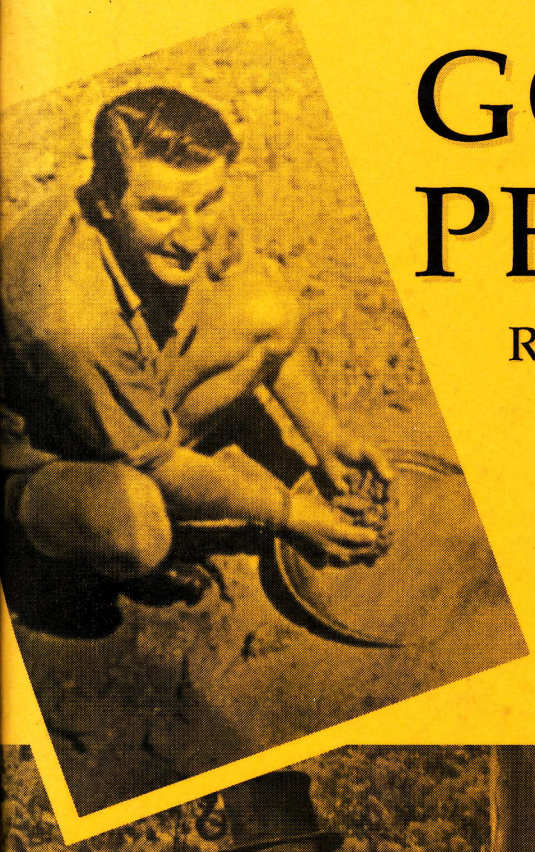

GOLD AND PEOPLE

RECOLLECTIONS OF HILL END 1920s TO 1960s

BRUCE GOODWIN

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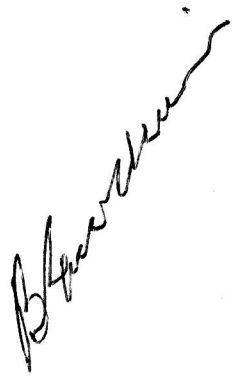

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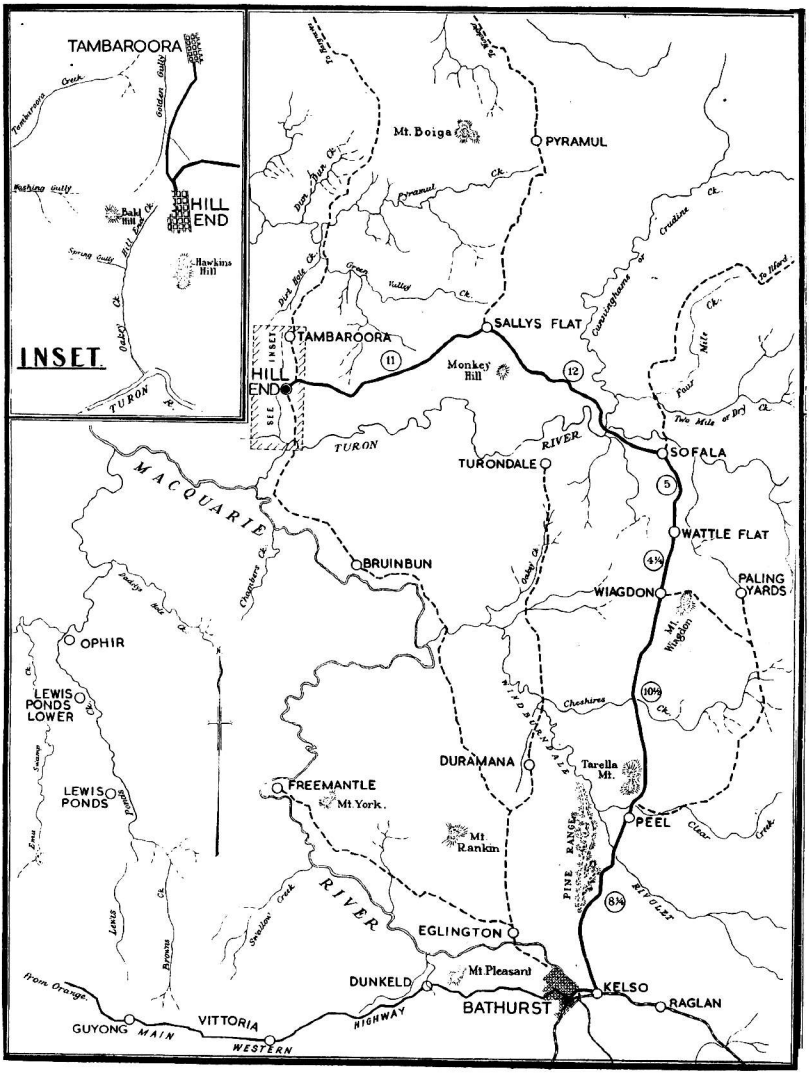
I dedicate this book to my family and friends who all helped to make things possible.



MAP OF HILL END AND DISTRICT

"Civilisation is a stream with banks. the stream is sometimes filled with blood from the people killing, stealing, shouting and doing the things historians usually record, while on the banks, unnoticed, people build homes make love, raise children, sing songs, write poetry and even whittle statues. The story of civilisation is what happened on the banks. Historians are pessimists because they ignore the banks for the rivers"

Will Durant wrote the above when challenged to sum up civilisation in a paragraph.

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My father's diaries spanning the period from 1908 to 1960, which gave many details about our family mining ventures. My mother's love of reading which she passed on to me and was to became a major part of my education.

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Finally my great good fortune, came when Brian Hodge agreed to read my manuscript. His skilled and detailed advice in the reorganisation and correction of the book proved invaluable, and to Brian I owe my sincere thanks.

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INTRODUCTION.

My grandfather, Enoch Goodwin, at 20 years of age voyaged from Manchester England in the sailing ship *Joseph Cunard*, arriving at Sydney in 1841.

He came out to the colony as an assisted immigrant, sponsored by Aspinall and Company of Sydney. After working in Sydney for a period he moved to the Hunter River area, and it was there that he first heard of a rich gold discovery on the Turon River. He decided to try his luck as a gold digger and he arrived on the Turon diggings in 1853.

Shortly after his arrival there he joined James Marshall, and they shared a very successful alluvial claim on Klondyke Point.

Both men were musical, grandfather as a singer while James played the violin. My father told me that the two partners were frequently joined by large crowds of their fellow diggers in musical sing-alongs on the Turon.

In 1855, at the town of Lower Turon, grandfather married my grandmother, Mary Ann Smith. They were living at Hill End during the alluvial gold rush and later were involved in that exciting era when the rich Hawkins Hill reefs were discovered and worked so successfully.

Grandfather spent six years as a councillor on the Hill End Borough Council; he played in the town band; and operated a large team of pack horses which were engaged in carting the rich ore from the Hawkins Hill Mines up to the crushing plants at Hill End.

He owned the *Rose of Australia* mine situated immediately on the eastern boundary of the original *Star Of Peace* claim. After sinking the shaft to 120 feet, grandfather sold out to the *Star of Peace* Company.

For some years he had a business in Clarke Street, Hill End, where he traded in second hand mining and building equipment. He died at Hill End in 1885.

My mother's father, Alfred Kemshall was also on the Turon Diggings in 1854. He had arrived in NSW, in 1848 on the sailing ship, *Agincourt*. Grandfather Kemshall, his mother and father, brother and five sisters were part of a group of over seven hundred immigrants, all lacemakers, originally from Nottingham, England, but who for some years had been working in the lace industry in Calais, France. A number of these immigrants came to Bathurst to work on the land and after the discovery of gold, many of them joined the rush to the Hill End and Turon diggings.

Grandfather Kemshall worked on many goldfields in NSW and Victoria . He managed to save enough capital from his gold digging to

set himself up on a grazing property at Hargraves. He married Eliza Jane Madden at Kelso in 1868.

My father, Enoch Goodwin, was born at Hill End in 1871 and apart from a few years dredging sand from the Narrabeen Lakes, and two trips to New Guinea he spent the rest of his 89 years gold mining at Hill End.

Most of his gold mining ventures were small scale and were financed by family and friends. He was underground manager at the *Reward Mine* until 1922, was correspondent for the *Lithgow Mercury, Bathurst Times,* and *Mudgee Guardian.* He was Captain of the Hill End Rifle Club, and was involved in lodges, church, hospital and other community activities. He loved gold-mining and was never happy when absent from Hill End.

My mother, Maud Kemshall was born at Shamrock Valley Bathurst on January 10 1875. From then until her marriage she lived with her parents at their Oak Creek grazing property near Hargraves. My mother and father were married in the Salvation Army Hall at Hill End in May, 1893.

I left Hill End as a child and spent eight years at Narrabeen. I returned to Hill End in 1931 and from my early teens became involved in the family mining ventures. I spent four years in the AIF.and with my wife I returned to Hill End in 1945, and abandoning gold mining, joined my brother in law Bob Lincoln who was operating a passenger and freight run between Hill End, Bathurst and Mudgee.

In 1954 my wife and I purchased a shop from Margo Fuge, and later purchased Nightingale's store.

I had one last fling at gold mining in 1964, when a syndicate I was interested in, carried out some Hydraulic sluicing in Golden Gully.

My sister, Lorraine Lincoln was the last member of the Goodwin family to live in Hill End. She moved to Sydney in 1984, but still retains her Hill End home.

Chapter 1

Childhood Memories of Hill End.

In 1922, I was six years of age and living in Hill End. One of my earliest memories is the hypnotic rhythm of the twenty-head stamper battery located near the Robert Emmett shaft and situated 200 metres from our home in Reef Street, Hill End. This battery crushed all the gold-bearing ore from the Deep Levels mine and a number of Hill End families' wages were dependent on the amount of gold produced.

Another constant noise was the clanging of the water carrying cage, as it went up and down the Robert Emmett shaft, drawing water to feed the insatiable appetite of the large Cornish steam boilers and the battery boxes of the ore crushing plant.

After our evening meal, my father often took me for a visit to the Robert Emmett battery. Here he would chat with his friend Jack Beattie, one of the engine drivers.

Once inside the battery shed I entered an exciting world of hissing steam and the swishing sound of the giant, five-ton cast iron fly-wheels, as they rotated in their endless effort to even out the intermittent power supplied by each stroke of the steam driven pistons. As the fly-wheels rotated, their spokes threw flickering shadows on the walls of the battery house. The hissing sound of the escaping steam combined with the ear-splitting noise of the stamper battery gave a sensation of power that was breath-taking.

Further delights to me were the sounds of steam escaping from the engine's cylinders and the shrill whistle that pierced the air at each change of shift; the sudden glare of the fire on the engine drivers' face as the furnace door on the steam boiler was flung open; the shower of sparks that burst through the furnace door when fresh logs of wood were thrown in. There was always an atmosphere of movement and excitement and these childhood experiences were to give me a life-long love of steam engines. Dad told me that the Cornish miners always referred to the steam engines as if they were human, and I could fully understand the feeling that those busy, hissing friendly machines were somehow part of the human family.

Each of the twenty stampers in the battery weighed 800 pounds. The stampers were lifted up eight inches and then dropped off the cam to fall

onto the quartz which had been evenly shovelled into the battery box. The noise within the battery shed was ear shattering as each stamper crashed onto the quartz. The ground for some distance around the battery vibrated with this massive mechanical onslaught.

Dad, was underground manager at The Deep Levels mine and as he went to work each day, I often went to our front gate to wave him good-bye. I would linger at the gate so that I could watch some of the miners walking to work.

Their uniform dress was, grey flannel shirt, synthetic moleskin trousers, bowyangs and blucher boots. After the miners had all passed, my next interest would be to watch out for the horses and drays, their steel tyres making a loud crunching sound as the wheels passed over the quartz material that formed the road bed.

The drays would be loaded with firewood and timber for the mine. George Denman senior had a two-horse dray and his horses were named Tiger and Toby. Charlie Thompson used a one-horse dray, and his brothers Jake, Dick and Jim frequently assisted with cutting and stacking the wood.

The wood they carted was obtained from green timber felled on the Hill End Common. Before being used in the steam boilers the wood was stored in very large stacks at the mine where it was allowed to dry.

All the timber and firewood had to be cut with axes. The cutters were on contract and they were paid so much per cord. A cord was a stack of wood measuring 128 cubic feet, the accepted measurement being a stack 5 x 5 x 5 feet.

There were some excellent axemen engaged in cutting wood and timber for the mine,and there was a great deal of rivalry as to which cutter could cut and stack a cord of wood in the shortest time. Jossie Bennett and Jack Denman were two out-standing axemen and could cut and stack four cord of wood per day. Jossie claimed he could fell a sapling and cut three lengths off the sapling before it hit the ground!.

One of the Cornish steam boilers at the Robert Emmett battery required a new steel chimney stack. As this stack was forty feet long and eighteen inches in diameter it had to be transported to Hill End in two pieces. Neither oxy nor electric welding were available in those days so the stack had to be bolted together. This operation required someone to crawl up inside the stack until the joint was reached and then fit bolts through pre-drilled holes, so that a second person on the outside could fit nuts onto the protruding bolts.

I was five years of age, small enough to fit the pipe and living very close to the site. This qualified me for my first job. Mum was very

apprehensive at the thought of me, her five year old son, crawling twenty feet up a steel stack, even if the stack at this stage was lying along the ground. Dad, however, finally won the day and along the pipe I crawled.. When I had completed the task Duncan Marshall paid me one pound ($2.00). This was quite a large sum of money at that time; however, to me the sense of achievement far outweighed the monetary reward.

I consider myself most fortunate to have lived in such close proximity to the Robert Emmett battery and The Reward Mine, where there was a never ending movement of machines and people. Those were the sights and sounds of Hill End as I remember them and I thank my father for introducing me to an exciting and wonderful world of men and machines.

Chapter 2

Memories of Home

Memories of my childhood home at Hill End are full of happiness and security. I had two brothers and three sisters but I, being the youngest member of the family, had a lot of love and affection lavished on me.

Mum was a great homemaker in a period when homes had to be made. She was forever papering the walls and making new curtains and cushion covers, varnishing the furniture and polishing the lino. Beech's store always had a good collection of brightly coloured cretonne for 1/3 (13 cents) per yard, and mum was one of Beech's best cretonne and wallpaper customers.

Bleak House my childhood home. This photograph was taken just after it was carried from in front of the post office to its present site in Reef St. My mother purchased it from John Ross in 1917 for one hundred pounds a considerable sum of money for that period. I was ten months old when we moved in.

On the electoral rolls, the occupation of the vast majority of women was classified as Home Duties. This classification was totally inadequate to describe the true occupational skills of these women. They required skills in medicine, dressmaking, cooking, educating their children and at the same time were involved in community affairs. Above all they

required the intelligence and fortitude to make a home under what were often austere and harsh conditions.

The personal ambitions and dreams of many of these women were sublimated in their role of homemaker and mother. They gave their families love, security and support in what were often isolated and lonely situations

Cooking for a family of eight, as well as numerous visitors, was in itself a daunting task. We bought flour, potatoes, pumpkins, bran, pollard, wheat, oats, corn and chaff by the sack, and used the various items to feed the family as well as cows, horses, fowls etc. All other foodstuffs were bought in large quantities: tea in 14 pound tins; honey in 72 pound tins; Arnott's Biscuits in 14 pound tins; and a full side of bacon. Sheep were bought by the dozen and slaughtered when required. No matter how many visitors we had, there was always plenty of food on hand and it was seldom necessary to make an urgent trip to the store.

When in season jam melons, quinces, plums, apricots, peaches, figs, apples, pears and blackberries could be had for the picking. The fruit was eaten fresh, made into jam or preserved for future use. Some fruits were sliced and placed on trays to be sun dried on the tin roofs of the houses. Green-beans from the home garden were placed between layers of salt in earthenware jars, onions would be pickled. Turnips, potatoes, pumpkins, onions, cooking apples and quinces would be stored on dry shelves or between straw so that they would keep as long as possible thus providing a greater variety of food for the winter months. With the advent of the Vacola and Agee systems a greater variety of vegetables, fruits and other foods could be preserved and stored for future use.

In the laying season when eggs were plentiful in the fowl nests, the surplus eggs would be placed in four gallon kerosene tins filled with water glass, (sodium silicate).This preservative solution insured that eggs would be available in the winter. Getting the eggs from this somewhat slimy, unpleasant-to-the-touch, water glass mixture was never a popular chore with us children.

In the majority of Hill End homes kitchens were detached from the house. Most had clay floors, but frequent dampening with tea-leaves or water and then sweeping, had given the clay floor a smooth, hard surface.

The open fires and the chance of overheated fat bursting into flame created an ever present fire hazard, which was the reason kitchens had earth floors and were detached from the main house

Our kitchen was furnished with a large array of huge cooking and mixing utensils. Cakes were made in large baking dishes of sufficient size to hold recipes calling for numerous cups of flour, a dozen eggs,

pounds of sugar, butter, sultanas, currants and other ingredients. This type of fruit cake was always available at home and father usually had a piece every meal.

Dampers were 15 inches across and contained 10 cups of flour, usually mixed with liberal quantities of clotted cream. So much for cholesterol. Rock cakes were produced 40 or 50 at a time. Great legs of mutton and large sirloin roasts with delightfully fatty Yorkshire pudding, were cooked and devoured at a meal, and locally made sausages, smoke cured bacon, and eggs were on tap for light meals.

Although most people kept a number of fowls for the production of eggs, poultry was only on the menu for special feast days; and on the occasions we did kill a fowl we had to be careful it was not, Henny Penny, Pick Pick or Rose or one of the other pet fowls. They were allowed to live out long and well fed lives; and scanty egg production was never a reason for killing; it was death from old age that finally decided their fate.

We always kept a cow that supplied us with plenty of milk, cream and some butter. The main problem with the cow was to decide which member of the family would be the milker and who would lock the calf in the pen each evening. Both these tasks require attention 365 days per year and were never popular. Mum, myself and one sister were the only volunteers for milking. Dad and the other four children wisely claimed they could not get the knack of milking.

Our cows were usually named after the month of their birth, so we had Nov, Sep, Jan, June etc. All became family pets and thirty years later are still remembered and spoken of with affection.

When my wife and I were living at Tambaroora, we had a jersey calf called June. Betty had bottle fed June from birth and she had become a real family pet. On one occasion we were going on holidays and decided to take her up to mum and dad at Hill End. To move the calf we just walked her into the back of our seven seater Hudson car. This was no problem as she seemed to enjoy a car trip and frequently tried to get into the car if we were going out.

On our arrival at Hill End, I let June out of the car and, un-noticed by me, she followed me into the house. As I went to the dining room to speak to mum, June went into the kitchen where dad had just set the table for breakfast.There was a loud shout from dad and when I ran into the kitchen I found that June was under the table. She was just high enough to lift the legs of the table about six inches off the ground and dad, in an effort to save the crockery was trying to keep the table balanced on June's back. Actually June was quite unperturbed and when we lifted

the table off her back she just calmly walked out of the kitchen. Dad was not at all impressed and banished June to the outer yard for the rest of her stay.

On another occasion Dad brought home a small piglet, the idea being to fatten him up and eat him. Little did father know that piglets become part of the family, use piglet talk to get whatever they want from humans, follow the children around and eventually become a much loved family pet. Came the time for slaughter; slaughter who! Dad or the pig.

After putting off the evil hour as long as possible, mum and we children locked ourselves in the house and dad and Frank Anderson performed the murder. It took us some time to forgive dad and we never forgave Frank Anderson; nor did we eat any of our piglet; we proved we were not cannibals.

On days when mum was cooking I often amused myself by melting scrap lead on the stove and then pouring the molten lead into designs I had cut out in the clay floor, making lead bangles, rings, play coins etc. After the moulding was finished the holes in the floor had to be dampened, filled with clay and smoothed over.

We originally had a Colonial Oven, an oblong iron box fitted with a hinged door. The ends of the stove were set into bricks and a gap was left underneath. At the back and on top was a six inch gap between the top of the stove and another iron plate. A fire was placed under the stove and a fire in the gap on top, the plate set right on top providing a hot plate.

To the inexperienced these stoves were fraught with problems. Temperature control was an arrangement between the cook, the wood and the stove. Mum usually judged the temperature by placing her hand in the oven for a second or sprinkling a small quantity of flour on the oven slide. This primitive method of estimating temperatures obviously worked well and mum always produced perfectly cooked meals.

We later graduated to a Beacon Light stove which was a great improvement and did allow for some temperature control by use of a manually operated damper or draught regulator.

The family was always delighted when mum decided to cook a meal in the camp oven. Even after years of using the more modern fuel stoves, mum would give us a treat by cooking a roast dinner in the camp oven. The dinner would be sirloin roast, baked vegetables and dripping-soaked Yorkshire Pudding. After the camp oven had been emptied and the fat drained off, we children would be allowed to soak our bread in the delicious brown gravy left in the bottom of the oven.

Mum would also cook delicious dampers and cakes in the camp oven. It would just be hung over the open fire in the living room fireplace and hot coals would be shovelled onto its lid.

At Easter time, mum would get some compressed yeast from the baker and make hot cross buns, and the whole house would be filled with the tantalising aroma of spices and yeast. We would soak the buns in butter, and eat them whilst still hot. Easter buns are still such a strong childhood memory that as each Easter comes around and I see Easter buns displayed in the baker's shop I can immediately recall that beautiful yeasty aroma, but when I try the bun my dreams are shattered and I find nothing to compare with those my mother made.

Christmas was a time for puddings, cakes, poultry, pressed tongue, brawn, ham, mixed pickles, and nuts in shell. Raspberry syrup, ginger beer and hop beer, all of which were prepared or brewed at home. We had a large table nine feet by four feet and at Christmas we would often have up to twenty people sit down to a meal. Mum always magically produced mountains of food to feed the family and visitors.

The role of women in the 1920s and 1930s was vastly different from the 1980s and 1990s. Any young woman unlucky enough to have an illegitimate child was almost an outcast and was considered to have brought shame to the family. Sex was a taboo subject and few parents discussed sex with their children. The most innocent reference to sex in any form usually brought an embarrassing silence to the room.

In 1921 there was grave concern over the latest fashions in women's dress, which critics claimed were immodest and immoral. They said; 'Skirts have been steadily rising since the war and now thousands of women are revealing the calves of their legs'. In 1931, in a 16,000-word Encyclical Pope Pius XI called on all Catholics to stem the tide of sexual freedom.

Very few married women were expected to work, partly because it was considered demeaning to the husband, mainly because her commitment to her family and house were so time consuming.

Running a household in the 1930s had many chores: darning socks; patching clothes; bailing water into the copper for the weekly wash. (The copper was fed with chips or wood, the clothes were lifted out of the copper into large galvanised tubs with a pot stick. When the clothes were hand washed and rung-out they were pegged on to lines supported by clothes props, and many a washing ended in the dust when the props were dislodged by windy weather; filling four gallon containers with water and carrying them to the stove or open fire, to provide hot water for the family baths, or in later years, if you were lucky enough to have a chip

heater, gathering chips to fuel the chip heater; wielding a broom or a mop and bucket to clean the lino floors; or a scrubbing brush if you had bare board floors; carrying buckets of water from the water tanks into the kitchen or wash house; or perhaps pumping water with a hand pump from an underground well; making clothes for the family with a treadle sewing machine; looking after the vegetable and flower garden; watering the garden, by carrying water in a bucket from the nearby dam or well. With a routine like this there was no time or need for fancy diets, aerobics or Valium.

Cooking food over an open fire with a camp oven or a fuel stove did not prevent the production of masses of all types of food that would make the modern family tremble with horror: boiled suet puddings, sponge cakes, fruit cakes, loaded with cream and eggs if the family had a cow and chooks; lamingtons, jam tarts, boiled roly-polys with currants or dates, date scones, pumpkin tarts and scones, roast dinners with yorkshire pudding.

In spite of all this work, my mother and many others like her, always had time to talk and explain things to us children. Mum was an avid reader and all the children inherited the love of reading, even down to her grandchildren. Reading became a valuable source of education and made up for many of the disadvantages of isolated living. Fresh green vegetables and fruit were only available in the very short Hill End growing season.

The vast majority of these people were lean and healthy; they had to be because the nearest doctor was 50 miles away; the cost of fares and the doctor's fee would have represented more than a week's wages.

Hospitals were considered a last resort. If the ambulance had to be called it was tantamount to having the hearse called to the home. The family of the patient waved goodbye to the ambulance with tears in their eyes and the upper-most thought in their minds would be that this was really good-bye for ever. I remember vividly one such occasion when dad was taken to Bathurst in the ambulance. The family were all very upset, and when I at age 5 saw the prone body of dad laid on the stretcher which was then slipped smoothly into the ambulance and the doors closed behind him, then the ambulance swiftly disappearing around the post office corner, finality was certainly conveyed to my young mind.

Radio was a great source of entertainment for the whole family, with news; radio serials; quiz shows; talent quests, variety and musical programs. The radio was an instant link with the outside world, we no longer had to get our news from day old newspapers, news as it happened was available in our lounge rooms; Test cricket and Davis Cup tennis

took on a new interest, and the Bradmans, Hopmans and Willards became our heroes.

Many families had a piano, concertina, violin, jews-harp or mouth organ and family and friends would sing along to what ever instrument was to hand. The wind-up gramophone supplied additional music and was in constant demand prior to the advent of radio.

There were family card games such as Rickety Kate Solo Whist, Five Hundred, Euchre, Pontoon, Family Favourites, Farmyard, Patience and, for the less academic minds, Grab. Other games included, chess, draughts, dominoes, Ludo, Snakes and Ladders, Air Race Game, (popular at the time because of Bert Hinkler's solo air flight from England to Australia and later in the same year Kingsford Smith and Ulm flew from USA to Australia) Bobs, Table Tennis, Murder, Forfeits, Musical Chairs, Thought Reading, Post Man's Knock, Musical Chairs and Charades.

All of these pastimes encouraged family and community to socialise and helped strengthen the bond within the family and the wider community of relatives and friends. No doubt the larger families that were a feature of this period, and the closer relationships engendered by home entertainment, helped to avoid much of the conflict that exists today between many parents and teenagers.

A happy and entertaining home life served the needs of the community, and to most of those people who lived in Hill End at this time, their memories would be of love and security within the home and with very few social problems in the wider community. To add to the security and entertainment of the children, grand-parents were usually close at hand and could be visited frequently by the grand-children without the necessity of having parents with them. The grand-parents usually provided special treats not available or in some cases forbidden at home. To the recipients these treats made them feel special and increased their self esteem and bonded the children in a close relationship with their grandparents, usually lasting their whole life through. Because of this close association with their grandparents, the children extended respect and caring to other elderly people in the community.

There was also much discussion, talk, reading, knitting and sewing. A great deal of these activities took place around the open fire on cold winter nights I personally have some very happy memories of those family evenings, and in fact, that was were I gained most of my knowledge of life as well as a very strong love of family.

If you went visiting there was no need to lock your doors and windows; security devices were unheard of most of the homes at Hill End could have been broken into by a six-year old child, yet theft was rare,

apart from the odd sheep that was accidentally killed to ease the hunger of a family in dire need.

Holidays were a luxury that few could afford and the only people who left the town did so to seek work, visit the doctor, or on some other business matter.

Most people were superstitious. You were flirting with fate if you put your shoes on the table; opened an umbrella in the house; walked under a ladder; saw a black cat run in front of you. Friday 13th was very unlucky, and it was considered unlucky to have wattle, may bush or ayrum lilies in the house.

There were also many tales of ghosts; appearances of people that were dead; haunted camps; women screaming in the night. All these tales filled me with a tingling sense of excitement, but never to the stage of being frightened.

Religion was much more divisive than it is today, and the animosity between Catholics and Protestants was strong. In the wider community when applying for a job, you were often asked on what side of the fence you were on, and the answer frequently decided whether, you did, or did not, get the job. The religious division was not very pronounced at Hill End. This was probably due to the fact that the Catholic community was small in numbers, and also that the Hill End people were very tolerant of religion and race.

Wattle day was celebrated with a school picnic. All the school children walked the two miles to Golden Gully. The gully was filled with wattle trees,which in season, were loaded with brilliant, golden blossoms. Although Golden Gully had been a very rich alluvial gold field, one section of which, Martin's Gutter reputed to have yielded one pound weight of alluvial gold to the fossicking dish, it was the wattle that gave the gully its name, not the rich gold in its gravel.

We would have a picnic lunch, then some games which always included a wattle fight. On most wattle day picnics the Tambaroora school pupils would join Hill End at this half-way meeting place. I still have a snapshot of myself, aged about 5 years, taken at one of these wattle day picnics.

Then there was the annual town picnic, held on either the Post Office Flat or the Recreation Ground. Here we played Kissing the Ring, Drop the Handkerchief, Sheep Sheep Come Home, Cocky-Lorum, Rounders, Hidings, Chasings, Three-legged Races, sack races, age Races, Cock Fighting, Prisoners Base, French Cricket. Mountains of food were provided by the ladies and at the end of the day every one returned home happy but exhausted.

This was the era at Hill End I knew as a child and teenager. In between the child and the teenager, I was to spend eight years in a very different environment when with my family I lived and went to school first at Narrabeen and then Manly; both being northern seaside suburbs of Sydney.

My childhood at Narrabeen was very happy with lots of surfing and swimming, boating on the Narrabeen lakes and walks on the Collaroy Plateau. The Plateau at that time was in its virgin state with a fantastic variety of wild flowers.

Sixty years later I am once again walking in the coastal bushland at Frenchs Forest; and in the cool of a spring morning, there is suddenly a scent of grass or gumleaf and I am instantly back on the banks of the Macquarie River; or standing on Hawkins Hill, rapt in the morning mists rising slowly from the Turon valley and the myriad sounds of the bush, the ringing calls of the thrush or magpie echoing around the hills and valleys. Then the ugly development that man has created seems far away. The Australian bush is far from the ordered fields and well-cared for tourist attractions of Europe; but with its vast wild ruggedness, it holds a charm that for me no foreign scene can match.

Now when I visit Hill End, I love the solid silence, the crisp clean air; and the brilliance of the stars set in a velvety sky no city lights can spoil their beauty. To those who have spent some part of their life, in the Australian bush, it is easy to relate to the love the aborigine has for this strangely haunting landscape. It will always call me back.

Chapter 3

The Deep Levels Mine

The closure of the Deep Levels Mine in 1924 was a severe blow to the Hill End mining community. For more than a decade this mine had given constant employment to a large number of men.

Each morning the townspeople awoke to the rhythmic beat of the crushing battery, busily pounding up the ore from the *Deep Levels* mine. For those working at the mine the battery was beating out a sound of security for them and their families.

At 7.45 am, the warning whistle for the start of day shift, could be heard all over the town. Another whistle at 12 noon indicated to the miners that it was crib time, twenty minutes later they were back at work until the final whistle at 4 pm that marked the end of the day shift. The miner's lunch was always called 'crib' because the twenty minutes was cribbed out of the eight hour shift. Even at that time the miners worked just seven hours forty minutes each day.

Our home was only about 200 yards from the battery and during my early years I always went to sleep with the sound of the battery in my ears. If I awoke in the night the hypnotic rhythm would sooth me back to sleep. Dad always said that if the battery stopped in the night the unusual silence would always wake him up. With the closure of the mine, the silence of the battery became a constant reminder to the townspeople that the production of gold had ceased as had the weekly pay packet.

The closure of the *Deep Levels* meant that many families had to make decisions about leaving their home of many years, or in some cases the place of their birth, and moving to an entirely different environment. There appeared little chance of future employment for themselves or their children. The families that moved from Hill End at this time started a pattern that would continue over the years.

At a special meeting held in Sydney, on 22 February 1922, a majority of the shareholders of The *Deep Levels Gold Mining Company*, (Previously known as the *Hawkins Hill Reward Gold Mining Company* and commonly known by Hill End people as the *Reward* or *Deep Levels*). voted against the proposal for an amalgamation with The *Hawkins Hill Central Gold Mining Company*. This decision killed the

last opportunity the *Deep Levels Company* had to de-water the mine by gravity and at the same time open up the deeper ground under their leases.

Certain factors operating on the Hill End gold field inhibited underground mining on an economic scale. The main one being that the field was split up into a large number of small leases with various individuals or companies holding a title. Another problem was the nature of the gold deposits. All the reefs worked on the Hill End gold field contained rich chutes of gold, interspersed with low grade or barren sections. Miners agree that the small leases and patchy gold within the quartz veins made underground mining both physically and economically a difficult proposition. One solution to this problem was to amalgamate adjoining leases and pool all resources to achieve greater efficiency

Consolidation of these leases would have permitted the installation of mining machinery that would have given increased and more efficient production. The amalgamation would also have improved the long term planning and development of the leases.

The Sydney meeting of The *Deep Levels Hawkins Hill Gold Mining Company* in February 1922 was called to consider certain resolutions relating to the amalgamation of the *Deep Levels G.M Co*, and The *Hawkins Hill Central G.M Co*,.

Details for this amalgamation had been formulated some months before, when both companies were in financial difficulties; amalgamation appeared to offer a desirable solution to their problems.

The *Deep Levels Mine* had to contend, with expensive and difficult de-watering problem. Amalgamation with The *Hawkins Hill Central* would have solved this problem by extending the Consolidated Tunnel a further 800 feet, at a cost of 1600 pounds.

The extension of the Consolidated Tunnel would have de-watered the Deep Levels workings by allowing the water to flow by gravity out through the extended tunnel. This de-watering proposal would have opened up a considerable length and depth of gold bearing country; in addition all the workings would have been dry and more economical to mine. However, by the time the above meeting was called the *Deep Levels* had struck payable gold. During the six weeks from 12 November to 22 December, 251 tons of ore taken from the *Deep Levels* mine yielded 582 ounces of gold.The next crushing of 102 tons yielded 188 ounces of gold. Taking 1988 gold prices into calculations, these two crushings would have returned, approximately half a million dollars.

These two payable crushings sounded the death knell of the proposed amalgamation. A majority of the *Deep Levels* share holders refused to

support the proposal, indicating that they did not wish to share their successful mine with the financially troubled *Hawkins Hill Central.*

The *Deep Levels Mine* continued as a gold producer for another two years. Working in wet and difficult conditions, combined with the cost of hauling water from the main shaft, eventually resulted in the closure of the mine.

This was the last profitable gold mining company to operate at Hill End. In later years many companies were formed and old mines were reopened. All these later efforts were still handicapped by the small leases. Some of these mining ventures produced a considerable amount of gold and provided very welcome employment for local miners, but the end result was a loss of shareholders' funds.

All the mining trades had been represented at the the *Deep Levels* mine. There were miners, timbermen, engine drivers, blacksmiths, tool sharpeners, truckers, top men, crushing plant operators, tailings dam labourers, mine managers, clerical staff, wood and timber cutters and carters. For the majority of the men, retrenched from The *Deep Levels Mine,* there was no alternative employment. The miners and their families who left Hill End at this time were descendants of the pioneers of the gold field. Their departure reduced the population of Hill End by more than 100, a severe blow for an already small and isolated village.

The following are some of the miners who left Hill End when the *Deep Levels Mine* closed down. Clymo, Viv Cook, Joe Elliott, Eli Evans, Dick Garth, Alex Grimshaw, Herb Groves, Charlie Hamilton, Rowley Heap, Billy Jenkyns, Alf and Walter Johnson, Alexander Marshall, Eli Matthews, Peter Natress, Ted O'Reilly, Jack Oliver, Tom Yates, Ern, George, Percy and Tom Risby, Alex Manaolato, Alf and Bill Le Messurier and Peter Mullens, most of these men had families.

Some of the families moved to Kandos or Charbon, where the men found employment in the cement works. Other families settled in Sydney.

The majority of these people would only return to Hill End, for casual visits or holidays they had made their permanent homes in other towns and cities.

Of those people who remained at Hill End, some turned to alluvial mining, other small groups worked underground, re-working some of the old mines. These underground miners were taking out small patches of rich ore that had been uneconomic for the mining companies.

Some miners left the industry and commenced working for local graziers, doing jobs such as fencing, scrub cutting, ringbarking and

rabbiting. Work on the land was seasonal, and in the off season they returned to ground sluicing, or fossicking.

Most of the Hill End people kept a part time link with gold-mining. This fascination with gold also remained with those miners who had left the town. When these ex-residents returned on a visit, they could be seen trying their luck with the fossicking dish or specking for nuggets. My brother Kem left Hill End at the age of sixteen to work in Sydney. Whenever he returned to Hill End on his holidays, he, like so many others, always included some gold digging in his activities.

The closure of the *Deep Levels Mine*, was Hill End's last link, with long term employment in the gold mining industry. For the nation at large, the latter part of the 1920s was the start of a devastating and demoralising financial collapse. However, Hill End and its people managed to survive the nationwide depression much better than many other cities and towns. Isolation, and the community spirit that isolation engenders in people, was to prove a big factor in survival. As you will read, survive they did, and their survival had very little to do with help from Government or outside sources. Very few of the locals received the dole and when they did have to apply for relief it was usually due to lack of water for fossicking and sluicing. There were a number of people who received Government Aid for underground mining projects, but this aid was only earned by very hard work. The locals were hard working and capable, and endowed with skills that had been inherited from those forebears, who had survived the disappointments and heart breaking work that was often the lot of the early gold diggers.

Just as Hill End was founded on gold, it was always gold that the townspeople went back to when conditions became tough; there was always a pennyweight or two left in the gullies for those who knew where and how to get it.

Chapter 4

Village Life 1925 Style

The 1925 electoral roll for Hill End lists the names of 236 people. With the exception of seven or eight names, all those enrolled were descendants of original Hill End mining families.

Hill End was linked with the outside world, by 50 miles of metal road that traced a tortuous path over rugged mountain ranges and deep river gorges. These formidable barriers had to be traversed by coach and horses, the journey taking twelve hours and the return fare costing almost a week's wages. Hence Hill End was a community living outside the mainstream of modern life, insular and orientated to village life, just as many of our forebears were in the early European villages.

However, group isolation does provide some recompense in that the people develop strong community ties. This was shown in their strong support of the village concept. This isolation made the Hill End people independent and self-sufficing. Not only did the ordinary people help each other, but the business people and public servants were also very supportive of the village and its people.

In those days of restricted transport, few people travelled very far from their district; but they knew every detail of that district intimately, and could identify by name all the creeks, rivers, valleys and mountains. Many of these geographical features had been named after a local identity, such as, *Kitty's Falls, Piesley's Island, Everrett's Bluff, Bragg's Flat, Fischer's Hill, Gilbert's Hill, Pullen's Hill and Hawkin's Hill.* Other areas had been named because of a unique characteristic; *Split Rock, Broken Back, Nuggetty Gully, Golden Gully, Red Hill, Noisy Hole, Dairy Hole, Dead Bullock Hole, Dead Man's Water Hole, Bald Hill, Brewery Creek, Washing Gully, Dirt Holes Creek and Chinamans Bend.*

They knew the creatures that roamed their district, be they wild or tame. They knew each other thoroughly, too, and had a kindly tolerance for idiosyncrasy and oddity. Every man and woman, down to the poorest member of the community, contributed something to the general life of the village; everyone was of value in his degree, and knew himself to be so; the result was a firmly-knit community, made up of men and women, who took a proper pride in their individual and often unique skills. Many small towns in Australia have their community life and economic

existence based on farming or agriculture. Hill End was unique because for many years the towns' economy was based on gold mining, only turning to the land as the gold ran out. However, once a gold miner always a gold miner, and whether it be for pleasure or need the Hill End miner always returned to gold.

All those who were privileged to live in small country towns during the first half of this century would have shared the common dependence and the binding force of isolated community living.

The townspeople knew that whatever they were doing, or where ever they were in the town, they could go about their business without fear. The children were protected from danger by everyone in the town, and because of this they were allowed the freedom to roam and investigate. Caring about each other was extended to work and play and reinforced the feeling of belonging, that, to me, is the corner-stone and joy of village life. It would be foolish to suggest that isolated villages, were heaven on earth where unkind thoughts and actions were not tolerated. Of course, people had differences of opinion, likes and dis-likes. However, when a community or personal problem arose it always brought the community spirit into focus and differences were forgotten. When the need was greatest, help and comfort was freely given and received. The receiving of help in this environment of community living, was not charity but a mutual sharing of the various skills and human assets that were available in the community.

THE VILLAGE SERVICES.

In 1925, Sergeant Lionel Alfred Bisley was OIC of police at Hill End. He was the last policeman of that rank to be appointed to Hill End. With few exceptions, the police who were posted at Hill End were fine men and carried out their duties in a fair and humane manner. They usually accepted executive positions in various village organisations, and in many instances, suggested, innovative ideas that set new standards for running community groups.

Joseph Alfred Loughrin was the postmaster, John Edward Thompson Public School Headmaster; Alfred Le Messurier Commission Agent; Algernon Smith Marr Doctor; Blanche Lee Matron of the Hospital; Adelaide Dove music teacher; Ellen Macryannis dressmaker; Emily Evans Dress maker; and William Joseph Jenkyns,Blacksmith.; Lew Judge Tank-maker and Tin Smith. There were a number of self taught barbers who with varying degrees of skill attended to the hairdressing needs of the

locals. There were shoe repairers and scores of other men and women who were very skilful in various crafts.

Unless the offence committed was of a serious nature, justice was dispensed by a local Justice of the Peace. The local Coroner conducted inquiries into death by accident or unknown causes. These officials were well-known to the local people, and because of this the proceedings were carried out with sympathy and understanding.

The duties of J.P and Coroner were honorary positions, and, to the best of my knowledge, the decisions arrived at by these officials were usually accepted as fair and just by the defendants and the community.

This local dispensation of justice sometimes resulted in a pragmatic finding by the presiding J.P. Early one Monday morning in the Hill End Court House, the presiding J.P had a conflict of interest. Apart from his official position, he was also the owner of a gold mine at Hawkins Hill. The defendant, was the engine driver, in charge of the sitting J.P's, ore crushing battery. When the defendant pleaded guilty, to a charge of being drunk and disorderly,.the J.P quickly responded, *"You are fined ten shillings, that I will pay, and now get down to the mine and start up the battery, as quickly as you can."*

Hill End did not have a resident dentist, the needs of the community being attended to by a dentist from Bathurst, who on his periodic visits set up a temporary surgery in what were called commercial rooms, that were provided by the hotels. As a youth I had a tooth removed whilst sitting on the running board of the visiting dentist's car, and the extraction was carried out without any pain-killers. I had caught the dentist as he was about to get into his car for the return trip to Bathurst. He said it was too late to set up his equipment in his usual room at the *Royal Hotel*, but if I cared to sit on the running board he would extract the tooth, and although it was a double tooth I must say the extraction was relatively painless.

The resident doctor was not renowned for his expertise in the profession of dentistry, and only carried out emergency tooth extractions. Thus his main source of dental patients were usually drawn from those who, because of pain and sleepless nights, were desperate enough to place themselves in his hands. One such client was Ken Hodge, who had spent many many sleepless nights nursing an aching tooth. Ken finally decided to take a chance, and get the doctor to pull the offending tooth. The going rate for extracting teeth, was seven-shillings and sixpence, per tooth, a fee strictly adhered to by the doctor. Ken eventually climbed into the doctor's chair and with trembling finger, indicated, the offending tooth. After Ken had received the necessary needles, the doctor fastened

onto the tooth and with much tugging and pulling, wrenched out the tooth and dropped it in a bowl, situated beside the chair. Before the tooth had stopped rattling in the bowl, the doctor said: *"That will be seven-shillings and sixpence"*. At this stage Ken, anxious to see the tooth that had caused him such pain, caste a furtive look in the bowl and to his consternation saw two teeth. With a cry of alarm he said: *"But doctor, you have pulled out two teeth"*. The doctor quickly replied: *"Well, that will be fifteen shillings, Mr.Hodge"*.

The professional people, public servants, and their families, who spent a tour of duty at Hill End, were community minded. In addition to their professional duties, they gave support and assistance in a wide variety of community activities. They brought with them new ideas and in this sense helped to alleviate the problem of isolation. In return they were given support in their work and were welcomed, into the sporting and social life of the town.

The post office was the centre of communications and was presided over by a number of postmasters and postmistresses all of whom were a very important part of such an isolated village. In the earlier days the mail came by horse drawn coach and arrived at Hill End late in the evening. No matter how late the mail was the postmaster opened the office for a short period so that those waiting could receive their mail.

Waiting for the mail was quite a social event and there was usually a number of young people in attendance. Going for the mail was often used as an excuse for clandestine and romantic meetings. Even in later years when motor vehicles were used on the mail run and the mail arrived around midday, there was always a group of people waiting. There were several people who collected the mail for a number of friends and neighbours.

In the twenties there were very few people connected to the telephone, so those who wished to make a phone call had to go to the phone booth at the post office. After World War 2 the phone subscribers increased rapidly and when the exchange eventually became automatic in the 1980s there were 60 subscribers.

Telegrams were used more frequently than they are today. They were used for business, and for birth, wedding and birthday greetings, as well as urgent messages between families.

My brother Kem started work in the post office at Hill End in 1920 at the age of 14 years, he was later posted to Bathurst and then to Marrickville. He remained in the postal service, and he was postmaster at Wentwortville when he retired.

Mary Flynn the present postmistress (1991) must surely hold the state record for the longest serving postmistress. Mary started in the Hill End post office in 1933 as assistant to her first husband Walter Brodie, and after Walter's death was appointed postmistress. Before the exchange became automatic, Mary had the onerous task of servicing 60 phone subscribers as well as carrying out her other postal duties. This was no mean task for one who also had to fulfil the role of mother and wife. In times of town emergency such as bushfires, sickness or accident Mary was always available at any hour of the day or night, seven days a week.

Similarly, the business people were very much a part of the community, giving credit in bad times and always providing a friendly and caring service to their customers. The two department stores, Henry Beech and On Gay Jang, both delivered orders to their customers. Deliveries were made by horse and cart and even people in isolated and distant parts of the community were included in this delivery service. At some of the more isolated homes the delivery man's face would be the only strange face seen for weeks on end

When the store account was paid, the customer was given a thank-you present, that was usually a bag of Arnotts Zu-Zu mixed biscuits or some boiled lollies. In a period when treats were few and far between, these simple gifts were greatly appreciated by the whole family.

There were also people who would cut and cart dray loads of firewood for a very modest sum of money; others, who would plough and harrow your paddock to prepare the earth for crop or garden; and many other handy people who could devise, plan, or manufacture, almost anything that was required; there was very little that could not be done locally. The village even had its own watch-maker, George Cross. He lived in Denison Street only a few yards from our home, and was a great friend of dad and mum. When I was a child I visited George frequently, visits mainly concerned with delivering gifts of eggs, milk, a meal, or some other item that mum had prepared.

George was a highly intelligent man with skills and innovative ideas far beyond his time. His house was filled with clocks and watches of all types, all of them ticking away in their individual rhythms. Most of these timepieces were not for sale, because to their owner they were treasured friends.

When he did sell a clock or a watch, the buyer was questioned as to whom it was for and if the recipient was a reliable and worthy person to have control of this treasure.

On one occasion, dad wanted to purchase a watch for my brother Kem, who was at that time about 15, and working in the Hill End post

office. Dad went to George and selected a watch he considered would be suitable. After receiving instructions from George as to the proper care of the watch, he casually mentioned that it was not for himself but for his son. George immediately with-drew his offer to sell, saying: *" I cannot let you have this watch because it is far too good for a fifteen year old boy"*

I still have dad's silver pocket watch that was his constant companion for over fifty years. Many years ago he gave it to George for repair. To effect the repair George had to hand-make a part. In later years dad took the watch to a Sydney watch-maker who was amazed that such a perfect repair had been effected by a self-taught watch-maker. When dad was working at the *Reward Mine* this watch fell out of his pocket and dropped 200 feet down the shaft into water. After it was recovered, George gave it a clean, and seventy years later the watch is still going and keeps perfect time.

Bathurst National Advocate July 1930 reports:-

"George Cross one of Hill End's best known citizens has not been well. George is the village watch-maker and a very intelligent and ingenious man. He is 83 years of age and is still busy keeping the watches and jewellery of Hill End repaired and all carried out at very reasonable cost".

George had many other talents. He made a very effective camera,and carried out his own developing and printing. I still have a portrait of dad taken by George some eighty or so years ago.

He also made telescopes to view the stars and the moon. He made a style of *Panama* hat from the inner bark of the Kurrajong tree. To make the hats he stripped the bark and then soaked it in some liquid until it was pliant and tough. He then passed the bark through a cutting device he had made. This simple machine had adjustable blades that cut the bark into strips of uniform thickness and width. He then wove the strips onto a hat block where it was dried into shape. The result was very professional.

On the footpath in front of George's house was a long wooden seat, used as a meeting place for the town elders. It was here that all sorts of topics both academic and not so academic were debated. Occasionally I accompanied dad when he attended, what was known as George Cross's school. Whether the discussions were scientific, political or general, George controlled the direction of the discussion just as effectively as our present day T.V interviewer.

George always made me feel very welcome and my visits to him were a great joy, and I still remember them as high points of my early life. To

some extent he must have taken the place of the grandfathers whom I never knew.

There were many other people in Hill End with skills and arts that came from their long experience with having to solve their own problems. They often had to make special tools before they could commence their special project, for there was no hardware shop near-by to supply either tools or material. Like many others, if dad wanted a steel hook, a bolt, a steel ring etc, he just went to the scrap heap, (a common feature in most Hill End yards), and after selecting a suitable piece of iron, took it to the forge, where he soon fashioned the required item.

The self sufficiency that was evident in Hill End was very akin to village life in England before the Industrial Revolution. The English village of that era was composed of a well-balanced group of people, able to provide all the skills and services that the community required. When the Black Plague decimated the people living in the English villages, many of the skilled artisans died and this loss resulted in some villages being so denuded of certain skills that they could no longer function as a viable community. They had to join with other villages, so that the balance of trades, could once again be established, and thus, the various village tasks could be carried out in a professional manner

As in all small towns the village pub becomes the village club, where yarns are spun; deals made; oral history told; sporting deeds discussed at length; politics debated; and friendships cemented. So it was at Hill End.

Another binding force was the common interest in gold. Like all one industry towns the bonds between the workers are very strong.

Every one in a mining town is aware of the dangers of mining just as they are familiar with the exhilaration of finding a patch of gold or the dejection that comes when the gold claim fails to live up to expectations. These are emotions that can only be understood by the miner who knows that his failure to find payable gold can mean that his family will not eat. There were no social services to fall back on, but fortunately there was usually some credit at 'Beech's or On Gay Jang, the Chinese store, likewise the butcher would never let anyone go hungry.

A butcher from Wattle Flat told me that he ran a meat cart down to Sofala during the depression and that all his profit went up the river. I said: "how come?" "Well," he said: "there were a lot of people living up the river during the depression and they would send orders down for meat, with a note saying they would send the money down with the next order. However, a lot of meat went up the river but very little money came down".

Chapter 5

The Cricketers Arms and The Royal.

In Australia it has been a common practice to assess the size of a town by the number of hotels. In 1925, Hill End was a two hotel town.

The *"Cricketers Arms"* licensed since 18 August 1863, was situated at the southern end of Tambaroora street and was usually referred to as the Bottom Pub or Weirs. The licensee of this hotel was Larry Weir. With the help of his wife Aspasia they served the village well. It had a cheerful, lived-in quality and the service was friendly and homely. Weir's Hotel would invoke many happy memories for all those Hill End people who experienced the companionable atmosphere of this old style country Pub.

The hearty, country-type meals were prepared under Larry's supervision and were always praised by visiting guests. Larry was a very good cook and one of his specialities was roast goose. This dish was frequently requested by visiting gold mining company directors and their friends. I remember dad receiving letters, asking him to book rooms at Weirs and requesting roast goose for dinner. Whenever dad told Larry that the guests had asked for roast goose, he always said he could not be bothered with damn roast goose; but when the time came a perfectly roasted goose was proudly placed on the dining table

Larry had an acerbity manner that disguised a warm and friendly nature. However, as with all dispensers of stimulating beverages, there comes a time when the preservation of good humour and calm becomes a challenge. One night Larry's patience was sorely tried, when two thirsty locals, feeling the need for further alcoholic stimulation, decided to knock on Larry's and Aspasia's bedroom window.

The hour was near midnight and the revellers were now making their third request for after hours service. This late night intrusion stretched Larry's patience to breaking point and when the carousers called for half and half, a popular drink of the time, consisting of half beer and half stout, Larry grabbed the chamber pot from under the matrimonial bed, opened the window and flung the contents of the pot over them below shouting: "there's your half and half; half mine and half the wifes'!"

THE ROYAL HOTEL.

In 1871 an advertisement appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald,* soliciting for shareholders to form a company to build the *Royal Hotel* at Hill End. However the hotel was not completed until 1872.

Henry Dwyer was the first licensee.Dwyer sold out to George Oldham, gentleman of Parramatta, and George Selway, Licensed Victualler, of Paddington. On the 14 September, 1888 Benjamin Carver became the owner.

William Henry Eyre purchased the *Royal* and assumed control of the hotel on 2 March, 1891.The freehold of the *Royal* remained in the Eyre family until it was finally sold to Owen McGuiness in 1967.

The Eyre family leased the *Royal* to George Hinchcliffe in 1955, Harry Dunk in 1961, Eric Magnus Synnerdahl in 1962, and Walter Warry, 1963,

Then Gwen Eyre and her sister Margo Fuge returned in 1966 to take control of the *Royal* for a short period..In 1967, the freehold of the *Royal* was sold to Owen McGuiness, thus finally breaking the Eyre family's connection with the *Royal*.. Owen McGuiness finally sold the Royal to the NPWS.

Oswald Eyre, son of William Henry Eyre, was the proprietor of the *Royal Hotel* in 1925, and was capably assisted by his wife Gertrude. *The Royal* was and still is a substantial two-storey brick building and in 1925 was the gateway to the business centre of Hill End.

Mr Eyre was affectionately known as Ossie and all who knew him will remember his warm-hearted and generous nature. The genuine and practical help he invariably extended to anyone in need remained a personal confidence between Ossie and the recipient. Ossie had a wonderful sense of humour and even when the joke was on him he was the first one to laugh.

There has been a number of proprietors of the *Royal*, since the final departure of the Eyre family, many of whom have served and continue to serve the town well. But to those who experienced the caring and friendly atmosphere and the community spirit that had been a feature of the *Royal* under three generations of the Eyre family, the magic was gone.

Some of the resident policemen enforced the six o'clock closing law with unnecessary zeal. This made quenching the thirst of Ossie's patrons a complex three cornered game, played by Ossie, the resident police officer, and the thirsty drinkers.

One of the schemes adopted in this game was to serve customers who were sitting on a seat on the front verandah of the Royal with after hours

drinks. Under cover of darkness the drinks were served through the parlour window. This method of overcoming the law of six o'clock closing had worked very well for some time. One night the above arrangement was in operation and the prospective drinkers were sitting on the front verandah, waiting expectantly for Ossie to fulfil their order, of beers all-around, when through the fading evening light the thirsty miners sighted Constable Rosser approaching. As he was known to be particularly keen on the enforcement of six o'clock closing, they decided to forego the pleasure of a cool beer in favour of a hasty retreat up Beyer's Avenue. Rosser, noticing the hurried departure of the locals and suspecting some infringement of the law, decided to occupy the seat so recently vacated by the thirsty miners. His suspicions were soon vindicated, when Ossie, unaware of the changed circumstances, passed a foaming pint through the window into the hand of the law. No punitive action was taken on these occasions, but the constable used these tactics to make Ossie and his patrons uneasy. When we look at the easy going and liberal drinking hours of 1990, it seems unbelievable that police were spending so much time on such trivial matters.

On another occasion when an illegal after-hours drinking session was in progress, Constable Rosser entered through the front door of the Royal. Bill Denman, one of the drinkers in the bar, prudently decided to seek sanctuary in the hotel garden. With this plan in mind, Bill made a rapid exit through the back door. However, Constable Rosser decided not only to clear the drinkers from the bar but also to extend his search to the back yard. His torch light revealed Bill, crouching in between the rows of climbing beans. When asked by the constable what he was doing on licensed premises after hours Bill innocently replied: "pickin' beans".

My memories of the *Royal*, are of the many happy times I spent with friends and companions, in the convivial atmosphere of this historic country hotel. It was a club where debates on politics, current affairs both local and overseas and on the lighter side sport could all be thrashed out with a great deal of vigour and little acrimony.

On one occasion, it was decided to run a chocolate wheel to raise funds for the Red Cross. The OIC police at that time was one who stuck to the letter of law and that included no chocolate-wheels on licensed premises. The constable's wife was secretary of the Red Cross and I was treasurer. Edna assured me that she would make certain that her husband would not leave the police station during that period when the chocolate-wheel would be running. She was a very attractive woman and on that afternoon her husband evidently found her charms of much greater attraction than a raid on the illicit chocolate-wheel operators; and the bar

of the *Royal* once again proved a profitable venue for raising funds for a worthy cause.

Situated alongside the *Royal Hotel* was the Royal Hall, and is a solid brick building complete with raised stage. In size and structure it is more fitted to the town that once was. This hall has been the main entertainment centre for Hill End residents and visitors for many years. It was used for dancing, concerts, films, reunions, school functions and meetings.

Chapter 6

The Business People 1925.

In 1925, the main business operating in Hill End was an extensive and well stocked department store. Henry Beech was the owner-manager and he was assisted by his wife Anthea, daughter Dorothy, sons Harry and Albert, and nephew Norman Cross. This basic family staff was supplemented from time to time by some local help

Like all the business people in Hill End, Henry Beech was a good friend to his customers and without his help many families would have suffered great hardship. More than generous credit was frequently extended, in order to tide a family over until the next crushing from an underground mine, or until a heavy rain storm washed down the alluvial sluice. Quite often the crushing did not meet expectations or the rain did not arrive. The old account would then be added up and put aside and a new account opened in the hope that this new account could be kept up to date. In some cases neither account would ever be paid.

Digger Hocking said: 'I started working for Henry Beech in 1925 and at that time, Roley Hodge was delivering goods from the Bathurst Railway Station to the store by horse team and waggon. The goods would amount to a few tons and would be unloaded onto the store verandah. Henry would tell Norman Cross and myself to get the goods in as soon as possible. We started with the groceries because they were vulnerable to stray dogs lifting their leg. The goods had to be moved by hand trolley through the shop and stacked in the store rooms at the rear. We moved the bags of sugar first because Henry always said: 'get the sugar in before up goes a dogs leg and there goes another lump in the sugar'.

Henry was a most astute business man. The store was always well-stocked with a wide variety of goods that covered every need of the town and district. His monthly accounts to customers were written in a small neat script, with every purchase itemised and dated.

Henry was hard of hearing and because of this he always spoke in a loud voice. His loud voice was a problem when he was selling the more intimate feminine garments to some of his lady customers, and everyone in the store would be made aware of the size of garment required by the particular customer that Henry was serving.

On the death of Henry Beech the store was carried on by Mrs Beech and her family. It was a general store in all respects and contained a wide variety of goods, such as groceries, sweets, hardware, explosives, produce, boots, shoes, millinery, men's, ladies' and childrens' clothing, Manchester and stationary.

Orders were delivered by horse and spring cart to the whole of the Hill End district and that included properties as far away as Ullamalla and Alpha. In 1932 orders of groceries etc, were delivered on pack-horses to a mining syndicate at Piesley's Island on the Macquarie River. The pack-horses, with Norman Cross in charge, travelled a distance of eleven miles and the journey was over a very rough and mountainous bridle track, extending from the Hill End plateau to a very isolated stretch of the River. This was service Hill End style; no thought as to the profitability of the delivery, just service to the customer at any cost.

Albert 'Bung' Beech was an inveterate prankster and Digger tells of one nefarious pastime that he feels sure Bung instigated. 'This was an action called "flying" and was in an era before the zipper, when the fly on male trousers was fastened with buttons. The idea was to catch an unsuspecting male in an unguarded moment and with one swift movement of the hand rip his fly open from bottom to top. It was only done in front of a group that hopefully included some young women, their presence meant maximum embarrassment for the victim. The trick was confined to the younger males because older men took a rather hostile attitude when they were the victims. When Flying was successfully executed, it revealed that a lot of the victims were not wearing underpants and thus were fully exposed to a highly amused audience. This sudden exposure of portion of the male anatomy enhanced the ego of a few and diminished that of the others.

Mrs Beech no doubt wondered why there was such a marked increase in the sale of underpants. However, the solution for this increase in sales was soon revealed to her. This day I was talking to Mrs Beech on the front verandah of the shop, and I noticed that Bung had casually joined us. When Bung was around, I usually had my hand at the ready to fend off any attack, but because I was talking to his mother I thought I would be quite safe. But he was not deterred.

Much to my surprise and embarrassment he "flyed" me from bottom to top with one swift movement. I was consoled by the thought that Mrs beech would chastise her young son, but this was not so. All she said was:"Oh Albert! You naughty boy'.

Flying did not continue for very long, because after a month or so of flying buttons and torn button holes, tempers became a little frayed and

this unusual and disconcerting prank was discontinued by mutual consent.

The Chinese firm of On Gay Jang also conducted a general store at Hill End. This was one of a chain of stores that had operated on the Western Goldfields. The branch at Hill End had outlived all its white competitors except one, this being Beechs'. When the On Gay store finally closed, an amazing collection of goods went on sale, some of which had been in stock for many years.

Men's Bowler hats were one of the items on sale, being sold for sixpence each. The locals were quick to discover that these hats were sturdy enough to save many a bruised head, a common occurrence for underground miners. The bowler hats would have served as the first safety helmet used by miners on the Hill End field! After the On Gay sale it became a common sight to see miners going to work in bowler hats,.an anachronism in this time of depression.

In addition to the bowler hats, there were many other treasures some dating back to the gold rush days. What a magnificent commercial historical museum this store and its stock would have made for the present day Historic Site.

After the Chinese left Hill End, Norman Cross opened a mixed business in the On Gay building. The building was finally sold to Bill Stevens, who was at that time the owner of the "Riverview" grazing property. Bill had the building demolished and the salvaged materials were used for rebuilding at "Riverview".

Opposite Beech's store, was a two-storey brick building that housed a shop and dwelling. This was originally Northey's store. It is still standing, (1991).

It was in there that Walter Warry and his wife Betty conducted a mixed business. The shop supplied the town with fruit, vegetables, smallgoods pies cakes etc.

Walter also operated a motor truck service to and from Bathurst carrying goods for his shop as well as chaff, grain and other items for individual customers.

When the daughters Nell and Beth became old enough to serve in the shop, frequent, if small, purchases were made by many of the local lads in their efforts to woo these two very attractive girls.

The Warry family finally closed the store and devoted their full attention to Cannonball the family grazing property, situated about 6 kilometres south-west of Hill End.

Walter Warry junior, bought a property adjoining Cannonball and after his father's death, managed both properties. He married Jean Harvey,

a step-daughter of a Cornish miner who had come to Hill End to work for the *Devon Gold Mining* company.

In the 1950s my wife and myself, purchased the building that had previously housed Warry's store. The purchased price was $80.00.

The building was considered unsafe and the council was asking that it be demolished. We carried out repairs that made it safe and complied with council regulations. Our intervention saved a building that is now an important part of the town scape.

We later sold the building to Owen O'Flaherty, who was then a member of the Muzzle Loading Gun Club. The building is now owned by the NWPS, it has been restored and is now leased for commercial use.

Dick Piesley and his wife Sarah Selina conducted a sweets, drinks and ice cream shop, situated just below Warry's.

Refrigerators with the ability to operate in country areas were not available at this time and the ice cream produced by the Piesley family had to be frozen with a mixture of saltpetre and ice. The ice, wrapped in a corn bag, had to be transported from Bathurst to Hill End. The bag of ice was strapped to the running board of Bob Flynn's service car. In hot summer weather, the ice was greatly reduced in volume, after the four hour, fifty-two mile journey to Hill End. Today, the universal availability of ice cream, even in the most isolated parts of Australia, contrasts sharply with Dick Piesley's laboriously produced, but deliciously flavoured product.

One of Dick's forebears, was the bushranger Ben Piesley. During the period that Ben was active as a bushranger, the Piesley family lived at a remote part of the Macquarie River still known as Piesley's Island. He spent his youth at this isolated spot on the river, without education and with little contact with the outside world. Yet, when the opportunity presented itself, he proved himself a capable and successful business man. Dick once said: "I can't understand some shopkeepers adding 33% to their goods, they are nothing but robbers, I never add more than 1%, I buy for a penny and sell for twopence".

As an extra attraction Dick had installed a Bobs table. This was a popular game at this time and was played with wooden balls and a cue, the object being to direct the balls into numbered holes in a board at the end of the table.

There was also provision for playing card games, draughts and dominoes. These various activities created an entertainment and social centre that was most important for many of the younger men.

Dick Piesley's daughter Evelyn became a school teacher and after teaching for some time in Scotland, returned to Australia and later became Head Mistress of the Birchgrove Demonstration school.

Like many other local Hill End people, Dick and brother Bill Piesley were noted for their wry and original wit. Bill demonstrated this when, after partaking of excess quantities of the amber fluid, he was with some difficulty making his way home. The night was dark and as Bill steered an erratic course down Clarke street, he passed Constable Rosser, who chose to identify Bill by flashing a torch in his face. Bill, confused by this unexpected illumination, responded with the question: " Where does Bill Piesley live?" Rosser, surprised at this response, replied: "But you are Bill Piesley" Bill answered: "Yes I know, but where does he live?".

Dad was always very friendly with Bill and appreciated his original wit. After Bill had left Hill End to work at the Kandos cement works he returned home for a holiday. Dad asked Bill how he liked Kandos. His reply was succinct: "Electric wires everywhere, touch one and you'll drop dead".

After Dick Piesley's death the business was bought by Effie Lyle. She continued to operate the business for a number of years. Effie's husband Bill was an outstanding citizen, kind hearted and always ready help in any project for the advancement of Hill End or its citizens. He held many positions on sporting and social committees, was an excellent master of ceremonies at dances and carried out all these duties with wit and good humour. He was a baker for Ern Hodge in the 1920s, and later was a loyal friend and employee of mine as chief assistant in our general store.

Next door to Piesleys' shop was a building that had been the cabinet-making and undertaking shop of Tommy Ackland. Tommy conducted his funerals by means of a horse drawn hearse. When he died motor hearses from Bathurst or Mudgee took up the service. The horse-drawn hearse is now part of an exhibition of vehicles at the Hill End museum.

The Ackland building had various tenants in later years. During the depression, George and Anthony Betar opened a clothing shop and hairdressing business. The hairdressing part of this business was later taken up during the depression as a part time occupation by Bob Lincoln. Each Saturday he cut the locals' hair and beards.

Next door was a shop kept by Polly Trestrail, a very well-proportioned lady who made and sold sweets and meat pies. She also retailed some proprietary lines of half-penny and penny sweets.

Further down the street was a pie and sweets shop kept by the Risby family.

Clarke Street about 1910. This is the Hill End I remember as a child. Beech's Shop right foreground, On Gay Jang next and Warry's the two store shop opposite.

Alf Hodge and son Ern baked and sold their bread from a shop situated opposite the *Royal Hotel.*

The bread was baked in a brick baker's oven, situated at the rear of the shop. The oven was last used in the 1950s-60s when my wife and myself owned the business. Our first baker was that man of many talents Red Jack Ellis. Jack had some initial training from Bill Lyle who had previously been a baker for the Alf Hodge. When we extended our business to include motor repairs, Jack took charge of this side of the business and Nick Harvey became our baker.

In the 1920s Alf and Ern Hodge were mainly concerned with baking and retailing bread. Ern also delivered bread to customers in the town area, using a Trojan, a chain driven motor vehicle. It had a two cylinder, horizontally opposed, engine that was located under the front seat. These unusual vehicles made a brief appearance on the Australian market in the 1920s. The only other vehicle of this type that I have seen was in the middle 1920s and was owned by an estate agent at Narrabeen.

After Alf Hodge died Ern carried on the business with the assistance of his wife Minnie. Eventually they retired from business and took up life as graziers on their Macquarie River property.

In later years, Hodge's shop was occupied in succession by Jim Holloway, Fred Wilde, Frank and Thelma Lamb, Vera and Ollie Tonkin, Fred and Wynne Nightingale, and was finally taken over by my wife and myself, and combined with our shop next door.

There were two butcher's shops and two slaughter houses operating at Hill End in the 1920s. All meat sold by the Hill End butchers was killed at the two local slaughter houses. Included amongst the butchers who operated these shops were Dave and Ben Holloway, Wattie Petrie, Frank Anderson, Reg and Herb Warry, Tommy Tunbridge and George Denman.

Next door to Hodge's shop was the Salvation Army Hall. The Salvation Army had arrived in Hill End in the 1870s and the new kind of religion they preached, combined with their brass band and torch lit street meetings, resulted in a large number of locals being converted. One sincere but humorous testimony given by a converted miner bears repeating. Holding a bible in his hand the newly enlightened one stood up in the meeting to give his testimony, saying: 'If this book's true and they all seem to think it is, there's souls popping into hell like corks popping out of ginger beer bottles'.

After the Army left Hill End, the Church of England held their services in the Army Hall. The original Anglican church had been situated next to the Hill End Public School but was demolished early in the 1900s. The Church of England used the Salvation Army Hall for some years and then purchased the Methodist Church, as their permanent place of worship.

After the churches had finally finished with the Salvation Army Hall two of the Bennett sisters opened it as a dressmakers shop. This family of Bennetts was not related to the Hill End family of the same name, but had moved from Molong to Hill End during the depression years.

The building was to have many changes in later years and now, houses the only general store in Hill End. During the period that this history covers, the business centre at its peak consisted of two hotels, two butcher's shops, two general stores, a bakery, and four small shops.

During the Christmas season all the business people carted loads of gum tree branches and tied them to the verandah posts. Apart from the softening effect this custom had on the buildings, it also provided welcome shade during what was usually a hot time of the year. An additional bonus for this custom was that, a very pleasant scent of gum

leaves pervaded the area. Most people who lived at Hill End during this period remember the gum leaf custom with great affection.

I remember going down town with my sisters to do some shopping on Christmas Eve. As we walked to the town centre the only light we had to guide us was the soft glow of lamp light, shining through the cottage windows. No motor cars to disturb the silence of the country night. When we reached the shops in Clarke Street, dimly lit with the soft glow of kerosene lamps, it was crowded with local towns-people all dressed in their *Sunday best*. There was a hum of conversation mingled with the sounds of happy laughter. To these early Hill Enders' Christmas was a time of happiness and togetherness; they had no need of manufactured entertainment; they made their own.

On the way home we all sang Christmas carols. Apart from the grunt of the odd cow disturbed from its sleep by our singing there was nothing to fear. There was no fear of the dark, mainly because we did not know of anyone in our town who would wish to harm us. This was a very gentle and happy lifestyle, personal possessions were few, and we cared for each other in a natural, unaffected manner.

Chapter 7

Individual Mining 1920s-1930s

In 1923 my father, whilst still Underground Manager at the *Deep Levels Mine*, developed a serious medical problem. A Mudgee doctor considered that a contributing factor to his illness was the constant dampness and uneven temperature experienced in the underground workings at the mine. In view of this diagnosis it was decided that the family would move to Narrabeen, where my father had the opportunity to join two old friends who were reclaiming land on the Narrabeen lake.

They were using a steam boiler and engine to drive a large sand pump, all of which was set up on a floating barge. The water and sand was then pumped through pipes and deposited on swampy areas on the lakes edge. Many houses were later built on this reclaimed land.

With the onset of the great depression, there was no money to reclaim land and the dredging operation came to a halt. Once again father turned to his life-long love affair with gold mining, and, in May 1928, dad left Narrabeen to return to Hill End and open up the *Lady Belmore Mine*.

He had formed a syndicate consisting of family and friends. Their object was to investigate the old workings of the *Lady Belmore Mine* situated well down the southern slope of Hawkins Hill. It had not been worked for 50 years, but a miner who had worked there in the 1870s told dad about a rich chute of gold left in the mine. While he and his mates had been working in the mine, they had found a rich chute of gold, but, because of a disputation between the owners and the miners about unpaid wages, the location of the chute of gold had not been made known to the mine owners.

The dispute eventually caused the closure of the mine and before leaving the miners had covered the gold up. Their idea was to return later when the lease became available. Because of changing circumstances the miners who knew of the hidden gold left Hill End and never returned.

Just before he died, one of these miners told dad what he knew about it. His only request was that a share in the mine be given to his wife. When the syndicate was formed the man's widow received a share.

After preliminary arrangements had been completed, the Syndicate proceeded to clean out and re-timber the shaft. With only a windless

operated by man power and the usual hand tools in use at that time, the timbering and de-watering took six months to complete.

After the shaft was cleaned out a vein of quartz about four inches wide was found in the southern end of the shaft and inspection showed that it was carrying very rich gold. This patch was close to the surface and in a completely different location to where the gold was supposed to have been left, and in fact this proved to be the only gold that the syndicate found in the *Lady Belmore Mine*.

The first crushing from this vein yielded 33 ounces of gold taken from three tons of ore, a second crushing of about eight tons of ore yielded 43 ounces of gold. At 1988 gold prices the two crushings would have produced about $50,000.00. By the time the second crushing was taken out it was found that the rich patch had cut out. It was then decided to see if they could find the gold that had brought them to the *Lady Belmore* in the first place. Further prospecting in the shaft and in a tunnel driven under the shaft at a lower level resulted in two small trial crushings that yielded a few ounces of gold; but no further quantity of payable ore could be found.

The mine was temporarily closed down in August 1929. After the closure of the Mine dad returned to Sydney and went to Bougainville Island to investigate a gold-mining prospect for a Sydney syndicate. On his return he spent some time at Pambula on the South Coast of NSW investigating another gold mine.

In 1931 the syndicate members contributed some further capital and with the assistance of Government aid the *Lady Belmore* tunnel was driven in a further 200 feet bringing the total length to 400 feet. Several small, trial crushings were taken out but the results did not warrant any further work, and the mine finally closed in mid 1931.

Although unsuccessful the venture had provided work for some locals who included Arthur Cook, Morrie Judge, Harry Garner, Joe Parslow, dad and my brother.

An interesting point about this mine was that Charlie Maris contracted to transport three tons of ore from the *Lady Belmore* to a crushing plant in the grounds of "Bleak House" in Reef Street Hill End. As there was no road to the mine at this time Charlie decided to pack the ore up the hill on horses, each horse to carry about 200 pounds weight.

The ore was in bags, one bag attached each side of a pack saddle so that they were evenly balanced on the horse. The price charged was one pound five shillings ($2.50) per ton. This represented about 25 cents per horse load.

At this same period Jimmie Smythe loaded and carted wood by a horse-drawn, four wheel wagonette from Prince Alfred's Hill to Reef Street for 25 cents per load. The wood was cut and thrown into heaps and Jimmy had to load the wood and cart it about a mile on the wagonette. The price per load for this sort of effort seems incomprehensible on todays standards.

Packing the ore from the Hawkins Hill gully up to Hill End by pack horse was the same method as that used in the early days, when the rich ore from the Hawkins Hill mines was transported up the hill to the crushing plants situated on the Hill End plateau.

In 1872 my grandfather had a large number of packhorses engaged in carrying the ore up the steep side of the hill to a receiving dump on the Hill End side of Kissing Point. The ore from this dump was reloaded onto horse drawn drays and carted the remaining distance to the crushing plants situated around Hill End. Grandfather's packhorses carried the rich ore from *Beyers and Holterman's* mine, ore so rich that it had to be guarded during transport to the crushing plant.

With the depression worsening, mass unemployment in Sydney, and the Government encouraging the search for gold, dad decided to return to Hill End and try his luck with another of his pet gold mining projects. So in early 1931 mum, two sisters, a brother and myself returned to Hill End, and took up residence in our home in Reef Street.

During the late 1920s, apart from the various individual groups working underground, there were others who managed to raise sufficient capital to employ labour in order to open up old mines or prospect new areas. Some of these ventures required machinery and developmental work beyond the resources of small syndicates.

Many were not very successful in paying dividends to their shareholders, but they did provide work for locals and the newcomers and helped the towns economy.

Over many years the Marshall Brothers had been prominent in raising capital to re-open mines or carry out developmental work, mainly on Hawkins Hill or in the Amalgamated and Consolidated Tunnels. Raising finance during the depression years was not an easy task, but because gold production was considered one means of overcoming the economic situation,there were always some people prepared to risk a few pounds.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, there were a number of small parties of miners working underground and there were many others sluicing the alluvial gravels at Tambaroora and Hill End. Golden Gully had a continuous line of sluicing claims, running from where the gully commences at Fischer's Hill, right down to its junction with Tambaroora

Creek. There were other claims in Tambaroora Creek, Red Hill Creek, Foremans Gully, Hill End Creek, Specimen Gully and Dirt Holes Creek. All were under lease, the majority had been held for many years by the one family.

These stormwater sluices depended on rain and a preference for heavy storms called *"Gully Rackers"*. The heavy storms were needed to wash down the dirt that the miners were continuously stacking in the sluices. The light material was washed away leaving the heavy gravel and gold. This heavy concentrate was then either put through a gold washing cradle or fossicking dish to separate the gold from the gravel.

During the dry periods the alluvial miners sank holes or dug tunnels into the alluvial banks in search of gold bearing wash that the early miners had missed. All the dirt taken out of these holes contained some gold so it would be stacked in a rill in the main sluice to await the rain.

Sometimes explosives were used to blow down the banks of the creek,the resulting material being further broken up by hand and stacked in the sluice to await a heavy rain storm. The main channel of the sluice was gradually pushed into the bank by forming wooden barricades composed of posts driven into the ground at regular intervals and behind these posts saplings were laid to form a solid wall. All the stones and other unwanted material were picked out of the sluice and thrown behind this wooden barricade thus gradually forcing the stormwater back towards the alluvial bank. The force of the water then gradually undercut the bank causing the bank to fall in to the stream and eventually the light material would be washed away, again leaving the heavy gravel and gold in the bottom of the sluice. Providing the miners were fortunate enough to get sufficient rain this was quite an effective method of alluvial mining.

The dependence on heavy rain made stormwater sluicing rather an uncertain means of existence, but many of the more experienced families such as the two Ellis families, Hamiltons, Woolards, Bennetts, Maris, Knights, Thompsons, Greens, Carvers, Everetts, and Lye, raised families and lived in comparative comfort, their main source of income being gold won from these sluices.

The Ellis families were very experienced in alluvial gold mining and held leases in Golden Gully for half a century or more. Both Sam and George Ellis senior had a number of sons, most of whom spent some part of their life alluvial mining.Their knowledge of the field and their very professional approach to alluvial mining, combined with tenacity and the will to work, made them experts in this type of gold mining.

Frank Knight and sister Florence spent their life living in a miner's wattle and daub cottage situated at the head of Dirt Holes Creek. Frank

and Florence always had a wonderful garden, filled with flowers, vegetables and fruit trees. It was a delight to see this garden in spring; tall tomato plants loaded with large red and yellow ponderosa; the dark green leaves of climbing beans in tepee like groups, held up by slender stringy bark sticks, crisp lettuce and cabbage, and neat rows of peas, parsnips and carrots. In the outer yard were potatoes and vast mounds of pumpkin, marrow and cucumber. The garden produced vegetables in such abundance that we were always given a bucket of tomatoes or a bag of other goodies whenever we called.

Frank and Florence were very shy people and because of the isolation of their home and lack of transport,Florence had little social contact with anyone. However, when the opportunity arose, she could discuss current affairs, and from her grasp of the subject, it was obvious that she was a great reader. Frank had very strong political opinions and was always quite happy to spend an hour or two debating the merits of various political ideologies.

When my brother Ivor and I were working on our Red Hill lease, Frank, on his way to work in his sluice, would arrive at our place of work about 8 am. While we worked Frank would join in some discussion, usually political. This would continue until lunch time. We would then put the billy on for tea, and Frank would produce his sandwiches and join us for lunch. If the subject under discussion was of sufficient interest he would stay with us until the 4 pm knock-off time.

Apart from the days Frank spent with us or on the rare occasions when he worked for wages, he regularly put in an eight hour day in his sluice at the top end of Tambaroora Creek. The gold Frank won from this sluice supported both him and Florence. They lived simply but well and always had cash for any extra purchases or treats.

In later years another brother, Charlie returned to live at the Knight home. He was also a very good fossicker and supported himself fossicking in Dirt Holes Creek.

Charlie Clifford was a newcomer to the district and he lived in what had been Charles Hamilton's Family home. As this house was very close to the *Valentine* mine we knew Charlie very well and he frequently worked for us or with us. He was a very good fossicker and gold from the Dirt Holes creek area gave him an independent life style that suited his needs.

Frank Walpole, Charlie and Billy Lye, Billy Hamilton and sons Ken, Walter, Les and George all worked sluices at the northern end of Golden Gully and the return from these was one of their main source of income for many years.

Apart from odd jobs or a stint at rabbit trapping most of these families made a living from alluvial gold. Living was inexpensive, they all owned their own home, they had good gardens, most had cows and fowls, some had pigs or goats. They made their own jam and preserved fruit and vegetables, there was plenty of firewood and unlimited manure for the garden, all were free.

Most of the business people in town were gold buyers and bought the miners' gold, paying in cash or goods. In the 1920s the ruling price was about three pounds twelve shillings and sixpence ($7.25) per ounce troy.

The buyer would usually give a little less than the market price to allow for impurities in the gold and the cost of selling to the mint or bullion merchant. However, the main purpose of the shopkeepers in buying the gold was to provide a service to his customers who found it difficult to market such small amounts.

A few miners continued to work in underground mines. They either followed reefs in the old workings or tried new areas in the hope of finding some payable ore. Most of the men who had spent part of their working life in underground mines preferred this type of mining. The preference for underground or alluvial mining seemed to run in families and was carried on from father to son. Most of the underground miners considered they had a greater chance of striking it rich underground than working in the old alluvial diggings where it would be unlikely to make a really big find. Other miners preferred working on the rivers. This was a more difficult form of alluvial mining and required skill and knowledge quite different to that of the alluvial miner working around Hill End and Tambaroora.

Apart from ordinary alluvial gold digging there was another band of diggers who dug up the ground around old crushing plants and washed up hundreds of ounces of amalgam that had been lost in the past when thousands of ounces of gold had been treated in these plants. Small quantities of amalgam lost during each crushing or when cleaning up, gradually worked its way down into the ground. The terrific vibrations caused by the stampers falling into the battery box resulted in the heavy amalgam working down deeper and deeper into the earth around the battery foundations. Around the foundations of some crushing plants the fossickers were getting good results down as far as three or four feet.

Then there were others who dug up and washed the dirt from old roads over which rich ore had been carted. Some of the ore had fallen off the drays and then been crushed by the steel shod wheels of the drays, thus releasing the gold.

The dray road between the *Deep Levels* mine and the Robert Emmett crushing battery yielded a handsome profit to the fossickers. The horse drawn drays had carted ore from the the mine to the battery for twenty years along this road and on each trip small pieces of gold-bearing ore would fall from the load,the ore being ground by the steel-shod dray wheels. Two men who dug up and cradled the dirt from this road were Mo Hocking and Bill Bennett. One day when they were working there Rex Seddon, a newcomer to Hill End, stopped and asked Mo and Bill what the hell they were doing digging up the road. When they told him they were looking for a few colours of gold, his comment was: "God forgive them for they know not what they do". Little did he know that they were doing very well and, in fact, it was one of the best claims they had worked. Rex, like most of the newcomers, had learned to fossick, but not knowing the background of this old road, he could not understand why there would be any gold there. As a child I washed a dish of dirt from an old road leading off Reef Street. To my surprise there were four pennyweights of gold remaining in the dish after washing away the dirt. The gold still had some quartz clinging to it, and it had obviously come from a specimen that had been dropped many years before and had been crushed by dray wheels.

Many of these activities were very profitable and gold was sometimes recovered by the *newchums* from some very unexpected places, much to the surprise of the local experts, who had not thought to try for gold in such illogical locations.

So, creeks were washed up, surfaces were skimmed, countless holes were sunk in the alluvial clays and gravels, thousands of dishes of dirt were carried or wheeled to water-holes and washed with the hope of getting a few grains of gold. Gold was found in the Hill End public school grounds, and holes were dug and gold was found on the Post Office Flat, and tunnels were put under roads. I dug holes in the grounds surrounding our home and found payable gold, my brother Kem found a three pennyweigh nugget of gold in our back yard. In times of depression these small discoveries were all very welcome.

In the harsh Hill End winter the fossicker still had to get out and get a pennyweight or the family did not eat. The fossicking dish was twirled around in icy water and hands became cracked and red raw.This was the result of puddling the clay and gravel in near freezing water. Mutton fat was rubbed on the hands to help fill the cracks and relieve the pain.

When the fossickers were washing their dirt in small water holes, they built fires and heated kerosene tins of water. This heated water was

added to the washing hole and the subsequent rise in water temperature made dish washing a little easier for the fossicker.

A great deal of credit is due to all those locals and newcomers who weathered out the depression years and managed to support themselves and or their families by gold-digging in the gullies and creeks or by underground mining. The vast majority worked very hard and very few were rewarded in keeping with the amount of labour expended, but they did retain their independence and were certainly very much better off than those who by choice or necessity had remained in Sydney. In addition these people had enjoyed the freedom of country living and experienced a great deal of comradeship. Some had even found a life partner. In later years I spoke to a number of people who had weathered out the depression in Hill End. At the mention of Hill End their face would light up and they would start telling me about the good times they had there, never a complaint about the difficulties that they had faced when they had left their suburban home, often with very little money, to start a completely different style of living in an isolated country mining village. My sister once said to me she felt guilty about the happy lifestyle she had experienced at Hill End during the depression.

Chapter 8

The Great Depression

The depression that commenced in the 1920s and to some extent continued until the commencement of World War 2, was an economic disaster of immense proportions, and, for those people who were part of it their lives would never be the same again.

The world economic situation deteriorated rapidly in September-October 1929. Australian economy was still heavily reliant on primary production and when wool and wheat prices fell this had a serious effect on our overseas earnings; credit was no longer available from abroad; thousands of farmers faced imminent bankruptcy; profits fell and unemployment rose rapidly. The collapse of the Wall Street stock market in New York during late October 1929 accelerated the world crisis.

By 1929 the percentage of the work force unemployed was 9.3%. This had risen to 25.8% by the beginning of 1931 and by the middle of 1932 the figure had risen to 30%. It was generally accepted that from 1930 to the end of 1934 more than a fifth of the work-force was out of work.

To that group of unemployed must be added those who finished school and failed to find a place in the work-force, others, mostly women, who withdrew from it in despair, and a further group of employees working reduced hours. In 1932 when unemployment among trade unionists reached a peak of 30%, it would therefore seem likely that as many as one million people in a total work-force of a little over two million lacked full-time employment.

The economic situation had deteriorated rapidly during the first few months of 1930, unemployment rising rapidly. There was no systematically organised government relief except in Queensland; what was available was meagre and irregular. There were mass demonstrations of the unemployed. These seemed to be expressions of frustration and despair, rather than political protests. Many of the unemployed set out for the country districts by *'begging a lift'* or *'jumping the rattler'*. They fared no better, unless they were skilled at rabbit trapping or were able to beg from the farmers. The landowners had no money to employ anyone, let alone inexperienced city dwellers.

Amidst all the despondency of the depression, some important happenings were recorded in Australia.

Sir Isaac Isaacs became the first Australian born Governor-General of Australia.

Australia and Britain were connected by telephone, and on 30 April 1930 the Prime Ministers of Australia and Britain were able to converse with one another by telephone.

In December 1930 Western Australia was connected by telephone to the rest of Australia.

On Saturday 24 May 1930, Amy Johnson reached Darwin, and therefore became the first woman aviator to fly from England to Australia.

However, the bright spots were few and newspaper headlines such as; **'Derelicts evicted from the Domain'; 'Children Underfed'; 'Stole Food Rather Than Starve'**. were quite common. The winter of 1932 was a desperate time for the unemployed. The relief offered had been slow to begin, and it was meagre in extent and humiliating in form; the dole, sustenance, the issue of army clothing left over from the war, the employment of men on relief work, and the removal of unemployed from their families to camps. Two large camps were established one at Lidcombe another at La Perouse, they were occupied by people who had been thrown out of their homes through their inability to pay rent. There were some thousands of people living in these camps in appalling conditions.

The dole or sustenance was not usually available to single women, and single men were subject to special conditions. First they were offered meal tickets but later, to get them off the streets, they were brought into camps or pushed out to the country. They were often forced to tramp from town to town in order to be eligible for track rations. *Humping the bluey* came back into vogue, the name *bluey* coined from the colour of the blanket forming the main part of the swag.

Later there was a greater resort to various forms of unemployed relief work. Unemployed men were required to labour on construction or improvement projects, mainly pick and shovel work and at wages well below the basic wage. A man's acceptance of this work, no matter how far afield it took him, became a condition of his family's further assistance. Many of the projects operated under this scheme were in isolated areas. The workers were required to live in tents and what we now look on as essential services were non existent.

Bathurst National Advocate September 1931 states;-

one hundredth birthday. His son, Digger Hocking, has a tape of this event.

Mrs Hocking and all the family joined in the various community activities and were always willing to play their part in making the town a better place in which to live and bring up a family.

Digger followed in his father's footsteps and was involved in almost every aspect of community life, both in the town itself and on many adjoining grazing properties. He has been a lifelong friend of mine and over the years has provided me, and many others, with witty anecdotes and eye-witness accounts of events that occurred at Hill End.

He was a man of many skills. These covered carpenter, painter, miner, engine driver, film projectionist, shop assistant, but above all was loved for his sense of humour and willingness to help anyone. He always had time to listen, a quality that gave him understanding and a love of people.

At parties, dances and sport he was always welcome. His humour was infectious, and when he was present laughter became part of the outing. Digger, by his presence made life a lot happier for a lot of people. My life has certainly been enriched by his friendship.

His personal impressions of life at Hill End,during the depression are a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the town. When I asked Digger for his recollections of Hill End he replied: "I will be very pleased to help in any way I can to assist you in recording those very memorable depression and post war years". The remainder of this chapter is how Digger remembers Hill End.

"The number of people who came, and stopped for a time at Hill End, does represent a very large number, when compared with the township's population at that time. Of course, there were many people who came and stopped for only a short period. The length of their stay was often shorter than they would have wished. This was brought about because the local policeman had the authority to move them on to the next town.

"The local policeman issued the dole tickets and was usually under instructions to keep some of the relief recipients moving. This instruction was given to police in order that the local populations of towns and villages would not be unduly disrupted by a large influx of unemployed people. However this rule was not so important to Hill End, the reason being that there was a large area of crown land where they could live without disturbing the local community, and also that they could earn some money by digging for gold.

"The dole at that time was four shillings and ninepence (approximately 50c) per week for a single person. Some of the men who

The newcomers soon found that the skills they had brought with them were not always the answer to survival in this new improvement. To succeed in their new life it was necessary to learn from the locals; those who followed this path found life a great deal easier.

Some came with capital for mining ventures and other projects that provided employment for locals, others came and took up grazing leases and tried to eke out a living made almost impossible by the low price of wool.

As this quote from the *Bathurst National Advocate* 10 September 1931 states many individuals at Hill End were prospecting for gold with the help of Government Aid

"There is a good deal of activity in gold mining at Hill End. Tommy Tunbridge and party have done a considerable amount of prospecting on the old Golden Gully line of reefs, they have sunk a shaft 100 feet deep and driven along the reef but no payable results to date.

"Jim Rodwell and party have completed sinking a shaft 150 feet pulling up the mullock and quartz with a windlass. They have dollied some gold from the quartz and this has kept their interest alive. There is quite a little (mining) village of newcomers around this area (Golden Gully).

"Arthur Ackerman and party are prospecting near the Rose of England claim on Hawkins Hill. The party is driving along the Brown Vein. This is a bona fide prospecting venture and could be rewarded with a rich find, particularly when they get through the cross course on the north side.

Wal Houghton and Bob Lincoln have been working very hard for several months cross-cutting. Their objective being the Rose of Australia reef (this mine was situated near the Turon River crossing). Values were nil when they cut the reef and they have now abandoned the claim. Their perseverance in sticking to this long task deserved better luck, but such is the hazards of gold mining. Wilson and party are driving on Rowley's reef, close to the (Hill End) post office, to date without success.

"Messers Hodge and Heap are not having a great deal of success with their mine. They have about four tons of ore ready for crushing in the near future but this crushing is not expected to be payable.

"Joe Parslow and Bill Whittaker are still on developmental work and they have been handicapped with underground water.

"Messers Longmore and Faraday have erected a crane capable of lifting four tons. This crane is being used to work the creek bed in Oaky Creek. Oaky creek is noted for the number of large gold nuggets that have been found in the heavy gravel of the creek bed. Longmore and Faraday have

recently found a one-and-a-half ounce nugget. Stan Trevena also had some success in finding good sized nuggets in Oaky.

"De Courcy Browne and party working at Pullens Hill are still driving the great Northern Tunnel and they have now driven the tunnel in fifty feet. The tunnel is being driven in the rock under the wash and the wash is being tested at intervals. This party have built a large water dam and a two mile long water race from the dam to the mine and sluice boxes are in position at the mouth of the tunnel and as soon as some rain falls wash from the mine can be treated.

"At Goodwin's *Lady Belmore* mine they are still driving along the reef, the drive is now in 400 feet. A favourable change occurred during the week when a number of leaders carrying Galena appeared in the drive.

"During the past three months there has been an average of 45 people receiving the dole at Hill End. With the rabbit skin season now over for this year it is expected that this figure may increase.

"There are a number of people at Hill End who have substantial amounts in the (State) Government Savings Bank, but as they have been unable to operate on these accounts since the bank closed, they may have to go on the dole. The closure of the bank has caused considerable hardship at Hill End.

The Newcomers.

The newcomers who settled in Hill End had one great advantage and that was the will to help themselves and each other. They soon showed that they were resourceful and innovative and that most were prepared to *'have a go'*. Because of this they were accepted and helped by the locals.

The people who came to settle at Hill End were able to enjoy a healthy open air climate. They soon mastered new skills, made friends and close relationships that were to last for the rest of their lives. To many of the young people who came to Hill End this was their first experience of a country life that provided the close community relationship that was part of the pleasure of living at Hill End.

Finding Shelter

Using local materials that were freely available, some were able to build themselves a Wattle and Daub hut with a bark roof, while others were able to move into an abandoned house or hut. Either way they were soon able to establish themselves in a cosy home at little or no expense.

The Common ground surrounding Hill End provided free building materials such as timber, sheets of bark for roof or the sides of the hut, mud and *wattles* for the walls if building a 'wattle and daub' house. *'Wattle'* is the English word for flexible twig or rod. As the twigs of the Australian Acacia were frequently used for wattling mud houses, our Acacia became generally known as wattle trees. However most of the *'wattles'* used at Hill End were from slender stringy bark saplings. The floors of the huts were made by pounding down damp clay.

There were quantities of old bricks and stone for chimney and fireplace; and there was also quite a lot of old corrugated roofing iron that could be picked up from deserted mine buildings. All these free materials were combined in various forms to make very comfortable and warm homes.

Comfortable bunks or beds were constructed with Corn bags stretched across poles these were fitted into forked sticks set in the earth at each corner of the bed. Sometimes the bag mattress was filled with dry grass and layers of newspapers.

A "*wagga rug*" completed the bed, a *wagga rug* was made by sewing three corn bags together then lining the inside of the bags with newspaper. This made a very warm but heavy blanket. The *wagga rug* was rather hard to keep on the bed and because of this it was often held on by what was called a *"Kicking Strap"*. This was several loops of rope or other suitable material tied around the bed poles and over the wagga rug.

Corn bags were readily available in the country at this time as all wheat, flour, corn, oats, bran, pollard etc, were packed in them. When empty they became the battler's friend and were used in many ways. With the end tucked in they became an effective covering for head and back against the rain, sewn together, they could be made into a tent fly, mats for the door, covers for windows without glass, a curtain for the door of the outhouse. Both ends tightly sewn with one side cut in the middle and thrown across a riding saddle, they became sturdy pack-saddles for carrying all manner of extra goods on horses. They were used in place of canvas for deck chairs and other home made seats, sewn together with ropes or straps added, they made a very warm horse rug. Walls and ceilings of huts were frequently lined with bags and they made handy rugs for the floor. In fact their use was only limited by your imagination.

Tables were constructed with table legs embedded in the earth floor to carry a plank top, with long plank stools on either side fixed in a similar way on embedded supports. Planks for table and stools were made by using an adze to square and smooth round bush poles.

Stools were made by boring angled holes in a plank. Round sapling legs were then inserted in the holes, the angled legs giving the seat stability. Some of these seats gave years of service.

A useful cool safe, for meat and other perishables, was made by passing a pole lengthwise through a chaff bag, and then placing a suitably sized board in the bottom. The pole was then suspended from the ceiling, and the result was a three cornered safe. The open end of the bag was then tied with cord.

The Kitchen cupboard was often a packing case. Tee- hinges were used, or if no conventional hinges were available, hinges could be fashioned by cutting leather and tacking them onto the door.

The variety of bush-made furniture was endless, and varied from rough and ready to neat and functional, depending on the skill of the builder.

Pit toilets were usually situated a suitable distance from the house and they came in a variety of styles some with hand-hewn seats, other models, less comfortable, made by fitting a pole into two forked sticks. This type required the user to adopt a crouching position whilst the operative part of their anatomy balanced over the hole. Reading matter was not provided because of the necessity to keep one's balance and concentrate on the job in hand, and consequential visits were as brief as possible. This latter type of toilet resulted in a great improvement in productivity when installed at a mine.

A bucket of ashes from the kitchen fire was kept at the toilet and instead of pulling the chain to flush with water, you simply sprinkled a dipper of ashes down the hole. This simple action prevented odour and discouraged flies. Some toilets had an open doorway with a view, others had a corn bag curtain. A nail in one of the uprights supported a Grace Brothers catalogue or newspaper cut to size.

The outdoor dunny was a haven for red back spiders and as children we would never pay a night visit without being accompanied. Then, on arrival, we would light the candle that was always kept in a handy position. In later years the electric torch provided a weapon that was better suited for investigating the haunts of the dreaded redback.

The outdoor convenience was also handy for a furtive smoke but to effectively avoid detection one had to rely on the odour of the toilet being stronger than the lingering scent of tobacco.

After the home was established it was then time to think about low cost food. Most of the newcomers soon had a vegetable garden in production while free meat for the table came from rabbits, kangaroos, the odd murray cod or yellow belly. Wood for cooking and heating was freely available on the Common. In season there were vast quantities of

blackberries that could be eaten fresh, preserved, or made into jam or wine.

Many abandoned home sites had a variety of fruit trees that although unattended for many years, still produced quantities of good quality fruit. Those that had survived best were plums, quinces, apricots, pears, mulberries and cherries.

Jam bottles were made by heating a specially made circle of iron that fitted onto the shoulder of a beer bottle. The hot iron was held on the bottle for a few seconds and then the bottle was plunged into cold water. The narrow neck of the bottle fell away leaving a nice neat glass container. After filling, the jar was sealed by gluing several thickener's of brown paper over the top.

During World War 11 when drinking glasses became scarce, the troops revived this old custom of cutting the tops off beer bottles. The lip of the cut bottle was ground smooth and the result was a serviceable drinking glass, and was known as a *Lady Blamey*.

After building and furnishing the house and making provision for some food for the table, the next step was to learn the art of fossicking for gold. Once the art of fossicking was mastered it was possible to earn some ready cash for extras.

Many of the newcomers followed this plan with great success and their neat and comfortable homes and cooking achievements bore witness to their adaptability. I personally sampled meals that included roast kangaroo, stewed or roasted rabbit, and kangaroo tail soup. Jack and Tom Bairstow also produced a good drop of mulberry and blackberry wine. Both vintages were very drinkable but the high alcohol content put them in the drink with care class.

Success in the home and food departments gave the new pioneers a great sense of pride and independence, both of which were difficult to achieve in the city where the unemployed were battling with so many difficult and soul-destroying problems. There were, of course, some who did not adapt so well but even they muddled along in an independent manner.

For those who had the smoking habit, and there were many more than there are today, finance was a problem. To cut down on costs they rolled very thin cigarettes, known as *'racehorses'*, recycled their butts, and in extreme cases mixed tea leaves or dried grape leaves with their tobacco. Many made their own smoking pipes or cigarette holders.The newcomers joined in with the locals to make their own entertainment and in this area they made a great contribution to the social life of the town.

Alf Shields and his two brothers were among those who decided to try their luck in the country. In September 1933 they decided to set out for Hill End. In a recent letter Alf tells some of their experiences.

'My two brothers and I cycled from Blackheath to Hill End, setting out in early September 1933. We carried on our push bikes 60 pounds of flour, a few cooking utensils and a tent fly. In cash we had 35 shillings each ($3.50). Arriving at Yetholme at sundown we camped under some trees on the side of the road. We awoke at daybreak to find there had been a fall of snow during the night.

'We were soon on our way to Bathurst, arriving there at about 2 pm. We decided to take the Bridle Track to Hill End, (this road follows the Macquarie and Turon Rivers eventually climbing up from the Turon valley onto the Hill End Plateau). On our journey we called in at Albert Hodges property on the Macquarie and he invited us to help ourselves to some choice tomatoes that he had growing in his garden.

'On our arrival at Hill End we purchased some bread and a few groceries at Ern Hodges bakery. From Hill End we followed the main Bathurst road until we reached Sally's Flat a small hamlet about ten miles from Hill End.

'We eventually camped on the Mudgee side of the Green valley Creek.

'We started fossicking for gold in the creek bed and we soon met many other fossickers who without hesitation showed us where we would be likely to get a few colours of gold.

'In a cottage about 200 yards away lived Jim O'Brien with his wife and family. They were *Dinky Di* Australians and were the type of people we were glad to meet, they remained our friends until the time of their demise.

'During our wanderings far and near we went to places such as Little Sweepy and Big Sweepy, we met about 16 chaps working on a road that was eventually to pass through part of Seaman's property and would then connect with the Hill End-Mudgee Road.

'The ganger came from somewhere in the Pyramul district. The ganger told us how to get a *starting docket* (This docket made the recipient eligible for relief work),from the Police Station at Hargraves. This road work was part of the Government Relief work program.

'We arrived at Hargraves the next day and the police issued us with a pair of army boots and a starting docket.

'We had enough money to buy a couple of loaves of bread and some butter at the local store. A man walked into the shop while we were there and put about six grains of gold onto the gold scales, saying; "Will that

buy a loaf of bread", apparently it did because he was given a loaf of bread.

'In those days a loaf of bread weighed 2 pounds, cost 4.5 pence (4.5 cents) a loaf, and it was real bread when compared with some of the bread we buy today.

'Jim O'Brien and his son would pass our camp on the way to work. They were ringbarking trees on Jack Tomlinson's property. They would pass our camp at sundown on their way home, after a hard days work with the axe.

'Another identity who came our way was Jim Fitzgerald, who often passed our camp as he cycled to work. One evening he called at our camp and gave us a kangaroo tail. He gave us instructions how to cook it so you could enjoy the meat as well as have plenty of soup. Jim also gave us some honey that he had obtained from a nest he had found in a tree on his property.

'Jim's wife was the postmistress at Sally's Flat and her home was the centre where orders were left by the mail or passenger services. These carriers would pick up orders for groceries meat etc. in the morning on their way to Bathurst or Mudgee and deliver the goods back at Sally's Flat on the return journey.

(Mrs Fitzgerald and indeed her whole family, were the salt of the earth. Mrs Fitzgerald was a generous and loving mother to everyone, a true Christian in every sense of the word. For those who needed some relief in a time of great hardship, her house was haven of good cheer and laughter and was always filled with visitors and friends).

'Our order usually contained such items as bread, meat, butter, jam, cheese, tinned peas etc. We collected the goods at night paid the bill plus two shillings (20 cents)freight.

'One of the real old timers we met was Jim O'Brien's brother Mick, he lived by the Green Valley Creek. He lived in a two room hut he had built himself. We often visited Mick for a yarn and to imbibe in some tea, that was always embellished by the flavour of gum leaves and sugar.

'Mick ran a few sheep on 30 acres of nice grassy country that was green and lush in the spring.

'Every morning at dawn we would light our fire by shaking the ashes and putting on it a few bits of stringy bark torn from a nearby tree. The bark taken from a tree was always dry even in wet weather and was a magic means of lighting the camp fire. Looking across at Mick's chimney we would see smoke rising up, he was always an early riser.

'Our access to news, sport etc. was obtained with a Crystal radio that had quite a range. Our earth for the radio was the ground and our aerial was the nearby wire fence.

'Our job on the road building required us to ride our bikes for about four miles to the work site. On our first night we had a choice of two tents both with plenty of holes in the roof so that when it rained you could not find a dry place in the tent.

'Fortunately we started off with dry weather, Our first morning on the job we had fried bread covered with beans and tomato sauce.

'At 7.30am we were allotted a pick, a shovel and a wheel-barrow and joined in the fun!.

'There was a strict rule on this job, and that was that you worked as slow as possible when the ganger was not looking. If the ganger was asleep when it came time to start work after lunch, everyone kept very quite so as not to wake him up. One or two would fill a couple of barrows, and when the ganger did wake up they could trundle the barrows along while the rest of us made suitable noises that gave the impression that work was proceeding as usual.

'On one occasion the ganger told us that an overseer from the Public Works Department was coming to inspect the job. For three or four days we created a record by clearing about half a mile of scrub and forming that part of the road.

'During the evenings we gathered on both sides of the camp fire. Over the fire was a long pole supported at each end with a forked stick from which our billies were suspended by fencing wire.

'We always had a kind of concert where each person was called upon to sing a song or tell a yarn. I remember one chap being asked to sing but as soon as he commenced it was obvious singing was not his strong point. One of the chaps from Windeyer grabbed a frying pan and a piece of iron and said: "You are off key, here is your starting note" and he gave the pan a bang. This brought out a peculiar noise from the singer, upon which we wold all cheer and clap to end the performance and make way for someone else.

'In memory I can still recall the laughter and chatter of those men and boys from country farms and small towns.

'No doubt all those people who spent this period of their lives at Hill End or in the surrounding district would have some memories of hardship and frugality; but the friendships formed, the independence achieved, and the learning of new skills in a strange environment, would have compensated for much of the hardship.

Chapter 9

Digger Hocking's Hill End

The Hill End Subdivision of the Electoral Roll for 1925 lists the the names of 236 people all of whom used Hill End as their community centre. The vast majority of the people who bore these names were the descendants of some of the early gold miners.

The Hocking family was different. They arrived at Hill End in 1921, when Frank Hocking, Diggers father, commenced working at the Amalgamated Hawkins Hill Mine. Digger Hocking said:'The family moved to Hill End from Trunkey Creek in Tom Spratt's red Dodge truck. Mum and four of us kids travelled in what was a far from spacious cabin and our furniture was packed in the back. Brother Len rode his push bike over, Dad had arrived a week or two earlier to start work at the mine.

"One of the first things we had to do after arriving at Hill End was to cart household water from the spring that ran into a trough at the foot of Bald Hill. This was quite a distance to carry the water and it became a very constant and unpleasant chore. We later found a closer source of water in the well at Steele's Corner.It was a very dry time at Hill End and many of the townspeople had similar problems in obtaining water. However, despite the water situation we all liked the town and thought it was a big improvement on Trunkey Creek."

Digger's mother was born at Lithgow but she did have some ties with Hill End, having gone to school at Tambaroora. During her school days there she planted one of the pine trees still standing on the school site. Her father worked as a miner at the *Red Hill Mine.*

The Hocking family had also lived at Yerranderie, where Frank was employed as an engineer in the silver mines. Frank was an experienced engineer with particular knowledge of steam boilers and engines and held a boiler inspector's licence, as well as many other certificates.

Frank spent 50 years in Hill End and during that time proved himself a caring and responsible citizen. His ability to communicate never diminished with the years and he had the ability to participate and advise community groups be they mature or youthful. He was respected and loved by all.

Frank played the organ in the Church of England church for many years and in fact was still able to play the organ and sing along on his

one hundredth birthday. His son, Digger Hocking, has a tape of this event.

Mrs Hocking and all the family joined in the various community activities and were always willing to play their part in making the town a better place in which to live and bring up a family.

Digger followed in his father's footsteps and was involved in almost every aspect of community life, both in the town itself and on many adjoining grazing properties. He has been a lifelong friend of mine and over the years has provided me, and many others, with witty anecdotes and eye-witness accounts of events that occurred at Hill End.

He was a man of many skills. These covered carpenter, painter, miner, engine driver, film projectionist, shop assistant, but above all was loved for his sense of humour and willingness to help anyone. He always had time to listen, a quality that gave him understanding and a love of people.

At parties, dances and sport he was always welcome. His humour was infectious, and when he was present laughter became part of the outing. Digger, by his presence made life a lot happier for a lot of people. My life has certainly been enriched by his friendship.

His personal impressions of life at Hill End,during the depression are a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the town. When I asked Digger for his recollections of Hill End he replied: "I will be very pleased to help in any way I can to assist you in recording those very memorable depression and post war years". The remainder of this chapter is how Digger remembers Hill End.

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"The local policeman issued the dole tickets and was usually under instructions to keep some of the relief recipients moving. This instruction was given to police in order that the local populations of towns and villages would not be unduly disrupted by a large influx of unemployed people. However this rule was not so important to Hill End, the reason being that there was a large area of crown land where they could live without disturbing the local community, and also that they could earn some money by digging for gold.

"The dole at that time was four shillings and ninepence (approximately 50c) per week for a single person. Some of the men who

came from Sydney had been issued with a fossicking dish, pick, shovel and a couple of *"quid"* (four dollars), and told to make their way to one or other of the N.S.W gold fields. At this time anything seemed worth a try.

"Some of these people refused to move on when requested by the local constable. I remember one chap who was told to move on, as he would not be issued with any more dole at Hill End; so he decided that one way to get some food would be to put a stone through a window of the police station. This he did and was promptly arrested and received a bed and a few meals.

"The people who came to Hill End and stayed on as permanent residents were not always entirely happy with what they found, but they soon realised that here they could at least survive. They soon found that with their own exertions and the help and generosity of the local townspeople, life at Hill End was far superior to the one they had left.

"I am quite sure that many of these people came to love the old place and were sad when they eventually had to leave.

"Certainly they were better off than their counterparts in the cities and big towns, and the gain to Hill End was their contribution to the social and sporting life of the town. An added advantage was that many of the newcomers had skills in various trades not generally found in small country towns, and in some cases these skills were in part passed on to interested locals. In this sharing of skills the ability to carry out tasks within the town was greatly improved.

"During some of the tougher periods when the alluvial diggers could not work because of lack of rain and there was no rabbiting or seasonal work, many of the Hill End locals were forced on to the *"Mare and Foal"* (dole).

"Dad, like myself and others, used to go panning for gold and in this endeavour we were not always successful. There were large areas of alluvial ground covered by legally held sluicing leases and there were also other gold leases on which we could not fossick. The restrictions on where we could fossick, combined with a scarcity of water that was close to better fossicking areas, limited the scope for continuous and profitable fossicking.

"After rain there was always a rush by the fossickers to get out and find a few *'colours'*, (grains of gold)but after a day or two, you would find yourself competing with a number of other fossickers for the shrinking, and ever muddier, holes of water.

"Dad survived a great part of the depression by obtaining government aid for mining. Government aid was given for sinking shafts and driving

tunnels in hard rock. Aid was usually given in places where the Mines Inspector considered there was a chance that the prospector would strike a reef containing sufficient gold to be payable. If the prospector was successful beyond a certain level, the aid that had been given was repaid to the government.

"The prospector had to provide the explosives, the tools and the labour and the Government, through the Mines Department, paid so much per foot of driving or sinking. The amount was usually in relation to the hardness of the rock being worked. At Hill End the amount paid was usually about two pounds ten shillings ($5.00) per foot.

Dad worked at *Tip Raking* on the Hawkins Hill mullock tips. These were the refuse from the rich Hawkins Hill gold mines and still contained some gold.

"Dad first worked on *Krohmann's* and then on the *Star of Peace* tip, sometimes having the help of family or friends, but mainly on his own. When working on the *Star of Peace* tip he had to wheel the pay dirt on a barrow. This required him to wheel the barrow around a very rough and narrow track to the Flying Fox. Here the pay dirt was sent down on the Flying Fox to the crushing plant at the bottom of the hill.

"From records Dad kept during the two years he worked on the tips we find that he crushed 442 tons of material for a total return of 59 ounces 13 pennyweights, that averaged out at approximately 2 pennyweights 16 grains per ton.

"He sold most of the gold at $15.00 per ounce and during the latter period received $16.00 per ounce from Frank Lamb, who was the storekeeper at that time. On these figures he averaged almost $9.00 per week for the two year period. This was an excellent result at a time when wages, if you could get a job, were about $6.00 per week and the dole was about 50 cents.

"We boys occasionally worked with Dad on the tips and the procedure was to screen the mullock dumps at suitable places where it had been ascertained by prospecting that the fine material in the dump contained gold.

"The screening was carried out by shovelling the selected material onto a wire mattress from an old style double bed. The mattress was set at an angle so that the fine material passed through the wire mesh. This fine material was bagged and sent to the treatment battery. The heavy material that had not passed through the screen was visually checked for specimens containing gold and the remaining mullock was discarded.

"Angus Longmore and son Norman were working on the lower part of *Beyers and Holterman's* mullock dump and we were working on the *Rose of England* dump.

"Angus and son had rigged up a small flying fox to send their fines down to the crushing plant and while dad was working on this particular tip, they allowed him to use their flying fox as he was working near-by.

"This kind of co-operation was of enormous benefit to the tip rakers and was greatly appreciated. Those working the dumps up near the top of the hill were able to send the fines down on the big main flying fox, which runs from the top of the hill down to the crushing plant at the mouth of the Consolidated Tunnel. The main cables on the big flying fox were originally the cables that propelled the cable trams around the streets of Sydney.

"At one time Dad and Mo were working the *Star of Peace* dump and Tom and Jack Bairstow were working the dump near the flying fox. There were a number of other *tip rakers* on different parts of the Hawkins Hill, many of them newcomers to the town. Most of the tip rakers were able to make a reasonable living in this healthy outdoor work, much better than inhaling the dust and fumes that are always present in underground mining.

"Another activity at this time was *running the stopes.* In underground mining, as the rich reefs were mined, it was necessary to blast out some rock in addition to the gold bearing quartz. This was to allow room for the miners to work in the stope. As the stoping proceeded upwards this excess rock was filled back into the stope. This made the workings safe and also saved trucking out a lot of worthless material. During the period this work was carried out the reefs being mined were very rich, so there was always some gold lost in the waste rock that was filled back into the stopes.

To get the gold bearing material out of the stopes was very risky work, because it required removing some of the timber that had been placed in the roof of the drive by the original miners to prevent the waste material falling down. Once the timber was removed this allowed the mullock to run down into the drive where it could be sorted out, the selected material then being sent to the crushing plant for treatment.

"This plant at the entrance of the Consolidated Tunnel was under the control of the Marshall family and in their usual generous fashion they allowed all the *tip rakers* to use the plant free of cost. Angus Longmore was in charge and the whole plant was operated on a co-operative basis, everyone contributing his share to the operation of the plant and in turn getting his material treated and the gold extracted. This was a true

community effort that permitted a number of families to make a living in those very difficult times.

"I was always fortunate enough to get some seasonal rural work during the depression years, such as ringbarking, *suckerbashing*, (knocking off the suckers that shoot from the tree stump after ringbarking) seedling digging, rabbit trapping or poisoning, and, when the shearing season commenced, work in the wool shed. The newcomers found it difficult to get rural work because they were seen by the local graziers as being inexperienced. However, as they became better known some of them did get jobs on the properties. In fact some of them married grazier's sons or daughters.

"During this time getting people to invest in gold mining was a very difficult task. However the Marshall Brothers managed to attract capital for the mines at Hawkins Hill. Over the years they provided many Hill End miners with employment. Any work with regular wages was most welcome, and gave a lift to the town, as well as to those directly employed.

"In the early 1930s I worked in the Amalgamated Tunnel with Morrie Judge, Bert Longmore, Arthur Alder and Jimmy Smythe. Before we could commence mining we had to clean up portions of the Amalgamated Tunnel where heavy falls of rock had occurred. I was working with Sam Ellis, who was an expert in this area of underground mining. Sam was an excellent miner with all the skills needed to carry out the tasks of timberman, miner, tool sharpener, engine driver and the temperament to make him a great mate to work with.

"I then worked with Jimmy Smythe putting up a rise on a small vein close to the bottom of the *Star of Peace* shaft. Although some of the other miners were operating pneumatic boring machines quite near us, Jimmy and myself were using the old method of hammer and drill. I wielded the hammer and Jimmy turned the drill. I was not sorry when that job cut out. The ground was very hard and we were inhaling a lot of dust and fumes. Angus Longmore was in charge of mining operations and he was working in the consolidated tunnel with another party of miners which included Dad and Bab Ross".

Edward George Dyson's poem *To the Men of the Mines* is an appropriate comment on Digger's story of mining at Hill End .

To the Men of the Mines.

We specked as boys o'er worked out ground
By littered flat and muddy stream,
We watched the whim horse trudging round,
And rode upon the circling beam,
Within the old uproarious mill
Fed mad insatiable stamps,
Mined peaceful gorge and gusty hill
With pan, and pick, and gad, and drill,
And knew the stir of sudden camps,

By yellow dams in summer days
We puddled at the tom; for weeks
Went seeking up the tortuous ways
Of gullies deep and hidden creeks.
We worked the shallow leads in style,
And hunted fortune down the drives,
And missed her mostly by a mile-
Once by a yard or so. The while
We lived untrammelled, easy lives.

Through blazing days upon the brace
We laboured, and when night had passed
Beheld the glory and the grace
Of wondrous dawns in bushlands vast,
We heard the burdened timbers groan
In deep mines murmurous as the seas
On long, lone shores by drear winds blown.
We've seen heroic deeds, and known
The digger's joys and tragedies.

I write in rhyme of all these things,
With little skill, perhaps, but you,
To whom each tale a memory brings
Of bygone days, will know them true.
Should mates who've worked in stope and face,
Who've trenched the hill and swirled the dish,
Or toiled upon the plat and brace,
Find pleasure in the lines I trace,
No better welcome could I wish.

Chapter 10

The Rabbit Industry

For those Hill End people not involved in gold mining, the rabbit skin industry was the main means of earning a living. For about four months each year many of the locals went on to the surrounding grazing properties to trap or poison rabbits.

The rabbiter usually had a permanent year to year arrangement with one of the graziers, and quite often when the season finished the trapper would spend the rest of the year doing rural work for the same grazier. Many of the locals managed to make a reasonable annual income by combining rabbiting and rural work. For more than twenty years the rabbit industry was a major part of the Hill End economy.

Digger Hocking tells of his experiences during some years of rabbiting on various Hill End properties. "My first experience of rabbiting was with Dave Holloway, on *Killongbutta Station* that was situated about 18 miles by horse or foot from Hill End. This was in 1927 and I was 17 years of age. As I did not own a horse Dave packed my food and equipment and I carried whatever I could on my push bike. I was able to ride the bike along the Bridle Track to a point on the Macquarie river not far from *Bruinbun Station*, here I left the bike and continued on foot for another four miles, until I came to the camp.

"After a week's rabbiting I bought an old horse from Bob Flynn for ten-shillings ($1.00). Unfortunately the horse became ill and died a few weeks after I bought him. However by this time I had earned enough money to buy another horse from Billy Lye for ten pounds ($20.00). This was a fair bit of money for those days, being equivalent to about 3 weeks wages, but this was a good horse well worth the money.

"The camp at Killongbutta was an old bark hut that we had to patch up in order to keep the rain out. The owner J.J.Leahy would not allow anyone to set traps on his property, so we were restricted to poisoning and shooting the rabbits. I bought a new Savage .22 Sporter, costing four pounds ten shillings ($9.00). After a bit of experience I was able to shoot an average of 70 rabbits a day. Some of the rabbiters became very expert with the .22 rifle and were able to make a good living shooting rabbits and foxes.

"J.J.Leahy had lease over a lot of grazing country to the west, south and south-east of Hill End. He would not allow trapping on any of his properties because he considered there were too many injuries to the sheep.

"Most of the rabbiting on his properties was carried out by horse drawn poison carts, that dropped baits of pollard and phosphorus. This method was not very successful and was replaced with baits of quince jam and strychnine and later thistle roots and strychnine. Thistle roots were dug up, washed, cut into baits and sprinkled with icing sugar, vanilla essence and powdered strychnine.

"With one man digging out a divot with a small mattock and his mate coming behind dropping a thistle bait in the divot, they would be able to lay 1000 to 1200 baits between 4 pm and sundown. Poisoned oats was another rabbit bait used, very effective in killing rabbits, but also lethal to the native birds.

"The reign of J.J.Leahy ended in the late 1920s when his leases ran out. The country was cut up into smaller sized holdings, and the new owners quickly put an end to Leahy's no trapping rule.

"The rabbiting season began with poisoning and this phase usually commenced about midsummer. The poisoning would continue for four to six weeks, varying from property to property. After a break of about a month the trapping would then commence, and this was the time when the rabbiter could make some good money.

"The average trapper set from 60 to 80 traps according to the terrain of the country and the number of rabbits in evidence.

"The rabbiting season was very important to those Hill End men who followed the trade. In good years they could put enough aside during the season to help them over the rest of year.

"The rabbiter's life was a very rough one. The main trapping season was in the middle of the Hill End winter, with its heavy frosts, rain and the odd snowfall. When the day's work was done there was no warm cosy home and a nice hot meal to welcome the weary trapper. Usually it was a cold drafty tent with a galley, this was a rough structure about eight or nine feet square with a bark roof and at least two sides covered with bark to keep out the prevailing wind. A low stone fireplace was built on the open side of the galley. Some of the rabbiters had crude huts that they used from year to year.

"The camps were usually equipped with home-made bush furniture. The bed was either a sheet of bark or bags on top of poles supported by forky sticks in the ground. Some did not even go to this trouble and instead would lay a couple of logs on the ground at a suitable distance

apart and fill in between them with kangaroo grass, blue bell or bush leaves.

"Camping equipment was kept to a minimum, usually blankets, hurricane lantern, billy can, wash dish, alarm clock and a frying pan.

"The menu was restricted to a very basic diet that fitted into the cooking and food storage facilities. Many of the trappers lived on corned beef, cheese, potatoes, pumpkin, onions, bread, butter and a few tins of bully beef as a stand by. Calico flour bags and sugar bags were usually the only means of food storage.

"Clothes and hands become permeated with the smell of rabbit, rabbit fur and blood become part of everything you touched. Washing facilities were minimal and did little to get rid of the taste and odour of rabbit. The only thing that kept the rabbiter going was the thought of a hot bath, clean clothes, a bed with sheets and a good serving of tender loving care at the week end. For some even the week ends were not all that different.

"Yet with all this hardship there were never any complaints from the rabbiter, as the difficulties and loneliness were considered part of the job. When they came to town for the week end they left their problems back at the camp and gave their full attention to enjoying the brief taste of home comforts, a beer at the *Royal*, and a yarn with their mates.

"Running 100 traps and picking up the catch on a cold winters night is a tough way to earn a living, and at the same time requires a high degree of skill. Finding traps at night with the aid of a hurricane lantern has to be one of the most difficult tests of bush craft. Some of the trappers had very good dogs that would go ahead, find the trap, and sit there until his master came along.

"Bill Faraday, one of he newcomers to the town, a carpenter by trade and very handy at most things, decided to try his hand at rabbit trapping. He later told of his first night around the traps: "I went to where I thought the traps were, but couldn't find any of them, I kept on walking until I came to an old galley. After walking a bit further, I came to a bloody dead horse, I hadn't seen either of these things when I set the traps. I decided to change direction, and soon I came to another old galley and another bloody dead horse. It was not until I saw the galley and the horse for the third time that I realised I was lost. I eventually found my way back to the camp without seeing a trap until next morning".

The trappers day would start at daylight, after a quick breakfast, then on to traps for the morning catch. The traps would be pulled up and carried along with the rabbits. When you had pulled up about fifteen traps you dumped them in a heap ready for reset. When all the traps were up and the rabbits skinned, the next thing was to reset the traps parallel to

and a suitable distance from the first line. When they were all set it was back to the camp, some lunch, then peg out the skins and take in any dry skins. After a short break it was time to start on the sundown catch. On this run you would just pick up any rabbits caught, and reset the traps in the same place. Back to camp and peg out the skins. A cup of tea and something to eat and into the bunk for a few hours sleep until dawn.

"Sometimes the rabbits became cunning and were difficult to trap or poison. When one local trapper, with a dry sense of humour, was asked how the rabbits were going, he replied: 'No bloody good; they won't poison, they wont trap; and I'm buggered if they'll shoot'.

"The price of rabbit skins varied from month to month and year to year. The auction system used for selling rabbit skins was most unusual and was probably unique to Hill End. It took place in an area in front of the *Royal Hotel*, and the Shop. The system gradually developed as more and more skin buyers became interested in the high quality skins that were a feature of the Hill End market. The frosty cold winter weather experienced in the Hill End district, improved the weight and quality of the skins.

"The seller usually had one or two chaff bags of skins and when he took his skins to the selling area, he would invite one of the buyers to come and value his skins. The buyer would make a check of skins from each bag and judge the average quality. At this stage he would offer so much per pound for the seller's skins. Not expecting this offer to be accepted, the buyer would then move on and examine the next lot of skins on offer.

"Then another buyer would check the skins and ask what you had been offered; then, if he was interested in the skins he would offer a higher price than that previously offered. If this offer was refused then he, too,would move on.

"This continued until three or four buyers had given a price on your skins. If the skins were good quality each buyer would offer a little more than the previous buyer. The buyers would then call back periodically to check the latest offer, and if still interested offer a still higher price. Eventually the bidding would reach a stage where only two buyers were still interested and the highest bidder then bought the skins.

"In the Hill End district, and no doubt in many other places, the rabbit was a blessing, and provided many families with a living, particularly during the depression years. During periods of low wool prices and drought, many of the graziers managed to keep their properties going by trapping. Many of the women set traps in the paddocks close to

the homesteads and many women were able to earn quite substantial incomes from the bunny."

Diggers description of the unique auction system that was a feature of the rabbit market at Hill End prompted me to ask Albert Denman for some further information on the industry. Albert was an expert trapper, who did most of his trapping at the *Bullen*, a property situated on the Orange side of the Macquarie River. To get to this property involved riding a horse over a mountain track that crossed the river, a journey of about 10 miles each way. On the outward trip the horse would be loaded with the rider and sufficient food to last the week, and the skins would make up the load on the homeward trip.

Albert Denman told me that as far as he knew the highest price paid to a Hill End trapper for a bag of average quality ungraded skins was 15 shillings ($1.50) per pound. The trapper was John Leslie Ellis. Albert said Jack was capable of setting 130 traps a day, and for professionalism in all aspects of trapping, Jack was the best that he had seen. He told me that in 1947 one trapper he knew had netted 133 pounds sterling ($266.00) for one weeks trapping. At this time the basic wage was about $10.00 per week.

In 1950, rabbits dead from myxomatosis were seen on the banks of the Macquarie River. This was the beginning of the end for the rabbit skin industry and a great financial loss to those local men who had depended on the rabbit industry

Chapter 11

Piesley's Island

With the family now in residence at Hill End and the Lady Belmore Mine closed down, dad, in true gold miners' style, decided to test the validity of another story about rich gold. An old Chinese gold miner had told dad that he had worked at a rich alluvial gold claim in the bed of the Macquarie river, at Piesley's Island. He said the river had flooded the party out of the river bed when they were still on rich gold.

So it was in the spring of 1931, that dad and I set out on a trip of investigation, I was fifteen years of age and naturally quite excited.

To reach this part of the Macquarie River, we had to ride our horses over eleven miles of rough bush track. The trip took us through the grazing property known as *"Cannonball"*, past Madmans Hut, then across Spring Creek and over Walking Stick Spur, down and up the steep sides of Tambaroora Creek, and eventually descending into the Macquarie Valley at the head of Piesleys water hole.

It was always a great pleasure to take a trip anywhere around Hill End with dad, he knew the area so well. As we rode along, he gave me running commentary on the features of the bushland that we were riding through and anecdotes about the people who had used this track. When the early gold diggers on the Macquarie River went to Hill End for supplies this would have been one of the tracks they used. Thousands of people, many of whom would have been Chinese, had passed over this track in the last 80 years.

It has always intrigued me to reflect on the thousands of people that passed through the Hill End district and left so little evidence of their ever having been there. No wonder there were so many ghost stories told; there must be many phantoms of the gold fields.

After our track reached the river we continued along the river for another mile until we reached our destination, Piesley's Island.

This remote part of the Macquarie was once the home of the Piesley family. Ben Piesley, the bushranger, had lived here with his family, spending his youth in this rugged river valley. He was one of Gardiner's gang, and was the first of that gang to pay the ultimate price, when he was hanged at Bathurst in 1862.

Now in 1931, the only vestige of the family home was a few fruit trees, pieces of broken china and the remains of a stone chimney. These remains of past settlement were the first I had seen on the river. In due course I was to see many more muted reminders of the river people, each discovery a fresh fascination.

Lewis Ponds Creek, known locally as Ophir Creek, joins the Macquarie about a kilometre below Piesleys Island. It was at the head-waters of Ophir Creek that, Lister, Tom and Hargraves first discovered gold. The early gold diggers followed Ophir Creek down to where it joined the Macquarie. They prospected the gravel on the Macquarie and found gold. This discovery resulted in the diggers spreading up and down the Macquarie in search of new claims.

The diggers who had travelled upstream about 12 kilometres came to the spot where the Turon River joins the Macquarie. The Turon was to prove a real golden bonanza for the gold diggers. The Gold Commissioners report for 1855 read in part: *"On the Lower Turon some rich deposits of gold have been discovered, 18 and 20 ounces daily have been obtained from claims opened in the bed of that river, a few miles from its junction with the Macquarie".*

This invasion of diggers left scant evidence of their stay in the river valleys, but there are some signs of past habitation. I spent a lot of time mining, fishing and shooting on both the Turon and Macquarie Rivers and even in the most remote places I found traces of old huts and houses where the diggers had established their semi-permanent homes.

The house was usually built out of material that could usually be found near at hand. Most were constructed by bonding river stones together with mud to form the walls, and then the building was capped with a bark roof.

When the gold ran out the diggers moved on to a fresh claim, the action of the wind and rain on these primitive buildings soon converted them back to nature. All that remains are the, faint outline of the walls a hump where the chimney once stood and a few scattered pieces of broken china and glass. They provide a poignant reminder of a people long gone.

The Chinese gold diggers were usually found working where there was a quantity of alluvial wash either in the river bed or on elevated banks. Because they worked very effectively in parties, they were often successful in places where the European digger had failed.

There was still a number of Chinese working on the Macquarie river in the 1870s and dad often spoke of Chinese gangs working on the river when he was a young man. It was one of these Chinese who told dad that he had worked at Piesley's Island when a gang of his countrymen had

sunk some holes there in the early days. He said that when they had stripped off the top gravel, a seam of alluvial drift, rich in gold and four or five feet thick, was lying on the river bedrock.

They were still on rich gold when the river flooded, the dam was breached and the canal filled with gravel. Because they were using very basic equipment, rebuilding the dam and canal was considered too great a task, and they abandoned the claim.

Dad had always said how sincere and trustworthy the Chinese had been and that he felt sure there was still a rich patch of gold at Piesleys. So it was with some excitement that towards the end of 1931, Howard Morrison, Nesbit Lougher, and Harry Fisher joined with dad in a working partnership, with the intention of testing the worth of the Chinese story.

The area was called an island, because, the party of Chinese already mentioned had diverted the river with a log dam and then changed the course of the river by cutting a canal across a bend, thus forming an island. Below the main dam wall, box-like structures called coffer dams were built. As the river gravel was excavated the walls of the hole was lined with logs of river-oak. They were lowered one at a time into the hole and the cracks between the logs were plugged with clay. The large numbers of Chinese involved in these schemes made it possible to remove the gravel yet keep the water to a reasonable level.

During our work at Piesley's Island we came upon one of the Coffer dams used by the Chinese. Although seventy or eighty years old it was still intact, and some of the clay used in sealing the cracks between the logs was still in place.

The syndicate found it a difficult task to get any equipment into the mine site. The absence of any roads, and the precipitous mountains on either side of the river, made normal transport impossible. So it was decided to take some of the equipment by road to the junction of the Turon and Macquarie and there load it onto a raft. A raft was made and launched into the Macquarie.

It was loaded with a hand winch, parts of a hand operated crane, water pump, material to build sluice boxes, a small petrol engine, tools and other odds and ends. Anyone familiar with the river, between the Junction of the Turon and Piesley's Island, would understand that this trip was to be fraught with difficulty.

Between each water-hole was a shallow ripple, that required the raft to be unloaded and the load and the raft man-handled or pulled with the winch over the rocky ripple and into the next water hole. After a great deal of labour by Dad, my brother Ivor and Alex Grant, they eventually delivered the raft and its load to Piesley's Island. This raft trip was a

painful experience for all those involved, and was certainly the most ill conceived venture ever thought up by dad, who usually had good ideas. Rafting in all its forms was henceforth never a popular subject in our house.

We needed a horse and dray at the mine and it was decided to purchase the dray in Bathurst and, using our family horse, Ginger, to bring the dray out along the old Bullen road that led to a property situated on the Orange side of the Macquarie. From the Bullen the dray was taken across country, to the top of an almost sheer bluff that overlooked Piesleys Island and here it was lowered by ropes down to the river. Most of the remaining equipment was brought in on pack horses.

Ginger was what was called a half draught horse. He was very versatile and could be used as a saddle horse, and would work in harness in a sulky, dray or plough. He was a family pet, well fed and quite spoilt. His life of comparative ease came to a end, when he went to work at Piesleys Island. The work expected of him at the Island was not at all to his liking, and he never missed an opportunity to show his displeasure. He continually planted himself, hiding behind bushes or banks, and on several occasions made valiant attempts to find his way home, but there were too many boundary fences barring his way, on the 12 mile trip to Hill End.

With the equipment finally landed on the river, the first task was to clean out the canal and build a diversion dam across the river just as the Chinese had done about seventy years earlier.

Our equipment was much better than that of the Chinese, but we lacked the large and well-organised labour force that had made the Chinese gangs so successful. In hindsight I think the Chinese, even without equipment, were better able to handle this type of project than we were. Our equipment consisted of two centrifugal water pumps each powered by a petrol engine, a hand operated crane fitted with a bucket that held half a yard of gravel, a horse and dray, and all the necessary hand tools.

In addition we were all imbued with dad's wonderful optimism. He commenced each mining project with such happy expectancy, and was equally distraught when the results did not meet these expectations. However, past disappointments were quickly forgotten in his enthusiasm for the next project. You had to have this type of philosophy if you wanted to enjoy your work as a gold miner at Hill End in the 1930s and 40s.

At last we were ready to start work and the first job was to go up stream and cut river oaks. The oak logs were then floated down the river to the dam site. These logs were then placed, so that they formed

interlocking sections. Where the logs intersected they were secured with steel spikes that held the various sections firmly in position. The base of the dam was about 5 metres wide and 100 metres long.

As square sections were built up with the spiked logs, the spaces, thus formed, were filled with river boulders, and earth and gravel from the canal excavation. With this system, a small number of men, with very basic equipment, had built a dam and diverted the water from one of the largest rivers in New South Wales. It also made us realise what a labour intensive undertaking this must have been for the Chinese.

Before the dam and canal were fully completed, the river came down in a flash flood; further heavy rain kept the river at a high level and it became impossible to continue with the project. In mid March 1932 it was decided to suspend operations until the next summer.

To keep the syndicate members together they transfered their activities back up the river to Junction point, where they could work the alluvial until they returned to Piesley's Island.

The Syndicate returned in November 1932 and completed the canal and the dam. The hole below the dam, known as The Pump Hole, was then pumped dry. It was estimated that after pumping for 48 hours, two million gallons of water had been drained from the hole. We also had an addition to our diet, even if it was an expensive way to catch eight Murray Cod.

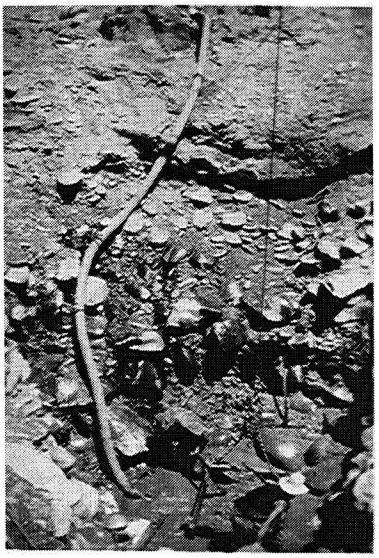
At this stage a site was selected for the first hole. Because it had to reach a depth of 20 to 30 feet and had to pass through very loose gravel, it was necessary for the hole to be large and the sides angled in to prevent slippage. This involved moving a large quantity of gravel in order to finish up with an area about 2 x 2 metres at the bottom, where it was expected the gold would be.

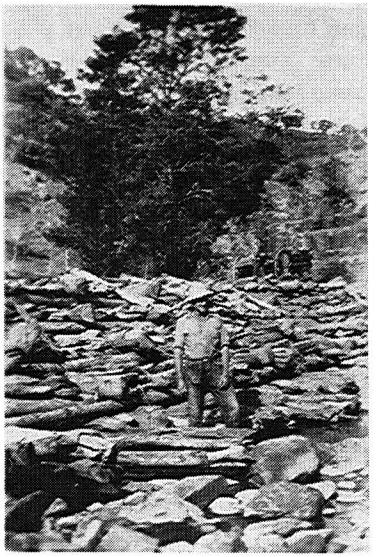
The first hole was about 8 metres deep and 130 tonnes of gravel was excavated before the gold bearing wash was reached. Rich wash was encountered one metre from the bottom of this hole. In selected places a prospecting dish of the gravel yielded half an ounce of gold. A good percentage of the gold was very course, similar in shape and size to melon seeds.

Thirty-two ounces of gold was recovered from this first hole. At 1988 gold prices this would be worth approximately $21,000.00.

When the second hole reached a depth of 3 metres we came upon the remains of the Chinese Coffer Dam I mentioned earlier in this chapter. Further work on this hole was abandoned.

Two more holes were sunk, yielding 41 ounces of gold, and a further 11 ounces of gold was recovered from odd quantities of wash left untreated from previous work.





Left: First hole put down in the river bed Of the Macquarie at Piesleys Island, Herb Maris and Walter Oats working in the bottom of the hole. Right: Log and stone dam across the Macquarie, Ivor Goodwin in the foreground.

At the end of March 1933 heavy rain fell on the upper reaches of the river. When the flood waters reached Piesley's Island, the dam held, but the canal could not handle the rushing flood waters and eventually a metre or more of water was flowing over the top of the dam. This completely destroyed our workings. The flooding combined with results that had fallen far short of expectations, caused the syndicate to abandon the project.

In addition to the syndicate members the men working on the Piesley Island project were: Jim Toohey, Walter Oats, Sam Ellis, Bob Lincoln, Jack Ellis, Herb Maris, Ivor Goodwin, De Courcy Browne; and myself, aged 16 years, lending a hand.

Arthur Alder and Les Trevena were using a number of pack-horses to transport petrol and other supplies from Hill End to the mine site. Each pack-horse carried about 160 Pounds weight of goods. A large order of groceries and other items were delivered to Piesley's Island. This order was from Beech's Hill End store, and Norman Cross delivered the order with pack-horses.

Gold mining in the heavy river gravel was very hard work, particularly in hot summer weather. Dad's diary mentions temperatures up to 105 degrees (40 C) In addition to the heat and hard work, living conditions for the workers were far from easy. The men were living in tents and apart from a trial period of community eating, that proved unsuccessful, they had to prepare and cook their own food.

I was struck by the good humour and mateship of the men, working in this arduous and isolated mining camp. Their only entertainment was a yarn or a game of cards around the camp-fire. Inadequate lighting confined reading or writing to daylight hours.

One of the syndicate members was Harry Fisher, a retired bank manager, and a great lover of the sun. To achieve an all-over suntan, Harry usually worked in a scanty loin cloth. On this particular day he was working with Sam Ellis and Morrie Judge, excavating the diversion canal, and this required them to shovel the gravel into a dray. The day was very hot and as usual, in such conditions, Harry was wearing his loin cloth. During lunch time conversation, dad, who was always called Enie, said to Sam: "You are not eating very much today, has the heat upset you ?" Sam, in his inimitable style replied, "It's not the sun Enie; it's Harry's '*Bronze Ettie*' winking at me all morning that has spoiled my appetite".

In later years I worked with Sam's brother, Jack and their cousin Red Jack Ellis. Both had a marvellous sense of humour. They were always able to recall some humorous incident or anecdote that had some relation to the current problem. This ability to tell an appropriate joke at the right time relieved the tension and frequently assisted in over coming the difficulty.

After leaving Piesley's Island, some of the syndicate members moved back to Junction flat at the confluence of the Turon. My brother Ivor and Morrie Judge started working on the Four-ounce vein at the *Valentine Mine*. Dad, Bob Lincoln and myself went to Puggoon, near Gulgong. Dad had been asked to develop a fire-clay lease for the Vulcan Firebrick Company. Even when looking for clay it seemed that we could not get away from gold.

We sank a shaft 50 feet down through the clay deposit and under the clay seam we came on a bed of wash about two feet deep. Dad decided to try a dish of the wash. He soon returned in a highly excited state because he had half a pennyweight of gold in the dish. To dad, the gold was far more interesting than the valuable and extensive clay deposit we had found. We did get a few ounces around the bottom of the shaft but not enough to put us off our main objective which was fire clay.

We also mined fire clay from a tunnel driven in under Mount Panorama Bathurst. It had a high silica content and had a different usage to the clay from Puggoon this was fine and with a high alumina content.

However, soon we were back at Hill End looking for gold. This time we went underground.

Chapter 12

The River People

Working the river alluvial for gold required certain skills and local knowledge, and because of this, only a few Hill End miners went to the rivers gold digging. In the 1930s there was only a limited number of diggers that were capable of getting any worthwhile gold

Dad always said that Billy Kimm was a man who understood the river alluvial, and had particular knowledge of the Macquarie River gold mining. In the 1930s Billy and his three sons, Lindsay, Gordon and Ronnie, owned a sheep property. But during slack periods on their property they would go to the river gold digging.

I was with Dad, when we met Billy Kimm and his three sons working on the river. They had been sinking holes in the drift at a spot where the Ophir Creek joins the Macquarie. This would have been one of the earliest workings on the river, and an area where most miners would have thought the gold would have been long gone. However, the Kimms were able to show us a nice sample of gold they had washed out of the river drift in a hole they had put down on its bank. Apart from the Kimms there were a few other casual river miners, such as Tommy Thompson and Arthur Alder, who, during dry spells, when water was scarce around the Hill End alluvial diggings, would head for the river. Others who lived on the river included; Sammy Trevena, Paddy McCartney, Les Everrett, Alf Johnson, Ben Piesley. Charlie Maris was another good river miner although he did not live permanently on the river. Most of these diggers lived lonely and Spartan lives and in several cases the search for gold, or the power of the river, resulted in their deaths.

Paddy McCarthy died a lonely death when he attempted to cross the flooded Macquarie River, and it was not until many days after his death, that his body was found. The flooded river had forced the body into the fork of a submerged oak tree, and held it there until a drop in the river level allowed the searchers to solve the mystery of Paddy's disappearance.

It was ironic that a man who had spent so many years living on the banks of the Macquarie, should eventually fall victim to the flood waters of the river that had helped to sustain him during much of his life.

Paddy, like most of the river people, had lived a very solitary existence. His home was a tent fly, made with corn bags sewn together; the fly, was thrown across a ridge pole that was supported by two forked sticks about one and a half metres high. The back end of the shelter was filled in with a few gumleaf boughs, the front end open to the sun by day and the stars by night. The bed was she-oak needles, or dry grass, spread on the ground and covered with corn bags, and for warmth a couple of threadbare blankets.

Groceries, such as flour, tea, sugar etc. were all kept in bags hanging from the ridge pole. Two or three billy cans, a frying-pan and a pint pot completed his equipment.

He cooked dampers in the ashes, ate fish or rabbits when ever he could catch them. If he caught extra fish he would keep them alive for future use. His fish larder was a wire-netting cage, submerged in the river.

Whenever my brothers and I went down to the Macquarie we always paid Paddy a visit. His camp always had a temporary appearance, almost as if he was just camping for the night. But there was never any rubbish around the camp.

Paddy was a man of few words, and although my father knew him very well, he never talked of his past life or his family.

Every few weeks he walked the twelve miles to Hill End to purchase some basic foodstuffs. When his shopping was completed he set out on his long walk back to the river. If the mood took him, he camped whenever darkness fell. After all there was no one to worry if he did or did not come home, and there was not a great deal of difference in a camp on the side of the track and his home on the river.

Ben Piesley lived on the Turon River just down stream from where Oaky Creek joins the river. His wattle and daub house was a palace compared with those of other river dwellers. The main source of income was from working the river alluvial for gold. Living was cheap, there was always fish, wild duck or rabbit for roasting or stewing, supplemented by vegetables and fruit from a well kept garden and orchard.

Ben lived alone and died alone. He had been dead for some days when searchers found his body at a spot known as the "Peach Trees", a spot near the Randwick water hole on the Macquarie River. The body was badly decomposed when finally found and the actual cause of his death remains a mystery.

Charlie Maris and his son Paddy met a tragic death when an alluvial mining tunnel in which they were working collapsed and they were buried under some tons of earth. The accident occured when the two men

were mining on Klondyke Point on the Turon River. The death of these two men was a grievous blow to the Maris family, and their friends. As in most mining towns the death of miners while working underground was mourned by the whole district; and the town's reaction to the death of father and son was deep and sincere. Dad was very upset, he had known the family since childhood. They were fellow miners and the accident occurred at a spot very close to where grandfather Goodwin had commenced his first gold mining venture in 1853.

My uncle, Dave Goodwin, was killed when a bank of alluvial wash collapsed on him, causing instant death. The accident occurred at the junction of the Turon and Macquarie Rivers. At the time Dave, together with dad, and Nap Lougher were hydraulic sluicing on Junction Flat. Dad writes in his diary for 23rd. July 1913: "My dear brother Dave killed. The saddest day in my life. Stricken with grief and sorrow". A newspaper report states, that on the day of Dave Goodwin's funeral the two Hill End mines that were then working ceased operations, and a large contingent of miners and friends attended the funeral.

Les Everett was another river dweller. The Everett home was situated on the edge a gully to the western side of Bald Hill. The area is still fenced in and there are still remains of the old home (1988).

Les, decided that Hill End was too crowded and made up his mind to move to a spot on the Turon River. On the opposite side of the river to Les's home is a high rocky bluff. This sheer rock face is still known as *Everett's Bluff*. His river hide-away could only be reached by walking or riding a horse down a narrow and winding track. The ground Les had selected was a small area of fertile river soil and on it he had established a fine orchard and an extensive garden.

Choice peaches and water melons were specials amongst a wide variety of fruit and vegetables. As a teenager I made many a trip to this Little Eden; sometimes on a social call, at other times to purchase fruit and vegetables for mum.

Young people were always welcomed by Les and while filling their tummies with a variety of succulent fruits freshly picked from his garden, he would beguile his guests with tales of the river. His garden was a haven for native birds and possums that were all very partial to the smorgasbord of fruit.

I always returned from these trips with pleasant memories of a very warm and caring person who was living in complete harmony with nature. Les's whole demeanour was one of kindness and understanding, perhaps his attitude was the result of his tranquil and uncomplicated lifestyle.

Les also had a house in Hill End, it was situated almost opposite the Royal Hotel, but he spent very little time in his town house. He would pick up a few supplies and head back to his Turon river Eden.

He was just one of the many river dwellers whose quiet lives were moulded by the rhythms of the seasons. Some sought the solitary life on the river to escape from some personal problem and for most of these people the solution to their problems was found on the banks of the Turon; tranquillity was easy to achieve when the only intrusion on the solitude was the murmur of the she-oaks and the gentle swish and gurgle of the ripples.

Another river dweller was Alf Johnson. Alf lived in a stone house, that was situated a short distance upstream from the Randwick Water Hole. One side of the house was the stone retaining wall of the Bridle Track road. The crumbling walls of this house can still be seen attached to road. A peach tree, no doubt the result of a peach stone discarded by the former occupant, is growing near the old stone wall.

Dad had a lasting love of the rivers, and this love was constantly expressed in diaries that he kept during his lifetime. Even in his 70's and 80's, my father still loved to go down to the Macquarie or Turon River.

At each point we visited he would be able to quote an experience or anecdote, from a time when he and other miners, had worked on the banks of the Turon or the Macquarie.

It was inevitable that his three sons would also inherit his love of the Rivers. My two brothers and I were always keen to embark on a trip to the river, and we always forgot the problems we had on our previous trips: such as how hard the ground was to sleep on; the cold dawns; the wet nights; the hot noons and the time the horses left us twelve miles from home.

We remember only the beauty and solitude of those isolated places where motor vehicles still cannot penetrate and where the only sounds that break the silence are the sounds of the river.

Our memories are of nights sleeping under a canopy of stars, that shone like diamonds. Our lullaby was in the she-oaks blending with the cry of night birds, the splash of ducks, the distinctive plop and swish of the platypus, and at our slightest movement, the friendly nicher of our horses. Wonderful memories.

Ostensibly my brothers and I went to the Macquarie to fish, but fishing was a very secondary part of our trip. The brotherly companionship, and our love of the bush and the river were the real enjoyment.

In our youth we walked the ten or twelve miles to reach our favourite part of the river. In our later years we rode horses. With the luxury of horses, we were able to extend the length of our trips; in addition, we were able to take a few extra comforts in the way of food or blankets; and the horses, in themselves, provided companionship and pleasure.

In the summer months we would swim naked in the lukewarm water letting the current carry us down the rapids and then repeating this simple pleasure until we were exhausted.

Our hunger was satisfied by mixing up some flour and water for a damper, this was then cooked in the ashes of the camp fire. The damper while still hot was soaked with butter and liberally topped with tomato and cheese.

If we were lucky enough to catch a yellow belly or a cod, we would split it down the middle, clean it, then bend it open until flat. The fish was then grilled on the camp fire. The scales and skin of the fish forms a hard dish in which the fish cooks in it own juice. This is a delicious method for cooking Murray Cod.

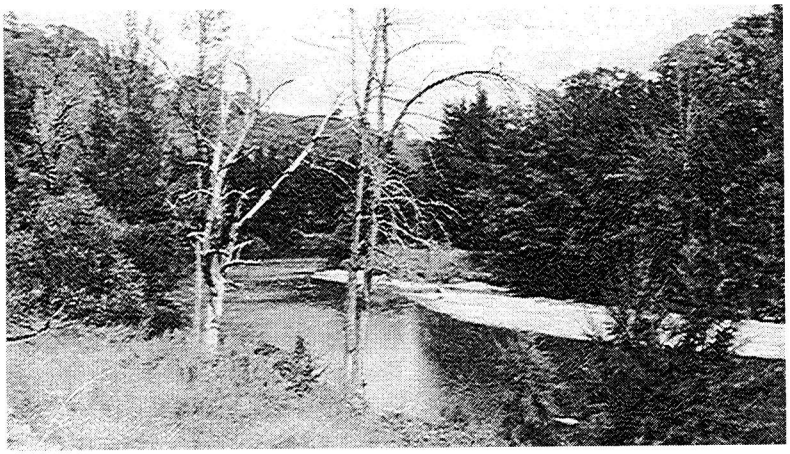
These isolated parts of the river still hold the same fascination, that in the past had lured people like Paddy, Ben, Les, Sammy, and Dad to spend such solitary lives.

My brother Kem, now in his 80's, and myself in my 70's decided to see if our memories of the river were true or false. With this in mind we set out from Sydney and headed west, our eventual destination being the Randwick water hole on the Macquarie River.

Age dictated that we have the comfort of tent, sleeping bags and a car to transport us and our gear to the camp site. We were not disappointed. We could still hear the music of the river, and see the beauty of the night sky. We sat by the camp fire, talking about river trips we had shared in our youth. The sweet scent of the burning she-oak twigs swirled around us; above, the heavens seemed so close. We talked late into the night and watched the Southern Cross turn-over.

The next day a young chap arrived at our camp. He said he was an accountant from Bathurst. He had decided to take a break from the office and spend the day fishing. He seemed in no hurry to throw in a line, and after yarning for a couple of hours, he accepted an invitation to join us for lunch.

After lunch more yarns, and by this time we had come to realise that the soporific effect of the Macquarie was working in the same way as it had half a century earlier. As if he had read our thoughts, our young visitor said: "I have found it so peaceful and relaxing here on the river that I can't be bothered fishing".



Little Sandy Hole Macquarie River, just below the Root Hog.

Will Ogilvie mentions the Macquarie River in the second and last verses of his poem:

The Bush My Lover

The still night wraps Macquarie;
The white moon, drifting slow,
Takes back her silver glory
From watching waves below;
To dalliance I give over
Though half the world may chide,
And clasp my one true Lover
Here on Macquarie side.

The winds of Dawn are roving,
The river-oaks astir.
What heart were lorn of loving
That had no love but her ?
Till last red stars are lighted
And last winds wander West,
Her troth and mine are plighted-
The lover I love best !

Chapter 13

River People During the Depression

During the depression years a number of people came to live on the banks of the Turon or the Macquarie. Some were new to the area, others had previous ties with Hill End.

Sarah Mobbs and her children Hazel, Tom, Hilton, Jack and Ted, came to the Turon during the depression years and made their home in what had been Ben Piesley's house.Another daughter Stella came to the Turon with her husband Les Keech and their children. They built a home on Klondyke Point. Directly opposite this point is a high rocky cliff, known as Sailors Bluff.

The Mobbs family were all great workers and possessed all the necessary skills for survival in an isolated environment. The family moved into a house that was surrounded by fruit trees. The fruit trees had been planted in the early gold rush days. In spite of neglect and drought, they were still bearing fruit. For the new occupants, it was a great advantage to have a ready made orchard of quinces, apricots, apples, pears, figs, plums, peaches, lemons and oranges.

In addition to the fruit trees, the banks of the Turon were covered with blackberry bushes. During the berry season these bushes provided almost unlimited quantities of choice blackberries that could be used for jam making, preserving or eaten fresh.

The family soon had a large vegetable garden producing a great variety of vegetables. They also had Fowls, ducks, turkeys and goats. As the mixed poultry all had the run of river it was not uncommon to see the mothers wandering along the river bank with a dashing, darting, chirping group of chicks behind each mother. A video depicting the antics and obvious delight of these chicks would be very effective against the present practice of keeping hens in wire cages.

In addition to the domestic animals there was always a Murray Cod or a Perch for a change of diet. Cash for other items was obtained either by
ping rabbits for the skins or panning a few pennyweights of gold.
Les and Stella Keech and their four children were also very resourceful
hardworking. They built a home and started a mini market garden. To
vide water for the garden, they installed a Hydraulic Ram in the river,
ery ingenious and cost free means of pumping water. The ram was

placed at the bottom of a ripple in the river. A pipe line a few metres long was then fitted to the intake side of the ram and run up stream towards the top of the ripple. The pipe is set so that some of the river water will enter. The water runs down the intake pipe to the ram, this low pressure water then enters a closed chamber that is provided with an escape valve. A second pipe is attached to the delivery side of the ram and this delivery pipe is fitted with a non-return valve.

River water rushes down the supply pipe into the chamber and runs through the escape valve until its velocity is sufficient to close the valve suddenly. This checks the flow of the rapidly moving body of water, and causes a build up of pressure in the chamber. The pressure in the chamber, now being much higher than that in the supply pipe, forces a small amount of water through the non-return valve and into the delivery pipe and eventually into the elevated storage tank. Although each pulse of water delivers only a small quantity it operates twenty-four hours-a-day and thus the total volume of water elevated is considerable, and for the Keech family provided adequate water for both garden and house.

The combination of rich river soil and plenty of water resulted in a fine garden, providing plenty of fresh vegetables for the Keech household, the surplus being taken to Hill End and sold door-to-door. This provided extra cash for the family and a weekly supply of fresh vegetables for the towns people.

To attend school, the children had to walk a distance of four miles each way. Part of this walk required them to climb up a very steep track, that started at the Turon river and rose to the Hill End plateau. They frequently set rabbit traps on their way home from school and next morning on their way to school picked up the traps and skinned any rabbits they had caught. Even with the long walk and the added chore of setting rabbit traps, the children still managed to achieve a high level of attendance at school.

In spite of having to negotiate a narrow mountainous road, split by creek and river crossings, the Keech family were always involved in community affairs. They seldom missed the week-end tennis or local dance.

This was one family that always seemed happy and showed little concern about living in such an isolated place. With intelligence and self-reliance they lived through what was considered the worst depression in this century.

In 1933, Snowy Freeman came to live on the Turon. His home was a wattle and daub house on the eastern side of the Turon River crossing. Snowy was a 1914 World War veteran and had been a tram driver in

Sydney. In 1933, with Sydney in the grip of the depression and with many people lonely and disheartened, Snow had started to turn to alcohol. It was at this time that he had decided to try the country. He walked from Bathurst to Turon via the Bridle Track. Bill Whittaker then owned the grazing property known as *"Homeward Bound"* and he told Snow he could stay in an unused hut on the property. He was to stay there for the rest of his life.

He lived a Spartan life, bathing in the cold waters of the Turon River, be it summer or winter. For his weekly food supplies he walked to Hill End, up the same steep track used by the Keech children. He worked the river wash for gold, had a vegetable garden, and like, the other river dwellers supplemented his diet with wild game.

Snow became an institution. His hut was positioned a few metres off the Bridle Track road, and Snow was usually there to greet all who passed that way. There was always a cup of tea, a yarn, and if it was needed a bed for the night.

A Mr Davis formed a syndicate to work the Turon river alluvial and in 1932 he was excavating the river bed when a heavy storm upstream caused the Turon to flood. This storm flooded the syndicate,s workings. They were working at Brown's Bar, near where the Bridal Track crosses the Turon. After the flood had subsided another attempt was made to open up the river bed, but this second attempt also proved unsuccessful. A newspaper report on this mine said the party had spent $800 to $1000 on the first attempt. This sounds an insignificant sum of money by todays standards but in the depression years represented a considerable outlay for a small syndicate.

Another report in the same newspaper: "Messrs J Aubrey and Bernhardt have formed a company to work the alluvial wash on Browns Point. They have purchased a two stage six-inch water pump, 40 horse-power engine, hydraulic high pressure nozzle and other equipment. J.Aubrey had previously worked this point using hand tools and his efforts had been rewarded with many ounces of gold."

Many of these individual attempts to work the river had little if any success. Most of these ventures were started with very little capital, and the equipment they were able to purchase was totally unsuitable to the task in hand. Heavy and efficient machinery was required to successfully move large quantities of water and excavate hard river wash. Even with better machinery, success would have still been doubtful, the Chinese had worked this area in the early years and they were most efficient in cleaning up even the poorest of claims.

A deserted gold mining tunnel, over-looking the Root Hog water hole on the Macquarie River, provided an unusual home for Arthur Toesland. Although narrow and long, Arthur's tunnel was warm and dry, and certainly unique. Its rear section supported a bed on one side and storage shelves on the other wall. The next section towards the mouth of the tunnel was his lounge and dining room. The whole of the dwelling was furnished with bush furniture made from bush timber, corn bags and packing cases.

The entrance to the tunnel was part kitchenette and part fireplace the latter providing warmth and cooking facilities.

Arthur established a small vegetable garden on the river bank in front of his home, and with plenty of water and good river soil, he was able to keep himself in vegetables.

Arthur's hobby was tanning snake skins. After the skins were tanned, they were fashioned into soft and beautifully finished belts and draw-string purses. On one occasion I presented him with two freshly killed snakes, one brown, and one black with a red belly.

In later years, a decomposed male body was found in a another deserted tunnel. There are a number of mining tunnels in this area. They had been driven into the side of the mountain in the latter part of last century.

Examination of the decomposed remains failed to reveal any foul play, and it was thought that death was due to carbon-monoxide poisoning. It was obvious that the man had sought shelter some 381 feet into the tunnel and there was also evidence of a fire. The fire, combined with a lack of ventilation, was probably the cause of death.

Finger prints, and a union ticket found on the body, enabled the police to identify the man as a Yugoslav migrant. His name was Dragulin Cryngevic; he had escaped from the Gladesville mental hospital about six months earlier.

Other people who lived on the Turon and Macquarie rivers during the depression were Gus Aubrey and his son, Elias Lumstrom, Ernie Christie, Jock Ramsay, George Saunders, Tom and Pearl Royal and son Harold; Eddie Donovan, Eddie Cox, Bob Lincoln, Wally Houghton, William and Rita Barnard and sons Ellis and Mervyn; Darkie Brown and George Saunders.

On a trip down the river it was usual to have a chat with all these people, or perhaps share a cup of tea or a smoke, looking back it seems as though no one thought about time. That they had time to chat or socialise was certainly not because they were lazy. These people were all virtually living off the land, so if they did not work they did not eat.

Perhaps their relaxed lifestyle stemmed from the fact that they had no house mortgage, car, TV, etc, payments to meet no gas or electricity bills in fact no bills at all!!

During the 1930s most of the river country was heavily infested with rabbits. To the depression people they were a readily available source of cheap meat, and skins could be sold for cash. To most graziers the rabbit plague was a disaster, and their eradication by trapping and the laying of poison baits was a constant task. Many of the poison baits that were used not only killed the rabbits but were lethal to native bird life and some species were decimated. The river was the life blood of many of these birds, because it provided water food and nesting. Many species that used the river when I was a child are no longer there, or are very rare. One delightful bird that was common on the Macquarie was the Azure Kingfisher.

The Azure Kingfisher is about 8 inches long and is a smart river hunter taking small fish, yabbies, frogs and insects. A nesting tunnel about 2 feet long is dug into the river bank, with a rounded chamber about six inches in diameter at the end. The Kingfisher diet would appear to save it from poison baits, but they did disappear about that time.

This side effect of rabbit eradication received little publicity, and, as far as I know, caused little concern even amongst those who were well aware of the disastrous effect of these poison baits. Now, it is difficult for me to understand how I and most other people had such little concern for our environment. Half a century later I and most other people would be appalled at such wholesale slaughter of bird life.

During the depression, the people on the rivers, or at Hill End itself, had various means of saving on living expenses or earning small amounts of money. However, the main attraction was gold. Gold was the cash crop, and almost everyone could fossick up a few grains.

Chapter 14

Valentine and Individual Mining in the 1930's

In 1934 a syndicate was formed by dad and a few friends to de-water and re-timber the Valentine Mine shaft. This was quite a substantial venture, providing employment for five or six men during the dewatering and preparation of the Valentine Shaft, then increasing to about twenty men during the nine months the mine was working at full capacity.

The men employed were Les Woolard, Herb Dowell, Ernie Christie, Bill Absolem, Andy Pervis, Morrie Judge, Bert Longmore, Sam Ellis, Walter Oats, Nap Lougher, Charlie Clifford, Les Dean, Bill Eldridge Senior, Bob Lincoln, Jock Ramsay, Harry Fisher, Ken Wilson, Ben Holloway, brother Ivor, and myself. Dad was mine manager.

In addition to those actually working at the mine Bill and Walter Hamilton were cutting wood for the steam boilers and Bill Whittaker was carting the wood. Ron and Roley Hodge were engaged in carting mining timber, machinery and other supplies from Bathurst Railway station.

The *Valentine Mine* was well equipped with machinery. There was a ten head stamper crushing battery operated by a steam boiler and engine, large capacity air compressor, winding engine, steam and air operated water pumps. Steam for the air compressor and winding engine was supplied by a large underfired multi-tubular steam boiler. Underground equipment included late model air operated Jack Hammers, Tom Machines, and steam and air powered water pumps.

To de-water and timber the main shaft down to the 260 feet level was a difficult task that required experienced miners and timber-men. When the bottom of the main shaft was finally reached, it was possible to reach Davidson's vein by way of a cross-cut that had been put in by the original mining company.

At this depth Davidson's Vein was about two feet wide and was showing very good prospects, and it was estimated that it would return about two ounces of gold to the ton of ore. To work the vein by underhand stoping would have been difficult and expensive, so it was decided to sink the main shaft a further 52 feet. This would then make the Valentine shaft 312 feet deep.

After sinking the shaft to the 312 feet level we then cross cut back west until we reached Davidson's Reef. When we cut the reef we found that it had undergone a complete change. The soft brown reef two feet wide that we had opened up on the 260 feet level,was now a hard white reef four feet in width with very low values. This was probably the most disappointing gold mining result that we as a family experienced. We had a third of the shares in the mine and the first prospects had given us great expectations.

We then backstoped Davidsons Vein up to the 260 feet level. The total amount of gold won from this work was 182 ounces, 1988 value about $125,000.00. This gave some return to the shareholders but was not a profitable result.

The syndicate then applied for Government Aid to drive 100 feet south and 100 feet north on Davidson's Reef. Aid of 32 shillings ($3.20) per foot of driving was granted. The 200 feet of driving was carried out from the 312 feet level of the main shaft.

As no payable ore was found in either the north or south drive, the syndicate closed the mine down. When it was decided to cease operations in October, the workmen held some discussions, and most of them voted that we take a tribute to work the mine on a co-operative basis.

During the period of this tribute all the men except Sam Ellis and myself worked on day shift. The day shift was occupied in boring holes, shifting mullock and sending up ore to the battery. Sam and I worked afternoon shift firing out all the holes that had been bored on the day shift. This system allowed the day shift to work straight through without the problem of dynamite fumes and dust.

Sam Ellis was a very experienced miner with well developed skills in all phases of the craft of mining. He was an intelligent man with a unique philosophy of life, and a great sense of humour. He had a wife and family to care for and, as it was for anyone with family responsibilities, he was trapped into working at the only type of work available at Hill End; mining.

Like many other miners, Sam paid the penalty for the years he had spent working underground. He died a slow and painful death at a very early age. The dynamite fumes and silica dust he had sucked into his lungs during years of hard underground toil finally took their toll. These men or their families did not share in the benefits available today such as large lump sum compensation etc.

While we were sinking the Valentine shaft, we worked three shifts seven days a week, as this was the most economical method when contending with underground water. On the afternoon and night shift

there were two men underground and one man on top looking after the steam boiler, air compressor and the winding engine. There was a number of extra men on day shift, sharpening tools, operating the crushing plant, moving mullock and ore etc,.

My mate underground was Morrie Judge and the engine driver on our shift was Nap Lougher.

Sinking the shaft was a very dangerous and difficult job for the miners. Because of the considerable flow of underground water it was necessary to keep the pump operating 24 hours a day. Even then the miners had to work in a permanent well of water in the bottom of the shaft.

Continually working in water up to our knees caused a great deal of personal discomfort. However the main problem was that the blasting holes had to be bored and then loaded with explosives under the water, because the bottom of the shaft always contained about eighteen inches of water. The explosives we were using at that time were not suitable for such wet conditions, and the charges had to be made waterproof. The waterproofing was accomplished by smearing the fuse and cap with heavy grease. If this was not carried out efficiently the hole would misfire.

A mis-fire under these circumstances created a very dangerous situation because the unexploded caps and gelignite remained in the misfired holes, and were covered with water and loose rock that had been blasted from the other holes that had ignited.

Morrie Judge was an expert miner, a man of immense strength and the capacity to carry out strenuous work over long periods, and above all, a loyal and caring mate with a very even temperament. The conditions under which we worked were primitive and by today's standard would be considered intolerable. In addition, there was a real and ever present danger to life and limb unless all safety precautions were observed.

The experienced miners were able to place the underground timber in the right position for maximum safety and they were able to sense danger before it was apparent to the inexperienced. By striking the shaft or tunnel rock face with a hammer it was possible to tell if the ground was safe or not. If there was a ringing sound given back from the hammer blow it indicated that the workings were safe, if the sound was hollow,or as the miner called it *drummy*, then it indicated that cracks or flaws were in the rock face and it could result in a dangerous rock fall.

It is to the credit of the Hill End miners that their skill in knowing the danger signs, and taking steps to correct the problem, resulted in very few underground accidents due to rock falls.

Dad was a very experienced miner and if any of his miners considered the workings unsafe, he would always investigate the situation. The men always accepted his judgement on matters of safety, He expected a full eight hours work and in return always made sure the men were correctly paid. He was always open to suggestions or advice from his miners and treated them as the intelligent, capable men that they were.

As this is mainly a history of my own experiences I have confined most of the descriptions of mining to those I am fimiliar with. There were numerous other people doing similar work, particularly during the depression years and then in lesser numbers in later years, but by and large their experiences would have been similar to mine, with the same highs and lows. The driving force was, that the next bench of quartz blasted down or the next dish washed, would produce the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

Underground work at the *Valentine Mine* ceased in October 1935. We continued to use the crushing plant and water from the dam for the next six years.

Small Syndicates Working in the 1930's

There was a number of other small parties working on various mining projects in and around Hill End. Some of these projects were just two or three men sinking shafts to cut known reefs or driving tunnels for the same purpose. Many of these miners were receiving Government Aid.

This was a form of subsidy introduced by the Government to encourage people to prospect, When an application for Aid was applied for, it would be investigated by an Inspector, from the Mines Department. He would assess the prospects, and, if he considered the mine had a chance of finding gold, he would recommend that applicants be granted so much per foot of sinking or driving. The rate per foot was based on the hardness of the rock to be mined. The price in the 1930's was usually about two pounds ten shillings ($5.00) per foot. If the aid were granted the local policeman, who was also the Wardens Clerk, supervised the work and measured the amount of work completed each fortnight and on his advice the miners would get a cheque from the mines department.

A party that included Eddie Donovan carpenter, Eddie Cox Estate Agent, DeCourcy Browne Former New Guinea plantation manager, and several other men were working a gold lease at Pullen's Hill. It is a basalt-covered, flat-topped hill overlooking the Macquarie river and situated about three miles from the Ullamalla station homestead.

This party of men performed a great deal of manual labour building a large water dam and cutting about 2 miles of race to carry water from the dam to the mine. The water race passed in front of a tunnel driven into the hill and it was expected that as gold bearing wash was mined from the tunnel it could be trucked out and washed in the race.

However, the results fell far short of expectations. The amount of work carried out by this band of men of such diverse backgrounds and skills, none of which included gold mining, or even manual labour, indicates how well some of these newcomers adapted to their new lifestyle.

This group came up with a novel method that solved the problem of shovelling very sticky wet clay that refused to leave the blade of the shovel. They built a fire and heated the shovel blades !! I must say that this prompted some of the local miners to brand them as *'bloody newchums'*. But it did work; I saw it in operation.

Arthur Alder and a mate worked a similar alluvial claim on another basalt covered hill called Yankee Toms, on the Orange side of the Macquarie.

There is a series of these basalt covered hills running along each side of the Macquarie River. The basalt covers a depth of gold bearing wash and sand that was part of the ancient river bed. Over many thousands of years the water was forced out of its original course by the flow of basalt from Mount Canobolas near Orange. The river gradually cut a new path and now the Macquarie River flows many hundreds of feet below its original course. In places the alluvial in these hills was composed of very fine quality coarse, white sand and smooth quartz pebbles. This was a very dangerous free running material and when accidentally tapped by the early miners tons of this material would flow into the workings.

Because of its very high quality, one party considered this sand and gravel as a commercial proposition but the remote location made the idea uneconomical.

Most of these hills were extensively worked in the early gold rush days and a considerable amount of gold was won from the ancient river gravels. In early workings some miners sent the alluvial wash down to the Macquarie by aerial rope ways. The gold was then separated from the gravel in sluice boxes, making use of river water.

Ab Carver was a very competent miner and a successful prospector, and in one mining venture he joined forces with a Sydney builder, Billy Sach. They sank a shaft on the hill situated south west of the Hill End post office. They worked in this mine for some time. I do not know how much gold they actually extracted but they did get some very rich

patches. I remember Ab showing my father a fossicking dish of quartz that was laced with gold. Ab estimated that it contained 40 or 50 ounces! During my time of gold mining at Hill End that was the most gold in one fossicking dish that I personally viewed.

The Judge and Woolard families had a sound knowledge of the Hawkins Hill mines and usually worked together. They spent a lot of time in the old workings and over the years mined some very rich veins. They worked in Forster's Tunnel, the Mica vein in the Consolidated tunnel and in the Flat ground in the hill above the mouth of the Consolidated tunnel.

The Woolard family had a long history of mining, and their knowledge was passed down from one generation to another. This was very useful on a gold field such as Hill End, where the gold was deposited in such an unusual and quirky manner.

Apart from their expertise in hard rock mining the Woolards were also very efficient alluvial miners, and all members of the family were always capable of washing up a few pennyweights of gold whenever they wanted some emergency finance. Ted still lives at Hill End and carries on the Woolard tradition of being always able to fossick up some gold.

Basically the newcomers to Hill End had to win admittance to the underground mining fraternity because it did require more skill and care as compared with alluvial mining. The locals were always helpful in introducing the newcomers to gold mining and eventually quite a few became quite proficient underground miners.

Conditions underground were difficult and unhealthy with bad air, dynamite fumes, dust, and in most cases water. Working broken ground was always dangerous and this factor made it important to have at least one good timberman in the party.

Fitting timber so that the walls or roof of the mine would not collapse was a very special and skilled job and good timber men were always in demand. Underground timbering had many functions, shafts and drives had to be fitted with timber to secure broken ground. Also sets of timber were required to support ladders, guides for hauling cages, carrying truck rails and timbering stopes. It was also the timberman's job to erect all the surface timber structures such as poppet legs and ore bins. Of course the main role of the timberman was to ensure that the mine was safe for his fellow workers.

Dad was a very good hand at all kinds of underground timbering and was at one time head timberman at the Burraga Copper Mine. I learned the art from working with dad, Sam Ellis, Bert Longmore and Morrie

Judge, all of whom were very competent timbermen, however, I never acquired the skills of my tutors.

In places where the air was bad, the flame on the miner's candle became weaker, warning him that there was a lack of oxygen in the air. If the air was very bad the flame on the candle eventually went out, and the miner would be in a potentially dangerous situation.

After the golden-years of mining at Hill End had passed the underground miners reward was seldom in keeping with the effort expended, and the effect on his health was often devastating.

In spite of all these difficulties most of the underground miners that were working for themselves found the work an interesting and exciting challenge. The challenge was to find a schute of ore containing gold and then keep on it. Keeping on the gold was not always easy, particularly when the gold was not easy to see in the quartz, the miner then had to wait until the quartz was crushed before he could assess its value.

The exciting part was that piece of ground beyond the rock face in front of you, there since creation. No man had seen it. Did it contain the eldorado you were seeking ?

Gold miners are incurable optimists and any disappointing results are soon forgotten when the reef starts to show better prospects. Then the past is obliterated by the expectations of the gold that will be theirs in the next crushing.

There was always the thrill of cleaning up the crushing plant after a good crushing and seeing the lumps of amalgam (gold combined with mercury) collected in various spots in the battery box. Each box had different places were the main part of the gold amalgam would lodge. A quick look at the favourite spots would indicate if the crushing was a profitable one.

The amalgam was separated from the material remaining in the battery box, by panning off into a wooden tub, and saving the amalgam. There was also the amalgam that had escaped from the box, during the crushing process. After passing through the battery screens this amalgam would stick to the copper plate, and would be scraped off the plate with a piece of leather. The combined ball of amalgam was then placed in a piece of unbleached calico and twisted tightly to expel any surplus mercury. The dry amalgam was then placed in a metal retort that was slowly heated until the remaining mercury was evaporated. The gold remaining was called a cake of retorted gold, because of its shape and colour it had the appearance of a golden coloured rock cake.

To refine the gold further it was placed in a plumbago crucible. The inside of the crucible was sprinkled with borax. Then the cake of gold

was added. If a large cake, it would be broken up and and more borax added. The borax forms a slag and melts over the top of the gold,absorbing some of the impurities and allowing the gold to flow freely. The temperature is increased until the gold melts. At this stage you may scrape some impurities off the top, including any slag. The molten gold can then be poured into a gold mould that has been previously prepared by warming and smearing with candle grease. After weeks of hard work it is a great thrill to see the golden ingot drop out of the gold mould.

Chapter 15

Social Life at Hill End in the 1930s

Digger Hocking has been able to provide me with a contemporary account of social life at Hill End during the 1930s. Digger and his family were involved in most of the sporting and social activities of the town, so his account of the various activities is of great interest.

In the early 1930s, George Hokin, one of the new arrivals at Hill End, suggested that we form a club. George told us how they had formed a very successful Glee Club in the Sydney suburb where he had lived before coming to Hill End. He thought a similar club would provide the town with a lot of free entertainment. It was then decided to call a meeting to discuss the formation of a club, the meeting being held in Weir's Rooms.

George was soon propounding on the benefits such a club would bring to the township. His enthusiasm soon convinced the meeting that Hill End needed a club. The meeting decided to call the new venture the 'Gee Bung' club.

The Gee Bung Club became very successful and we soon discovered the many hidden talents that existed in the town. The club meetings were always well attended, and after the formal part of the meeting was over we were entertained by some of the members.

Tommy Goldspink was the school teacher at Tambaroora during this period and he became a member of the Gee Bung Club. He was a very good football player and for a time coached the Hill End team.Tommy was also a very good boxer, and was well known and respected among members of the boxing fraternity in Sydney and elsewhere. As his contribution to club activities, Tommy taught boxing to any member who wished to learn. One of his pupils, Tom Austin, who worked for Wattie Petrie in the butchers shop, became quite a good boxer.

The ladies became envious of the success of the all male Gee Bung Club and decided to form a club of their own. A meeting of the ladies decided to call their club the "Gumnut Club". It was also very successful and there was great rivalry between the two clubs.

Florence Fizelle (the Hill End school teacher's wife), Edie Bowman, and Mum (May Hocking) were among those who took a leading part in the Gumnut Club activities.

Concerts were a popular form of entertainment and Frank Hocking organised a number of concerts to raise money for various local organisations. He was very keen on what was known in those days as Black and White Minstrel Shows. The first half consisted of Black Minstrel songs and the second half was mixed entertainment, such as Comic songs, Popular songs, Recitations, Piano solos and other instrumental pieces.

I took part in several of these shows and to blacken our face and hands we used burnt cork mixed with Vaseline. As you can imagine, this mixture was very difficult to remove.

Hill End was very fortunate in having some very good piano players, but the outstanding pianist was Minnie FitzSimmons, who played excellent dance time and who was a very good accompanist. Dad, who was very musical himself, used to say Minnie was the best accompanist he had ever met.

Dad was a good solo entertainer with a fine tenor voice. He usually favoured comic songs of which he had quite a repertoire, his presentation was good, and he always received a favourable response from the audience.

Ben Bramhall was one of the newcomers who became an enthusiastic member of the Gee Bung Club. Ben knew a number of comic songs, that he performed in a very entertaining manner. He also gave some excellent renditions of epic poems such as, *The Pigtail Of Li Fang Fu*, and *The Green Eye Of The Little Yellow God.* Ben was also good at conjuring tricks,, sleight of hand and juggling. With his comic songs, recitations and conjuring, Ben was quite capable of putting on a very professional one man show.

Ted Cassin was another performer who sang comic songs and performed at concerts. Mervyn Burnard senior was a skilled professional magician. The only problem he had was that his patter did not match his dramatic skill. He constructed all his own props, some of which were very complex, and he obviously was a skilled tradesman. With the help of his family, a fully professional magic show was staged in the Royal Hall Hill End, with repeat performances at Sofala and Hargraves.

There were quite a few of the locals and newcomers who were able to sing a song, play some musical instrument or entertain in some other way. The concerts were always well attended and provided inexpensive entertainment for the whole town. Although Hill End had the talent to stage a concert on its own, it was the newcomers who gave the lead in many of these social activities.

A number of very good football players came to Hill End during the depression. Bill Martin was generally regarded as one of the best. Other newcomers who played a good game included Cliff Fuge, Tommy Bairstow, Bill Byrnes, Karl Banks, W Osborne and Len Saxby. Bob Lawson and Mo Hocking were hard to beat amongst the locals.

Push Bike riding was another popular sport at Hill End, and here again the newcomers to the town included some very experienced bike riders.

A cycle racing club was formed and road races were held on a regular basis. The main venue for the races were from Weir's Hotel to the top of Fischers Hill for the shorter races and to the Ullamalla turn-off on the Mudgee Road, for the longer races. Arthur Phillis was a very professional bike rider and was always in the forefront of the Hill End club. Other well performed riders were Cyril Anger and Allan Snesby. Among the locals were Albert Denman, Silas, Jack, Allan and Don Ellis, Herb and Les Dowell, Laing and Don Longmore, and Phyl Cook. Albert Denman was a good all-round sport. As well as being one of the most consistent at cycling he was very good at swimming, cricket, and tennis.

Sport at Hill End was certainly enriched by the influx of new blood, because they provided the competition and enthusiasm that raised the standard of local sport to its full potential.

There were plenty of opportunities to play tennis. In Tambaroora and Hill End there were six tennis courts and most of the surrounding grazing properties had a court. The only cost to the player was five or ten cents for the purchase of tennis balls. The players were also asked to take a turn at rolling or marking the court.There was also Cricket, Rifle, Golf and Swimming Clubs.

Swimming became a very popular sport in the summer and a club was formed using the Connie Dam as the venue. The driving force in the swimming club was Rex Seddon. Rex and his wife came to Hill End early in the depression and took up residence in a deserted house near the Connie Dam. This house had originally belonged to Jackie Howard. The Seddens quickly transformed the old wattle and daub house into quite a comfortable home surrounded by a good garden.

Rex had been a member of a swimming club in Sydney and was very enthusiastic about the sport. He was a good organiser and had the knowledge and skill to arrange swimming and diving contests in a professional manner.

The swimming carnivals were a novelty to Hill End and were always well patronised by the townspeople.

Again it was proved that once given the opportunity and the competition there was plenty of talent amongst the locals.

Les Judge was one of the locals who developed into a very good competitive swimmer. Rex Sedden considered Les was a swimmer with a natural talent and relaxed action, and had the ability to compete at any level in this sport.

No doubt there is a great deal of untapped talent in all our small country towns, where lack of opportunity allows the talent to remain undiscovered. During dry weather when the Connie Dam became too low or too dirty to swim in, the swimming club transferred its activities to the Turon River.

Vere Fizelle, headmaster at the Hill End school in 1932, was one of the first people to introduce golf to Hill End. He was a very good golfer, playing on a low handicap. There was no golf course at Hill End at this time, so Vere had to travel to Mudgee for match play. However, he used to frequently have a practice hit on the Post Office Flat, and it was by these practice hits, that golf was introduced to some interested locals.

Eventually a group of would be golfers laid out a nine hole golf course. There were actually only five sand greens but the tees were arranged so that the greens could be approached from nine different directions.

The golf club operated for many years and there were quite a number of both men and women members. The greens were kept in order by allocating the care of a particular green to three or four members. This proved a competitive and practical means of ensuring that the greens were kept in good order.

Many of the members became handy golfers and in addition to regularly playing on the local course frequently went to Mudgee or Bathurst for a days golfing. Golf opened up new social contacts both locally and away. It also encouraged a number of women, some of whom had not been particularly interested in other sports, to try their hand at golf.

Foot racing was another popular sport during the depression. There were a few young fellows who could run very well and had frequently been successful in district sports meetings. Some of the older men seemed to think that runners had been much faster in the old days, or during the period when they were kings of the running track. The brothers Bucky and Jossy Bennett had quite a reputation for their prowess on the foot racing circuit during their younger days, and, although at this stage they were a bit long in the tooth, they still fancied themselves as runners. Their talk about the races they had ran in their youth prompted

the organisers of the Hill End annual sports day to include an Old Buffers foot race in the program. Because of their past performances the Bennett brothers felt they had an excellent chance to win this event, and were very keen to enter the sprint.

On race day, there were six starters. The distance had been set at sixty yards. Included in the starters were Bucky, Jossy and a newcomer named Harry Secombe.

Harry did not look like a runner, he was short, very lean and on appearances was out of condition. Local opinion was that the winner would be one of the Bennett brothers. The brothers were also very confident of sharing first and second positions, and had in fact decided they would split first and second prize-money.

The starter called the runners into line and issued his instructions. He said: "I will call, On your marks, Get set, and go". Jossy and Bucky looked very toey with trousers tucked into socks, and for extra speed they were wearing tennis shoes.

The remainder of the field did not look nearly as toey, especially Harry Secombe who was wearing everyday clothes and shoes, and was still smoking his pipe and had not even bothered to remove his felt hat.

When the starter said, "on your Marks", Jossy and Bucky quickly took up their positions on the starting line, and at the command, "get set", they went into a professional crouch, muscles tense, bodies perspiring and bald heads glistening in the sunlight. Harry Secombe, far from any semblance of a crouch stood as straight as a ramrod, removing his pipe being the only indication he gave that he was ready to start.

When the starter said: "Go!', Harry seemed to spring forward as though propelled from a catapult. Pipe held firmly in his hand he streaked away and won the race with great ease, and in so doing, ruined the long held reputations of a couple of locals. As he reached the finishing line Harry replaced the pipe in his mouth and puffed away contentedly. He was as fresh as a daisy. Jossy and Bucky who had finished second and third appeared very confused at having been beaten by Harry Secombe, a man who had never given any indication that he was a runner. They had given of their best in the 60 yard race and were showing signs of distress. It was generally conceded that Harry must have been a smart runner in his day, and Jossy and Bucky seldom mentioned foot-racing again.

The social and sporting activities during this period of economic depression were either very inexpensive or free. The main thing was participation, and the locals and newcomers supported every social or sporting event with great enthusiasm, either as spectators or contestants.

Chapter 16

Transport for an Isolated Town

Hill End and its people were isolated from the rest of the district by distance and a difficult terrain over which people and goods had to travel. With improved roads, increased reliability and more powerful motor vehicles, the isolation has been alleviated, but in the days of horse drawn vehicles, early T model Fords and solid rubber tyred motor trucks, it was a formidable barrier.

Hill End is situated on a deeply dissected plateau, that on the southern end falls sharply into the Macquarie and Turon gorges.The two rivers converge about 5 miles south of Hill End.This deeply divided plateau stretches north to Hargraves, 23 miles distant, and has a general elevation of about 3000 feet.

From Bathurst the main road to Hill End heads northward over undulating country crossing the Winburndale Creek and through the hamlet of Peel. The first steep climb is up Wyagdon Mountain, where the road followed a narrow and tortuous route up the side of the mountain. In recent years it has been re-aligned and widened. This climb brings the traveller to Wattle Flat, was another gold field in the early days. The road then descends steeply into the Turon Valley at Sofala, where thousands of miners came to search for gold in the early 1850s. The road then follows along the south side of the Turon until it finally crosses to the northern side at Wallaby Rocks. Until about the turn of the century, a ford was the only means of crossing the river and this was often impassable. Finally the money was found to build a bridge over the Turon.

A mile or so after crossing the bridge the road commences a very winding section around the side of Cockatoo Mountain, with a steep drop into Crudine Creek. About three miles further on, the road makes a steep and winding ascent to the top of a basalt capped mountain known as Monkey Hill.

As you travel up it, you can catch glimpses of the old road used in the 1870s. Monkey Hill was a horror stretch for the early teamsters and passenger coaches, who were supplying a town of 8,000 people with all their needs.

From Sallys flat to Hill End, a distance of 11 miles, the road follows along a ridge. On one side of the ridge the water drains into the Turon and the other into the Green Valley Creek.

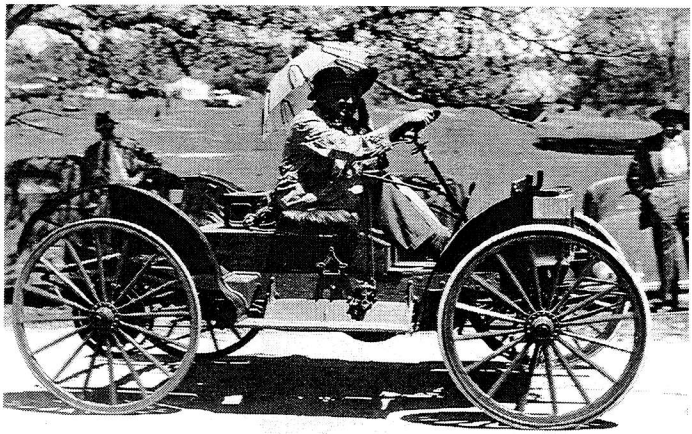
The road from Hill End to Mudgee covers similar difficult terrain to that on the Bathurst Road. After passing through Tambaroora the road follows undulating country for two miles and then plunges down a winding road clinging to the side of Green Valley Hill until finally it crosses the Green Valley and Pyramul Creeks and ascends Red Hill on to the Hargraves plateau. Hargraves goldfield was early in the news when Daniel the aborigine, in June 1851, showed his master, Doctor Kerr, the hundredweight of gold that caused such a stir in Bathurst and a sensation around the world.

After leaving Hargraves the road rises for a couple of miles and then descends very steeply to the foot of Tuckers Hill, then through, what was, the mining village of Avisford then up and down several lesser ranges, and finally on to the Cudgegong River flats that surround Mudgee. The total distance from Hill End to Mudgee was 44 miles.

The above roads were the main roads used by the Hill End people. There is a third road known as the Bridle Track or New Road. This road leaves Bathurst passing through the villages of Eglington and Duramana and then closely follows the Macquarie River until it is joined by the Turon. The road then heads north along the the eastern side of the Turon, and crosses to the western side of the river. There is a very steep climb out of the river, but it flattens out slightly until it crosses Boogong Creek; and then climbs sharply up to Broken Back, and by a very winding and steeply inclined route, eventually reaches the Hill End plateau, on the eastern side of the town.

For many years the Bridle track was impassable to motor traffic, mainly due to rock falls, and the difficulty of fording the Turon. This road received some attention during the depression when the Turon Shire made it one of their relief work projects.In recent years the road has been open more frequently and concrete crossings have been built across Oakey Creek and the Turon River. However, it is still a rough and narrow road for conventional vehicles.

In the early years of this history, that is the 1920s, the unforgiving access roads to Hill End contributed greatly to its isolation. The coach trip was long and arduous, particularly for women and young children. The early motor cars provided some improvement, but due to their limited capacity and doubtful reliability, they did not encourage, or cater for, large numbers of travellers.



This 1896 International Horseless Carriage was not part of the Hill End Transport System but with Tom Ryan at the wheel and Hilda Allen the passenger it was a major attraction in a procession at Hill End in 1951.

Because of all these factors it was not until the late 1930s, when Bob Lincoln introduced the first motor bus service to Hill End,that comparatively large numbers of Hill End people were able to travel in comfort, safety and at an affordable cost to either Mudgee or Bathurst.

In the years before the second world war, Bob Flynn operated a tri-weekly passenger and parcels service from Hill End to Bathurst. The service provided a same day return trip leaving Hill End at 8 am for the forward trip and leaving Bathurst at 4 pm on the same day, for the return trip.

Bob commenced the service with coach and horses and, as motor vehicles became available, he changed to a "T" model Ford car. The T model Ford was fitted with 4.5 inch tyres and they had to be inflated to a pressure of 85 pounds to the square inch. The high pressure in the tyres, combined with very basic suspension, did not give a very smooth ride over the rough gravel roads, and tyre punctures and blow-outs were common with tyre repairs made on the roadside.

In the pre-WW2 era tyres were so prone to damage on the gravel roads that a car trip to Bathurst or Mudgee without at least one puncture was considered a major achievement. And believe me, changing a tyre, on the early type split rim, was a very difficult task anywhere, let alone on the roadside.

On a family trip from Hill End to Sydney in 1930, we were travelling in a 1924 Buick car fitted with 28 inch by 4.5 inch high pressure tyres. Before leaving Hill End four new tyres had been fitted and by the time we had reached St Marys on the out skirts of Sydney all four tyres had blown out. It was just before Christmas and the day was very hot. Hot weather, indifferent road surface, and high pressure thin walled tyres were not a very good mixture.

The Braking system on the T model Ford, consisted of fibre bands positioned around steel drums attached to the rear wheels only. The calliper type bands were operated by steel rods connected to the brake pedal. The brakes were subject to overheating and when wet were very inefficient. This was particularly so when the vehicle was over-loaded, and overloading was an everyday occurrence on the Hill End run.

There were many tales of brake failure on Monkey or Sofala hill, and on these occasions the old Ford reached record speeds. The tale has been told that one passenger had commenced eating an apple when the brakes on the Ford failed, and after a ride of terror down Monkey Hill he found only pips and apple juice in his hand. Another front seat passenger tried to slow down the runaway Ford by applying pressure to the floorboards and his efforts were so strenuous that he fractured the wooden floor board. Bob Flynn always enjoyed telling about hair-raising experiences he and the passengers had in the T Model Ford.

However, despite the difficult steering, the faulty brakes and shocking road surfaces, Bob retired from the run without experiencing any serious mishap. With all its discomfort and faults, the Ford was a great improvement on the horses and coach. Travelling time was cut from about twelve hours to three or four, and the passengers did not have to walk up the steep hills.

The Ford was eventually replaced with a 1926 seven seater Buick Six. A Hudson Super Six, of similar vintage, was kept as a spare vehicle.

Even under the extra-ordinary conditions under which these cars operated, the Buick proved so reliable that it was seldom necessary to call on the spare Hudson Super Six.

These were long bodied cars, and were fitted with two folding or "*dickey*" seats, that were located between the front and back seat. These cars frequently carried 10 to 12 passengers, and even then you could fit in an additional child or two. On these crowded trips there were few problems with the younger passengers, many of whom welcomed a close encounter with a member of the opposite sex. A trip from Bathurst to Hill End in a crowded car often ended at the church, with both the former passengers saying 'I do'. Unfortunately the trip on these over crowded cars

was not quite so rewarding for the older passengers, who were often in agony with cramps in their legs, and an all-consuming desire to empty their bladders. I can vouch for these conditions, because I frequently drove these cars in the late 1930s, when Bob Lincoln was operating the service.

On one occasion, I was pulled over by the police whilst driving down George street Bathurst on Christmas eve. As I was loaded with 12 passengers in a seven seater car, and all their luggage, either on the roof rack or strapped to the running board, I naturally thought I was being pulled up for overloading, but to my surprise there was no mention of this. But I was reprimanded for having a registration label that was out of date.

I might add that at this time there was no road worthiness inspections and once you had a licence there were no restrictions on what you could drive. Likewise driving under the influence of alcohol did not seem to bother the police, the affected drivers or the majority of the public.

In addition to the heavy load in the car, there was invariably a stack of luggage or other goods on the roof rack. To accommodate excess luggage and a wide variety of other goods, the cars also pulled a large trailer. A major part of this service was to purchase items in Bathurst to the order of clients along the road. The goods carried included meat, bread, groceries, fruit and vegetables, clothing, shoes, birthday presents, cakes, and anything else required by those people living in isolated homes along the road, and the villages of Peel, Wattle Flat, Sofala, and Sallys Flat.

Apart from the above service to the town Bob Flynn played a very important role in village life. As the passenger service operated only three days per week, Bob had four days per week to pursue his other activities, which were bee keeper, gardener, farmer, growing feed for his horses, milking cows, amateur vet, blacksmith, and farrier.

He had a gruff manner of speaking and as a child I found this rather frightening; but I soon realised that he was a very kind and generous man. Bob had a wealth of natural ability and because of his various skills was an important and needed member of the village.

Bob was a very skilful blacksmith. I remember him making a beautifully designed and professionally finished single furrow horse drawn plough. The plough was forged from raw steel heated on the forge and each part of it was then hammered into the required shape. The finished article was a work of art. This plough served its purpose for many years and still may be in existence somewhere in Hill End.

Bob's assistant and blacksmith's striker (striker,the man who wields the heavy hammer), was Jack Walpole an ex-miner and well into his sixties, but still powerful and still able to wield the heavy hammer with

force and accuracy, no doubt a skill he had perfected through years of hammer and drill work in the mines. When I visited the workshop, usually on some errand for dad, I always lingered to watch the two men at work around the forge. The puffing of the bellows; the crackle of the charcoal; and the shower of sparks billowing up as the air from the bellows fanned the fire into a white hot glowing mass of coals, that quickly heated the steel until it was in a malleable state.

When the steel was hot enough to be shaped with hammer or dolly, it was drawn from the fire with tongs and placed on the anvil. If the piece of steel was large in size, Bob would indicate with his small ball pean hammer where Jack was to hit with his big hammer. The tap of the light hammer and the thud of the heavy hammer produced a pleasant musical cadence, that could be heard for quite a distance. When the main shaping of the steel was completed the finishing touches were done with the light hammer or swedges.

The skilled blacksmith was a joy to watch. Many of the techniques that I saw at Bob Flynn's forge were useful to me in later years when it was necessary that I become an amateur blacksmith. In fact not long after joining the Army in WW2, I was given a specialist payment of one shilling (10c), per day when the C O discovered I could sharpen the Sections picks, mattocks and bars. The 10c per day represented a 20% increase in pay !!

Tom Spratt operated a motor truck service from Mudgee to Hill End via Grattai, Avisford, Hargraves and Tambaroora. Tom gave roadside parcel service and carried heavier goods such as bags of chaff, oats, wheat and corn, and on the return trip, bales of wool. This service took a day to come from Mudgee. Then he stayed overnight at Hill End and returned to Mudgee next day. At various times other members of the Spratt family had mail contracts from Mudgee to Hill End.

There was also a daily mail service operating from Mudgee-Hill End-Bathurst Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Bathurst-Hill End-Mudgee Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday.In later years the mail run terminated at Sofala instead of Bathurst. A second contractor operated the Sofala-Bathurst section.

Various people operated these mail runs and they used a variety of vehicles, from horse drawn coaches to motor vehicles.

My mother often recounted a terrifying experience she had when, accompanied by three of her children, she was travelling from Hargraves to Hill End on the mail coach.

Just as the coached reached the point where the road plunges steeply from the top of Red Hill down to the floor of the Pyramul Creek gorge,

the coach driver warned the passengers that the brakes had failed. During the driver's efforts to correct the faulty brakes, he dropped the reins and lost control of the horses. Mum said that as the horses felt the push of the heavy coach they increased their speed in an effort to escape the wheeled monster that seemed hell bent on running over them. Despite the swaying of the coach and the rough road the horses managed to keep their feet. The panting and sweating horses eventually came to a stop where the road started to climb out of the Pyramul. Fortunately no one was injured, but both passengers and driver were badly shaken.

Before the advent of the motor truck, all the goods coming to and from Hill End were carried by horse teams. George Cook and Walter Frederick Hodge were the last two Teamsters.

As the town declined so did the carrying business and it was finally the Hodge family who outlasted all their rivals.The horse teams were eventually superseded by motor trucks and in the 1920s the Hodges were the first to commence a motor truck service from Bathurst to Hill End. The carrying service was carried on by Fred Hodge's sons, Roley and Ron. Roley had commenced driving horse teams for his father's carrying business in 1915 when he was only 14 years of age and continued this gruelling work until the horse teams were replaced with motor trucks in the 1920s.

Seven great Clydesdales took two days to pull the heavy, steel-shod waggon the 53 miles from Hill End to Bathurst. After a day unloading and taking on supplies for the homeward journey, the teamster and his horses once again faced the steep haul up Wyagdon and Monkey Hill, the return journey taking three days.

The seventh day was spent shoeing the horses and attending to other needs. Then it started all over again.

The young Roley Hodge endured ten years of this, chocking the huge wagon wheels every foot of the way on the long climbs when the load was heavy, throwing water over the brake shoes to cool them on the long descents, doctoring sick horses and cajoling unwilling ones, and often crawling into rain-sodden blankets under the tail of the waggon at the end of the day; but only after the horses had been fed, watered, and rugged.

Roley served overseas in the Middle East Campaign and later in New Guinea. He was demobilised in 1943 after the death of his father because he was needed to help grow wool on the family property, known as *"Maitland Camp"*. Roley was loved throughout the district and a chapter in the history of the Hill End district closed when he died of a heart attack in January 1983.

The many years of service the Hodge family had spent carrying goods to and from Hill End finally ended when, Ron Hodge decided to join his brother as a grazier, and disposed of the carrying business to Bob Lincoln.

Bill Whittaker was a local grazier who ventured into the carrying business. Carrying goods for the General store he and his family had opened in the 1930s, as well as chaff, grain, and general merchandise. Bill was also the main contractor for the Hill End Alluvial venture at Tambaroora, when he carted cement from Kandos to Hill End to build the company water reservoir. He also moved the majority of the heavy machinery from Bathurst to the mine site. He was one of the major skin buyers in the Hill End district where in the plague years of the rabbit he bought hundreds of dollars worth of skins each week. Bill was also a councillor on the Turon Shire for a number of years.

In 1935, Bob Flynn decided to sell the Hill End to Bathurst passenger and parcel service, the buyer being Robert Lincoln. He was one of the men who had came to Hill End during the depression years. He was a turner and fitter by trade and had served his time at the Eveleigh railway workshops. After completing his training at Eveleigh he worked as a car and truck salesman for Dodge Bros. Car sales were an early casualty of the depression. With future employment looking very bleak Bob was attracted by a scheme being promoted by the Mines Department. The Government, through the Mines Department was encouraging men to go and mine for gold, and although they knew nothing about gold mining Bob and his cousin Wally Houghton came to Hill End to try their luck.

After receiving some local advice they decided to put a tunnel into a rocky hillside on the eastern side of the Turon River. The tunnel had to be blasted through very hard rock, the ultimate object being to intersect a gold bearing reef known as the Mares Nest.

Completing this tunnel was a remarkable feat, for two men who were completely inexperienced in this type of work, and it was a great disappointment to find a reef devoid of gold. Unfortunately this was the fate of many ambitious mining ventures carried out during the depression years.

At this point Wally and Bob decided to return to Sydney. However after a short stay in Sydney, Bob decided to returned to Hill End. His return was in part motivated by gold fever and love of the town but the main reason was that he had met my sister Lorraine, whom he later married.

Although a turner and fitter by trade Bob could turn his hand to anything. He a was skilled motor mechanic, built his own home, was a

keen gardener, poultry farmer, operated a successful transport business and held many executive positions in community organisations.

However Hill End residents will always remember Bob Lincoln for the the modern passenger and parcel service he established. Shortly after purchasing the business from Bob Flynn, the service was upgraded from cars to a modern bus service. This provided a tri-weekly passenger and bus service from Hill End to Bathurst.In addition residents of Sallys Flat, Sofala, Wattle Flat, Peel and all the isolated homes between those villages had the advantages associated with this service.

Bob came to love Hill End and served the town well, not only in a business capacity, but also in helping any community project both with his own labour and the free use of his motor vehicles. He was one of the newcomers who stayed on to become a valuable and well respected local citizen. In addition to the transport people I have mentioned there were others such as Cliff Fuge, Percy Flynn, Bill Ellis, and Don Murry who operated motor trucks, mail runs and school buses. However, those mentioned were the backbone of Hill End's link with the outside world. In later years Nick Harvey combined a passenger run to Bathurst with his school bus run, and then Ray Auld took over as the only passenger service from Bathurst to Hill End.

As the need arose Bob commenced a bi-weekly run to Mudgee via Tambaroora, Grathlyn, Hargraves, Avisford, Grattai and Mudgee. This was followed by a mail and parcels truck service from Hill End to Mudgee via Sallys Flat, Pyramul, and Windeyer. Finally he purchased a general carrying business from Ron Hodge. This transport and passenger network provided an extensive service not only to Hill End but to the whole district. The Lincoln transport system carried the majority of passengers and heavy goods, such as groceries, stock, feed, petrol, machinery, furniture and wool to and from Hill End for many years. With improved economic conditions, the ready availability of motor vehicles, and the decline in population, the need for transport declined and services were gradually reduced.

Chapter 17

Beech's Fire and the Decline in Business

On the night of 30 December 1935, a number of the townspeople was awakened by the sounds of shouting. On looking outside they could see billows of smoke and a great red glow centred in the main street of Hill End. The red glow came from a fire that was rapidly devouring Beech's General Store, an institution that had served Hill End so well for many years.

Due to the inflammable nature of the building and its stock, the fire quickly took hold and the whole building was rapidly turned into a blazing inferno. By the time the fire had burnt itself out, Beech's Store and all its stock were reduced to ashes. Due to lack of fire-fighting equipment and shortage of water, the townspeople had been unable to save anything.

Digger Hocking was one of the first people to arrive at the scene of the fire and because of his close friendship with the Beech family he remembers that night in great detail.

"On the night Beech's store was destroyed by fire, my brother Mo and myself were sleeping on the front verandah of our home in Denison Street this was about two or three hundred yards from the scene of the fire. I awoke to the sound of the loud crackling of the fire and from our verandah could see the flames belching up from the rear of the main shop building. I aroused Mo and we hurriedly pulled on some clothes and raced down to the fire. When we arrived at the fire there were only two or three other people there, even then the fire was so advanced that it was obvious we could not save the store. The store was lined throughout with heavily-painted pine lining boards, and these provided highly inflammable fuel for the fire. In addition, the stock contained a lot of inflammable fuels and explosives.

"The wind was blowing the flames and smoke across the road to Warry's shop, and parts of this shop were starting to ignite. We realised that we would have to work quickly to save the Warry building.

"A number of people had arrived at the scene by this time and we formed a bucket brigade to get water up the narrow stairway and out onto the balcony had started to burn. At one stage it seemed that Warry's shop would also be destroyed, but eventually we won the battle. This was a

great relief to the very wet and exhausted fire-fighters who had been frantically passing buckets of water.

"A further danger occurred when the wind changed and the flames started to threaten the On Gay Jang store. Parts of this building started to burn. The bucket brigade went into action again and eventually both the Warry and On Gay Jang stores were saved."

The burning down of Beech's store was a great loss to the community in general. Apart from being the main shopping centre it was also a meeting place. The Beech brothers were very well liked in town, both were keen sportsmen as were members of the staff.

The Beech family decided not to rebuild after the fire and the entire family moved to Sydney. Harry , Albert and their wives Dot and Gwen purchased a business on Sydney's North Shore and they continued in this business until the onset of WW2.

The burning down of Beechs store on the last day of 1935 was to start a decline in the old established business section of Hill End. In 1936 Weir's *Cricketers Arms* hotel abandoned its licence. Walter Warry and his family closed their shop and moved out to their grazing property. In early 1937 Dick Piesley died, and Mrs Piesley and her family left Hill End.

After Larry's death in September 1932, the hotel was conducted by Angus Longmore. Angus was followed by Dallas Rodda and his wife Gladys. Harry Weir junior, a nephew of Larry, managed the hotel during the final term. It closed in 1936.

The hotel buildings were then purchased by Ron Hodge. He had the buildings dismantled and the salvaged materials were used in the construction of a homestead and farm buildings on his grazing property situated about 5 kilometres from Hill End on the Bathurst Road.

Another building in the Weir estate was situated almost opposite the hotel. This building had served as Council Chambers meeting room, dance hall and concert hall; and during the depression this hall was home to the Gee Bung Club and the Gumnut Club. The building was generally known as Weir's Rooms.

Dad purchased Weir's Rooms in 1935 for $110.00. The building was dismantled by Tom and Jack Bairstow. Some of the salvaged material was the basis for extensions to "Bleak House" our home. Many of the roofs of Hill End houses have some roofing iron from Weirs Room, because dad sold a considerable quantity of roofing iron from this building.

Two sovereigns, a half-sovereign and a number of other coins were found under the floor. Also ten packets of Navy Cut cigarettes, each pack containing five cigarettes and a well made cigarette holder. The holders

had a goose quill mouth piece. The cigarette packets were found sitting on top of a floor joist, probably planted there many years before by some child, who after sampling his loot was either too sick or too afraid to retrieve his cache.

All the heavy timber in the building had been pit sawn from local stringy-bark trees and was still in excellent condition. Many of the hardwood floor boards were worn down to half their thickness due to the friction of dancing feet. The nails in the building were all square and had been hand forged.

The removal of these buildings and the consequent reduction in services did not improve the morale of the townspeople who were still feeling the effects of the depression.

However, once again Hill End's economic situation was temporarily given new life by a gold mining company. *Oriomo Explorations* took up an option on a large area of leasehold of the old alluvial workings at Tambaroora and this enterprise brought a certain amount of prosperity back to Hill End during 1937-38.

Bill Whittaker and his wife Annie helped to replace some of the services the town had lost by opening a store in their home "Athol", situated at the lower end of Clark street. They also kept a stock of produce, chaff, oats, bran wheat etc. Bill and Annie followed the tradition of previous Hill End business people, by helping people in times of hardship. Providing credit and where the need was greatest to unobtrusively deliver a gift of food.

Encouraged by the prospect of a big increase in the number of men who would be earning regular wages at the Tambaroora mine, Ken Hodge and his wife Peg opened a mixed business in the old Salvation Army barracks. The shop was a big asset to Hill End. It was fitted with the first commercial refrigerator ever installed in the town. This meant the town could have a constant supply of ice cream, small goods, cold drinks and many other perishables that had not been possible before.

Ken also purchased film projectors and started regular weekly screening in the Royal Hall, so with shops open and the movies on saturday night life took on a new meaning for Hill End people, particularly the younger generation.

The projectionist showing these films was Ken's brother Ron. Later when Ken Hodge sold the business to Reg Warry, Digger Hocking took over the job of running the films and for a time I acted as his assistant.

The projectors were the old style machines, and they operated on the carbon-arc principle. When in use they required constant attention and concentration. To create the brilliant light that was required to project the

film onto the screen, the carbons had to be maintained at a set distance apart; too far apart the light became dim; too close and the light became intense. To some extent this required gap was maintained mechanically but this did not always work perfectly; and then it was left to the projectionist to manually control the arc.

In previous years Bob Brazier from Bathurst had operated a travelling picture show and he had included Hill End in his travels. However, Ken Hodge was the first to establish a permanent resident film theatre in the Town. Films were shown each saturday night and were a great success. At a time before T.V, the movies were a great entertainment boon for the locals. The Royal Hall was very cold on frosty Hill End nights and many of the patrons brought rugs to wrap around them and by this means attendances were still maintained in the coldest winter weather.

Jack Reynolds purchased the shop and film business from Reg Warry. Jack had moved from Burraga to Hill End when the Hill End Alluvials mine started operations and had opened up a Billard and games club in the old Hosie's Store. Jack married Jean Anderson, a daughter of Frank Anderson. The Reynolds left Hill End when WW2 commenced.

With the closing down of *Oriomo Sluicing Company* and the onset of WW2, local business contracted once again. Many people had left the town either to join the forces or work in essential industries.

The films were discontinued and Laurie Lincoln, Margo and Gwen Eyre carried on the store section of the mixed business during the war years. Frank and Thelma Lamb served the town well in the general store next door.

After more than a century of business activity in Hill End there were few survivors. Many of the past business ventures, had been most profitable, others less so.

A number of the earlier business people had staked miners while they were prospecting for gold or sinking a shaft, a gamble that quite often had resulted in a rich reward.

The 1930s were the end of an era at Hill End as far as business was concerned. We had seen the departure of On Gay Jang, the Beech Family, Ern Hodge, Walter Warry, and *Weir's Hotel* and Weir's Rooms. These were all people and buildings that had been associated with business in Hill End for many years, and the townspeople certainly felt they had lost many good friends.

For a brief period Norman Cross conducted a general store in the On Gay building, but the eventual survivor was Ern Hodge's Store and Bakery.

Chapter 18

Oriomo-Hill End Alluvials

In 1936-37 a company titled Mineral Explorations had applied for large areas of the alluvial gold bearing gullies and creeks at Tambaroora. It commenced to sink holes on a grid plan, the holes being sunk until they reached the rock bottom. Then a four-inch wide strip of dirt was taken from top to bottom of the hole. The dirt thus obtained was then bagged and numbered in relation to the hole and its place on the grid. The samples were then taken to a testing point. They were reduced by panning and the value of gold obtained was calculated as being so much per cubic yard.

After some of this testing had taken place Mineral Explorations granted an option to Oriomo Explorations Ltd. Oriomo was a company that had the financial resources to fund the project, if, after investigation, it considered it a viable proposition.

The following press reports appeared in Sydney papers early in 1937:-

The Telegraph (Sydney) headed **Hill End Alluvial,** the article continued, "Testing of Mineral Exploration alluvial property at Hill End has been completed with the following results: Total area 1,500 acres; area tested 400 acres; yardage 3,000,000, value, eight shillings (80c) per cubic yard. The figures have been determined over a period of two years, and from the results obtained by three independent engineers. Application was made to the Mines Department for a grant to equip the property. An engineer from the department inspected the area to check the values and a grant was recommended.

"11,000 acres remain to be tested in detail. Preliminary sampling of this section indicates a probable further 3,000,000 yards with similar values. Following a preliminary inspection, with satisfactory results by, the engineers of Oriomo Explorations Ltd. an option has been granted to that company on a basis which permits a satisfactory return to shareholders."

If the values as reported in the above article had been correct the gross value of the area would have been between four and five million dollars, a very large sum of money for that period (1937). To give some comparison of the worth of the property, at 1988 gold prices, given that

the sampling was correct, the estimated value would have been in excess of $132,000,000.00.

The Sydney Morning Herald dated 25 January, 1937 states;

"Giving further details of the company's interests at Hill End (N.S.W), the directors of Oriomo Explorations Ltd. in their annual report, state that the company acquired a free option over an alluvial area of about 400 acres. In addition further contiguous areas of approximately 1100 acres have been applied for and from preliminary examination, appear to contain considerable ground of a similar nature. The area under option has been divided into sections for examination by the company's engineers. The first of these Poor Man's Gully, contains 27.3 acres of sluicing ground holding 311,000 cubic yards, valued at six-shillings and seven-pence per yard, (70c). Taking gold at eight pounds per ounce ($16.00) Tambaroora Gully (Red Hill) contains 32.1 acres holding 301,000 cubic yards valued at seven-shillings and ten-pence per cubic yard. These results were obtained by close sampling along section lines. The third section known as Golden Gully, comprised within leases of 200 acres is estimated to contain 2,000,000 cubic yards, and is now being sampled. The method of working the property would be by sluicing this would entail pumping from a storage dam to be erected on Tambaroora Creek at a site below the sluicing areas."

A further article in *The Sydney Morning Herald,* dated 3 February, 1937 states:

"At the annual meeting Of Oriomo Explorations Ltd yesterday, the chairman (Mr.J.D.Fell) said that the company's engineers at Hill End had reported that approximately one-half of the Golden Gully area had been sampled with the following results 700,000 cubic yards, average depth 8.8 feet, average value six-shillings and two-pence (62c) per cubic yard.

"Mr.Fell said that the total yardage proved to date out of nearly 300 of the 400 acres under option was 1,312,000 cubic yards, having an average value of six-shillings and eight-pence (68c) per cubic yard. The property appeared to be a valuable one. A further area of approximately 1100 acres of surrounding ground of a similar nature had been applied for. They would now await a report from the managing directors upon the cost of constructing a water conservation dam and equipping the field, and the best manner in which it could be worked.

"The chairman mentioned that the financial position of the company at February 2nd. 1937, was as follows:- Cash in Bank five thousand and seven pounds; cash on deposit Fifteen thousand pounds; calls deferred Six thousand eight hundred and sixty pounds; calls overdue five hundred and sixty-five pounds".

The sampling methods used, to arrive at the values quoted, at the annual meeting of Oriomo Explorations Ltd, were carried out and supervised by various independent, as well as interested parties. The procedures adopted were the accepted testing methods of that period.However, either by faulty methods or deliberate design, the values obtained from the grid test holes were grossly inflated. The local fossickers knew that the areas tested would not average the stated value of almost one pennyweight of gold to the cubic yard. If average values had been as claimed, local fossickers could have made very good money just using a fossicking dish.

However, Oriomo Explorations exercised the option and accepted the estimated values as correct. Work was started on a concrete wall dam across Tambaroora Creek at the lower end of the leases. The dam had a capacity of 31,000,000 gallons of water, and was estimated to have cost eight thousand pounds ($16,000) to build. This dam was subsidised by Government aid, and for what it was worth, became the property of the government after the closure of the venture.

The machinery installed consisted of a twin drum Babcock and Wilcox boiler, steaming at 160 pounds per square inch fitted with a condenser etc,. A 540 B.H.P Allen vertical compound steam engine direct coupled to 375 K.V.A Crompton generator set, that supplied electric power for the whole project.

The water from the dam was delivered to the workface by two six-stage centrifugal pumps, pumping the water through a 10 inch spiral steel riveted pipeline. The water from this line was supplied directly to a settling dam situated on the eastern side of the Mudgee Hill End road. The water from this settling dam then passed through steel mesh screens and down a pipe line under a road bridge. This pipe line was directly coupled to the Monitor Pumps. The monitor pumps were electric motor driven 10/8 centrifugal pumps and they were capable of providing a nozzle pressure of 80/100 per square inch.

The water and alluvial material washed down by the monitors then travelled down open races to a sump hole where it was picked up by a 9 inch gravel pump. The gravel pump then lifted the water and alluvial material up through a delivery pipe to the top end of elevated sluice boxes. The gold was caught in the steel ripples fitted in the sluice boxes and the water and waste material passed back into the settling dam.

After the heavy material had settled in the tailings dam, the water continued back on its endless circuit to the monitor pumps. When the water became too heavily loaded with suspended clay, make-up water was pumped from the main dam to the settling dam.

This system is known as closed circuit hydraulic sluicing, and is usually adopted when water supply is a problem.

This system was not entirely satisfactory at Tambaroora because of the clay content in the material being sluiced.The clay was very fine and remained in suspension, the water becoming so loaded with this fine clay that the water and clay mixture from the nozzle lost its cutting ability, and would not penetrate the alluvial banks with the same efficiency as clean water.

Another disadvantage of this dirty water was an unacceptable loss of gold. The fine gold failed to settle in the sluice box ripples due to the density of silt in the water. There was never an adequate supply of clean make up water delivered to overcome these problems.

The dredging plant was estimated to have cost approximately twenty thousand pounds ($40,000) to install. The completed plant was undoubtedly the most modern and efficient mining plant ever installed at Hill End. It was sad that such a well planned and equipped project had such a short and financially disastrous fate.

My brother and I worked at the sluicing face. On afternoon and night shift three men operated the plant, one man on the nozzle, one on the gravel pump. The third man relieved either of these positions and saw that the water race and boxes were running correctly. Jack Bairstow, was the gravel pump operator on our shift. The whole area was floodlit by electricity that was generated at the main power plant. From my recollection there were three men required at the main power plant on each shift.

Extra workers were needed on day shift to carry out plant maintenance and establishment tasks, while the night and afternoon shifts just concentrated on sluicing as much alluvial as possible.

During the construction period there would have been about fifty or sixty men employed on the project. Some of these were indirectly employed, carting cement from Kandos, carting machinery and supplies from Bathurst, cutting and carting wood for the steam boilers etc..

Local men such as Cliff Fuge and Perc Flynn purchased motor trucks fitted with Berryman-Loaders and took up contracts to supply gravel for the construction of the dam wall. The building of the dam gave employment to a large number of men, and certainly the largest number of men to be employed at Hill End since the Reward Mine closed down more than a decade before. Many of those employed at the mine were the men who had come to live at Hill End during the depression.

Apart from the dam and machinery installation, a number of large buildings had to be built. These were required to house the power plant, store rooms and smaller portable buildings for the work face.

The pipeline from the dam up to the sluicing site had to be laid, and tailings dam built.

A saw mill was established and all the sawn timber used at the mine was harvested locally and then milled on the site. Poles and power lines for the distribution of the electric power from the generating plant to various sections of the leases had to be erected. All these tasks required a considerable work force.

On the 8 November 1937 when the power lines were nearing completion, a fatal accident occurred, resulting in the death of Les Judge. Les was working up a ladder on one of the power poles when a wire stay on the pole was removed. The main power wire had been run out under the stay cable and in order to lift the power wire up onto the pole the stay cable was removed. The pole fell to the ground and as Les was holding on to the cross bar of the pole his weight brought him underneath as the pole fell. He was crushed between the pole and a bar of rock and the injuries sustained proved fatal.

As a residence for the mine manager, Mr Rowe, the company built a substantial house near the Mudgee-Hill End road. It was built of local white stringy-bark timber and was clad with wooden shingles, also of white stringy bark, all the timber being cut at the company sawmill.

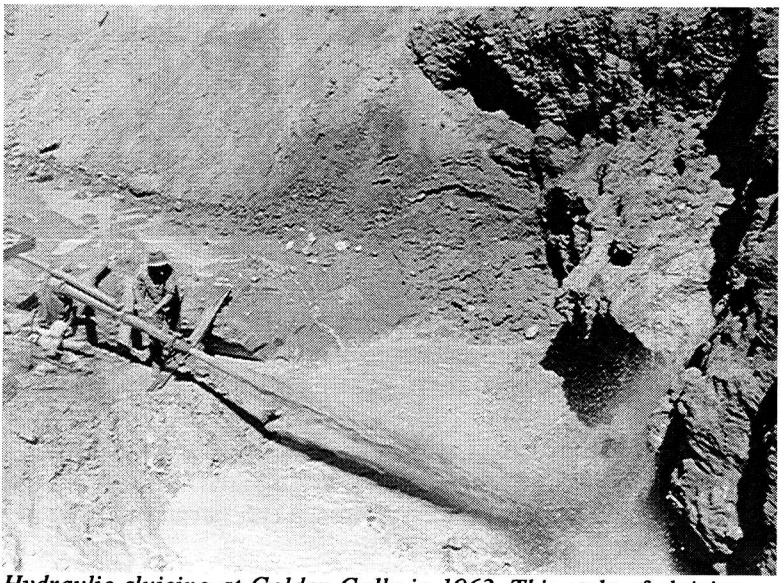
I purchased this house in 1939 for 130 pounds ($260). It had 3 bedrooms, lounge room, dining room, kitchen, laundry, bathroom, verandahs back and front, was wired for electricity, was fully furnished, had septic system, water tanks, feltex floor covering throughout and insect screens on all doors and windows. This was a very modern and well equipped house for the times. In later years I cut this house into sections and moved it to Reef St. Hill End. Some design alterations were made during this move.

Nick Harvey now owns the house and has made further alterations and has also replaced the timber shingles with alternative cladding.

The Company started sluicing early in 1938 and the operation was closed down in July 1938. After this date my brother, Ivor and several others carried out some prospecting under the supervision of the company engineer Mr Moore and the manager Mr Rowe. This sampling revealed values much lower than the initial testing.

Dad was asked to attend a meeting of company directors and management to discuss the future of the mine. At this meeting, it was revealed that the average values recovered during the duration of the

sluicing were 10 pence per cubic yard (10c). This represented about 12% of the values arrived at during the initial testing of the area. Admittedly there was some gold lost during the sluicing operations, but not on such a scale that would account for this large discrepancy.



Hydraulic sluicing at Golden Gully in 1963. This style of sluicing was similar to the system used by Oriomo

I have been unable to ascertain the actual amount of gold, obtained by the Company. However Mines Department records reveal that the amount of gold produced at Hill End during 1938 was 995 ounces.This was approximately 700 ounces more than 1937. So it can be assumed that most of this increase of 700 ounces of gold, if not more, came from the company's work. I say possibly more, because most of the workers, who under ordinary circumstances would have been getting some gold, were employed by the Company..

There were some post mortems as to how the actual results had so dismally failed to match those obtained in the extensive testing that had taken place. It was obvious that some grave errors had occurred either by incompetence or design, but so many people both independent and company associated, had been involved in the preliminary testing that it was difficult to ascertain just what had gone wrong.

Sluicing operations had commenced close to the Hill End Mudgee Road and at the southern end of Red Hill. From an engineering point of

view this was the logical and most efficient position to start this type of sluicing operation. However, it was certainly not the best place as far as values were concerned. Perhaps a greater degree of success would have resulted if operations had commenced in Golden Gully.

Part of the area sluiced in this first paddock had been the site of a Chinese settlement and Joss House. New Chip the last chinaman to live at Tambaroora had also lived on part of the land that Oriomo had sluiced away.

My brother and I assisted in the first clean up, and the sluice boxes contained a great number of Chinese token coins, Round with a square hole in the middle, no doubt lost by the Chinese many years before. There were also a number of old coins of English origin found in the sluice boxes.

The closing down of this project was a severe blow to many Hill End families, some of whom had received regular wages over the past eighteen months.The improved standard in the economy had been short lived but most acceptable after the stringent financial years of the depression.

There was already talk of another world war in Europe and soon the depression and unemployment would be forgotten and the Hill End population would be rapidly reduced through enlistments in the fighting forces and work in war related industries.

Chapter 19

Gold Mining Red Hill - Dirt Holes

When a crushing was well below expectations, Hill Enders frequently referred to it as a *"smudder"* crushing. This saying originated when one of the early miners had spent many months of hard work mining and carting 50 tons of quartz, that, when crushed, returned only a few pennyweights of gold. On looking at the tiny piece of smelted gold that represented all his weeks of toil he said, "I feel I *smudder* (smother)"

Although we never had what could be called a *smudder* crushing we did have one or two *smudder* alluvial clean-ups when sluicing the alluvial banks at the Junction of Turon and Macquarie Rivers.

Red Hill Dumps

During the Hawkins Hill mania, 1871-72, the Dirt Hole claims were floated into boom companies to sink vertical, or, as they called them, downright shafts. These shafts were to exploit veins profitably worked on underlay until water became too heavy to be handled even by two horse whims. Most of these ventures ran out of money before reaching the reef they hoped to cut.

The *Red Hill Company* was working one of the richest areas and was one of the few to continue working after the collapse of a number of the other companies on this northern end of the gold fields.

The *Red Hill Company* had to contend with a lot of underground water. It increased from 1000 gallons per hour to 1500 gallons per hour as depth increased. To cope with this extra water they kept installing better pumping equipment. The increased water flow and the 1902 recession caused the mine to close. From Mines Department reports, they were then on seven ounces of gold per ton and were pumping 4000 gallons of water per hour from the shaft.

Annual Report, Department Mines NSW, 1888 page 67 quotes:-

"The chief and most noteworthy event is the success of the *Red Hill Gold Mining Company*, Tambaroora, owned by Newton Brothers, which has worked for several years with poor success partly owing to influx of water. The enterprising proprietors however, having procured more powerful machinery three months since, were rewarded by striking the

reef at a greater depth, and stone has been crushed yielding seven ounces to the ton, and continues to improve".

Dad, my brother, and myself spent two or three years carting dumps from *the Valentine* and *Red Hill* mines to the crushing plant at the *Valentine* Mine. We were able to process about 40 to 50 tons per week.

The returns from this work varied greatly. By prospecting the dumps before we treated them we could always be certain that our work would result in a reasonable return. Occasionally the result would be much greater than expected. One such occasion was a return of ten ounces of gold for a weeks work by three men. We had struck a small quantity of rich ore that had been accidentally mixed in with the waste material and thrown over the dump. Apart from this initial crushing we had several other very good crushings from the same dump.

On another occasion we found 5 ounces of gold in a small amount of quartz right on the surface of a large reef at Red Hill. This reef was known as *Kissells Blow* and had been worked by William Kissell in the 1870s. The patch of gold was contained in a fossicking dish of broken material enclosed in a small bug hole in an otherwise hard clear quartz reef.

The Red Hill-Valentine reefs were never as rich as those on Hawkins Hill. Because of this the dumps at Red Hill and the Valentine were not as rich as those on Hawkins Hill. .However, the advantage was that the dumps in the Red Hill area were very accessible and the material was easier to process. These two factors enabled us to treat the material more easily than the dumps on Hawkins Hill. During our work on processing the dumps in the Red Hill area we averaged a weekly return of $20.00 each. This was twice the amount of miner's wages at that time.

Dirt Holes Mine

Later we carried out some prospecting on some large dumps of quartz that had been mined by one of the first reef mining companies on the Hill End field. This reef had been worked as early as 1854 by a group known as the *British Colonial Company*, but in my time, was generally referred to as the Old Company. Although the Old Company, took out about 200 tons of ore from the Dirt Holes mine it did not crush any stone from this area. This is borne out by Brian Hodge in his booklet 'Touring Hill End', where he states that the Roasting Pit battery complex crushed just 100 tons of ore from Sarjeant's Hill, and the mines close by did not even produce a crushing.

This statement accounts for the large tonnage of ore that still remained at the Dirt Holes mine, when we became interested in the area. Our first work involved the crushing of 70 to 80 tons of ore from this stock pile the Old Company had left.

By selecting the quartz we were able to obtain values of 8 to 10 pennyweights per ton. This was a profitable result, for our costs were very low, as the ore was already mined.

This quartz had been taken out of the vein by cutting a trench down some one or two metres from the surface and along the line of reef for a distance of 400 metres.

A tunnel had been driven in from the bottom of the hill, and under the open-cut. This tunnel was driven along the reef for 100 metres or so, and was sloping down as it went into the hill. There were also two underlay shafts sunk on the reef and these intersected the tunnel at 150 feet intervals.

The main reef at the *Dirtholes Mine* was unusual in that the vein had turned from its normal south-north line with an easterly dip, and had developed an east-west line and was dipping to the north. Before the Old Company acquired the leases, this vein had been worked by Messers. Coles and Company. Parliamentary Papers 1854 said in part: "The Royal vein at Dirt holes is being worked by Coles and Company, but their machinery , although good of its kind, is on too small a scale to effect much. The yield from the quartz is considerable, and with better machinery would, I think, pay well for crushing. At present they only grind about one ton per week; the gold in this vein is so fine that the matrix must be completely pulverised before the quicksilver, (mercury) can do its work." However, it seems that the Old Company did not crush any ore from this mine, after they took over from Coles.

After crushing the quartz that had been left on the surface, we then cleaned out the trench in several spots and uncovered a reef about 12 inches wide, the reef was really divided in two by a thin layer of slate. One portion of the reef carried little if any gold but the other portion about 6 inches wide showed good prospects.

We started to sink on this reef and it was to be the start of a very profitable family mine. By taking out only the gold bearing half of the vein, we were able to obtain values ranging between 1.5 ounces and 75 ounces to the ton, and an average of one ounce. Because of the soft nature of the workings in this mine it was very easy to earn a good living.

We worked the Dirt Holes mine for several years, sometimes employing people, at other times just dad, my brother Ivor and myself. With the start of WW2, my brother and I joined the army, and dad, who

was then almost 70 years of age, retired, or at least we thought he had. The mine has not been worked since.

After a brief break away from mining, dad returned to his life-long love and spent the next 10 or 15 years supervising and advising on various mining ventures around Hill End. He lived a very happy and active life, he approached old age full of fight, still showing how strong and fit he was. He was very even tempered, and remained active and interested in gold mining until the day he died.

My father was a great walker and continued walking long distances, well into his 80s. When visiting my sister at Pendle Hill he frequently walked into Parammatta to do some shopping. In his late seventies he thought nothing of walking from Hill End to the junction of the Turon and Macquarie Rivers, and on several other occasions to Piesley's Island and Dixon's Long Point, the latter being a distance of about 14 miles.

One entry in his diary, written when he was 78, remarked that he did not know what was the matter with him, because he felt tired after a 12 miles walk to the Macquarie.

By the 1940s the Hill End miners and most of the younger generation had left Hill End, either to join the fighting forces, or to work in munition factories or other essential industries.Gold mining and fossicking became almost non existent for the next 4 or 5 years. Those that remained in Hill End were engaged in running the essential community services and rural work. So gold became an unimportant part of Hill End's economy for the first time in almost a hundred years.

Chapter 20

Turon Community Advancement Co-Operative

In 1939 the depression was still being felt in Hill End and a number of citizens were concerned at the high level of unemployment amongst the younger members of the community. With little prospect of long term employment those young people who were in a position to do so were leaving the town, in order to look for work in the provincial towns or cities. The departure of the young people from any community points to a bleak future.

At this time a discussion group had been formed, and regular meetings were held in the Church of England Rectory. Reverend Alan Laing was the rector. Our objectives were to discuss and debate political, social, and community affairs. The group consisted of people from all sections of the community, including both local residents and newcomers to the town. We had a connection with Sydney University and were supplied with various instructive booklets that provided material for debate and stimulated open discussion.

It was from discussions by this group that a plan was formulated to assist the town by starting a community project that would promote ideas to foster local cottage industries and social development.

On the 23rd. March 1940, "The Turon Community Advancement Co-Operative Society Limited" was legally registered. Its first directors were, Reverend A.W.Laing, C of E Rector; O.E.Martin, Headmaster P.S; A.K.Scott grazier; F.Lamb, Storekeeper; Frank Hocking, Engineer; and J.Sneddon Assistant School teacher.

The aims and objects of the society were very ambitious, and if World War 11 had not intervened it would certainly have produced some benefits for the people of Hill End. We printed a brochure to explain the plan and this information was picked up by the press and received favourable comment from the community at large.

I was a member of the group that was actively interested in the co-operative, and before joining the AIF was engaged in several aspects of the scheme. My participation included organising weekly social nights for children and younger members of the community. I was also involved with the Department of Agriculture, in an investigation of soil and

climate, to test Hill End's suitability for the commercial growing of stoned fruit.

The following has been taken from a brochure that was printed, in order to explain the scheme to the general public.

"It is intended that the Turon Community Advancement Co-Operative Society Limited should do anything within the limits of its resources to advance the welfare of the district, to provide employment, training in home industries and, in addition, a Community House where facilities would exist for cultural development, education, sport and also a library and reading room. Briefly, anything that has as its motive improved conditions, higher citizenship and opportunities for individual advancement all come within the ambit of the Community Advancement Society.

It is intended that it should be an organisation for the physical, cultural, and spiritual development of the district; to provide the necessary finance and to be completely dissociated from any political party or religious denomination. It will be managed by the people and by the people's representatives and seek to provide a sensible method of finance within the existing order of things. There is nothing unorthodox or revolutionary about the proposals. It is merely the adoption of an evolutionary process to enable people to help themselves.

The Beginnings

The plan had its beginning in the meeting of a small study group at the Hill End Rectory. The group became determined to formulate a plan that would enable something to be done for and by the people of Hill End who, through no fault of their own had found that life had become merely an existence. It was felt that circumstances and environment should not be allowed to dominate the life of those, who anxiously seeking development, found themselves through financial and other limitations forced into a life of virtual idleness.

"It is hoped that the scheme will provide the means of helping the young men and women of Hill End, and later, people in similar circumstances in the surrounding districts, to build their lives soundly by providing a means of livelihood and a means of extending their mental development through education in all its forms. It is also recognised that social development must be extended through social evenings, music, games and the provision of a good library.

"There is nothing charitable about the enterprise. Those citizens who have given time and money to the formation of the society have done so

without any intention of personal gain. They have been inspired solely by the principles of citizenship and the desire to help those who are willing to help themselves. The success or failure of the whole plan depends upon the people themselves.

"It is hoped that much will be possible amongst those at present unemployed, or dependent upon fossicking for a hazardous living, but even more importantly it is to help the boys and girls who are leaving school without prospects of employment or without any reasonable chance of becoming responsible citizens. Obviously the society must do its utmost to remedy the state of affairs that exist at the present time but even more important is the determination to prevent recruits being added to the number already finding life to be more of an existence than an adventure in mental and spiritual development."

We will never know if this grand and altruistic scheme would have worked or not. The war deepened, the main organisers of the scheme soon became involved in some aspect of the fighting forces or war work and the planning came to halt. After the war, with ample work available and many of the young people to whom the scheme was aimed no longer living at Hill End, the idea was never revived.

I was a member of the committee and must admit that I together with a number of others, was swept up in a wave of enthusiasm, all quite convinced that the scheme would be successful.

Had the Co-Op worked it would certainly have made Hill End unique and who knows! The establishment of cottage industries and other schemes that were in the pipeline could have produced permanent industries in the town as well as being attractive to tourists.

Additional details on the Co-Op can be obtained in the appendices.

Chapter 21

WW2 and the Affect on Hill End

At 8 p.m Eastern Australian time on the evening of 3 September 1939, a despondent Neville Chamberlain broadcast the news that Britain's attempts to preserve peace had failed. Seventy-five minutes later, Australian listeners heard their own prime minister, Robert Menzies, declare it his melancholy duty to confirm officially that Britain was at war with Germany and, as a result, Australia was also at war.

There were no brass bands to lead men to the recruiting centres in the summer of 1939 and the decision to cut soldiers' pay from 8 shillings (80c), a day to 5 shillings (50) did not increase enthusiasm. However, many Hill End men were among the first to volunteer. The departure to the fighting forces and the munition factories had commenced, and as the tempo of war increased, the Hill End population decreased.

The Hill End men fought overseas first in the European conflict and later in the Pacific war.Some were taken prisoner of war and worked on the Burma Railway; others lost their lives. For many the transition back to civilian life was difficult but the country men and women seemed to adapt to change more easily than city dwellers.

Those that remained at home set about helping the war effort by any means in their power. A local branch of the Australian Red Cross was formed, and a considerable amount of money was raised for Red Cross war activities. A town committee organised farewell dances for those departing for service in the fighting forces. In true Hill End style the community joined together in helping the war effort. As the only venue for dances etc., The Royal Hall played an important part in community fund raising efforts. The Eyre family provided the Hall free of charge and the local ladies supplied the food for supper.

Donald Dove and his wife Jean made a major contribution to this fund raising, providing what was then called "Canned Music", an amplifying system connected to a record turn-table. In the days before tapes and long-playing records, the frequent changing of records, selecting suitable records for each particular type of dance, required constant, expert attention. Donald Dove's hobby was building and repairing radios and amplifying equipment, and he was well qualified and very willing to play the part of music maker and master of ceremonies. He was a most good-

humoured man, willing to help anyone, and it was always a joy to be in his company.

On numerous occasions during the war years, the Dove family made the long trip from Ullamalla, bringing with them the somewhat cumbersome amplification equipment and then at two or three o,clock in the morning, making the long trip home. This family, like many other families in the Hill End district, gave unstinting of time and money to help and entertain their fellow citizens.

During the war years, the younger members of the community were the first to leave, and the majority of those who departed did not again take up residence in the town. The loss of these younger members of the community reduced the population and commenced an ageing pattern that would eventually lead to social changes within the town. It was a situation that posed the question; how do you get them back to a small gold mining village after they had experienced the advantages of Sydney and the provincial towns?

During the war years petrol was rationed and the private car owner received only enough for emergency travel. The purchase of new cars was practically impossible, so in this way the War also added to the isolation of the town.

To some extent this isolation was eased by a passenger bus Bob Lincoln had purchased just prior to the war. Being an essential service, and almost the only means of transport for people to travel to Bathurst, Bob received extra petrol and with the help of a charcoal burning gas producer, he had fitted to the bus, he was able to maintain a reliable, if somewhat overworked, passenger service from Hill End to Bathurst.

Ron Hodge, who was working under similar circumstances, operating his freight service with motor trucks, kept the town supplied with all their general requirements.

The motor vehicle and petrol shortage continued for some time after the war.So once again the old problem of isolation affected the community. This isolation from the outside society, with restricted cultural, social, sporting and employment opportunities, was of particular concern to the younger generation.

Those that returned and decided to settle in the village, joined with new residents, some of whom were brides, and together they set about making Hill End a more congenial place to live and bring up their children.

The improved economic conditions, after the war had ended helped everyone and especially the newly married couples, who soon bonded

themselves into an enthusiastic group, building new homes and forming community associations.

Soon the sound of two-stroke engines broke the silence of the night as a number of people installed 32 or 12 volt home lighting plants. Electric light at the flick of a switch was a big improvement on kerosene lamps and candles!

Silent Knight and Electrolux refrigerators, operated with a kerosene flame, found their way into many homes, as did Agar slow combustion cooking ranges that were fitted with hot water systems. There were also slow combustion wood burning room heaters. Saw benches took the place of the axe for the never-ending chore of keeping the family stove or open fire fuelled with wood.

More water tanks were installed and water laid on to bathrooms and kitchens. In some homes Feltex replaced lino as a floor covering. Houses were painted in brighter colours, the era of modern, easy-to-apply house paints had arrived. The depression years were beginning to fade.

Radios were still powered with 2, or 6 volt wet plate batteries, that had to be taken to Bathurst to be recharged, and any acid spill during transit became a problem and we had to have lead lined boxes fitted to accommodate the batteries,

Apart from these modern improvements and the better living standards that were being enjoyed, Hill End was still much the same as it had been pre-war. The isolation and very restricted employment opportunities still prevented any real increase in the population.

To myself and many others, Hill End still presented an appealing lifestyle, where it was possible once again to enjoy a friendly and caring community life. Because the price of gold had not moved with inflation gold mining was no longer an attractive means of earning a livelihood. Those who had depended on gold in the past had to seek alternative employment.

There was a backlog of rural work, mainly due to lack of labour during the war years. For some locals the rural work offered an immediate source of employment. There were also employment opportunities with the Turon Shire Council and the Prickly Pear Eradication Commission. Others went back to the family grazing property.

With many young people returning to civilian life after four years of war, it was natural that a number of marriages would be celebrated. Some of these were between local couples, others brought home partners, whom they had married, during their absence from home; and, as in other parts of post war Australia, Hill End enjoyed a minor baby boom.

This group of newly married couples, most of whom were starting a family, created a core of young people with common interests and aspirations. To some extent these young couples, and their children provided a period of social and community renewal. With extra numbers at school, due partly to the baby boom and partly to the innovation of a school bus, we had a higher grade school with two teachers.

I am sure, that most of those involved in the town's activities during this time, will remember the wonderful community spirit that prevailed and the happy and safe environment that Hill End provided for their children. My children and my nieces, who were part of this period, still remember their childhood in Hill End with a great deal of affection. They often say that they would like their children to have experienced the warmth and freedom that they knew in their childhood.

Sporting activities such as tennis, golf, cricket, football and rifle range shooting were supported with enthusiasm.

Hill End Football Team 1952

L to R B/Row: Kevin Eldridge, Cliff Fuge, Const. Fitzgerald, John Burns, Barry Ellis, Jack Ellis, Jim Tunbridge.

L to R F/Row: Mick Byrnes, George Williams,Peter Burns, Ted Woolard, Allan Tunbridge, Herb Woolard.

Mascot Gray Goodwin.

The social, sporting and community organisations were invaded by young and enthusiastic members. Increased membership helped to revitalise the Country Women's Association, Red Cross, Church Guild, and Parents and Citizens Association. A Returned Servicemen's Club and a Discussion Group were formed and both were well supported. The CWA became involved in Sydney University extension courses and they also presented several well directed amateur plays.

In 1947 Digger Hocking, Gwen Eyre and Margo Fuge purchased a modern 16mm projectors, and on March 29 of that year commenced regular screening of films. The opening program was Naughty Marietta, starring Jeannette McDonald and Nelson Eddy. After three years of operation the film projectors were sold to the *Devon Gold Mining Company* and Bill Ellis became the projectionist.

Some of the films shown during the period that *Devon Gold* operated the theatre included:-

Dead Reckoning, Humphrey Bogart and Lizabeth Scott;
Dooling of Oklahoma, Randolph Scott & L. Allbritton;
I love Trouble, Franchot Tone and Janet Blair;
Lust for Gold Glenn Ford and Ida Lupino;
Riders In the Sky, Gene Autry and Gloria Henry;
Snafu, Robert Benchley and Vera Vague;
Together Again, Charles Boyer and Irene Dunne;
Voice of the Whistler, Richard Dix and Lynn Merrick.

Bill Nicholson was the school headmaster and both he and his wife fitted in to the community spirit that prevailed in the town in this post war period.

This was a very pleasurable and happy period for all those who were able to participate, in what we saw, as a wide variety of social activities. Apart from the general sporting and community functions there were large parties in private homes, wool-shed dances, picnics, annual balls, festivals and sports days.

There was a number of tennis clubs functioning in Hill End and Tambaroora. Most of the grazing properties had a tennis court and with adjoining property owners and their families, they were able to field strong tennis teams. This resulted in a circuit of tennis matches that occupied the full tennis season. We played matches with Rayners at Grathlyn, Seamans at Avila, Sallys Flat Village, Prices at Pyramul, the villages of Windeyer, Crudine, Turondale, Sofala, Wattle Flat, Hargraves, and an occasional game with a Bathurst team.

The tennis teams always had a picnic lunch on match days and at the end of the day there was often a sing-song around the piano.

The same group of people who played tennis also attended weekly dances held at the various village community halls, so friendships in this group were constantly reinforced with frequent social contact. This community friendship was a very caring and deeply satisfying form of social enrichment, and friendships were formed that were to last a life time.

Citizens associations were formed with intent to improve the town and all its community facilities. Trustees for the Common, Hospital and Sports Ground all played a part in bringing new ideas for maintaining and improving these facilities.

The coming of the artists to Hill End and the discovery of the Holtermann collection of photographs generated state wide media coverage. Hill End was featured in most of the weekly magazines as well as daily papers and radio. As motor cars and the petrol to fuel them became more available, the widespread publicity Hill End had received, encouraged an ever increasing number of people to visit Hill End.

Post war Australians were becoming much more conscious of their history and with better economic conditions and motor cars easier to obtain, people were more mobile. The trip from Sydney to Hill End was no longer a barrier to this new type of Australian tourist. Thus the publicity that Hill End received fitted the times.

The people who who came to Hill End were attracted for a number of reasons. Some were interested in art, some in history, some came for shooting and fishing, gold digging, geology, others just for a peaceful holiday. For others the publicity had regenerated an interest in some of their ancestors that had lived at Hill End in the early days. Some of the people who had lived at Hill End during the depression returned to renew their links with the town.

The increased number of visitors encouraged the townspeople to provide entertainment that would interest the visitors and would also be in keeping with the history of the town. Many of the competitive events that were organised were based on gold mining methods or local industries, such as sawmilling, grazing and leaf cutting. These sports days were very popular both with locals and visitors and the profits were used to improve town facilities.

The number of tourists visiting Hill End gradually increased but the resident population continued to decrease. The opportunities for more satisfying and permanent employment that was opening up in Bathurst, Orange and elsewhere encouraged many of the younger families to leave

Hill End, and as the older citizens of the town began to pass on, there were fewer young ones to take their place.

The post war babies growing up commenced a new cycle of population shift, and each time there would be fewer and fewer residents left. As there was no arrangement for children to continue their education either for high school or university, many of the post war children left Hill End to seek further education. When their education was completed most of these young people sought positions in Sydney or other towns.

The modern trend for children to leave small country towns to seek further education usually results in the children becoming urban dwellers. Sadly, this is the pattern of all small Australian towns, and consequentially the majority of Australians live in overcrowded and heavily industrialised cities, clinging to the coastal fringes of the continent.

Many years ago a member of parliament told me that all governments approach decentralisation in the wrong manner. They try to decentralise to the provincial towns and so create another urban giant that bleeds the surrounding towns of their young people. He argues that if small industries were established in the small towns and villages first, this would stabilise or increase the rural population. Then by its production fuel the provincial towns and cities with its produce rather than its young workers. This would eventually lead to a truly decentralised community, relieve the housing shortage in the cities and in addition provide cheap and healthy living for many families.

As we moved into the 1960s the decline in Hill End's population is shown by the electors on the roll. The number on the roll in 1925 was 236; 1930-211, 1935-342, 1943-265, 1947-245, 1954-200, 1960-140, 1964-158.

The decline in the number of descendants of the original Hill End families has continued and by 1991 only a handful of representatives of the old families remain.

Fortunately this decline in the population has now been halted to some extent by a new wave of people who have come to Hill End to retire or simply to live in peaceful and healthy surroundings. A number of these people have taken over the reins of citizenship.

Maybe in the future some small industries with a local content could be developed, such as making wooden toys from local timber. There are many local timbers, that when polished, display a beautiful grain and lustrous finish.

Apart from the gums and stringy bark there is yellow, white and red box, red gum, river oak, and hickory. There is a keen demand for wooden

toys and they command high prices, particularly when made from unique timber.

Jock Sneddon, an assistant teacher, and I had intended to start toy making as a project within the Turon Community Advancement Co-Operative. Recently I made some wooden toys for our grandchildren and other friends. They included rocking horses, doll's house, hobby horse, boats, train, cars, trucks, games and novelty toys. I was surprised at the reception they received and a local retailer offered me very high prices for some of the items. However, I wanted to do it as a hobby, not as a business. I think that this type of industry would be very suitable for Hill End and, with enthusiastic people, could develop into a viable business.

Quartz and other local stones could be used in the manufacture of other items, and could be combined with timber for door stops etc. And of course pure, pollution-free roof water bottled and suitably labelled would be a very profitable side-line. Quality and presentation is always a big selling point for any local products.

Perhaps a modified version of the Community Advancement Co-Operative could still be used to finance local cottage industries.

I have extended Hill End's post war period a long way in this chapter, but the things I have written about are all part of the social and economic changes in direction that have occurred and altered the face of Hill End during the past 75 years.

Chapter 22

Devon Gold and the Cornish Miners

In 1949, a large Melbourne company, *Devon Gold N.L*, was formed by the principals of Ian Potter and Company, who were one of the largest sharebrokers and underwriters in Australia. They were joined in the venture by some representatives of overseas capital. *Devon Gold* had been granted an option to work the *Beyers-Holtermann Nugget* mine and fifty other adjoining leases.

The consolidation of these leases had been a life long dream of the Marshall Brothers, particularly Alexander. The three brothers, William Alexander John, Duncan McLean, and Alexander had spent a lifetime working mines on the Hill End field. They were very experienced in all aspects of the gold mining industry and their knowledge of the Hill End field was unique.

Over the years they had been responsible for raising capital as well as investing their own money, in an effort to develop and work gold mines at Hill End. All these ventures were an important feature of the Hill End economy, providing employment for the miners and helping the business community. The Marshall family was most generous, with its help to Hill End people generally and to miners in particular. The family owned quite a lot of mining machinery. This pool of machinery was rarely idle because it was always made available to local miners and, as far as I know, completely free of charge. This was particularly helpful during the depression years and kept many miners off the dole.

The consolidation of the Hawkins Hill leases, under the management of *Devon Gold*, was the first time, in the history of the Hill End gold field, that one company had held leases covering the entire Hawkins Hill area. Having control of this comparatively large area presented a great opportunity for *Devon Gold* to prospect and develop some of the deep ground to the north.

The original plan was to extend the Consolidated, Amalgamated and Foster's Tunnels. These three tunnels had a total length of 6 or 7 kilometres and were driven into the side of Hawkins Hill, at levels of 400, 800 and 1200 feet from the surface. It was suggested, that these tunnels could be the means of working the line of lode at depths and areas

as yet unexplored, but this was not to be; and as you will see, most of the companies capital was expended in fragmented work, mainly in the old workings.

The crushing plant and other machinery, already in situ, at the entrance to the Consolidated Tunnel, was repaired and upgraded and additional machinery purchased and installed. New shower, change and lunch rooms were built for the miners. Buildings to house the machinery and the upgrading of the Flying Fox were also undertaken.

The mining engineer in charge of operations was a Mr. Paul Jones, of San Francisco, a mining engineer and geologist of world wide experience. The mine manager was Angus Longmore, a native of Hill End and a miner who had been involved in the gold mining industry all his life and who had a good working knowledge of the Hawkins Hill mines.

Because of the shortage of experienced underground miners at Hill End in the immediate post war years, it was decided to bring some miners from Cornwall. Their migration was arranged with the help of the Commonwealth Government's immigration authorities. *Devon Gold* undertook to provide employment and accommodation for this special group.

On Thursday November the ninth, 1950, the Cornish miners arrived at Hill End, their families were to arrive later. Thus, after almost one hundred years another migration of Cornish people had come to Hill End in the search for gold. The first Cornish miners were brought out in the early 1850s by the *British Colonial Company*, to work the *Dirt Holes Mine*. Apart from those that worked at the Dirt Holes, and later at Hill End, Cornish miners played a most important role in the gold mining industry all over Australia.

During 1950, the company found encouraging quantities, of rich ore, carrying high concentrations of gold. This ore came from an area about 80 metres north and 75 metres deeper, than the site of the famous Beyers and Holtermann nugget. Work was also proceeding on four other veins. The most famous of these was Paxton's vein that in previous years had produced some very rich returns.

During the preliminary work, some small areas of very rich ore were intersected. 900 pounds of ore from one vein yielded 36 ounces of gold.

A Mines Department Inspector's report, dated 9/5/1950, reported that the following results were obtained by *Devon Gold*:-

"In December 1949, 5.25 tons of ore was treated for 83 ozs of gold. And a further 30 ounces of gold was obtained from development ore."

A report covering June to September 1950 gives the following figures:-

June	17 tons yielded	172 ozs gold.
July	Nil	
August	9.5 " "	65 " "
September	15 " "	46.25 " "

The above crushings were encouraging. The plan of the company was to forge ahead with developmental work in the northern end of the leases and at the same time exploit any remaining rich areas in the old workings, a plan that most Hill End miners had been advocating. At this stage it did seem that the company was going to test the northern end of their leases.

Towards the end of 1951 some 30 miners were working at the mine. Wages being paid by the company were very good. Experienced miners, some of whom were on piece work, could earn from $40 to $70 per week. With this new money coming in by way of regular pay packets, the town was booming.

Accommodation for the Cornish miners was provided by reconditioning Hosie's store in Clarke St,. This building provided hostel style living for single men. Other houses were purchased for miners with families. The Cornish miners and their families fitted into the Hill End community without any major disruption, which speaks well for the tolerance of the Hill End people and the adaptability of the Cornish. This was a large group of people in relation to the town population and in a less tolerant community could have presented some problems. Apart from the adults there were five or six school children.

During the life of the *Devon Gold Mining Company* an accident occurred that almost ended in tragedy. Six men were overcome with latent dynamite fumes. The area where the accident occurred was 160 metres along a tunnel and about the same distance below the surface, the last 30 metres being down a winze or underground shaft.

The afternoon shift finished work at midnight, when they had fired 17 by 1.5 metre holes loaded with 50 to 60 plugs of gelignite. It was expected that the fumes created by this firing would have dispersed by the time the day shift started work the following morning, but due to weather conditions and bad ventilation this was not the case.

The first man to go down the shaft was William Frenzel and when he did not return, Charlie Trevithick and Reg Fraser climbed down the shaft to investigate. They found that Frenzel was unconscious and at this stage Fraser was also overcome. Trevithick, although seriously affected by the

fumes, managed to climb up 30 metres of ladders and make his way 160 metres to the mouth of the tunnel where he raised the alarm.

The mine manager, Angus Longmore, foreman Bill Byrnes, and engine driver Dick Ellis, then went down the winze and all three were affected by the fumes. However, after some effort Byrnes, Ellis and Frenzel were able to escape. At this stage Fraser and Longmore were both unconscious at the bottom of the shaft.

By this time the air compressor had been started and fresh air was forced down the shaft to clear the fumes, and the two unconscious men were strapped to stretchers and hauled up the shaft with the air winch. Ambulances were called from Bathurst, and Longmore, Fraser, Frenzel and Trevithick were taken to hospital where after special treatment,all four made a full recovery.

It was discovered later that the blast that had caused the trouble had broken into a previously worked area and the foul air that had been trapped in these old workings had combined with the gelignite fumes to form a lethal gas.

A report by the Government Geologist dated 12.11.1951 in part states:-*"At present a cross-cut is being driven to intersect the Frenchman's vein. This vein was 5 to eight feet wide on the 324 feet level, and averaged 10 to 12 pennyweights of gold per ton. If these values persist to the present level a large amount of medium grade ore can be expected, this, with the rich patches of ore left in the old workings, should give a cash flow of sufficient volume, to keep the mine going while deeper levels are prospected and developed.*

"The Syndicate to date has spent about 80,000 pounds on development and rehabilitation of the mine, and 24 to 30 men are constantly employed. About 10,000 pounds ($20,000) worth of gold has been recovered to date. (At 1988 values $330,000.)

"These operations represent a genuine attempt to bring the field into production, and the only serious endeavour of that kind since the rich claims ceased operations 60 years ago.

"The mine has been a source of employment for the people of Hill End, and the success of the venture would be of material benefit to the town and to the state.

"The Syndicate is being financed by the various members to cover current expenses, which have been substantial, and the fact that in recent months costs of labour, stores and transport have increased so rapidly, and are likely to continue doing so, is a matter of grave concern to the Syndicate, particularly as it is unlikely that the mine could be brought into production for some time, and the gold produced has to be placed on

the market at a price fixed a considerable time before the present steep rise in the cost of commodities.

"So much work has been done that it would be a great pity for prospecting to stop at this stage. On the other hand, it is possible that at least as much money as has already been spent would be required to develop reasonable ore reserves in proportion to the capital expended."

By May 1952 Paul Jones, the managing director, had returned to America, Angus Longmore had resigned and to all intents and purposes, *Devon Gold* had ceased operations at Hill End. It was an unfortunate ending to what had started out as a well-organised attempt to bring the Hill End gold field back into profitable production. However, as work progressed the mine management seemed to become mesmerised by the small patches of rich ore they were finding in the old workings, and the very worthwhile developmental work to the north was neglected.

The local miners were disappointed, because the company had expended all its capital without proving if payable gold did existed in the virgin ground north of the Patriarch Shaft.

Some of the Cornish miners and their families remained on at Hill End, three married locals. One of the Cornish men, Nick Harvey still lives at Hill End where he operates the school bus as well as being a regular writer for local and overseas sporting magazines.

After the departure of the *Devon Gold* Alexander Marshall continued with work in the Middle Workings and from November 1953 to end of 1956 had five men working underground and two men on surface work. During this period, Herb Woolard was in charge of mining operations.

In February 1956, 75 ounces of gold were obtained from a crushing of 75 tons of ore from the middle workings. Over the next twelve months there was some intermittent mining operations carried out in the Consolidated workings without any spectacular results. Then Hawkins Hill gold mining suffered a severe blow, when in the summer of 1957 a severe bush fire swept up Nuggety Gully and completely burnt out the Mining Machinery and buildings situated at Consolidated tunnel.

During 1957 Herb Woolard and brother Vivian were working under a tribute. They were underhand stoping in the middle workings. Because the bush fire had destroyed the Air Compressor as well as other machinery the two men had reverted back to the old hammer and drill method of mining, and as the crushing plant had also been destroyed they had to crush their ore in a hand operated Dolly Pot. Naturally this was a slow method and was only suitable for treating rich patches.

In mid 1960, Bill Marshall, with a Company called Comweal Gold started working in the Consolidated Tunnel. The Crushing Plant

destroyed in the 1957 fire was refurbished and a large capacity portable air compressor was installed. Before the Crushing Plant became operational some tons of ore was taken to Lucknow for treatment. Although some rich stone was mined during the next twelve months, overall returns were below expectations and the company ceased operations in October 1961.

During its life Comweal bulldozed a road from the Flying-Fox down the side of Nuggety Gully to the Consolidated tunnel. This road had a great advantage over the Flying fox as a means of getting supplies down to the mine an advantage overlooked by previous companies.

Herb Woolard continued working in the middle workings and the flat ground and, because of his intimate knowledge of the area and his mining skills, he always managed to make a living, even though he had a long walk to and from work and was using very primitive mining methods. During this latter period, Herb's wife, Evelyn frequently went to work with him and assisted in some of the mining.

The next serious work carried out on this part of the field was in the 1980s when a group headed by *Silver Orchid and Northern Gold Companies,* carried out an extensive diamond drilling program. They also opened up the Cornelian shaft with the intention of investigating the Deep Levels or Reward area, refurbished the Patriach Shaft, and prospected in the Consolidated, Amalgamated and Fosters tunnels. During this period they have found some rich patches of gold in the old workings but once again very little new ground has been explored. Royalty records show that the value of gold won at Hawkins Hill in 1986/87 was $103,978.00 gross, some of this came from a tribute.

Because the Hill End gold field has small veins with patchy precipitation of gold, it has not been particularly attractive to large scale companies with adequate capital. With a further increase in gold prices and improved extraction methods we may eventually see some enterprise attempt a large scale investigation of the deep ground to the north of Hawkins Hill.

As it had been with past mining ventures, when *Devon Gold* finally ceased operations, many people had to leave Hill End to seek employment. The number on the electoral roll had fallen to 140.

There were moves to close the police station and reduce the teachers at the school. By representation to the local MP, to whom we pointed out that because of the number of visitors now coming to the town it was necessary to maintain a police presence, the closure of the police station was deferred.

Chapter 23

Timber Mill and Local Industries

The story of the people who started the Hill End Timber Mill is certainly a story of the people on the banks. This family overcame the hard economic years of the depression and then with hard work and engineering ability founded a first class timber industry at Hill End. Their contribution to the economy of the town was significant.

Part of the following information on the Auld family comes from an interview given to Brian Hodge in 1979.by Bob and Rita

Bob Auld was born at Leichhardt, and in 1931 a doctor told Bob's stepfather to move into a dry climate. They arrived in Hill End in 1931, the year when Hill End and the nation were in the depths of the depression.

Bob was single when he arrived at Hill End. In 1932 he married Rita Thompson, a daughter of one the towns early mining families. Part of their early married life was spent in a hut on the banks of the Macquarie River at the Root Hog.

The Turon Shire Council had been granted some money for relief work. In order to employ the maximum number of men the Government directed that the work had to be labour intensive. To carry out this order it was decided that the relief money would be spent repairing the Bridle Track Road.

Each monday morning Ron Hodge would come past the Root Hog, taking relief workers to their camp situated a few miles further up the river. When it was Bob's turn to go on relief work, he would join the Hill End gang as they passed his camp. Rita's uncle, Charlie Thompson, was the road boss of this gang.

Bob was young and very slim, and when he was questioned about his size being a handicap in standing up to hard pick and shovel work he said: "I may be slight but I am Solid." This retort earned Bob the nickname of 'Solid', and, over the years, he certainly proved that he was 'solid'.

The wage for relief work was four pounds two shillings and sixpence ($8.25) per 40 hour week, but relief workers were not permitted to work more than 35 hours per week. Hourly rate was one shilling and eightpence halfpenny (17c), Maximum wage per week was $5.95.

In between relief work Bob eked out a living, by acting as Ron Hodge's offsider, or working the river alluvial. Bob and his mates Bob Thompson and Keith Siely were using wheelbarrows to carry alluvial wash dirt from high up on the Root Hog point down to the river. Here, one of the team would pass the wash through a sluice box.

This was a very hard life for both Rita and Bob, but there were many others in similar circumstances. Their staple diet was damper and bread, with the added few extras their limited income allowed. There was also the odd rabbit, Murray cod or a few river shrimps to give a variety to the diet. Hard as it was, I am sure it could be ranked as a Garden of Eden compared with those who were unemployed and living in Sydney.

By 1937, Bob commenced taking fencing contracts first for Fred Hodge and later, on Bill Reid's property at Triamble. This was still a hard life but the income from this work averaged about six pounds per week, and this was at a time when the rural wage was three pounds ten shillings per week. So the rewards would have been some compensation for the hard work and primitive and lonely living conditions.

In one six months stint in very hard country, they fenced a line three miles long and averaged 22 posts a day.

Rita and sister Ettie had some rabbiting dogs and the skins from the rabbits they caught helped to increase the family income. They also robbed wild bee-hives for the honey, helped with the cross cut sawing and tied the fence wire. These were the days when the families worked as a team, closely bonded by the isolation that was an inherent feature of bush work.

They were living in tents during the fencing contracts, and from my own experience I have some idea of the difficulties that tent life would impose on families with young children. The cooking, supply and conservation of food under these conditions becomes a nightmare. Bob and Rita had three children at this time: Leo, Ray and Sister. These women were the real heroines, in that they cared for their families, giving them love and affection, and at the same time supplied their daily needs.

Cooking facilities were primitive. There was no corner shop down the road. Powdered milk, flour for baking bread, honey, golden syrup and hard vegetables were the order of the day. Butter and fresh foods were very difficult to keep in hot weather. The Reid's were very good bosses and supplied them with a dressed sheep when ever required.

During the war Bob and Bill started burning charcoal on the Drakeford's property. The charcoal was sold to Macquarie Motors Bathurst for six pounds per ton. Charcoal gas was used during the war as a substitute fuel.

The brothers cut the red box and red gum timber with axes and crosscut saws. They then placed the timber in a pit in the ground. The pit was 4 feet by 16 feet and 4 feet deep. The timber was set alight and by controlling the air admitted to the pit, the wood burned slowly for two days. The air entering the pit had to be very carefully controlled. If the fire was too intense, the resultant charcoal would be light and of inferior quality, and much of the gas would have been burnt off. Each pit, when burnt, produced about one-and-one half tons of charcoal. When the pit had cooled off, the charcoal was bagged and transported to Bathurst by Ron Hodge.

The families were living in bark huts near the charcoal pits and Bob said the winter temperatures were cold enough to freeze petrol.

At the end of the war the demand for charcoal ceased and the brothers and their families moved into Hill End.

Bill Auld, Bob's brother decided to build a house and as it was difficult and expensive to get timber at Hill End, it was decided to mill the timber from the stringy bark trees that could be harvested in the district. Thus the idea of the timber mill was born. The mill became a family business and soon it was supplying the local market and later expanding to Bathurst and Mudgee.

The mill was started with very little capital and quite primitive machinery. This lack of money and equipment in the early years of the saw mill, was overcome by the inventiveness, skill and hard work of the various members of the family.

Bob and Bill were the senior partners and as the business expanded, they were joined by their sons, brothers and cousins with the occasional help of someone outside the family. All the family had a great ability to invent, or convert any odd piece of equipment, into a workable labour-saving device.

They taught themselves the professional skills necessary to operate a sawmilling business, they also mastered the mechanics and maintenance of steam, diesel and petrol engines. In addition to the on going maintenance of the plant, they also carried out major over-hauls, structural and engineering alterations to all types of machines and road vehicles. They had a great skill for solving difficult problems, both at the mill and in the bush. In addition to running the mill they did all their own logging, this included cutting and carting the logs.

The timber from the Hill End Mill was in great demand locally and in Bathurst and Mudgee. Timber merchants and builders from far and wide praised the quality and accurate size of the Hill End timber, and the demand always exceeded the capacity of the mill.

The Hill End mill discovered the best timber was found in the country, (at an elevation of some 3000 feet), bordering the Hill End-Hargraves plateau, and in the belt extending to Sallys Flat

For some reason, perhaps a quirk of soil and climate. the timber from this region is better and less liable to warp, and the logs produced more useable timber than did logs from other areas.

The First Mill

A steam boiler and engine supplied power for the first mill. Scantlings and off-cuts from the milled timber supplied the fuel for the steam boiler, so the power was virtually free. The days were long and hard. Logs were cut in the bush and then loaded onto the truck by manually rolling them up poles laid against the side of the truck, and bad backs became an occupational hazard.

They soon found a market for their timber, the main buyers being O'Learys in Bathurst and Kellets in Mudgee. As the demand increased it became necessary to improve their equipment and they bought their first army surplus Blitz for two hundred pounds. This and later purchases of similar army vehicles were expertly converted to their particular requirements, and these machines, plus the advent of the chain saw, helped to cut down on the heavy manual work.

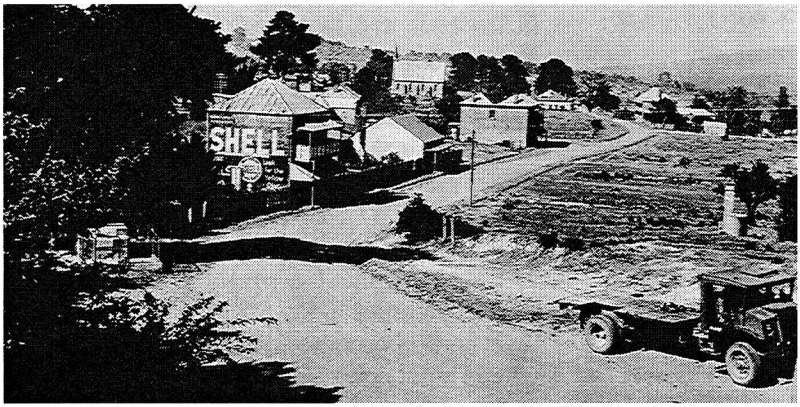
On the evening of Thursday 20 December 1951, the original saw mill built by Garner and Auld was burnt down. A great number of the towns-people turned out, and they made a gallant effort to save the mill. However, with an inadequate water supply, and the amount of flammable material that is a feature of all timber mills, it was impossible to save and it soon became evident that all the buildings and machinery would be completely destroyed.

Due to the high cost of insuring timber mills, there was no insurance. Thus destruction of their means of livelihood, and the capital loss involved was a grievous blow, and most people would have taken some time to come to terms with such a dramatic change in their economic situation. However, as the flames were licking at the last remnants of the mill shed, Bob turned to me and said: "Well we can now start and build a better mill". And build a better mill they did.

Both the Colley and Ryan families were very helpful to the mill boys after the fire. Colleys waived any owing royalties and the Ryan family allowed them to harvest some special trees off their property at *Pomanara.*

The power for the second mill was initially supplied by a six-cylinder Buick car engine, and later a Cadillac engine was installed. The petrol engines were later replaced with a more powerful diesel engine.

As the business expanded it became necessary to extend the area where they harvested the logs for milling. This increased the transport costs and also time taken. Because they were using second hand vehicles this extra distance imposed a strain on the wearing parts and just as they got in front with their logs, a gearbox or diff would go and once again they would be battling to keep up with their timber orders. The other difficulty was weather. Wet weather made the bush impossible for logging and hot windy weather presented problems of sawdust in the eyes and dangers when felling trees.



Clarke Street 1949 Beyers Cottage and the old two storey bank building at the far end are the only two buildings remaining on the right hand side. A Timber Mill Blitz truck is in the right foreground and immediately behind is a water tank and a brick chimney, was all that remained of Beechs store after the fire.

One of their greatest inventions was a machine they called the 'Bug'. To produce the Bug they fitted a chassis with two front differentials and wheel assemblies from an army 4WD Blitz. This provided a four wheel drive vehicle with front and rear steering. It was a unique adoption and provided power and manoeuvrability for logging and loading in the bush. A second Bug provided a versatile and labour saving machine for work around the mill. This Bug was also fitted with a dozer blade, this gave it the ability to make roads into the logging areas.

I had a personal experience that proved the capabilities of the Bug. This happened when a bulldozer we were using for alluvial mining became bogged in Golden Gully.

The bulldozer contractor we had working for us had inadvertently backed the machine into a deep hole filled with sand and water and the machine was submerged up to the driver's seat.

The contractor was very experienced, having spent some years on the Snowy Mountains Scheme, and he considered it would be impossible to get the dozer out without getting a similar machine from Mudgee. This would have been an expensive and time consuming solution to the problem.

My suggestion that we ask the mill boys to bring down a machine they had made and called 'The Bug' was greeted with little enthusiasm. However, I went to the mill and asked for their suggestions. And, although the mill was working at full speed, Bob sang out:"Close down the saws, Bruce is in trouble and we have to pull a bulldozer out of a bog."

All hands,plus the Bug, proceeded to the mine and in the capable hands of Ray, the Bug was driven straight over the steep alluvial bank of Golden Gully and into the creek bed. Double and treble pulley blocks and a heavy steel rope were attached to the dozer and The Bug. A tractor was then hooked to the front of the Bug to prevent it from rearing up when the strain was applied. Ray then started the Bug and to the great amazement of the dozer operator, the bogged bulldozer rose slowly out of the muddy bog hole, like some prehistoric monster emerging from a primordial mud bath. The ingenuity of the mill boys had triumphed over what had appeared an impossible task.

In 1961, electricity came to Hill End. Gone were the days of stoking the steam boiler or the two men required on the crank handle of the Lister Diesel, in order to turn the engine over. Now all that was required to start the saws humming was the flick of a switch. The power supply for the mill had evolved through steam, petrol, and diesel to electricity.

With the advent of electricity a planing machine was installed at the mill. This machine had the ability to dress and shape weather boards, T & G flooring boards, skirting and architraves. Some of the flooring boards produced were from red box or red gum timber that when dressed and oiled produces hard wearing boards with glowing red colours . However, the planer was not a financial success.

In 1970, a second fire wreaked havoc on the mill and all the valuable saws were buckled and rendered useless with the heat. A very wet year on

top of this second fire, plus the longer distances that now had to be covered to get suitable logs, finally closed the mill down.

This ended an industry that called for techniques bred of hard experience; the handling of heavy logs; the problems of dry seasons; when the bark will not easily strip; wet seasons, when all the tracks are boggy; mechanical breakdowns; and overcoming the difficulties of isolation from spare parts and repair material.

Under a partnership operating between Ray and Robert Auld the mill is once again operating in 1989. However timber is now only cut to firm orders.

The Gumleaf Industry

In the late 1950s an unusual industry was started at Hill End, an industry that showed the versatility of the stringybark tree. It was found that the leaves of the stringybark tree contained a drug called *"Ruten"*. Most of the world supply of this drug had been harvested from a poppy growing in China. America was looking for an alternative source from which to extract the drug.

The country chosen for this alternative source was Australia and the particular location was Hill End. The reason that Hill End was chosen was that the district had large areas of second growth stringybark trees available. These second growth trees were a result of the original tree trunk being cut down and used for steaming fuel or mine timber, during the gold mining era. Once a stringybark tree is cut down it sends out a number of suckers that eventually develop into saplings.

These saplings were cut down and then by using slash knives, the twigs and leaves were stripped from the branches. The leaves were then packed into chaff bags and carted to a diesel-electric drying plant. The leaves were cut by locals and they were paid 1.25 pence (1.25c) per pound

The drying plant extracted the moisture from the leaves, and the dry leaves were then pressed into wool bales. The bales of dry leaves were then transported by road to Bathurst rail head and thence by goods rail to Coopernook, Taree. On occasions they were taken straight through to Coopernook by motor transport.

At Coopernook the leaf was processed further and this resulted in the production of a white powder, this was, ruten, but in a crude form. This powder was then exported to America where the finished drug was produced. *Ruten* was mainly used by the medical profession to assist in the prevention of bleeding during surgery.

Each year some tons of of leaf were stripped and dried. The harvesting and drying of the gumleaves provided employment for a number of locals, and royalties were also paid to the Hill End Commons Trust.

The political situation between China and America eased and it was no longer economical to continue this industry.

Rabbits and Blackberries

In the early 1960s I purchased a chiller that we operated in conjunction with the general store. This made possible two industries that provided income to the town.

In the winter it enabled rabbits to be harvested for their carcasses. The chiller held about 800 pair of rabbits. The rabbits were snap frozen and each week a contractor from Mudgee picked the frozen rabbits up and transported them to Sydney. During the winter season the trappers made quite good money. From memory the prices ranged from about 50 to 80 cents per pair.

During the summer months the chiller provided the means of handling blackberries. The local blackberry pickers were supplied with 4 gallon tins. After the pickers had filled the tins with about 40 pounds of blackberries they were collected and brought to the chiller where they were weighed and then frozen.

This was a small local industry that took advantage of a free local resource. It also provided the opportunity for house-wives and young people to earn some extra money, and, for the full-time professional picker, the returns were substantial. Each week the berries were transported to Sydney for jam making.

The chiller was also a very handy addition to the shop. During the hot weather, when the chiller was not needed for berries or rabbits, it provided a means of making ice for tourists and storage for perishables and cordials.

Apple Orchards

Apple orchards were planted by Jim Toohey, Bon Carver, and Viv Woolard and were most successful as far as fruit quality was concerned. However, because of the comparatively small size of the orchards and the difficulty of getting the fruit to market, the orchards were never a viable full-time means of earning a living. Over a period of years they provided choice fresh apples to locals and visitors, at very reasonable prices.

Sheep and Cattle

After the gold rush was over many of the mining families turned to the land, for wool growing and the supply of meat for the local and district markets. It was the grazing industry that was to give stability to Hill End in the long term.

Many of the properties taken up had frontages to the Turon and Macquarie Rivers and Green Gully and Pyramul Creeks. Much of the country to the west of Hill End was lightly timbered and more open and carried a lot of white box and kurrajong and in its raw state provided feed for sheep and cattle. These conditions particularly applied to the Ullamalla area.

Gradually the old open sheep runs, where shepherds had looked after the grazing sheep, were phased out. The country was fenced, scrub was cleared, and trees ring-barked. The large areas of the old properties were divided into smaller holdings of two to five thousand acres.

It was the smaller properties that surrounded Hill End that provided income for their owners and employment for many of the Hill End people. As with all rural industries there were good times and bad times, droughts and rabbits. But by and large the land holders were reasonably well off, they enjoyed the good years, and tightened the belt in the bad years.

The rabbits had been a boon to many people but to the grazier they were a curse. Thousands of acres were kept in a permanent state of denudation, erosion was rampant, and many acres of good land was covered with stinkwort and tobacco bush. Both of these pests flourished during the rabbit plague. In the late summer of 1950, rabbits dead of myxomatosis were seen on the Macquarie River, and a year later the virus was carried up the creeks on to the high country and quickly spread amongst the vast rabbit population. The resultant decimation of the rabbit rapidly changed the countryside.

Stinkwort and tobacco bush almost completely disappeared, grass returned to the hill sides, erosion was halted and sheep numbers doubled. Rabbits have now became immune to most strains of the virus but as yet the rabbits have not returned in the plague proportions that existed prior to 1950.

Aerial application of superphosphate became economical and practical and in many areas this had a dramatic effect on the carrying capacity of the land.

The grazing families that used Hill End as their main community centre during the period covered by this history were.

Warry, Graham, Anderson, Kimm, Drakesford, Martin, Edwards, Brodie, Burns, Burnard, Cooke, Hodge, Seaman, Rayner, Ryan, Parslow, Whittaker, Stuart, Sibley, Polain, Stevens, Dove, Fitzgerald, Oats, Walker, Macfarlane, McKenzie, O'Reilly, Keightly, Smith, Pirie and Hawkins.

All these Hill End land holders were very self sufficient knew their properties intimately and most of the work was carried out by the family members. Although there was often years of devastating drought and plagues of rabbits, not one family ever went bankrupt. The main reason for their success was that they usually solved their problems by working harder rather than increasing their overdraft.

Chapter 24

Sluicing Golden Gully and The Junction.

In May, 1911 the *Golden Gully Tambaroora Sluicing Company* was formed. The object was to sluice the Golden Gully alluvial area running from Hill End to Tambaroora.

The capital of the company was 15 thousand pounds in 60,000 shares of five shillings each. The vendor syndicate had spent three hundred pounds in testing the area, the results of the tests were satisfactory. The report estimated that over the 100 acres held there would be 1,749,860 cubic yards of alluvial wash, worth something over one shilling and three-pence per yard, without reckoning upon the occasional specimens, slugs and stoppers that will be found, and the certainty of uncovering the continuations of some of the gold bearing reefs were worked previously on the hillsides and gave very rich returns to their owners.

The water supply was to be provided by two dams, one opposite the Canton shaft and the other at the confluence of Hopman's Creek with Golden Gully Creek.

It was proposed to install a plant similar in design but much more powerful, to that in use at the *Great Britain Tin Sluicing Company's* property at Emmerville. The Britain plant has conclusively demonstrated that ground formerly supposed to be exhausted can be profitably worked by the adoption of modern Hydraulic Sluicing methods.

The 1911 prospectus gives us the information that:

"Agreements had been entered into for the purchase of the sluicing areas held by Messrs James and Samuel Ellis, John Ellis and Samuel Ellis Junior, William Hamilton and Francis John Wallis.

"It was estimated that the proposed plant would sluice not less than 5,000 cubic yards of wash per week. This wash is estimated to yield not less than one shilling and threepence per cubic yard, and the cost of sluicing is estimated at a maximum of fivepence.per cubic yard, or a profit of tenpence. per yard thus giving a profit of say, two-hundred and eight pounds per week, and for a year of 48 working weeks ten thousand pounds. Assuming that all capital is subscribed, the profits from working should repay the whole in eighteen months. With the ground already secured, the property will probably last at least ten years."

The prospects of a profitable venture seemed assured and the estimated values of one shilling and. threepence. per yard seemed modest. However, the expected returns were never realised and, after a brief working life, the company closed down.

This same area of Golden Gully was tested by *Oriomo Explorations* in 1937. They reported that tests had proved that 700,000 cubic yards of wash would average six shillings and twopence per yard. Oriomo was never to test the accuracy of these tested values because, as you have read in a previous chapter, the company ceased operations after briefly working a section of alluvial at point a mile or more away from Golden Gully.

Hydraulic Sluicing at Golden Gully 1963, the author directing the water monitor.

In 1962, a syndicate that included Jack Ellis, Bob Lincoln, myself and Joe Clift of Melbourne, decided to install a modern closed circuit sluicing plant. We considered accurate testing of the area was not possible, so decided to run the risk and install the plant.

The plant was powered by two 300 HP Cummins Diesel engine. The pumps used were a Harland Spiroglide Monitor pump capable of delivering 2360 GPM at pressure of 100 PSI through the monitor, and a Warman 8/8 series A Gravel pump. The plant was designed to treat 120 cubic yards an hour, but because of various problems we never achieved

this through-put. Both these units were fitted on a steel slide so they could be easily moved. The plant was being worked with four men.

The method of working was similar to that described in the Oriomo operations, but our plant was more mobile; both the monitor and gravel pumps were more efficient than those used by Oriomo 25 years earlier. And of course with only a fraction of both the capital and running costs.

After nine months work the mine closed down, the main problem being lack of water, and insufficient capital to tide us over the development period. Other problems were the colloid clay that remained in suspension in our water supply, and blockages in our screens from roots, leaves and other vegetable matter. Our best result for four weeks work was just over six hundred pounds ($1200.00). This clean-up was the only one that showed a profit. The plant was eventually sold to Ipec who had some mining interests in northern NSW.

As the plant was almost new and of very good quality it brought a very good price, and because of this the loss to the shareholders was minimised

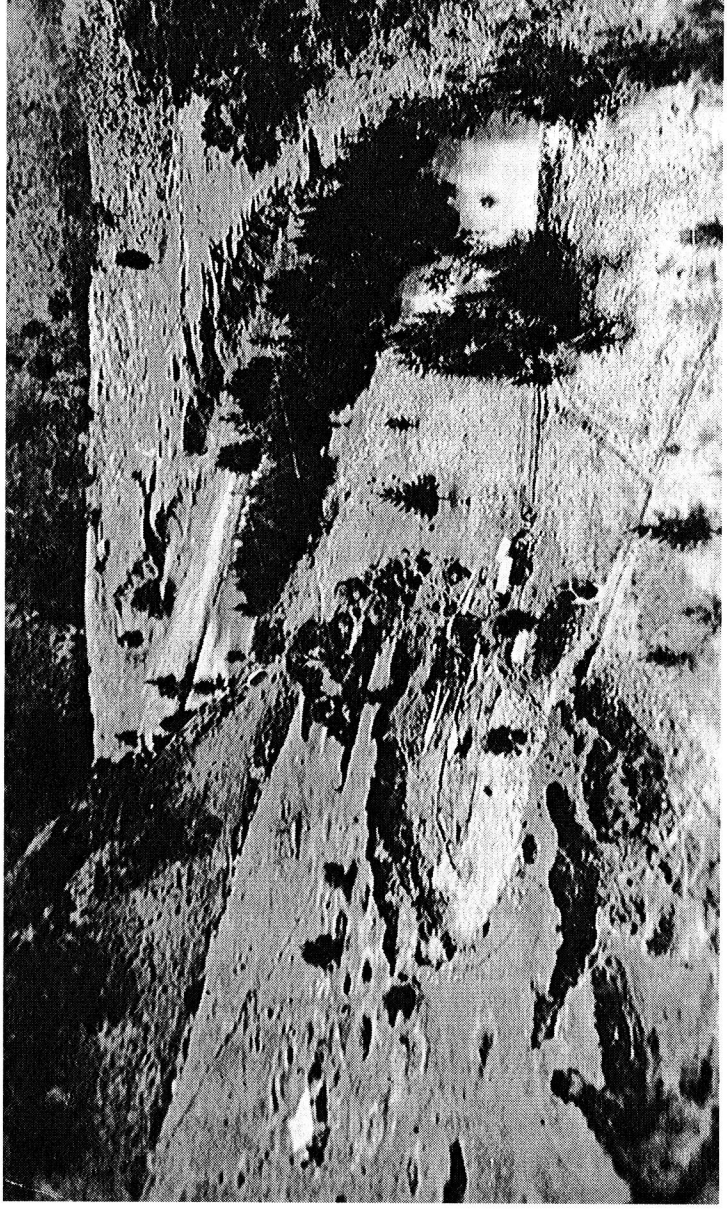
Junction Point and Macquarie River

Over the years dad, my brother and myself, together with family friends, spent a good deal of time sluicing river wash at the junction of the Turon and Macquarie Rivers. Dad and Nesbit Lougher first installed machinery on this lease in 1908. They had purchased equipment from the Turon Dredging Company, had ceased operations after striking a lot of bother in the water hole under Sailors Bluff.

During the next thirty years we had various attempts to work this very difficult, heavy, stony wash. The machinery we had was usually incapable of handling the cement-like material that held the river stones together.

We were always lured on by the favourable prospects we we were able to get with the fossicking dish, but to separate the gold from the wash in payable quantities was beyond the capacity of our machinery. However, when times were hard, we could usually keep things going by returning to the Junction. Dad still had faith in it until the day he died. He always thought that if only we could get the right plant we would make our fortune.

On occasions we blasted the banks down with explosives. We used a slack-line-excavator to remove the stones from the face, but even then we could not treat a sufficient quantity of wash to make the mine pay.



The alluvial mine on the Turon just a short distance from its junction with the Macquarie. The dam on the right with a race cut into the pump hole and the sluiced area on the left. In the background Dry Digging .

Most of our effort was expended on the Turon side of Junction Point and the amount of material we sluiced can be gauged by the bite taken out of the alluvial bank in the above picture. We used steam, petrol and suction gas engines to drive our water pumps, but all were lacking in power and reliability.

We installed a flying-fox from a point on the Bridle Track road high on the point above the Junction. We used the flying-fox to send down petrol, charcoal and other supplies, particularly when the river was in flood.

We were able to reach the works by motor vehicle, when the Turon River was low, but to do so meant following a very rough steep track down onto Klondyke Point and then fording the river three times. This was only a fair weather track, particularly as there was no such thing as four wheel drive vehicles at that time.

It is interesting to note that in 1937, Ron and Roley Hodge delivered by motor truck three tons of machinery right onto the point. As far as I know this was the first and only motor truck to travel over that piece of track from Klondyke Point to the Junction.

Although we were working hard I always enjoyed the times I spent at the Junction. Getting the engines, pumps and other machinery to give of their best was always a challenge. All our family ventures were worked by team effort. Disagreements were very rare, dad was always the boss, but never failed to listen to and encourage ideas from all members of the working party. This method of management always produced a happy team.

While working at the Junction we used to cart our slopping water from the river, and we usually went down with our buckets just before sundown. If we approached the river carefully we would be rewarded by seeing platypus disporting themselves in the water hole.They would often swim rapidly across the surface of the water and then jump up onto a log that was sloping into the water. This was obviously part of a game and they would repeat this dashing about and jumping on the log routine a number of times.

Although the Junction did not yield up much of its golden treasure to us, it provided us with a tranquil and restful working place. There was always time for some fishing and a swim after work. And around the fire at night, wonderful discussions on interesting subjects. Without the distractions of radio or TV the discussions became our main form of entertainment.

Chapter 25

Artists, Historians and Holterman Photographs

In 1947, Russell Drysdale had just purchased a new car, and after reading a newspaper article on the Hill End-Sofala mail run, decided to try the new car out with a trip to Sofala. Accompanied by Donald Friend, and armed with sketch books they set out.

On this first trip to the Hill End-Sofala district, Russell Drysdale painted Sofala's Main Street, this painting, won the Wynne Prize and now hangs in the New South Wales Art Gallery.

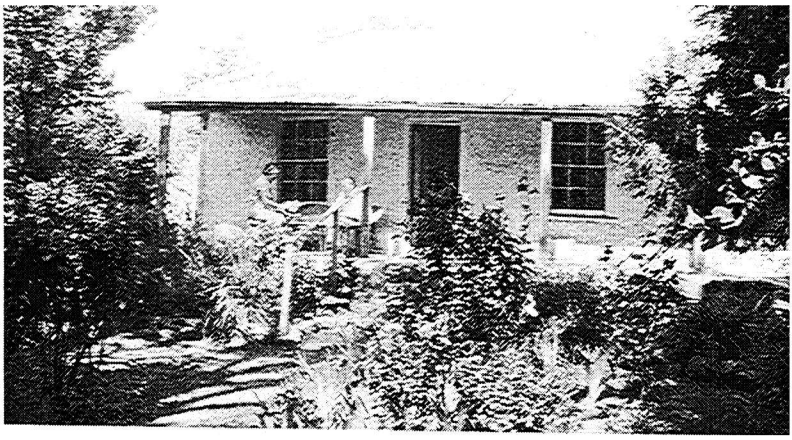
Both Russell and Donald were impressed with what they had seen on the trip and on their return to Sydney made a decision to try and purchase a house at Sofala. They contacted a mutual friend, Donald Murray, and asked him to go to Sofala and see if he could find a suitable cottage.

Donald Murray travelled to Bathurst by train and then by passenger bus to Sofala. He spent several days at Sofala, looking around the village and inspecting any cottages that were for sale. Having heard about the beauty of Hill End, he decided to move on and see if there were any properties there that would be better suited to his friends.

Donald arrived at the *Royal Hotel* Hill End and was immediately impressed with the friendly and helpful reception he received, from both the Eyre family and local residents.

He was directed to a wattle and daub cottage situated in Beyers Avenue, just a short distance north of the Royal Hotel. This was one of the original miners' cottages, and was exactly the type of dwelling that Donald was seeking. The cottage was subsequently purchased by Russell Drysdale and Donald Friend; and it was here that Friend and Murray made their home, Donald Friend to spend a few years and Donald Murray for most of his life.

Shortly after his arrival at Hill End Donald Friend won an award given by an Italian shipping line for a painting to be used in the decoration of one of its ships. Part of this award was a trip to Italy. This work was painted in Hill End and depicts local life and colour,and, when last heard of, was hanging in a ship on the South American-Italian line from Naples to Buenos Aires.



Donald Friend's cottage at Hill End.
Betty Goodwin and Donald Murray on verandah.

Russell Drysdale was a constant visitor, as were many other prominent artists of that era. This group of artists collectively observed and preserved local detail in paintings that are now in galleries and private collections in many parts of the world.

He also won a Blake Prize, completed a number of private commissions, and accumulated a wealth of material that was used for paintings in later exhibitions and sales. Finally, he produced a volume of local Hill End history and anecdotes, entitled *"Hillendiana"*.

In addition to his art Donald always found time to join in the community life of the town. He was a great raconteur and an unusually good listener. He had the ability to draw out the most interesting information from people, whom others, would have considered dull and boring. He was always most willing to help any local organisation and on several occasions illustrated our programs or booklets with black and white drawings.

In 1949 he was on a holiday in Ischia, an island in the Bay of Naples. It was here that he met a young Italian fisherman, Attilio Guarracino. Donald brought Attilio to Australia and then on to Hill End where Attilio lived for two years. This was a long term friendship and Attilio, now living in Melbourne, has an extensive collection of Friend's paintings.

Donald Murray was to spend many years at Hill End. He did have a break of a few years working in Sydney, but from the day he arrived at Hill End, he never again lost touch with the the town or its people. He

also was an entertaining story teller and his tales were made more interesting because of family experiences in India and Europe. Donald's mother was a gifted photographer, at a time when photography was in its infancy. Donald had a collection of his mother's photographs depicting the rich and exotic period of the British Raj. His early life in India, living with a mother, who was something of a celebrity, and later with his grandmother in Paris, provided Donald with a wealth of anecdotes and stories of society in the early 1900s.

Donald Murray was a very knowledgeable and competent gardener. In fact he could probably be classed as a botanist, and many Hill End people gained a lot of gardening knowledge from him.

Both Donald Murray and Donald Friend, through their permanent residency in Hill End, introduced the townspeople to new perception of art and culture. This education was further enhanced by the numbers of other artists who followed after them. With very few exceptions, the artists who came to Hill End were very sensitive and understanding of the local people and their way of life. They were courteous and friendly, and I am sure were of immense benefit to the village.

Paul Haefliger, for many years the art critic of a leading Sydney newspaper and his wife Jean Belette, a painter of considerable power, visited for many years and then decided that they too would like to have a permanent share in the town, they purchased a house opposite the Hill End school residence and, although they later lived for many years in Spain and Switzerland, they kept in touch with Hill End and the friends they had made there.Paul died overseas and Jean died in Spain as this book was being completed in 1991.

Needless to say, such well-known artists as these had many friends who were easily attracted to the town, there to observe the beauty and variety of the district combined with its historic significance. Many and varied were the artists who arrived and departed; and all were influenced by the experience.

John Dabron, in charge of education in the State Schools; Margaret Olley, of Brisbane; Lindsay Churchland, instructor of art at the National Art School; David Strachan, Douglas Watson, Jeff Smart, Bob Dickerson, Jon Olson, are only a few of those who came to Hill End.

What was the nature of this attraction; an attraction that stimulated so varied a group of painters as talented Rufus Morris, a one time Hill End resident. The primitive Matilda Lister; the classic Jean Belette; the abstract expressionist George Orianski; Wallace Thornton; Jeffrey Smart, now living in Tuscany, and whom critics call a hyper-realist, a maker of

philosophical statements about the position of man in the twentieth century!

Perhaps it can best be answered by saying that artists are observant but selective in their observations. Artistic perception is such a mysterious, intensely personal quality, that this may be the reason that in this diverse group, each saw something at Hill End that appealed to their artistic eye.

The surrounds of Hill End, both village and countryside provide both material and time to observe, without the distractions, stimulating though they are, that are inseparable from city life.

First, the ever changing landscape from the burnt and glowing earth colours of summer to the black and white of winter's frost and snow. The spring with its foaming fruit blossom, apple, pear and plum, the golden gullies of wattle, the reds, pinks and white of the hawthorn blossoms, the trees in palest green and then autumn, of red and yellow and rich coloured leaves and berries.

The variety of form in the landscape, peaceful pastoral areas, alternating with strangely shaped, craggy rocks and mountainsides, to hillsides and gullies ravaged by the early gold diggers. The unusual multi-stemmed regrowth of the surrounding woodland.

A breathtaking panorama of the Turon valley, stretching to Mount Conoblas can be seen from Hawkins Hill,the scene of so much dramatic activity in the vivid gold rush days of the 1870s.

Then there was the village itself, that still contained a number of the original miners' cottages, in a charming setting of old world flowers and shrubs. A great avenue of European trees, planted over a hundred years ago by Louis Beyers, the constant movement of geese, horses, goats and cows roaming the extensive common lands, and giving colour and variety seen nowhere else in Australia.

Hill End did not have any great or grand buildings of architectural or historic importance, but there is that, which the artist assures us, will give in the long run more lasting pleasure. The town is significant because it is one of the few largely untouched nineteenth century mining villages to survive into the twentieth century, with a number of vernacular cottages still standing.

We less fortunate mortals have the unfortunate habit of being attracted by the obvious, the showy, and wonder why we so quickly tire and are bored. The charms of Hill End are not easy to define. Much of it all is subtle and this is not a very popular quality, particularly in this present age.

We can be grateful to those artists who have carried some of the beauty and interest of this part of Australia to other lands and people; and we hope that the present residents of Hill End in conjunction with the NPWS can help to preserve some of this beauty and interest for future generations.

Russell Drysdale, known to Hill End people as Tas Drysdale, was another artist who had a great fondness for Hill End and its people, among whom he had many friends.

Born of well-to-do Victorian squattocracy, Russell was never short of money and was able to make frequent trips overseas, yet he was a very unassuming man, and like Donald Friend, had a great facility to converse and obtain information from the most unlikely people. He often said that the old men, the shearers, the nomads, the rural workers and country people were the ones that fascinated him; that they were the characters. The society people, no matter how beautiful they might be, were to him ephemeral people, the others aren't. They just go on. The survival thing that means something.

In 1960, when Russell Drysdale was 48 years of age he was given a full scale retrospective exhibition 1937-1960. He invited my wife and myself to the opening of this exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, and although he was surrounded by many prominent and influential people, it was typical of him that he immediately welcomed us, and then asked his son Timothy to take care of us.

There were 108 paintings in this exhibition, six of which had been painted at Hill End, they were 'Margaret Olley' 1948, 'Picture of Donald Friend' 1948, 'Hill End" 1948, 'The Councillors House" 1948, "Golden Gully" 1949, 'Herb Thompson' 1953.

In addition to Drysdale's skill as an artist he was a photographer of considerable skill. In a recent exhibition "Drysdale the Photographer" at S.H.Ervin Gallery, the organiser Jennie Boddington of the National Gallery of Victoria states in her essay for the exhibition: "it is no longer acceptable to see Drysdale simply as a painter. To fully assess his achievements we will have to take notice of his considerable skills as photographer."

David Strachan was another artist of considerable skill. David spent lengthy periods of time at Hill End and won several awards for his paintings of the town. In the late 1960s, he was killed in a road accident, when the car in which he was travelling became involved in a collision near Goulburn. He was returning to Hill End, after attending his father's funeral.

Rufus Morris was another artist who made Hill End his part time home, and he and his wife Jean always enjoyed the time they spent in "Rose Cottage", German Town, Hill End. Rufus and Jean were always ready to join in and help in local community affairs and, when required, Rufus gave freely of his talents as a sign writer. Apart from exhibiting at the Royal Show and in private galleries, Rufus was a Commercial artist of great ability and early in his career had contributed to many of the cartoons advertising Minties "Moments Like These You Need Minties'.

Matilda Lister was living at Hill End in a house very close to Donald Friend's home, and after Donald had given Matilda some encouragement, she started to paint. Although she was elderly at this time, she went on to be come recognised as a true primitive artist. She regularly submitted and hung paintings in the Blake exhibition, and on one occasion won the D'Arcy Morris Memorial Prize, and was frequently referred to as Australia's Grandma Moses..

In the 1960s a talented young artist named Junior Baines visited Hill End. Junior and his attractive wife Leah were part of the Hippie scene of the sixties. During his stay at Hill End Junior painted a dramatic Mural on the wall of the billiard room at the Royal Hotel. The mural was a vivid portrayal of Hill End and its people. Unfortunately the painting was later obliterated by Junior during a late night party.

After leaving Hill End he spent some time in Queensland and then went to a Hippie gathering in Vientiane, Laos. The carefree Laotians first thought the hippies were a western hill tribe who were refugees from the war torn mountains in the north. But then things went very sour and the hippies were no longer welcome. Junior and Leah had some trouble getting out of Laos and then in 1969 they were in Goa, where he was resuming painting, in preparation for an exhibition in Bombay.

All these artists made a substantial contribution to the recognition of Hill End as a beautiful and historic place in which so much of the early history of the gold rush era was still intact. This widespread publicity was also a great morale booster to the townspeople, who, because of so much outside interest, found a new pride in the town of their birth.

Because of the prominence of some of the artists and their friends the town received a great deal of publicity. During the 1950s and 1960s there were many articles in the daily press; the *"Women's Weekly"*, *"Pix"*, *"People"*, and a host of other papers and magazines also featured the historic village. In addition there were radio interviews and programs, film documentaries. Rolf Harris made a documentary at Hill End this was shown in the UK as well as nationally. Dymphna Cusack, the Australian

novelist, visited Hill End, praised its historical significance both on radio and in newspaper articles.

In 1952 Keast Burke located the Holterman collection of wet plate negatives and recommended its donation to the Mitchell Library, Sydney. Keast Burke, in his book *"Gold and Silver"* writes:

"In 1951, a survey of photographs in the Mitchell Library brought forward the name of Bernard Otto Holterman who was catalogued as being responsible for some panoramas of the Sydney Harbour. On inquiry to the then Mitchell Librarian, Phyllis Mander Jones, I was Told in a letter of 22 November 1951 that she had 'recently heard that plates of photographs taken by old Mr Holterman may be in the possession of Mrs M.C.Holterman of 15 Thomas St Chatswood.'

"It appeared that Mrs Holterman was the widow of B.O.Holterman's youngest son (Leonard) and that she still held her father-in-law's photographs. They were safely preserved in a garden room, but the room had remained locked for many years.

"After some delay, a key was obtained through the co-operation of her son Bernard Holterman 111, and the room disclosed its long hidden treasures. It was an incredible sight: neat stacks of cedar boxes of various dimensions, each with slotted fittings which had held the larger negatives in perfect preservation. A number of enamelled iron boxes, not so carefully designed, contained a vast number of smaller negatives"

Eventually enlarged and titled, the photographs were displayed throughout Australia, exciting much interest. During 1958-9 the ABC used the photographs in a series of documentary programs, written and presented by Keast Burke and his wife Iris.

The discovery of the Holterman Collection was very significant to the history of Hill End. The photographs provided a very detailed picture of the Hill End commercial, residential and mining scene as it was in the 1870s, and now it was possible to document the history of the town as it was in its zenith.

The momentum of publicity was sustained by the publication in 1964 of Harry Hodge's *"Hill End Story"* Book 1. Book 2 followed in 1965 and the final book of the series followed in 1972.

This series of three books were an important contribution to Hill End and its history. This history of Hill End as Mick saw it, came at just the right time. For twenty years or more he had been gathering information from the oldtimers and spending countless hours in research. The books highlight Hill End's period of glory. These books are most important because a lot of the material they contain is very precious oral history.

Mick had the foresight and ability to obtain this from some of the oldtimers before they passed on.

Brian Hodge, a nephew of Mick, has also produced three well researched and beautifully written books: *"Valleys of Gold", "Frontiers of Gold", and "Remembered With Pride"*, the latter being a memoir of Mark Hammond, but edited, introduced and annotated by Brian.

Brian takes in a much wider sweep of the gold mining history than did his uncle. Apart from the Hill End history of gold mining, he also covers the surrounding district and makes forays out into other gold rush towns that were scattered around the Western Goldfields. Mick and Brian have certainly made a major contribution to the history of the Hill End area.

This unfolding story of Hill End's past, together with the continuous publicity brought hundreds of people to the town and was the start of a never-ending stream of tourists. The artists and the historians have been a powerful influence in preventing Hill End from going the way of so many other surrounding towns. The publicity their work generated prevented, what could have well been, Hill End becoming a ghost town, and was undoubtedly the main factor in the town becoming an Historic Site.

Chapter 26

Sports Reflecting Gold and Local Industries

After World War 11, Hill End gained a reputation for organising carnival sports days with a difference. These events not only attracted large numbers of people to Hill End, but they also received widespread media attention.

Many of the events were unique to Hill End and were, in the main, thought out and developed by the locals. The first of these carnivals featured a number of events based on gold mining skills, and required the contestants to use tools and equipment that were in use in the gold rush days. This type of carnival appealed to locals as well as visitors.

In October 1951, the Hill End citizens held their first big event, it was called the "Hill End Jubilee and Gold Centenary Celebration". This was to celebrate the discovery of gold in Australia. The various events were spread over a full week.

The main attractions were: Educational and Historical Exhibition - PSAA Sports - Bathurst Migrant Concert - Grand Centenary Ball - Re-Enactment of the Raising of the Beyers and Holterman Nugget - Historical Street Procession - Rock Drilling Exhibition - Gold Washing Competition - Gold Specimen Race - Polo Match - Gold Mine Lucky-Dip, some of the lucky-dips contained specs of gold - Gold Nuggets were raffled - Aerobatics by the Mudgee and Orange Aero Clubs and a Rifle shooting competition.

A replica of the Beyers Holterman nugget was cast from Hawkins Hill quartz held together with cement and sand and there was a competition to guess its weight. I moulded the replica Holterman Nugget, by making a mathematical enlargement, taken from a photograph of the nugget, this resulted in an outline of the correct shape and dimensions. This outline was transferred to a bed of clay and a mould was formed. Devon Gold supplied some quartz specimens showing colours of gold. These specimens were placed in the mould and bonded together with re-enforcing, sand and cement. Gold paint mixed with fine sand was applied to the cemented area, to simulate the gold of the original nugget.

The finished nugget had a very realistic appearance, in fact so realistic, that in order to recover some of the gold specimens, souvenir hunters smashed the replica nugget to pieces. It had been left overnight at the sports ground, because of the difficulty in moving such a heavy weight.

The re-enactment of the raising of the nugget took place at the Star of Peace shaft, for it was not possible to stage this event at the actual Beyer and Holterman shaft because of its inaccessibility to audience and media.

Reins in hand George Denam urges Tiger to pull away from the Star of Peace shaft during the discovery of Gold Centenary Celebrations at Hill End in 1951

Angus Longmore and a number of other miners and carpenters, who at this time were working for Devon Gold, expended a considerable amount of time timbering the collar of the Star of Peace shaft and putting in a stage (blocking the shaft off) some five metres down. This work had to be correctly and safely done because the Star of Peace shaft is 900 feet deep and is the deepest shaft on Hawkins Hill.

A timber 'whim' was built, an exact replica of the whims that were used in the early days, to pull the ore and mullock from a shaft.A horse supplied by George Denman was used to work the whim. After the

"nugget" was pulled to the surface, it was loaded on to a spring cart that was lent by the Drakeford family. This spring cart had originally belonged to Holterman, so, it was a most appropriate vehicle for the re-enactment.

Angus Longmore played the part of Bernard Holterman and Digger Hocking the part of Beyers. They were assisted in the raising of the nugget by Ted Woolard, Mick Fitzgerald, Reg Warry Junior and Jack Ellis, all of whom were dressed in period costume. To add some colour to the scene three ladies, Margo Fuge, Beryl Woolard and Hilda Allen were at the shaft top, all beautifully dressed in period frocks and twirling colourful sunshades. It was a most impressive performance by all concerned.

With the nugget in the spring cart, George Denman in the role of driver and 'Beyers and Holterman' on board, the party proceeded to the top of Reef Street where the cart with nugget on board was to lead the procession through the town. In the procession 'Beyers and Holterman' rode in a valuable period coach loaned by Mr.H.Rotherby of Mandurama.

Another interesting vehicle in the procession was a 1896 Horseless Carriage. This was one of the first cars made by International and was brought to Australia at the beginning of this Century. The car was loaned by Arthur Bowers of Wyagdon and was put into working order by that very ingenious and skilful person, Tom Ryan, of *"Pomenara"* Sallys Flat. His brother Matt assisted by repainting the intricate line work on the body of the International. This fancy line work was a carry-over from similar decorative work that had adorned horse drawn vehicles of that period.

Tom Ryan was the driver of the International in the procession and he was accompanied by Hilda Allan, who sported an attractive and very necessary parasol. Motor vehicles of that period did not have a hood.

Arthur Bowers subsequently sold the International Horseless Carriage to the Vesta Battery Company.

Other floats depicted various aspects of the mining industry, sports, school, younger set, and local activities.

The keynote of the exhibition was gold and its influence on Hill End. There were various devices that had been used for the winning of Gold from the alluvial by generations of miners, including the "banjo", tub and cradle, trough and cradle, and "Long Tom". All were fully functional and miners gave working demonstrations.

In the gold dish washing competition each competitor had to fill his dish with gold bearing wash dirt, wash the gold from the dirt and place the specs in a "pot" and then keep washing until the final bell. The gold

extracted by each competitor during a set time was then weighed and the winner declared.

A Centenary Queen competition was held and the "Queen" was crowned at the Grand Centenary Ball held in the Royal Hall on the Friday night. The music at the Ball was provide by Jack Coxheads Bathurst Dance Orchestra.

The official opening of the Jubilee Celebrations was performed by the Hon.J.G.Arthur, Minister for Mines. A number of other dignitaries were present including Federal and State Members of Parliament, senior police officers, and Members of Local Government from surrounding towns and shires. The A.B.C had a mobile unit at the town for several days and *"Pix"*, *"Womens Weekly"*, and provincial and metropolitan newspapers gave the function very good coverage.

Donald Friend contributed a very fine line drawing depicting, Holterman with camera and a background of Clarke Street Hill End as it was in 1872. This drawing was used as the cover design for the Jubilee Program and information booklet.

The celebrations were a marvellous success, and the co-operation of the whole town in this community effort brought the people together in a manner that had not been experienced before. The feeling amongst the townspeople was one of great satisfaction, because a small town, with a handful of residents, had been able to so successfully produce and direct a function with activities spread over a week.

The success of this initial festival set the scene for many future functions of a similar format. The main feature of all these was the comradeship and support received from local and district people and, on the day, many of the regular visitors gave valuable assistance.

Easter weekend became a permanent date for many of our future functions and each year we endeavoured to introduce new themes that reflected some unique local skill. The proceeds of these functions were used to assist various local organisations

In 1953 the Citizens Association held the Holterman Festival and Photographic Exhibition. In addition to the Photographic Exhibition, there was a Car Rally from Bathurst to Hill End Via Turondale. The Bathurst Car Club combined with the Hill End Committee, and the Rally proved a great success, with about 35 cars taking part in the Rally.

The police would not permit a car race, but we were allowed to run the Rally by setting a set safe time, the competitor finishing in that time or closest to it, to be the winner. I travelled the course and sealed the time in an envelope, opened after the Rally was completed, the time was 69 minutes.

We then followed the Rally up with novelty car events between teams from Bathurst, Hill End and Sofala.

Another interesting event was put on by the Bathurst Model Aero Club.

We also had 500 leaflets printed, a percentage of these were labelled as "Lucky Leaflets". The leaflets were released over the sports ground from an Aeroplane flown by the Mudgee Aero Club, and anyone retrieving a "Lucky Leaflet" was entitled to various cash or discount prizes donated by Bathurst Business people. Vin Suttor from Triamble was a great supporter of the various Hill End sports days and always arranged for an Aero Display.

In addition to the above there were always other attractions and events oriented towards gold mining. In other years we had festivals highlighting Hill End industries.

When the Gum Leaf industry was working at Hill End, we held a Gumleaf Festival and Gum Leaf Cutting competitions were held. These events not only demonstrated the techniques used in leaf cutting but were highly competitive and exciting events.

We also had events in keeping with the Timber Mill such as log cutting with Chain Saws, Pit Sawing, and Cross Cut Sawing. One year Leo and Ray Auld put on a Furniture Making event, the furniture being cut out of green logs with chain saws. This event was picked up by the press and was also a feature article in *"Pix"* magazine.

I quote a small part of this *"Pix"* article:

"The brothers Leo and Ray Auld selected a large "Cabbage" gum, standing straight and tall among its fellows. "It's got to be solid right through," said Leo, as the saw burst into an ear shattering whine.

"The sawdust flew as the saw ate into the butt and in no time the tree crashed to earth.

"The brothers selected a three-foot length and cut it out. Then with a piece of chalk, one of them rapidly roughed out a pattern on the section, restarted the saw and sent it racing like a knife through butter, along the outline.

"As the waste pieces fell away, a one-piece chair with a comfortable sloping back, solid legs and rounded seat was left standing on the ground.

"In rapid succession the Aulds fashioned a garden flower tub and a low table or footstool.

"These three demonstration pieces of furniture had taken only a few minutes to shape."

Another theme for our sports related to the Hill End Bush Fire Brigade, the profits from this Festival being devoted to improving the fire-fighting equipment. Again events were designed around Bush Fire Fighting activities, with various Fire Fighting Teams taking part in each event. There were also demonstrations of fire-fighting equipment. During this festival we held an Art Union, the prize being a show pony, complete with bridle and saddle.

A novel, money-raising event was operated in conjunction with the Hill End Rifle Club, and was instituted to raise money for the P and C. This competition was contested on a weekly basis, and consisted of a target being drawn on a large sheet of white drawing cardboard. The sheet was placed on a board in the Royal Hotel and those wishing to participate paid 20 cents to place a cross and their name on the target. The target was then taken out to Rifle Range and placed behind the usual target used at the weekly shoot. A previously nominated rifleman then fired at the target. The winner of the competition was the one whose cross was nearest to the bullet hole.

All our sports days concluded with a Ball at night and the festivities usually finished up about 3 am.next morning.

The Australian Muzzle Loading Gun Club played a prominent role in the Hill End Easter sports and in fact still hold their Australian Muzzle-Loading Rifle Championship at Hill End.

The Muzzle-Loaders fitted in very well with the Hill End historical theme, because the majority of members were keenly interested in early colonial history. On the festival days a number of club members dressed in period costume.

Quite a few of the members had rifles they had made themselves, many members were skilled gunsmiths. In building these rifles some used .50 calibre rifle barrels made at Lithgow.

The muzzle-loading shot-guns used by the gun club competed very favourably with modern shot-guns when the club held their clay-pigeon shoot at Hill End.

The members of the Gun Club made many friends at Hill End and were and still are welcome guests.

Some of members of the club who visited Hill End during the period discussed in this history were:

Lyn McKenzie, Frank d'Astoli, Bob Bonham, Enid Kell, John Kell, Bill Maris, Betty Maris, Munro McKenzie, John Andrews, Tony Hill, Edgar Penzig, Owen O"Flaherty, Barbara Dean, Peter Leggett, Peter Isles, Ken Turnbull.

One of the most exciting and interesting events that I was involved in took place at Hill End on 21 August 1963.

The managing director of Cobb & Co Queensland financed and organised an epic coach journey in aid of the Flying Doctor Service. The coach journey covered 2868 miles, commencing in Port Douglas Northern Queensland on the 30 June 1963 and finishing in Melbourne on 20 September 1963.

Money was raised by charging people to ride on the coach over various sections of the journey, and by sports days, Balls and other functions held at the towns the coach visited. The marathon journey was well organised and was hailed as a resounding success.

The Hill End people joined in the spirit of event with great enthusiasm. Practically the whole town was dressed in period costume both for the welcome to the coach and the ball at night. Armed with orders from a number of locals I went to Sydney and hired a wide variety of male and female period costumes.

Our first function was at the spot where alluvial gold was first discovered in Tambaroora. A large contingent of Hill End residents and visitors welcomed the coach at this point. It was a wonderful sight with all the people in period costume. Enid Kell and Flo Ellis were striking pair in their period costumes and appropriately riding their horses side saddle. George Anderson was in period police uniform and cut a dashing figure on a bay horse.

We re-enacted the aborigine digging up a gold nugget as he dug a hole for the police tent pole. Then with some locals in the coach we moved on to the Royal Hotel at Hill End where practically the whole town awaited our arrival. It was a splendid sight to see the Coach and horses clatter down the avenue.

The ball at night was also a great event and people dancing in period costume made it an unforgettable night.

My wife and I were invited to the Cobb and Co Ball in Bathurst. This was held in an ex-army building and 1600 people attended. Those present included many prominent people from the entertainment and official walks of life, many of them from distant towns and Sydney. There were floor shows and dancing until the early hours of the morning.

An ounce of gold sent on the coach from Hill End was auctioned at a party in Lonsdale street Melbourne the site of the original Cobb & Co stables.

All our sports days were very happy social gatherings and were well supported by the locals and people from the surrounding villages, such as Hargraves, Triamble Pyramul, Long Creek, Windeyer, Sallys Flat,

Sofala, Wattle Flat, Peel, Turondale and, of course, the many people living on grazing properties throughout the district. There was also a number of people from further afield, some even coming from other states.

Old friendships were renewed and competition in all the events were keenly contested in a friendly and sporting manner. A yarn and a few beers at the Royal were capped off by dancing into the early hours of the next morning, when pleasurable exhaustion usually called a halt to festivities. The locals and all the other Hill End addicts looked forward to these annual functions with keen anticipation.

Unfortunately many of the present generation miss out on the companionship and pleasure that was engendered amongst those who spent many days planning and running these community festivals. In fact the organisers seemed to get more pleasure out of the preparation and rehearsal activities than they did out of the event itself.

Chapter 27

National Historic Site Declared.

On the seventh. November 1966, Mr. Tom Lewis, M.L.A., Minister for Lands, released a press statement in which he announced that Hill End, a century ago the largest inland town in the then colony of N.S.W., and today, a quiet, peaceful community but retaining an atmosphere of fascination for the past glory of the Turon gold era, is to be the location of a National Historic Village. Many Hill End residents received the declaration of the Historic Site with great enthusiasm, but others were not so keen. I was pleased with the announcement as I was firmly convinced that this declaration was the only way that Hill End could be saved. My experience told me that the declining population would not be able to maintain the public and commercial buildings that were still standing in the town. I had been a trustee of the Hospital Building for some years and it was most difficult to even keep that one building from falling into irreparable condition.

However, the declaration was only a piece of paper that provided official status to the scheme. The implementation was to prove a difficult and controversial task.

Government sourced money is always in short supply for this type of development, particularly when the development is isolated and does not provide any great political advantage to the government in power at any given time. This problem is universal and because of the lack of adequate finance the implementation of major restoration of Hill End has fallen short of the expectations of most of the people involved.

The cost of restoring old buildings to their original condition is most expensive as is the on going maintenance. The cost in time and labour is not always apparent to those not directly concerned. These hidden costs are often the cause of misunderstanding as to where the money is going; conversely, money spent on new buildings, has an immediate and favourable impact.

The early history of how the Historic Village was first conceived, and the people who were involved in its conception, has to my knowledge never been correctly documented. I have in my possession early correspondence and newspaper reports and therefore can give a factual history of the early discussions and meetings that were held.

The first discussions as to Hill End's suitability to become a National Historic Village for the commemoration of the discovery of gold in Australia, occurred at Hill End on Easter Saturday 1964.

The discussion took place between Dick Simpson, then the District Surveyor at Orange, Bill Lyle, Norman Cross and myself. Bill, Norman and myself were at that time executive officers of the Hill End Citizens' Association. The HECA, together with the townspeople, was trying to stem Hill End's shrinking population and the erosion of its amenities. Our policy was to encourage tourists and improve the social and entertainment facilities in the town, and, at the same time, to encourage any new ideas that would provide employment.

Having listened to Dick Simpson's ideas, we were both interested and to some degree excited, at what appeared to be an opportunity to safeguard the future preservation of Hill End, and at the same time to achieve many of our other objectives, such as employment, entertainment, and improved community amenities.

At the next meeting of the Citizens Association, we discussed Dick Simpson's proposal. After some lengthy debate, the proposal, as suggested by Dick Simpson, was unanimously accepted by those members present at the meeting. The meeting then directed the executive to promote the idea to the best of their ability.

In carrying out this directive the executive contacted all relevant members of State and Federal Parliaments; the Turon Shire Council; The National Trust of Australia; local Historical Societies and the media. Every contact we made reacted with enthusiasm to the suggestion that Hill End become the first Historic Site in NSW.

Dick Simpson and Howard Stanly, an officer from the Lands Department, then visited Hill End. This visit resulted in a request from the Minister for Lands for a detailed report on the proposal. This report was written by the Orange District Surveyor, Dick Simpson.

This first report suggested that the Historic Site should be restricted to a comparatively small area, which just covered the central part of the village. This plan excluded the Royal Hotel, Royal Hall, and the general store opposite the hotel, and also the more modern homes and buildings situated at the southern end of the town, the latter because they did not fit with the original buildings in the main part of the town.

Dick Simpson suggested these exclusions so that the initial cost of acquirement, would make the plan more attractive to the government. It was later decided that the shop and hotel should be included as these buildings provided a gateway to the site and as such, should be considered as an important part of the Site.

The Minister for Lands then asked that a committee meeting be called to discuss the Simpson proposal.

In response to the minister's request, a committee meeting was held at the Turon Shire Council Offices at Kelso, on ninth August 1966. The Committee had representatives from the Lands Department, National Trust, Mines Department, and members of the Turon Shire Council. The Hill End Citizens were represented by Norman Cross, Bill Lyle and myself.

This meeting made a number of suggestions for guidelines that would be important to the Hill End community, local government, historical preservation, and undesirable development.

The minister then released an official statement giving a general summary of the guidelines that would be used for the planned Historic Site. My part in the early promotion of the Hill End Historic Site is well known to any of the residents who were at Hill End at that time. I was, and still am, strongly in favour of the scheme. I was very disappointed that family considerations made it necessary for me to leave Hill End soon after the Historic Site was declared. It would have given me great pleasure to have taken an active role in the implementation of the plan to preserve and maintain the village, as a lived in Historic Site.

However, I am saddened that many of the future plans for the town, discussed in early negotiations, have not been carried out. Some of these as stated earlier are no doubt due to insufficient grants by the government. Others seem to have been overlooked in later planning.

One suggestion that did disturb me was one that the use of the common should be restricted or rescinded.

The Hill End Common was an integral part of the early planning. Its presence would retain the visual and environmental aspects of the village, prevent the encroachment of undesirable grazing leases, that would eventually lead to land clearing etc, and also would provide an adequate barrier around the site, and at the same time provide visitors and locals with a recreational area that could be freely used for bush walking and other activities.

I am aware that cattle wandering within the site have caused some problems, but the cattle also provide an important service by keeping the grass under control. This would present a massive task if the cattle were shut out. I do hope that some compromise can be reached in this matter and that the Common remains safe for all time.

Consideration for planned areas for those wishing to build a home at Hill End should also be extended. I was under the impression that Tambaroora was to be used more or less as a dormitory area for the site,

but that roadside strip development would be considered undesirable. It was suggested that an avenue of native trees would be planted along each side of the road at Tambaroora and the land behind would then be made available for residential development. An avenue of native trees would make a pleasing entrance to the site from the Mudgee road.

The prospective resident is sometimes discouraged by stringent conditions on where or how to build. Surely the viability of the site is enhanced by increased population. I think that with careful planning and clear regulations this situation could be solved. I totally concur with any regulations that preserve the historical and visual aspects of the site, but would also like to see planned development.

Some residents see controls over the type of design of home, material used and colour of paint, fences etc, as an infringement on their natural rights.

All will agree that many of these regulations are desirable, and that all types of building regulations are in force nationwide.

However, if they are applied without very detailed and readily available information, supplied by NPWS and local council, then inevitably there will be conflict between the authority and the home builder.

In 1970 the historic site was extended beyond the initial area, which had only embraced the central part of the town. In these areas, the service purchased land as it became available and in some cases, lease-back or occupancy under licence arrangements were entered into with the former owners. Now that the site has had twenty years to plan, it would be appropriate to establish permanent boundaries for the site and also clearly designated areas for those who wish to build a home in the area.

There is no doubt that land values have increased at Hill End some of the increased values are due to the establishment of the Historic Site and the remainder to general increases in land values. When I left Hill End in the mid 1960s, the going price for blocks of land at Hill End was 40 to 50 dollars. Now I am told that building blocks are being sold for 10 to 12 thousand dollars. Obviously this represents an increase far in excess of the state average.

On the positive side we have to look at the improvements that have been instituted by the NPWS and the extensive rebuilding and maintenance work that has been carried out.

The Hospital restored and adapted as the Visitor's Centre and museum; the provision of a very comprehensive range of information by way of maps leaflets and books, verbal information and assistance in understanding the site, restoration of a number of buildings,

establishment and maintenance of Camping Areas, water supply, water reservoirs, effluent disposal; and garbage disposal. Many of these are services normally provided by local government. However, they are services that were never thought of before the NPWS came to Hill End.

There are also signs and walking tracks, and many other good things, many of these involving considerable expenditure, that would have been far beyond the capacity of the Hill End residents.

With these things in mind it has been said that :

While the Service is Managing the Hill End Site with some degree of success in the physical sense - the environment, structures, landscape etc - it is less capable of providing for the needs of the local population. Any sense of preserving a certain evolving social pattern in the Hill End Historic Site is disrupted by the very presence of the service as the new landlord.

The Draft Plan Of Management 1979 contains some 50 odd pages and covers a wide range of subjects relating to the future management of the Hill End Site. A major review of this 1979 Draft Plan was placed on exhibition in 1988. This Draft Plan is most comprehensive and if all its proposals can eventually be carried out, then I feel that most people would be happy with the result.

One of the paragraphs detailing the the management task is particularly significant to local residents:

"Part of the present day Hill End community live within the Historic Site. Their needs and those of visitors to the site are acknowledged by the Service in its management, a major component of which is the reconciliation of the often conflicting aspirations and needs of the resident community, visitors and the Service itself".

Perhaps this is the salient point for many of the problems that have so often surfaced since the Site was declared- *"The conflict of aspirations of all the people involved".*

Let us hope that the new generation of Hill End residents and the Service will be able to resolve some of these conflicting aspirations, and jointly work towards making the Hill End Historic Site something that the residents, the Service and the visitors can claim has been achieved with their combined efforts.

Chapter 28

Hospital Doctors and Nurses

Hill End, because of its isolation and small population, was never very attractive to the Medical profession. However, prior to 1925, the Hill End Hospital had operated as a fully equipped institution, providing medical and nursing care for the local and district population. The Hospital had a Resident Medical Officer, and there was also a Resident Matron and a permanent hospital staff. Surgeons were on call from both Bathurst and Mudgee. Appointment of staff, raising of funds and the general business of the Hospital was under the control of a local Committee.

Although the year 1915 does not fall within the scope of this History, it seemed worth while to quote the report of the Hill End Hospital for that year. In 1915 The Hill End and Tambaroora District Hospital Committee reported:

"I*n presenting this report the retiring Committee have much pleasure in stating that the past year has eclipsed all previous years, both in regard to patients treated and income raised. Increase of patients means increase in expenditure, but owing to the careful management of the Matron and the committee, the expenses are below that of last year.*

"The number of epidemics has shown the necessity for a Hospital, both as a place for skilful treatment and place for isolation. The amount of expenditure on the institution justified itself in a case of infectious disease, where, there is no doubt, the extra care taken by the Matron saved the town much expense and worry.

"The Hospital standard has been more than maintained. Wards have been made fly-proof, new beds added and everything made comfortable for the staff and the patients. We have purchased a complete set of splints and installed a large stock of drugs, a very necessary step in a town without a chemist's shop. The public obtain these drugs at almost cost price.

"During the year there have been no staff changes. The present Matron has proved herself a kind, attentive and unsparing nurse. Owing to the strain of day and night nursing in some difficult cases she has had to be relieved at times. Should the number of patients increase additional staff will be necessary.

"During the year occasion was taken of the visit of Mr Estell, Minister of Mines, and Mr W.F.Dunn M.L.A, for a deputation headed by the Treasurer and Secretary, to wait on the Minister with a view to obtaining a grant for repairs to the building. As a result of these representations the Government granted 314 pounds ($628). Plans have been prepared and the repairs will be carried out in due course. We have to thank Mr.Estell and Mr Dunn especially the latter, for the excellent work done in this matter.

"During the year 32 in Patients were treated (23 males and 9 females). Of these 14 males recovered, 5 were relieved, and 4 died, while 6 females recovered, and 3 were relieved. 118 outpatients were treated, of whom 87 recovered (49 males and 38 females), 23 were relieved (12 males and 11 females), and 6 died. One male remained in Hospital at the end of the year.

"We wish to thank the ladies who assisted at the annual bazaar, all collectors, also donors in kind or money and Mr L Weir for the use of the Committee Room.

"During the year the medical arrangements were altered. We were in a position to appoint Dr.W.K.Dale, M.B, as the much desired resident Medical Officer, with Drs Lester and Boake as consulting surgeons. Dr Dale has given great satisfaction, and we have to thank him for much needed help at times; also Drs Lester and Boake for stepping into the breach when ever needed. The services of the two latter in the time of stress cannot be too greatly emphasised.

"At the beginning of the year two capable officers retired, in the persons of Messers A LeMessurier and A. Payne, the former after a period of 33 years as Treasurer. The service of both was publicly recognised and we desire to place on record their excellent work on behalf of the institution. Mr Le Messurier was succeeded by Mr A.E.Cook and Mr Payne by Mr A.W.Marshall.

"In conclusion we wish the incoming Committee every success and assure them of our loyal support. With the support of the public we look forward to another successful year.

"The Hospital Board in 1915 held 12 ordinary and 3 special meetings, the figure after each Committee Members name donates the number of meetings they attended.

F.Brandon 14, A.E.Cook 15, A.W.Marshall 15, E.Goodwin 13, J.Millen 11,.F.Hodge 8, A.Hutchinson 8, V.Whittaker 7, J.Sullivan 6, R.H.Hopman 5, D.Marshall 4, W.A.J.Marshall 3, K.McKenzie 2, L.Weir 3, F.Walpole 2."

The Hill End & Tambaroora District Hospital
Balance Sheet 1915

RECEIPTS	£ s d	EXPENDITURE	£ s d
Subscriptions	111. 13. 0	Medical Salaries	91. 3.. I
Donations	57. 4. 0	Nursing & Gen.Staff	146. 7.. 8
Entertainment	77. 6. 0	Provisions	80..11. 5
Patients Contr	47. 0.11	Drugs & Dressings	62..19. 8
Gov.Subsidy	200. 0 9	Fuel & Light	17. 18. 0
Interest	12. 5. 11	Bed Linen etc.	3. 10..3
		Furniture	10. 6..4
		Repairs	7.11. 2
Funerals	5.10. 0		
Sundries	18. 6		
TOTAL	£505. 10. 7		£441. 8. 5

The Report gave a list of about 200 donations for 1915. Apart from local citizens, there were some interesting donations:

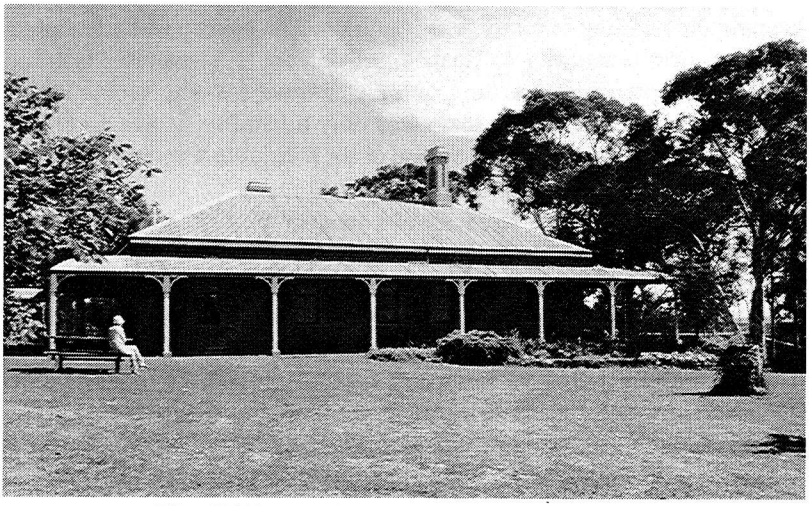
Walter and Eliza Hall Trust $50; Hill End Jubilee Trust $20; Castlemaine Brewery Newcastle $2; Denham Bros Sydney $1; Distillery Co Ltd Sydney; W.Dowling Sydney $3; Edwards & Co tea merchants Sydney $1.30; Friend & Co Sydney $1; T.Gibbet Sydney $1; Griffiths Bros tea merchants Sydney $1; Mudgee Guardian $1; T.J.Gray Goulburn $3; Mrs.Harris $4; M.Mollard Sydney $1; H.McFarlane Bathurst $17.85; W & A M'Arthur & Co Sydney $2; Pickles & Son Sydney $1; Hawkins Hill Reward $4.20; William Scott Sydney Builder $1; H.Shelly Sydney $2; James Steadman Sydney $1; W.D & H.O Wills Ltd Sydney $2; Donnelly Bros Motor Service 50c; Hunter & Son Sydney 50c.; Hospital Box $44.40.

By 1925, due to the fall in population and better transport facilities available between Hill End, Bathurst and Mudgee the role of the Hospital had declined. It was also becoming more difficult to raise money.

In 1925 Blanche Lee was the Resident Matron and the G.P at that time was Doctor Smith Marr. Blanche Lee was the last Matron at the Hospital and after she retired from the Hospital, she lived on at Hill End

in a private capacity, and her main interest turned to dogs, of which she had a large number.

By 1935 Dr O'Flynn was acting as the local doctor, he and his family were living at the Hospital. The Hospital was no longer functioning as an in-patients' institution, and patients requiring hospital services were sent to Bathurst or Mudgee.Dr O'Flynn was the last resident doctor.



The Hill End District Hospital building.
In 1972 restoration work on the building was completed and the Hospital was opened as a museum and visitor centre.

After WW2 the Sofala Hospital took over the role of District Hospital. Because of the reluctance of Australian doctors to take up positions at small country hospitals, it was frequently migrant doctors who were appointed as Resident Medical Officers. These doctors visited Hill End once a week, seeing patients at the Hill End Hospital where a room had been fitted out as a Surgery. Later they moved the weekly surgery to the C.W.A Rooms because of its more central location.

One of the Sofala resident doctors was a Doctor Darling. It was later revealed that he was not a qualified doctor and when his exposure became public, he made a hurried departure. In spite of not being a qualified Doctor, he was a very caring person and had served the community well. Many of the patients he had successfully treated were very sad to see him go. Although his departure was of necessity very hurried, he still found time to go to a Bathurst businessman and leave some money to cover a small debt he had with me.

Doctor Soller was resident lady doctor at Sofala for some time and was a very competent and well respected medical practitioner. She later took up practice in Sydney.

After the departure of Dr.O'Flynn the Hill End Hospital came under the control of the Lands Department who appointed local trustees to care for the building as best they could. Ron Hodge and his family rented the building for many years and they were to a great degree responsible for keeping the building in reasonable condition. The upkeep of such a large building, with practically no finance, was almost an impossible task for the Trustees, particularly as the Lands Department was reluctant to spend money on a building that to them was only a liability. It was fortunate that the building was retained because of the focal role it now occupies in the Historic Site, as museum and visitors' centre.

From 1925 on there were always lengthy periods when no local medical help was readily available at Hill End. Home births were the order of the day. Many of the Hill End mothers giving birth were attended in their homes by local women such as Mrs Fitzsimmons, Miss Evans, or Mrs Lawson, and babies arrived without a great deal of fuss or bother. These untrained midwives were very competent, and the mothers they attended, were saved many of the traumas of birthing that occurred in the 1850s, and are mentioned in Harry Hodge's Hill End Story book 2.

Harry writes that on one occasion a midwife swam her horse across the flooded Turon River to keep faith with an expectant mother on the tableland at Mahoney's Corner. She delivered the child in a tent, then turned the horse back through the swollen stream to keep another appointment at Tambaroora.

In some cases the midwife just could not be there and Harry cites another case, where a woman in the Macquarie River gorge, was out with a wheelbarrow, gathering firewood along the river bank, when her time unexpectedly arrived. Under the inadequate shelter of a river-oak and completely alone, she went through the ordeal, attending to the newly-born infant and all the requirements of the situation. She then took her petticoat, wrapped the baby in it and wheeled it home on top of the precious load of wood already gathered. That boy grew up to sturdy manhood and lived a long and useful life. Harry Hodge knew his mother as an aged but still active woman who regarded the whole incident as just one of those situations that country women had to face and overcome.

After WW 2, my wife Betty, a nursing sister,came with me to live at Hill End. As this was a period when little local medical help was available she was frequently called upon in emergencies. She attended to burns, fractures, heart attacks, motor car accidents and occasionally the

early arrival of a baby..Because of Betty's first aid work at Hill End, the local branch of the Red Cross made available to her a fully equipped first aid case. In the twenty years she was at Hill End she was to use that case on many occasions. The Australian Red Cross recognised her efforts by making her a life member.

With all the difficulties of obtaining medical care and certainly without the luxury of Medicare, with its multitude of free services and its seemingly endless supply of tranquillisers, antibiotics, injections, vaccines, and a frightening number of tablets, most Hill End people lived and enjoyed life beyond the allotted span. A fact that can only be attributed to the healthy climate, lack of pollution, tranquil life style and the fact that most people did a lot of walking.

Certainly the long life could not be attributed to diet, that is, if we go on the advice of today's dietitians. Many of the people who lived to a great age had a diet of corned beef, bread, potatoes, pumpkin, jam, boiled suet puddings, fried foods, and beef dripping, used both as a shortening and for frying and baking. Bread and dripping was often on the menu when times were hard.

My grandmother, who survived at Hill End until her ninetieth years and as far as I know without any medical attention, drank copious quantities of strong tea laced with three spoons of sugar. She rarely touched milk and claimed she never drank plain water. Perhaps the other message is, fewer doctors and less drugs.

Chapter 29

Hill End 1965-1990

There are very few representatives of the original Hill End mining families still living in Hill End in 1990. This gradual decline was, as stated earlier, due to the younger generation leaving Hill End to seek employment and the older generation passing on. I estimate that there are fewer than 20 representatives of original Hill End families in permanent residence at Hill End.

Also the surrounding properties have nearly all changed hands, the former owners selling out and making new homes in Bathurst, Mudgee or other locations. The present population is mainly composed of people who have purchased local rural properties, built new homes in the village, or purchased existing homes. There are also some ex-residents or their descendants, who have come back to live permanently or on a part time, or holiday basis, and of course there are new business people operating shops, hotel, motel and licensed restaurant.

Hill End's potential as a tourist venue has as yet not been fully realised. A considerable investment of capital is needed to restore fully and maintain the buildings and visitor facilities. The control of noxious weeds such as sefton bush should also be a high priority. Sefton bush is a threat to the natural landscape as well as the native flora and fauna. Access roads are also important both to residents and visitors.

As a part of their official school curriculum large numbers of school children visit Hill End. These study tours. to Hill End cover history, social studies, geology, history of goldmining, village life and flora and fauna of the region.

In 1963 Brian Hodge commenced bringing students to Hill End as part of their school program. From Brian's original idea the scheme has been taken up by the Education Department and schools throughout NSW. Over the years the number of students visiting Hill End has steadily increased . During their stay at Hill End, they are given the opportunity to learn about our early history, in a practical and enjoyable way.

The history tours have proved an outstanding success both for the students and the promotion of Hill End. The students and teachers are wonderful ambassadors in spreading the word about Hill End and

encouraging their parents and others to visit the town. No matter where you go you will find young people who have been to Hill End.

For the guidance of teachers and students the NPWS has printed very informative Teachers Handbooks, Location maps, historical notes and information leaflets. Various sections of the Education Department have also prepared very detailed programs so that students can take full advantage of the opportunities for learning during their trip to Hill End. This information has been greatly enhanced by the number of books and booklets that have been written about Hill End's early history and its people. This written history is unique in that the books so far written have not overlapped, but have traced different aspects of the early discovery of gold and the social changes that inevitably occur in gold mining towns.

Hill End is a place of national cultural significance, mainly due to its role in the development of alluvial and hard rock mining. This was the cradle of gold mining in Australia. The landscape is enhanced by the unique collection of 1870 buildings, relics, artefacts and the physical evidence of the early mining shafts, machinery and roasting pits. All this is surrounded by the multi-stemmed gum trees that have regenerated from the stumps of the original woodlands that were cut for mining timber and fuel. The town's elevated setting above the Turon valley and its isolation from large provincial towns provide a peaceful and tranquil setting for the preservation of its past history.

Beyers Avenue with its multitude of European trees leads the visitor into the town. The avenue trees, combined with the hawthorn and other remaining ornamental trees that dot the area in both existing and abandoned gardens, present a delightful changing landscape as the seasons change and the delicate colours of spring change to the rich vibrant colours that herald the coming of winter.

1986, was the first time for a century that Hill End once again had a newspaper,*"The Hill End and Tambaroora Times and Miner's Advocate."* During its short life the paper was able to give the local people a voice and many ex-residents were able to keep in touch with Hill End and its people.

Over the years a shortage of water had always been a problem to Hill End residents. This was particularly so in drought time, when household tanks and wells became exhausted. I remember many occasions when water for domestic purposes had to be carted from the "Stripping" at Tambaroora or the trough at Bald Hill. The stripping at Tambaroora was originally a water supply dam for the Golden Gully Sluicing Company,that excavated the dam in 1911. The dam was later fenced and

used as an emergency town water supply. The trough was fed with water from the Bald Hill tunnel. Under severe drought conditions water for slopping purposes was carted from the Cornelian Dam.

The NPWS has now put down bores to tap the underground water and pumps feed this water into reservoirs built in strategic positions. This water supply not only assists with domestic water but was also the means of establishing a sewage system. Without Government assistance this development could never have been realised at Hill End.

What was formerly the Catholic Church has now been restored by the NPWS and has been placed at the disposal of the Citizens Association as a venue for the display of historical Hill End photographs, Harry Hodge's model of Hill End in the 1870s, family records, and other items of interest.

The NPWS has compiled an extensive collection of historical material relating to Hill End. These archives contain a wealth of documentary and photographic material spanning over a hundred years of the town's history.

The Service has also collected a quantity of artefacts. Included in this collection are many of the simple things that were commonplace in most of the early homes. The collection also includes mining and agricultural tools many of these were hand- forged by local blacksmiths. This collection was being catalogued and prepared for exhibition. It is to be hoped that these items can eventually become available for public display.

With the original buildings and homes that remain, together with the Holterman photographs, artefacts and remnants of the old gardens this makes Hill End a perfect setting to detail the lives and aspirations of the people who lived and worked on the goldfields. It seems that all that is now required is adequate finance and efficient management, so that the Hill End Historic Site can be developed into one of Australia's leading historical holiday destinations.

To live permanently in a tourist town does not always provide a life style that suits everyone. This attitude should only apply to those who lived there prior to the tourist invasion, those that came after would be aware of the disruption to privacy that tourists can cause. Without the tourists and the Historic Site I think it would have been very difficult to retain any of Hill End's historic buildings. There were so many buildings pulled down in my lifetime and the few that remained were all on the verge of being condemned for safety reasons.

Speaking from a distance and without any local involvement in the present Hill End Community activities, I see the future of Hill End in

the hands of a new group of people who are introducing new ideas and services. I hope that their efforts and those of the NPWS will be rewarded with unlimited success in preserving a happy and fulfilling life for the citizens, at the same time restoring and maintaining Hill End as a living reminder of our past.

EPILOGUE

The main portion of this book has been taken from personal experience and observation. I have endeavoured to present this period of Hill End as I perceived it, and because of this, it is mainly about my activities and my associations with various Hill End people, who lived or passed through Hill End. There are hundreds of stories and characters that are not mentioned, not because they are not worthy of mention, but because space, time and lack of facts limited me to writing of events and people with whom I was familiar.

I considered it important that someone who had lived at Hill End should attempt to record an eye witness account of this fifty year period during which a town and its people experienced so many social changes. Changes that were to alter the whole social and cultural base of a great but declining mining town. It is important that the history of this town be documented up to the present time and beyond. Perhaps in the future this period of Hill End's history will be covered in more detail.

With the help of the NPWS, Hill End can be a reminder of the determination of our forebears and the role they played in the early history of gold mining in Australia. For the descendants of the early families that remain and those new citizens, who have had problems with the transition from country village to National Historic Site, I hope that in the long term your reward will be the preservation of a very significant part of the National Estate, and your efforts to sustain the town as an active community will be appreciated by all those people who are committed to preserving our cultural heritage.

There were many unsung heroes in Hill End's past: ordinary people going about their business as warm-hearted, understanding, hardworking citizens giving support and help to their neighbours and friends, unnoticed and unrewarded but still doing what came naturally to the villagers of Hill End. These were the *People on the Banks* , the kind of people that make the world a better place to live in but never receive much attention from the historians.I have mentioned but a few of the Hill End people and the contribution they made to the town, by their work in the community. However the vast majority of the residents contributed to the welfare of the village and its people. It was this unity that gave Hill End people the strength to overcome adversity. I am pleased that I spent so much of my life at Hill End, where I and my family lived in such a secure and friendly community. Writing this book has been of great interest to me and has given me the opportunity of reliving in memory fifty of the happiest years of my life.

APPENDICES

No. 1: Turon Community Advancement Co-Op. Agriculture

One of the most important plans already in hand is the training of suitable youths in agriculture. Through the generosity of a local landowner an area of land has been given, and declared by Department of Agriculture inspectors to be eminently suitable for intensive vegetable culture. It is intended to train boys on this land as soon as possible. This land will be used for the production of vegetables for seed and a certain portion set aside for the growing of vegetables for local consumption.

In this way the price of vegetables, distributed through ordinary channels, will be reduced; and the people of the district will have an opportunity to improve their diet as well as assisting the development of the society.

It is also pointed out that seeds, implements and a horse will be placed at the disposal of the Society for the purpose of working the land until such time as it is self-supporting. The boys to be trained on the land, will be provided with pocket money until production begins, then they will share in the profits of the land. In recognising an act of such spontaneous generosity the promoters of the Society realise that it has been given an instant and valuable starting point for its activities.

COTTAGE INDUSTRIES

To illustrate the widespread scope of the Association, it may be mentioned that it is intended to begin as many cottage industries as are possible taking into consideration the financial and technical limitations which may be imposed.

Cottage industries are those which require limited capital and may be conducted in the homes of persons skilled in the industry. Avenues of development which the Society expect to be able to undertake include:-

TOY MAKING, POTTERY, HAND WEAVING, RUG MAKING, WOODWORKING, DRESSMAKING, KNITTING.

And will extend as circumstances permit to include some of the ordinary trades, such as printing, bookbinding, boot making and, in the case of individuals, any trade or occupation likely to provide a living.

It is intended to provide instructors to make competent workers and for the society to provide for any capital outlay in plant and materials. The Society in turn will market the goods produced, increase its resources by a reasonable charge for its services, recoup its expenses from sales and pay the balance to the worker who should receive more than an ordinary return for his labour.

It is intended that assistance should be provided on the basis of character and ability rather than security. It is hoped that ultimately any member of the Society with a sensible proposition, will be assisted by the Society although at the start it is inevitable that the Society will not have the resources necessary to assist everyone. It should be possible to overcome this lag comparatively early in the enterprise.

An example of how the plan works is to be found in the case of a Nova Scotia experiment operated with great success on similar lines..A man approached the Credit Union for sufficient funds to purchase a truck to enable him to earn his living as a carrier. His case was examined. It was found that he had every reasonable chance of earning his living and the truck was purchased on his behalf, with the result that the cost was less than it was on the open market.

After a few months of successful operation the man concerned fell ill. He was unable to work and under the ordinary course of events the truck would have been repossessed for failure to pay instalments and the man would have lost everything. Because the truck had been provided by the Association, which was interested only in creating a livelihood for its members and not in the sale of trucks, the problem was approached from a different angle. A truck driver was employed by the Association to drive the truck; the earnings were paid to the Association who paid from them the hired man's wages and gave the balance to the sick owner to enable him to keep his home together during his illness. When, a few months later, he recovered he had not only his truck but also his business. The Association had succeeded in maintaining his livelihood.

NO PROFITS

Just as there is no charity in the plans formulated there is also no profits for the Society. Any money earned by the Society through its operations will be used to expand the the work of the Society.

Earnings or surplus will be use exclusively for the development of the Society and the providing of additional funds to finance fresh

enterprises. As the plan develops it is probable that the Society itself will be able to provide a certain amount of employment.

It cannot be emphasised too strongly however, that the Society will not make profits for the gain of any individual. It is essentially mutual and if the time comes, as the sponsors hope it will, when everyone in the district is adequately employed and making a respectable living, it is hoped that the Society's funds will be available for such enterprises as housing and other essential community services. There is no limit to the activities of the society in the direction of improving the welfare of the community.

COMMUNITY HOUSE

The Community House which it is hoped to establish at Hill End in the beginning will be designed to be the headquarters of the Society, and also to be self supporting. The main features of the community house will be a library, reading room and facilities for instruction in trades and cottage industries and also proper facilities for organised games.

The cost of these services will be maintained by means of nominal subscriptions which members will be asked to pay on a weekly or monthly basis. The subscriptions will of course be within the limits of everyone - even those at present on the dole. It is also intended to provide means of after school education and to do all things possible for the cultural development of citizens. The aim of the Society will be to provide people with the means of enjoying life, to obtain a new conception of living and forget for all time the fact of mere existence.

Community House will. of course, be a co-operative affair and it is intended that members of the Society will assist in its growth. Thus, boys receiving instruction in woodwork, would help in the construction of shelves for the library and furniture for the rooms; girls receiving instruction in needle work would make the curtains if possible from material weaved in local cottage industries. In this way the community spirit will be developed and Community House will be built on the very fundamentals which inspire the Society. There will be no limit to its ultimate achievement.

FINANCE

The finance of the society will depend upon two main methods. The first will be by share capital and loans upon which the Society will pay interest at a nominal rate - probably 2 per cent per annum. The minimum period for which these loans will be excepted will be two years and after that time will be subject to withdrawal at one months notice. Facilities

will also be be given for indeterminate loans to cover those people who in effect wish to give a donation to the Society. As the Society does not wish to accept donations because they savour of charity it is intended that indeterminate loans carry interest but that the principal be not repaid.

A contributing plan for lending to the Society will also be instituted whereby people may pay any amount to the Society - the amount to be credited to the holder in a book provided for the purpose - but the amount will not rank for interest until the amount has reached two pounds.

Amounts raised by these means will be used to finance the various enterprises of the Society. In addition the Society will raise funds from nominal membership subscriptions and once industries have been established, from the marketing of goods produced and any enterprise financed by the society for providing employment.

In the initial stages all services to the Society will be given voluntarily and the Directors will give their services. It is recognised that as the Society grows it may become necessary to employ full time officers, but not until such time as pressure of work and ability to pay justify the appointments.

CONCLUSION

The plan has been devised to help people to help themselves. It savours neither of charity nor philanthropy. It seeks only to provide the means of providing employment and to encourage ideals of higher citizenship. To give a meaning to life and to ensure the maximum security to people under its influence.

In addition to the above Aims and Objectives pamphlet, there was also a long article printed in "The Week-End Magazine" of "The Western Times" printed in Bathurst on twenty-fourth. February 1940. The article was entitled "God Helps those who help themselves". This article laid out the objects of the Co-Operative in very glowing terms and concluded the article by writing :-

" In simple words, through a system of co-operate development they seek to give mankind both the means and the facility to live in its truest sense. To offer adventures in art and culture as well as in the material things of life, and in the course of a generation or two to permeate a virile spirit, offering all that most modest people ask of life - health, happiness, entertainment and culture. The right to live as distinct from the right to exist. And once that right has been provided the way is open to even higher things, for the paths of contentment and earthly comradeship leads inevitably to the greater mystery and the greater joy, the path of God.

"That is why we can find the school teacher, the policeman, the rector and all other worthy citizens working harmoniously for the common end - because it leads to the ultimate that man asks, peace of mind on this earth and peace of soul in the world to come.

"And the fact that we have to go to Hill End to see the birth of a brave experiment is not so very remarkable when we realise the strange places in which began even greater things in the history of mankind".

One of the first endeavours of the Co-Operative was to secure permission to use part of the Hill End Hospital as club rooms; this was done and some of the young adults started a hobbies and games night once a week.

Children were supervised in hobbies and games for two hours one night per week, and it was intended to extend this club to cover a number of activities.

Experts from the Agricultural Department visited Hill End and took soil samples and advised on suitable crops for the district, both for the harvesting of fresh vegetables and fruit and also the harvesting of seed. With land and equipment available early success of the Co-Operative seemed assured.

It will be obvious that, a great deal of the hope and expectations of this scheme, was engendered by the poverty and unhappiness, that had been a feature of the Great Depression. People were grasping at straws in an effort to guard against further poverty, and the Co-Op idea seemed to offer some hope.

No. 2: Devon Gold Mining Company Pay Sheet for February 1950

J.Beck	E.F.Hocking
W.Bennett	J.Hocking
R.Burkinshaw	A.Longmore
W.Byrne	J.Longmore
A.Carver	R.Moore
M.Constantine	C.Lawson
A.Eldridge	C.Patterson
J.Ellis	P.Piston
J.F.Ellis	W.Read
R.Ellis	J.Reid
P.Flynn	E.Thompson
R.Fraser	W.Trevena
W.Frenzel	C.Trevithick
L.Garner	N.Woods
W.Godwin	E.Woolard
E.Hocking	V.Woolard

Rates of pay were as follows:-

Mine Manager	$37.80
Engine Drivers	$20.20
Miners	$16.40
Blacksmiths	$20.30
Gen. Hands	$15.40
Carpenters	$21.3

Income tax ranged from 30 cents to 70 cents per week this represented approximately 2%.

Angus Longmore was the Mine Manager.

No. 3: Index of Teachers who presided Hill End Public School 1923-1966.

J.E.THOMPSON	1923
JOSEPH HARRIS	1928
JACK PAULING	1929
HUBERT FIZELLE	1932
JAMES GAMBLE	1935
WILFRED JENNINGS Relieving	1936
JOHN BRITT Relieving	1936
OWEN MARTIN	1938
HARRY WALPOLE	1941
WILLIAM NICHOLSON	1946
MAXWELL E. PURSER	1949
JOHN B. FITZGERALD	1952
THOMAS L. IRELAND	1956
M O'CONNOR Relieving	1956
DAREL M. MULLEN	1958
COLIN JOYCE	1963
TOM SHUKER	1966

The following list of assistant teachers may not be complete, and apologies are extended to any who have been inadvertently omitted. Although the date of their tour of duty is not known we consider the following list indicates the order in which they served at Hill End.

OLIVE BARCLAY, E.V.PULLEY, E.BARLOW, GWEN McDONALD BRUCE HILL, R.HENICKIE, JOCK SNEDDON, RON WRIGHTSON, MONA CONN, HERB GUIHOT, JUNE DWYER, GEORGE WILLIAMS, ROGER SNAPE, DOROTHY COLLEY, ANN KEARNEY, ELIZABETH BOWMAN, R.WALSH, GRAHAM O'NEIL, IAN PERREIRA, LORRAINE SHUKER.

It is of interest to note that in the early twenties that the school enrolment was about 85, by 1927 with only 52 children enroled, the assistant Miss E.Pulley, was removed, the school remained without an assistant teacher until 1932, when school numbers had risen to 61 and Miss E.Barlow was appointed.

No. 4: METRIC CONVERSIONS

DISTANCE AND AREA

1 inch	254 centimetres
1 foot	0.30 metre
1 yard	0.91 metre
1 mile	1.60 kilometres
1 acre	0.40 hectare

WEIGHT

1 pennyweight (dwt)	1.41 grams
1 ounce (oz.)	28.34 grams
1 pound (lb.)	0.45 kilograms
1 hundredweight (cwt.)	56.40 kilograms
1 ton	1.02 tonnes
N.B. 12 oz. gold	1 lb. (troy weight)

MONETARY

1 penny (d)	1 cent
threepence	3 cents
sixpence	5 cents
1 shilling	10 cents
10 shillings	1 dollar
1 pound	2 dollars.

No. 5: Newcomers to Hill End During the Depression and Post WW2

The following is a list of names of people who came to Hill End during the period covered in this book. The majority came during the depression years. Some only stayed a short time; some married locals and a few spent the rest of their lives at Hill End.

Their reasons for coming to Hill End varied; some were escaping from the city; others came to join family or friends; there was also the lure of gold; a few came as graziers and some had financial interests in mining ventures. They all made some contribution to the social and economic well-being of the community and in many ways expanded the horizons of the locals.

This list containing 273 names has been compiled with the help of a few people who lived at Hill End during the period in review, and as we were mainly dependent on our memory it was difficult to insure complete accuracy. In some cases first names could not be recalled.

A number of former residents, who had left Hill End in the early 1920s, and who had lost their jobs due to the depression also returned, those people are not included in this list.

ABSOLOM BILL Carpenter.
ABSOLOM PEG (married Ken Hodge)
ADDICOAT JACK Cornish miner.
ADDICOAT IRIS
ACKERMANN HARRY
ACKERMANN 'NIGGER'
ACKERMANN STAN
ACKERMANN WALLY
ANGER HAROLD First class bike rider.
ARNOLD ARTHUR FREDERICK
ARNOLD MARY MARIA
AUBREY GUS Father and son worked on the Turon.
AUBREY J
AULD BILL Married Ettie Thompson.
AULD JACK
AUSTIN TOM

BAIRSTOW ADELLA Mother of Jack and Tom.
BAIRSTOW JACK Cabinet maker.
BAIRSTOW TOM Carpenter

BAIRSTOW NELL
BANKS KARL
BAYLISS MADGE Married Len Saxby.
BARNET ERNEST ALFRED Plumber.
BEESON GEORGE Cornish Miner
BEESON MARGARET
BEESON GEORGE Junior
BEESON HAROLD
BEE BILLY
BENNETT JIM Came from Molong with wife and family.
BENNETT VIOLET MAY from Molong
BENNETT CLEM " "
BENNETT HORRIE " "
BENNETT MILLIE " "
BENNETT NELLIE " "
BENNETT MAISIE Bill Bennett's wife.
BETAR GEORGIE Shopkeeper clothing etc.
BETAR ANTHONY Barber
BLACK FRED Married Violet Alder
BLACK VIOLET
BLYTON DAPHNE
BLYTON EVELYN Married Herbert "Cooee" Woolard.
BOWMAN BERT Worked at "Alpha" Carpenter.
BOWMAN GLADYS 'Alpha'
BOWMAN LEONORA
BRAMHALL BEN Amateur entertainer.
BROWN 'DARKIE'
BROWN DECOURCY N.G Plantation Owner,worked at Pullens Hill
BROWN DE COURCY Wife of above.
BROWN EDNA Married Pat Fitzgerald.
BRYANT JOSEPH EDWARD
BUMSTEAD PHILLIP STANLEY
BARNARD WILLIAM Entertainer lived on Turon River.
BARNARD RITA
BARNARD ELLIS
BARNARD MERVYN
BURKINSHAW DICK
BURKINSHAW KATH

CASSIN TED
CHAPMAN WAL 'NUGGET'
CHRISTIE GEORGE Retired school teacher.
CHRISTIE PAUL son of above.
CHRISTIE ERNIE
CLEMENTS NED AND WIFE
CLIFFORD CHARLIE
COOMBES ROBERT Married Dulcie Cook.
COX EDDIE Worked alluvial on Turon & Pullens Hill.
CULLEN TED Worked at Pullens Hill

DAVIS CLAUDE
DAVIS IVA
DAVIS HAZEL Married Mick Slattery
DAWES JOE Married Mrs Ross.
DAWES FRANK With Joe sold clothing from a van
DE BLOC HENRY'BELGIE' accidentally shot himself
DEAN CYRIL
DEAN RUBY Daughter Vince Howard.
DEAN LESLIE Later moved to Sofala.
DEAN GWENDOLINE
DESMOND JIM Lived in hut at Consolidated Tunnel.
DICK GEORGE
DONNELLY JACK Worked on drilling plant.
DONNELLY MRS.
DONOVAN EDDIE Carpenter Worked on Turon & Pullens

EDNEY JACK
EGAN SNO Worked at 'Alpha'

FAULKNER JOHN Gardner
FARADAY BILL Carpenter & Worked at Fosters Tunnel
FISHER HARRY Retired bank manager.
FISHER GEORGE Lived at Tambaroora.
FOYSTER Worked at Pullen's Hill with Cox & Donovan.
FOWLER ANNA MAUD
FOWLER GEORGE Gardner.
FRASER REG
FRASER DULCIE
FRASER BOB
FRASER RON

FRASER MARILYN
FREEMAN CHARLES HAROLD 'SNO' Lived Turon R Crossing.
FRIEND DONALD Artist lived at Hill End for some years.
FUGE CLIFF Contracter & Grazier
FULLER JACK Retired railway worker.

GARNER BOB Sawmiller Married Rita Thompson.
GARNER ROY Sawmiller
GARNER MRS Wife of above.
GARNER LES Sawmill
GARDINER GEORGE
GARDINER WALTER
GARDINER ELLENOR ELIZABETH
GLISSEN THOMAS
GLISSEN MAY
GODWIN WILLIAM 'BLUE'
GODWIN FRANCES
GOLDSPINK JACK
GOLDSPINK NORMAN
GOLDSPINK CHARLIE
GOLDSPINK ELIZABETH
GOLDSPINK CHARLIE Junior.
GOLDSPINK GRACE Married Lindsay Kimm
GOLDSPINK COLIN
GOLDSPINK GUS
GOLDSPINK PHYLLIS MARGRET
GOLDSPINK THELMA
GOLDSPINK EMILY
GORDON JACK Lived in hut at Valentine mine.
GRANT ALEX Worked at Junction Turon & Macquarie.
GRINSELL HARRY Married Dulcie Knight.

HARVEY NICK Bus Prop. Author
HARVEY JEAN Married Walter Warry
HAYNES ALFRED Lived in house at Connie Dam
HAYNES ROSE STELLA "
HAYNES ALLEN "
HAYNES DICK "
HARRISON REX
HINCHCLIFFE GEORGE Royal Hotel Prop later school bus.
HINCHCLIFFE RON

HING ARTHUR Later became Bookmaker Baturst-Orange.
HODGSON DICK Manager gum leaf industry.
HOGAN EDWARD ROY
HOKIN GEORGE Violinist & football referee.
HOLMES PEARL Retired grazier from Bourke.
HOLMES SAM "
HOLMES PETER "
HOWARD VINCE Built house at Dirt Holes.
HOWARD LOUISA
HOWARD ROY & Wife.
HOWARD RON
HOWARD HORACE
HOUGHTON WAL Worked at "Mares Nest" mine
HUNTER JAMES PATTERSON

INNES "JOCK" Died heart attack on the road at Tambaroora.

JENKINS VICTOR ROY Shearer
JENKINS MRS.
JOHNSON CHARLIE Mrs Fowler's brother.
JONES PAUL American Manager Devon Gold Mine.
JUDGE CASSIE Married Mervyn Anderson.

KEECH LESLIE Lived with family at "Klondike" Turon R.
KEECH STELLA MAY & CHILDREN.
KENDALL WILLIAM GEORGE
KENDALL MARY ANN
KELLY TOM
KITTY Mr. Lived in hut opposite Police Station.

LAWRENCE ROWLEY
LAWRENCE MAJORIE
LEE TOMMY
LEWIS MR & MRS
LINCOLN ROBERT WILLIAM J.P, Coroner, Bus & Truck Prop.
LISTER MATILDA Artist became known as Aust. Gma Moses.
LISTER ROBERT FREDERIC
LISTER BOB Carrier.
LISTER MARJORIE HARRIET
LOUGHER NAP Mining engineer worked alluvial Junction.
LUNDSTROM ELIAS Worked alluvial on the Turon R.

MARSHALL 'BLUE' Yardman at Royal Hotel.
MARTIN BILL First class footballer.
MARTIN - Pay clerk Oriomo Sluicing Coy.
MATTHEWS TOMMY Worked with C.Davis Magnet Mine
MAXWELL WILLIAM ARTHUR Engineer
MAXWELL MARY KATHLEEN
McALLISTER ELI
McAULEY JOHN BRUCE Carpenter
McCARTHY CHARLIE
McLEAN PAT Cornish miner
McLEAN DOT
McDAID ALBERT FRANCIS
McDAID ADA GERTRUDE
McDAID PADDY
McDAID GEORGE
McDAID BETTY Married Ted Woolard
McGARVIE CHARLIE Lived Opposite school.
McIVOR Worked alluvial on Macquarie River.
MIDSON RON Married Mavis Hamilton.
MOBBS SARAH Turon River
MOBBS HILTON
MOBBS TOM
MOBBS JACK
MOBBS TED
MOBBS HAZEL
MOORE FRANK Worked cyanide plant at Valentine mine.
MORRIS RUFUS Artist
MORRIS JEAN
MORRISON HOWARD Engineer at Junction & Piesleys Is.
MORRISON MRS.
MURRAY DON Operated Ullamalla school bus and mail
MURRAY DONALD Experienced gardener & friend of artists.
MURRAY HARRY
MURRAY BILL
MURRAY WALTER
MURRAY BOB Brass finisher
MURRAY TOM Bricklayer
MURRAY TIM 'CHING"
MYATT ERIC
MYATT ENID

NELSON AND WIFE
NICHOLSON MICK Tambaroora
NICHOLSON WINNIE "
NOONAN FELIX

O'NEIL 'SPEC'
OLLIVUE RUDY Lived at Tambaroora
OSBORNE ? Played football.

PARSLOW JOE From Molong to the Property the 'Haven"
PARSLOW ARLIE
PARSLOW BETTY Married Bruce Goodwin.
PARSLOW RUTH
PARFITT ARTHUR
PEMBLETON BILL
PHILLIS ARTHUR
PURVES ANDY Blacksmith

RAMSAY JOCK
READ BILL
REYNOLDS JACK Prop Billiards Club later store & Movies.
RODDA DAL Managed Weir's Hotel
RODDA GLADYS EVELYN
RODWELL JIM
ROGERS SCOTTIE
ROYAL PEARL MABEL
ROYAL THOMAS WILLIAM
ROYAL HAROLD
ROWE ? Mine Manager Hill End Alluvials.
ROWE NANCY Daughter of above.
RUMBELOW BERT
RUMBELOW WALTER and Wife.

SACH BILLY Builder worked at mining with Ab Carver
SAXBY AMOS
SAXBY LEN Married Madge Bayliss
SAUNDERS GEORGE
SECOMBE HARRY
SEDDEN REX Organised swimming club at Hill End.
SEDDEN MRS.
SEILY KEITH Married Effie Piesley.

SELLEN BILL Lived Tambaroora.
SMITH BERT Woodcarter lived Tambaroora.
SMITH ADA
SMITH-MARR DOCTOR
SMITH-MARR HELEN
SMITH-MARR JEAN Married Donald Dove.
SNELL BOB & Wife lived near Reward mine.
SORENSON MRS
SUMNER ARTIE Worked at Hill End Alluvials.

THOMAS ALLAN Motor Mechanic
THOMAS RITA MAY
TOESLAND ARTHUR Lived on Macquarie River
TOWELL CHARLIE Lived at Sarnia
TUNBRIDGE ALAN SENIOR
TUNBRIDGE TOM Married Florrie Anderson died WW11.
TURNER JEAN Nurse.

WALTON TOM
WAINWRIGHT JIM
WATSON TOM
WATSON MRS
WEIR SNOWY
WEBB BRUCE Worked at Alpha
WILKINSON DICK
WILSON KEN Married Ivy Alder

No 6: COMPOSITE LIST OF HILL END RESIDENTS ON ELECTORAL ROLLS.

SUBDIVISION OF HILL END FOR THE YEARS: 1925-1930-1935-1943-1947-1954-1960-1964.

This list gives a fair summary of those people who were over twenty -one and who lived at Hill End during the period when the various rolls were made up. Because of the gaps between rolls it is inevitable that some names would be missed. Where a women married during the period covered by this list she is entered in both her maiden name and her married name. The occupations shown are those that were given when that person first enroled. Occupations were often changed on later rolls. Very few of the people who came to Hill End during the depression enroled in the Hill End subdivision. The main purpose of this list is to assist people in family research, for more detailed information electoral rolls can be examined at the State Library of NSW.

NUMBERS ON THE VARIOUS ROLLS ARE AS FOLLOWS:-

1925 = 236 1930 = 211 1935 = 342 1943 = 265
1947 = 245 1954 = 200 1960 = 140 1964 = 158

TOTAL NUMBER OF NAMES ON THE FOLLOWING COMPOSITE LIST = 718.

H.D = HOME DUTIES. LAB = LABOURER

ACKERMAN HENRY, MINER
ACKERMAN ARTHUR ELLIS, MINER
ALDER ARTHUR AMOS, MINER
ALDER CHARLES HENRY, MINER
ALEXANDER JESSIE RANKIN H.D
ALDER REBECCA H.D
ANDERSON ALFRED DAVID, GRAZIER 'ULLAWALLA'
ANDERSON AMELIA H.D
ANDERSON GEORGE, 'CANOBLAS VIEW'
ANDERSON HELEN RUBY " "
ANDERSON LYNETTE HELEN, GOVERNESS
ANDERSON ROBERT FRANCIS, LAB.
ANDERSON LILY MAY, PALING YARDS

ANDERSON MERVYN JAMES, CANOBLAS VIEW
ANDERSON MARIA, GOLDEN GULLY
ANDERSON REGINALD FRANCIS, CANOBLAS VIEW
ANGER HAROLD LAB.
ANGER PHYLLIS MAY H.D
ARMSTRONG ANNIE THERESA H.D
ARNOLD ARTHUR FREDERICK WYATT, NO OCCUPATION
ARNOLD MARY MARIA H.D
ARSCOTT RICHARD CHARLES, NO OCCUPATION
TAMBOORA
ARBERY JOHN MAXWELL, POLICE CONSTABLE
ARBERY MARIE JOYCE, POLICE RESIDENCE
AULD LEO ROBERT, SAWMILLER
AULD LEONARD VINCENT, SAWMILLER
AULD PHYLLIS JOAN H.D
AULD RAYMOND ALBERT, SAWMILLER
AULD WILLIAM CLARENCE, SAWMILLER
AULD ESTHER H.D

BAIRSTOW ADELLA H.D
BAIRSTOW ELENOR
BAIRSTOW THOMAS JOHN, CARPENTER
BAIRSTOW WILLIAM JOHN, CARPENTER
BARNARD RITA RUBY H.D
BARNARD WILLIAM DAVID, COMPANY MANAGER
BARNARD ELLIS WILLIAM, MINER
BARNARD MERVYN THORPE LAB.
BARNET ERNEST ALFRED, PLUMBER
BEATTIE AGNES H.D
BEATTIE WILLIAM, ENGINE-DRIVER
BEATTIE JOHN, ENGINE-DRIVER
BEE WILLIAM HENRY LAB
BEECH ANTHEA, STOREKEEPER
BEECH HARRY MERCUTIS, STOREKEEPER
BEECH HENRY, STOREKEEPER
BEESON GEORGE, MINER
BEESON MARGARET H.D
BEHRENS GEORGE ADOLPH ERNST, MINER
BENNETT ALICE MAY H.D
BENNETT DINA H.D
BENNETT ELIZABETH BERNICE H.D

BENNETT HORACE WILLIAM CARL, "DONGOLA" STN. HAND
BENNETT WILLIAM NORMAN, MINER
BENNETT CLEMOTH JAMES LAB.
BENNETT JOHN CHRISTIAN, MINER
BENNETT JAMES FREDERICK, GRAZIER
BENNETT RANDOPH, MINER
BISLEY ALICE JOSEPHINE H.D
BISLEY LIONEL ALFRED, SERGENT POLICE
BLACK FREDERICK EDWARD LAB.
BLACK VIOLET ISOBEL H.D
BLACK IRIS, H.D SARNIA
BLACK NOBLE ALEXANDER, SARNIA
BLACKMORE DOROTHY H.D
BOWMAN CLAUDE JOHN, DAIRYMAN
BOWMAN EDITH JANE H.D
BOWMAN GLADYS, ALPHA H.D
BOWMAN HERBERT WILLIAM, ALPHA CARPENTER
BRAMHALL BENJAMIN HAMILTON, MINER
BRAZIER RICHARD ROY, PICTURE SHOW-MAN
BRODIE ARTHUR JAMES, GRAZIER RED HILL
BRODIE DERRICK CHARLES, PRICKLY PEAR CONTROLLER
BRODIE DOUGLAS WALTER LAB.
BRODIE JOCELYN ANN H.D
BRODIE JOHN EDWARD, LAB. ULLAMALLA
BRODIE MARY ANN, POSTMISTRESS
BRODIE MARY JANE
BRODIE SARAH BRIDGET H.D
BRODIE WALTER HENRY LAB.
BRYANT JOSEPH EDWARD, MINER
BROWN JOHN ALFRED, MINER TURON RIVER
BRYANT JOSEPH EDWARD, MINER
BROWNING SARAH H.D
BUMSTEAD PHILLIP STANLEY LAB
BURKE ELLEN AGNES MARY H.D
BURNARD DORCAS META, H.D TRELAWNEY
BURNARD GEORGE DANIEL, GRAZIER TRELAWNEY
BURNARD MAXWELL GEORGE, RURAL WORKER
BURNARD ROLAND JOHN, RURAL WORKER
BURNS JOHN RAYMOND, GRAZIER
BURNS PAMELA MARY H.D

BURNS RAYMOND SEPTIMUS, KURRAWARRA GRAZIER
BURNS RICHARD FRANKLIN, " STN HAND
BURNS STEPHEN, KURRAWARRA STN HAND
BURNS VERONICA, H.D KURRAWARRA
BYRNE WILLIAM HARVEY LAB.
BYRNE WANDA H.D
BYRNES JOHN, LAB. ULLAMALLA

CARVER ALBERT AMBROSE, MINER
CARVER ALBERT JAMES, MINER
CARVER CECIL ARTHUR, MINER
CARVER ELSIE MARY PHOEBE H.D
CARVER GLADYS DULCIE H.D
CARVER MARY ANN H.D
CARVER RUBINA MAY H.D
CARVER SIDNEY RAYMOND, MINER
CHADWICK DOROTHY SHIRLEY H.D
CHAPMAN ALBERT GEORGE LAB.
CHRISTIE ERNEST LAB.
CLIFFORD CHARLES WILLIAM, MINER DIRT HOLES
CLIFFORD ROSA H.D
CLYMO JOHN, FITTER
CONN MONA ISOBEL, SCHOOL TEACHER
COCK EDMUND ROBERTSON, MINE MANAGER
COCK MARGARET AUGUSTINE H.D
COOK ARTHUR, MINER
COOK ADA H.D
COOK DULCIE HILDA H.D
COOKE EMILY MAY H.D
COOKE GEORGE THOMAS, MINER
COOKE HORACE ALFRED FRANK LAB.
COOKE PHILLIP RAYMOND TREVOR, GRAZIER
COOKE MARY VICTORIA H.D
COOKE VIVIAN CLYDE, TEAMSTER
COOKE PHILLIP RAYMOND TREVOR LAB.
COOKE VICTOR HAROLD LAB.
COOKE VALDA JOYCE H.D
COOPER EFFIE IRIS H.D
CROSS GEORGE, MINER
CROSS NORMAN, SHOP ASSISTANT
CROSS SOPHIA H.D

DAVIS CLAUDE KENNETH, MINER
DAVIS IVA ESTHER
DAVISON RUBY IVY H.D
DAWES JAMES CHARLES, STATION HAND
DAWES MARY ANN H.D
DAWES SYDNEY CHARLES, TRAVELLING SALESMAN
DEAN GWENDOLINE MATILDA, ATHOL H.D
DEAN LESLIE CHARLES, ATHOL MINER
DENMAN ALBERT,TRUCKING CONTRACTOR
DENMAN ELLEN H.D
DENMAN GEORGE, WOOD CARTER
DENMAN GEORGE, DAIRY FARMER
DENMAN VERONICA VIOLET H.D
DENMAN WILLIAM ARTHUR LAB.
DESMOND JAMES, ENGINEER
DICK GEORGE, RETIRED
DOVE ADELAIDE, MUSIC TEACHER
DOVE DONALD ATHOL, GRAZIER ULLAMALLA
DOVE JEAN H.D
DOWEL IVY MARY H.D
DRAKEFORD ALLEN, GRAZIER
DRAKEFORD DORIS H.D
DRAKEFORD EDITH H.D
DRAKEFORD IRENE H.D
DRAKEFORD CECIL, STATION HAND
DRAKEFORD FLORENCE
DRAKEFORD MARGRAT H.D
DRAKEFORD LEONARD, SHEARER
DRAKEFORD RONALD, STATION HAND
DRAKEFORD SOPHIA JANE, H.D PALING YARDS
DRAKEFORD WILLIAM, PALING YARDS MINER

EDWARDS DONALD BRADMAN, STN MANAGER DALMENY
EDWARDS JOAN PATRICIA "
EGAN WALTER, STN. HAND
ELDRIDGE ALAN JAMES LEONARD LAB.
ELDRIDGE ALBERT JOHN, RAILWAY EMPLOYEE
ELDRIDGE ALFRED
ELDRIDGE ANNIE VIOLET H.D
ELDRIDGE CHARLES LESLIE, MINER
ELDRIDGE LINDA ANNIE H.D

ELDRIDGE WILLIAM ALBERT THOMAS, MINER
ELLIOTT JOSEPH, MINER
ELLIOTT SAMUEL LAB.
ELLIS CEINWEN, THE RECTORY
ELLIS PHYLLIS IRENE, GOLDEN GULLY
ELLIS ROBERT WILLIAM, C OF E RECTOR
ELLIS DONALD, MINER
ELLIS FLORENCE MAUD H.D
ELLIS FLORENCE AMANDA H.D
ELLIS GEORGE WILLIAM WESLEY, MINER GOLDEN GULLY
ELLIS GEORGE RAYMOND
ELLIS JOHN FREDERICK CYRIL, MINER
ELLIS DONALD, MINER
ELLIS JAMES, PROSPECTOR
ELLIS JOHN LESLIE, MINER
ELLIS JEAN MADGE H.D
ELLIS MARY BERYL JANE, GOLDEN GULLY
ELLIS MIRIAM VIOLET H.D
ELLIS JOHN THOMAS ALEXANDER, GOLDEN GULLY
ELLIS MARY H.D " "
ELLIS MURIAL ANNIE " "
ELLIS SAMUEL JAMES " "
ELLIS SAMUEL, LEES LANE MINER
ELLIS JANE H.D
ELLIS THOMAS, MINER
ELLIS WILLIAM WESLEY
EVANS BRIDGET H.D
EVANS DORIS AMY JOSEPHINE H.D
EVANS ELIAS, MINER
EVANS ELIZABETH H.D
EVANS EMILY SALINA, DRESSMAKER
EVERETT LESLIE, BALD HILL MINER
EVERETT RICHARD. BALD HILL MINER
EVERETT ROBERT ERWOOD, BALD HILL MINER
EYRE BETTY MARGARET, FRUITERER
EYRE GERTRUDE ELIZABETH, HOTEL PROP.
EYRE GWENNETH PAULINE, ROYAL HOTEL
EYRE OSWALD FORBES, HOTEL PROP.

FARADAY WILLIAM GEORGE THOMAS, MINER
FAULKNER JOHN, GARDENER
FISHER GEORGE, MINER TAMBAROORA
FITZGERALD CECIL WILLIAM, SHEARER
FITZGERAL ETHEL OLIVE, KURRAWARRA
FITZGERALD VIVIAN JOSEPH "
FITZGERALD EDITH,SUNNYSIDE
FITZGERALD ELLEN VERONICA, TAMBAROORA
FITZGERALD JOHN JAMES, STATION HAND
FITZGERALD JOHN BRYAN, PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER
FITZGERALD KATHLEEN MARY, PUBLIC SCHOOL
FITZGERALD TIMOTHY WILLIAM, STATION HAND
FITZSIMMONS MINNIE CENTENNIAL
FITZSIMMONS MINNIE VICTORIA
FIZELLE FLORENCE CAROLINE, SCHOOL HOUSE
FIZELLE HUBERT VERE, SCHOOL TEACHER
FLYNN DOROTHY MAY H.D
FLYNN MARY ANN, POSTMISTRESS
FLYNN PERCY EDWARD LAB.
FLYNN ESME RUBINA H.D
FLYNN HILTON THOMAS, STATION HAND
FLYNN PERCY ROBERT, MECHANIC
FLYNN WILLIAM GEORGE, MOTOR-DRIVER
FOWLER ANNA MAUD H.D
FOWLER GEORGE, GARDNER
FOLEY ANNIE H.D
FOLEY JOSEPH PHILLIP, MINER
FRENZEL WILLIAM OTTO, MINER
FRENZEL BURNARD, MINER
FRENZEL MARIA LINNA H.D
FRENZEL HERMAN OSCAR LAB.
FRENZEL WILLIAM AUGUST FREIDRICH, MINER
FRASER DULCIE ROSE H.D
FRASER REGINALD FREDERICK LAB.
FRASER ROBERT JOHN, PRICKLY PEAR CONTROLLER
FRASER RONALD JAMES, PUBLIC SERVANT
FRASER YVONNE FAITH H.D
FRIEND DONALD STEWART LESLIE, ARTIST
FUGE BETTY MARGARET, FRUITERER
FUGE CLIFFORD WILLIAM, HAULAGE CONTRACTOR
FULLER DAVID JOHN, RETIRED

GARDINER ELLENOR ELIZABETH H.D
GARDINER GEORGE ALEXANDER LAB.
GARDINER WALTER JAMES, RABBIT TRAPPER
GARNER HENRY BERTHON, MINER
GARNER KAY H.D
GARNER RITA MAUD H.D
GARNER ROY, SAWMILLER
GARNER ROBERT GEORGE, SAWMILLER
GARNER ROBERT WILLIAM LAB.
GARTH LUCY ANN H.D
GARTH RICHARD HENRY, ENGINE DRIVER
GAYNON JOHN LAB
GLENDENNING SYLVIA LOLA H.D
GLISSON MAY H.D
GLISSON THOMAS
GOFF ETHEL MAUD H.D
GOFF VIOLET MAY H.D
GOLDSPINK CHARLES AUSTRALIA
GOLDSPINK COLIN GEORGE LAB.
GOLDSPINK ELIZABETH H.D
GOLDSPINK GEORGE AUGUSTUS LAB.
GOLDSPINK PHYLLIS MARGRET
GODWIN WILLIAM ROBERT LAB.
GODWIN FRANCES MAY H.D
GOODWIN ADELAIDE CONSTANCE LORRAINE H.D
GOODWIN BRUCE SELWYN, MINER
GOODWIN BETTY HOPE, NURSING SISTER
GOODWIN ENOCH, MINE MANAGER
GOODWIN IVOR HOWARD, MINER
GOODWIN LILA
GOODWIN MAUD EHEL H.D
GOODWIN MARY ANN H.D
GOODWIN THEODORA MAUD H.D
GOODWIN VIOLET MAY H.D
GRAHAM ARTHUR ALBERT, GRAZIER
GRAHAM JESSIE MARGARET H.D
GRAHAM GEORGE HENRY, MINER
GREEN JAMES, MINER
GREEN SYLVIA LAVINA H.D
GRINSELL CHARLES HENRY, PROSPECTOR
GRIMSHAW ALEXANDER KELLY, MINER

GROVES JOSEPH HERBERT, ENGINE DRIVER
GROVES MARY ANN H.D
HAMILTON CHARLES, MINER DIRT HOLES
HAMILTON ELIZABETH H.D ' '
HAMILTON ESTHER MAVIS H.D, TAMBAROORA
HAMILTON LESLIE JAMES, MINER
HAMILTON ROBERT MINER, MINER TAMBAROORA
HAMILTON RICHARD CHARLES KENNIWELL, MINER
TAMBAROORA
HAMILTON SYDNEY, MINER
HAMILTON LILIAN ELIZABETH CARBERY H.D
HAMILTON WALTER ALEXANDER, MINER TAMBAROORA
HAMILTON WALTER WILLIAM, MINER "
HARVEY LILLIAN MAY H.D
HARVEY MOIRE H.D
HARVEY NICHOLAS
HARVEY JOHN, MINER
HARROWER BETTY ISABEL, POLICE STATION
HARROWER IAN ROBERT, POLICE CONSTABLE
HAYNES ALFRED HENRY, MINER
HAYNES ROSE STELLA H.D
HEAP ANNIE LOUISA H.D
HEAP GEORGE, MINER
HEAP DONALD, STATION HAND
HEAP ELLA MARY H.D
HEAP ROWLEY, MINER
HEAP SYDNEY GORDON, MINER
HINCHCLIFFE GEORGE, HOTEL KEEPER ROYAL HOTEL
HIND COURTNEY PROSSER, MINER
HOCKING DORIS H.D
HOCKING HAROLD EDGAR, SHOP ASSISTANT
HOCKING AMELIA MAY H.D
HOCKING EDWARD FRANCIS, ENGINEER
HOCKING JOHN GEOFFREY, STN. HAND
HOCKING LEONARD FRANCIS, APIARIST
HOCKING MARY MAY H.D
HODGE ALBERT ERNEST, GRAZIER "RIVERVIEW"
HODGE BERYL H.D
HODGE RONALD ARTHUR RAYMOND, CARRIER
HODGE ALFRED HAROLD, BAKER
HODGE ALICE H.D

HODGE ERNEST JOHN, BAKER
HODGE LILLIAN MARY H.D
HODGE LOYOLA MAY H.D
HODGE OLGA SUSAN EVELYN, H.D TAMBAROORA
HODGE PERCY AUBREY SYDNEY, FARMER TAMBAROORA
HODGE MURIEL ELLEN, H.D RIVERVIEW
HODGE KENNETH WILLIAM, GRAZIER
HODGE VALERIE JANE H.D
HODGE ROLAND WALTER, CARRIER
HODGE WALTER FREDERICK, GRAZIER
HOGAN EDWARD ROY, MINER
HOKIN GEORGE, ENGINEER
HOLLOWAY EVELYN DOROTHY H.D
HOLLOWAY BENJAMIN, BUTCHER
HOLLOWAY DAVID SENIOR
HOLLOWAY DAVID, BUTCHER
HOLLOWAY NELLIE GLADYS H.D
HOLLOWAY RICHARD GEORGE
HUTCHINSON BRIDGET H.D
HOWARD EDGAR VINCENT, MINER DIRT HOLES
HOWARD LOUISA H.D " "

JACKSON ELSIE MARY PHOEBE H.D
JACKSON MARGRET ANN H.D
JACKSON OSCAR JAMES, NO OCCUPATION
JENKINS ELIZABETH H.D
JENKINS VICTOR ROY, SHEARER
JENKYNS EMILY FRANCIS H.D
JENKYNS WILLIAM JOSEPH, BLACKSMITH
JOHNSON ALFRED THOMAS, MACQUARIE RIVER
JOHNSON WALTER ERNEST LAB.
JOHNSON MARIA MARY H.D
JOHNSTON JAMES, MINER
JOYCE COLIN DOUGLAS, SCHOOL TEACHER
JOYCE BETTY, SCHOOL HOUSE H.D
JUDGE CECIL BERTRAM
JUDGE LLEWELLYN, MINER
JUDGE ETHEL GERTRUDE H.D
JUDGE LAURA H.D
JUDGE LESLIE NORMAN, MINER
JUDGE MAVIS RILLIS H.D

JUDGE NEVILLE EVERETT, MINER
JUDGE MAURICE HENRY, MINER

KEARNS IDA MARY, POLICE STATION
KEARNS KELVIN, POLICE CONSTABLE
KEECH LESLIE JOSEPH LAB.
KEECH STELLA MARY H.D
KELLY THOMAS, MINER
KENDALL MARY ANN H.D
KENDALL WILLIAM EDWARD, MINER
KIMM GRACE KATHERINE H.D
KIMM GORDON ANTHONY, GRAZIER BUNDY
KIMM LEITA JOAN, MACMALLA
KIMM LIDSAY PATRICK, STATION HAND
KIMM RONALD JOSEPH. GRAZIER
KIMM WILLIAM GEORGE, TAMBAROORA GRAZIER
KIMM VALERIE JANE, BUNDY
KIRK ROBERT, NO OCCUPATION
KNIGHT BRIDGET, H.D DIRT HOLES
KNIGHT CHARLES, PROSPECTOR DIRT HOLES
KNIGHT DULCIE ISOBEL H.D
KNIGHT FRANCIS GEORGE LAB
KNIGHT FRANCIS WALTER, MINER DIRT HOLES
KNIGHT EMILY, H.D TAMBAROORA
KNIGHT FLORENCE ADA, H.D "
KNIGHT GEORGE HENRY, "
KNIGHT WILLIAM PATRICK, " MINER

LAING ALAN WALTER ARTHUR, C OF E RECTOR.
LAING CHARLOTTE, THE RECTORY
LAMB FRANCIS SYDNEY GEORGE, STOREKEEPER
LAMB THELMA LILLIAN, STOREKEEPER
LARARD FRANCIS, MINER
LAWFORD HENRY, CLERK IN HOLY ORDERS RECTORY
LAWFORD FLORENCE, MARY H.D RECTORY
LAWSON EDDINGTON, MANAGER ALPHA STN
LAWSON HENRY GARNET, FENCER
LAWSON MARY EMMA, ALPHA STATION
LAWSON MURIEL H.D
LAWSON PHILLIP CHARLES LAB.
LAWSON ROBERT GEORGE, MINER

LAWSON GLENDORA SARA H.D
LEE BLANCHE, MATRON
LE MESSURIER ALFRED, COMMISION AGENT
LE MESSURIER ALICE TRYPHENA H.D
LE MESSURIER WILLIAM ERNEST LAB.
LISTER FREDERICK DANIEL HARDMAN, FARMER SARNIA
LISTER MARJORIE HARRIETTE, H.D SARNIA
LISTER MATILDA MARGARET, ARTIST
LISTER ROBERT FREDERICK
LINCOLN ADELAIDE CONSTANCE LORRAINE H.D
LINCOLN ROBERT WILLIAM, BUS PROPRIETOR
LONGMORE ANGUS WALTER, MINER
LONGMORE HARRIET ANN H.D
LONGMORE JOHN CHARLES, BLACKSMITH
LONGMORE THELMA H.D
LONGMORE THOMAS ALBERT, MINER
LOUGHRIN GRACE ILEAN MAUD H.D
LOUGHRIN JOSEPH ALFRED, POSTMASTER
LYE CHARLES EDWARD, TAMBAROORA MINER
LYE WILLIAM, MINER "
LYLE EMMA H.D
LYLE EFFIE IRIS H.D
LYLE WILLIAM, BAKER

MARTIN BARBARA JEAN, DALMENY
MARTIN RICHARD NOEL, GRAZIER DALMENY
McALLISTER ELIAS EDWARD LAB
McALLISTER GLADYS ELMA H.D
McAULIY JOHN BRUCE,CARPENTER
McCARTHY PATRICK,MINER
McDAID ALBERT FRANCIS JOSEPH LAB.
McDAID PATRICK, MINER
MacFARLANE ARCHIBALD REID, ULLAMALLA
MacFARLANE PHYLLIS MAY H.D "
McKAIN LIONEL, C OF E MINISTER
McKENZIE DONALD, ALPHA
McKENZIE KENNETH, "
McKENZIE SARAH MAUD H.D
MacGARVIE COLIN CHARLES ROSS, MINER
MACKIE ALEXANDER GORDON LAB
McLEAN DOROTHY EILEEN EMMA H.D

McLEAN PATRICK GEORGE, MINER
McLEAN GEORGE, MINER
MACRYANNIS ALICE REBBECA H.D
MACRYANNIS ELLEN, DRESS MAKER
MANOLATO ALEXANDER THOMAS, ENGINEER
MANOLATO MARY H.D
MARIS DORIS MABEL H.D
MARIS HERBERT, MINER
MARIS CHARLES, MINER
MARIS GEORGE, MINER
MARIS MARY ANN H.D
MARIS RENE MAY H.D
MARSDEN JOSEPH LAB.
MARR ALGERNON SMITH, SURGEON
MARSHALL ALEXANDER WILLIAM, MINING ENGINEER
MARSHALL BEATRICE H.D
MARSHALL FRANK LAB.
MARSHALL HANNAH H.D
MARSHALL SARAH LANGLOW H.D
MARSHALL WILLIAM ALEXANDER JOHN, GOLD MINER
MAXWELL MARY KATHLEEN H.D
MAXWELL WILLIAM ARTHUR WELLESLEY, ENGINEER
MATHEWS BERTHA H.D
MATHEWS ELIJA THOMAS, MINER
MESURE KATHLEEN FLORA H.D
MIDSON RONALD GEORGE
MILLER JANE H.D
MOBBS ALBERT LESLIE, STATION HAND
MOBBS ESTHER ANN H.D
MOBBS JOHN DOUGLAS, TURON RIVER
MOBBS MAISIE IRENE H.D
MOBBS SARAH, H.D TURON RIVER
MOBBS THOMAS ALFRED, MINER TURON RIVER
MOBLES JOHN DOUGLAS, MINER TURON RIVER
MORFFEW LAURENCE WILLIAM, MINER
MULLEN DAREL MATTHEW, PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER
MULLEN MINA ISA, SCHOOL HOUSE
MULLENS CATHERINE MARY H.D
MULLENS MARY H.D
MULLENS PETER, MINER
MURRAY DONALD EDWARD, SCHOOL BUS PROP.

MURRAY DONALD WILLIAM, FINE ARTS DEALER
MURRAY ERNEST HENRY, BRICKLAYER
MURRAY ROBERT EDGAR, MINER
NATTRESS ELIZABETH JANE H.D
NATTRESS ARNOLD MARK, MINER
NICHOLLS LESLIE SIDNEY GORDON LAB
NICHOLLS WINIFRED ELIZABETH H.D
NIGHTINGALE FREDERICK GEORGE, STOREKEEPER
NIGHTINGALE WINIFRED VIOLET H.D
NORTHEY MARGRET H.D
NORTON FRANCIS AMELIA MARGARET, H.D TAMBARORRA
NORTON JOSEPH LAB. "

OATS EVA ETTIE MAY H.D
OATS WALTER, GRAZIER
O'FLYNN AMBER LURBINE, H.D HOSPITAL
O'FLYNN JEROME,MEDICAL PRACTITIONER,HOSPITAL
OLIVER MARY AGNES SARAH H.D
O'REILLY EDWARD, MINER
O'REILLY MARY ANN H.D
O'REILLY ROSE H.D
O'RILEY VERA HONORA, H.D REDBANK
O'RILEY JOHN PATRICK, REDBANK GRAZIER
O'RILEY LUKE, MINER

PACK EVA, H.D ALPHA
PACK HENRY GOODWIN, ALPHA
PENDELTON WILLIAM LAB.
PALMER ARCHER MONEY, MINER
PAULING JOHN RICHARD, SCHOOL TEACHER
PAULING MARY ELIZABETH, SCHOOL HOUSE
PARFITT ARTHUR LEONARD, MINER
PARSLOW ARLINE MAUD H.D
PARSLOW JAMES JOSEPH, GRAZIER
PIESLEY BENJAMIN, MINER TURON RIVER
PIESLEY ELIZABETH H.D
PIESLEY WILLIAM, MINER
PIESLEY RICHARD HENRY, SHOPKEEPER
PIESLEY SARAH SELINA "
PETRIE JESSIE H.D
PETRIE WALTER DOW, BUTCHER

PHILLIS FREDERICK, MINER
PLACE WILLIAM, BRICKLAYER
POLAIN CHARLES JAMES, GRAZIER BARGONG
POLAIN FAY, NURSING SISTER BARGONG
PURVES ANDREW, BLACKSMITH

RALPH ERNEST WILLIAM, LAB.ALPHA
RALPH THELMA MAY, H.D ALPHA
RAYNER ALLAN, GRAZIER THE HAVEN
RAYNER CLARICE NITA " "
READ WILLIAM ALFRED, DRIVER
REYNOLDS JOHN FRANCIS LAB.
RICHARDS VICTOR OLIVE, DENTIST
RILEY MARY JANE H.D
RISBY EMMA H.D
RISBY ERNEST CECIL, MINER
RISBY FLORENCE NEWHAM H.D
RISBY GEORGE HENRY, MINER
RISBY PERCY LAB.
RISBY THOMAS LAB.
RISBY THOMAS, MINER
RISBY JAMES, MINER
RODDA DALLAS HARVEY WILLIAM, PUBLICAN
RODDA GLADYS EVELYN H.D
ROGER DAVID, MINER WASHING GULLY
ROBERTS ELIZABETH H.D
ROBINSON JAMES, RETIRED GRAZIER
ROSS ALEXANDER, PROSPECTOR
ROSS ALEXANDER JOHN, RETIRED
ROSS MARY ANN H.D
ROSSER MARY, H.D POLICE STATION
ROSSER CLAUDE CLIFTON, CONSTABLE POLICE STATION
ROYAL PEARL MABEL H.D
ROYAL THOMAS WILLIAM HARRIS, MINER

SAXBY AMOS BENJAMIN, SALESMAN
SAXBY LEONARD RAYMOND, MINER
SAXBY MARJORIE JEAN H.D
SCHINCKEL MARY ANN
SEAMAN CHARLES EDWARD, GRAZIER
SEAMAN LILY IRENE H.D

SECOMBE JOHN HENRY, MINER
SELBY RAYMOND HAY, DAIRYMAN
SELLEN WILLIAM MINER, TAMBAROORA
SHERRING EVA JEAN
SHERRING HENRIETTA ROSE H.D
SHERRING ELIZABETH EMILY
SHERRING WILLIAM LAB.
SIBLEY WILMA BRAESIDE
SIELY ETHEL MAY H.D
SIELY KIETH IRVINE LAB
SMITH ADA,H.D TAMBAROORA
SMITH HERBERT JAMES, WOOD CARTER TAMBAROORA
SMITH BRUCE SHAW, GRAZIER ROBREAN
SMITH JEAN, ROBREAN
SMITH ROBERT BRUCE, GRAZIER ROBREAN
SMITH KATHLEEN AMY, BOWEN STREET
SMITH EDWIN WILLIAM LAB.
SMITH MARR ALGERNON, SURGEON
SMITH MARR HELEN GIFFORD H.D
SMYTH ANNIE H.D
SMYTH JAMES, MINER
STEPHENS WILLIAM NEASON, GRAZIER RIVERVIEW
STUART BRUCE ALEX, GRAZIER
STUART DUNCAN, GRAZIER LOGAN BRAE
STUART MARY VICTORIA, H.D LOGAN BRAE
STUART JOHN DUNCAN, STATION HAND
STUART JOHN WILLIAM, STATION HAND LOGAN BRAE
STUART SARAH ANNIE H.D LOGAN BRAE
SUTHERLAND VIVIAN BEATRICE H.D

TANNER JOHN NORMAN, CARPENTER
TASKIS EDITH MARY TONKIN, H.D
TASKIS THOMAS BOLITO WHITE, MINER
TAYLOR NELLIE H.D
THOMAS ALLAN PENROSE, MOTOR MECHANIC
THOMAS RITA MAY H.D
THOMPSON ALBERT EDWARD, MINER
THOMPSON ANNIE H.D
THOMPSON ARTHUR RICHARD LAB.
THOMPSON ARTHUR HERBERT LAB.
THOMPSON CHARLES DANIEL, MINER

THOMPSON DOROTHY EDNA H.D
THOMPSON JOHN EDWARD, SCHOOL TEACHER
THOMPSON STELLA MARGRET, SCHOOL HOUSE
THOMPSON MADELINE H.D
THOMPSON PETER EVAN, MINER
THOMPSON JOHN, MINER
THOMPSON JOHN EDWARD LAB.
THOMPSON MAISIE IRENE H.D
THOMPSON LUCY ANN H.D
THOMPSON ALBERT CHARLES LAB
THOMPSON RICHARD JAMES LAB.
THOMPSON ROBERT THOMAS LAB.
THOMPSON RONALD CLYDE LAB.
THOMPSON UNA WILMA H.D
TONGE WALTER LAB
TILSON SARAH ANN H.D
TOOHEY ELIZABETH H.D
TOOHEY FREDERICK JAMES LAB.
TOOHEY GEORGE CLARENCE LAB.
TOOHEY JAMES SAMUEL, STATION HAND
TOOHEY MARY H.D
TOOHEY WILLIAM, FARMER
TOESLAND ARTHUR LAB.
TRESTRAIL MARY ANN, SHOPKEEPER
TREVENA ARTHUR EDWARD, MINER
TREVENA ESTHER ANNE H.D
TREVENA EILEEN MAY H.D
TREVENA FRANK REINOLD LAB.
TREVENA HAZEL H.D
TREVENA JOHN WILLIAM, MINER
TREVENA SAMUEL JUNIOR, MINER
TREVENA REBECCA H.D
TREVENA SAMUEL, MINER
TREVENA VIOLET MAY H.D
TREVENA WALTER CECIL LAB.
TREVITHICK EDITH ROSE H.D
TREVITHICK CHARLES CLIVE LAB
TROTT MARJORIE JOY, THE RECTORY
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TUNBRIDGE FLORENCE MAUD H.D
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TUNBRIDGE THOMAS ALFRED, BUTCHER
TWINING WILLIAM CHARLES, MINER

VEIL LOUISA ANNIE, FOREMAN'S GULLY

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WALPOLE HAZEL, SCHOOL HOUSE
WALPOLE MARY CATHERINE
WALPOLE JAMES JOSEPH, SHORT STREET
WALPOLE LEO LAB.
WALPOLE JACK LAB
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WEIR ASPASIA, WEIRS HOTEL
WEIR LAWRENCE, CORDIAL MAKER

WIER HAROLD GEORGE, PUBLICAN
WEIR HARRY GEORGE, CORDIAL MAKER
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WHITTAKER KARL, GRAZIER
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WOOLARD HERBERT MANSFIELD, MINER
WOOLARD MATILDA H.D
WOOLARD WALTER, MINER
WYTHES EDWARD HENRY LAB.

YATES ESTHER H.D
YATES THOMAS, MINER.

Gold and People: Recollections of Hill End, 1920s to 1960s

by Bruce Goodwin, Frenchs Forest, NSW 1992

Indexed by Annette Sheen

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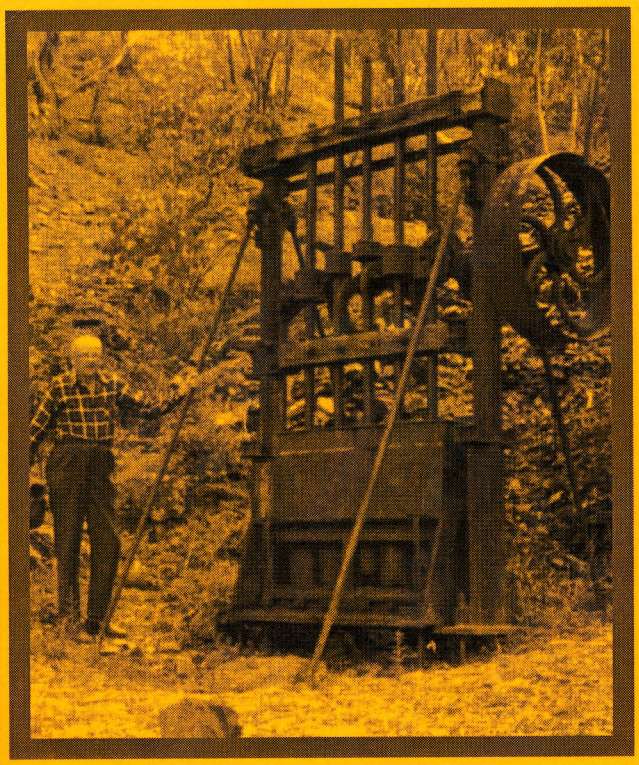

GOLD AND PEOPLE

Bruce Goodwin carries on the story of the famous Hill End goldfield during the period 1925-1965. The gold was harder to find but to most Hill End people, gold and the strong community bond was a very important part of living in an isolated town.

There were other events that would change Hill End dramatically, including the closing of the Deep Levels Mine in 1924 and the influx of people during the Great Depression. More changes were brought on by the further shift in population during World War 2, the discovery of the Holterman photographs, and the influence of contemporary artists and historians who drew attention to the town. Through all these changes, the unique character of Hill End and its people have left lasting impressions on all those who have lived there.

The effect of these events and the interesting and resourceful people who lived in Hill End during those years of change are seen through the eyes of the author, Bruce Goodwin, during his fifty years association with gold mining and community affairs in the town.

Cover photographs: front top, the author; bottom, Digger Hocking, Jack Elliss, Mick Fitzgerald, Reg Warry. Above: Kemshall Goodwin with a five-head stamper battery erected by Enoch Goodwin, Turon River.