

The train which had brought Mr. Watt had also as a passenger Mr. Wyatt, police magistrate, who held a court at Euroa that day, and actually walked past the bank whilst the Kellys were in it. Mr. Wyatt reflecting upon the telegraph wires being cut, had his suspicions aroused, and as the lines still continued disconnected, his opinion that something was wrong. On his return journey to Benella he got out of the train, which was also a goods one, at the place where the line was cut, and procuring a detached insulator and some wire he took them with him to Benella. The Kellys had returned from Euroa by this time and were watching the proceedings of Mr. Wyatt. When Mr. Wyatt arrived at Benella at 8 o'clock, he found Superintendents Nicholson and Sadler about to depart for Albury to consult with the officer of the N.S.W. police stationed there as they had received information the gang contemplated a raid in that direction. Mr. Wyatt informed the officers of his suspicions and showed them the wire and insulators. But the officers thinking the cutting of the wire was a ruse to draw them away from the more reliable information that the gang was about to cross the border went on to Albury and were there when they received information about the Euroa Bank robbery.

At 8.30 Kelly having everything packed, rode away in a northerly direction with his mates, before going he cautioned his prisoners not to leave under three hours or he would come back and shoot them, telling the station manager that he would hold him personally responsible that this order was attended to.

The first intimation the police received of this robbery was from the Chief Commissioners Office at mid-night. A party of police was despatched from Benella at 1.30 a.m. Mr. Wyatt accompanied this party, and the tracks being picked up at the station were followed into the scrub and again towards the railway line where they were lost. The police also went out searching in the ranges but were unsuccessful. After this affair from 80 to 100 men of the regular artillery were sent up to guard the banks through the north eastern district. In the same district the number of mounted police was increased from 53 to 127 and the number of foot police from 22 to 84. Except frequent threats of shooting them Kelly did not ill treat his male prisoners and put them to no further inconvenience than his own safety demanded. His female prisoners he treated courteously and by these means he got much sympathy which he would not otherwise have received. Kelly stated that he would injure no civilian who did not try to injure him, but he would shoot every policeman upon sight. He also stated and repeated it many times after, that he would never be taken alive. The irony of fate, he was the only one of the gang who was taken alive. After this the gang disappeared and very little was heard of them for a couple of months.

In the mean time parties of police were searching the ranges and had, I believe, a much worse time of it than the outlaws had.

On the 2nd January '79, there were warrants issued for the arrest of 20 or 30 men who were considered the most active sympathisers of the gang and nearly all of these men were confined in Beechworth gaol from the day of their arrest until the 27 April following. Their

/detention

detention being effected by remands from week to week. This step was taken by the authorities to cripple the gang in its resources, but it had no effect except, perhaps, to make these men more ardent and active in their sympathy for the outlaws after their release.

It was stated that Kelly paid the legal expenses of these men and gave some of them, if not all, a douceur.

VICTORIA POLICE
MUSEUM
CHAPTER 5

Jerilderie Bank Robbery

Evidence of Messrs. Tarlton, Living and Trooper Richards

Ned Kelly's Speech and Autobiography

Telegram from the Postmaster, Jerilderie. N.S.W.
Monday, 10th, Feb. 1879.

The Kelly gang stuck up this office today at 2 o'clock, cut the office connections and cut down seven poles. My assistant and I were marched to the lockup which the gang had stuck up. We were there locked up together with two constables. We were released at 7 p.m., and told not to touch the wire until morning. I have done so and fixed the wire along the fence. They stuck up the bank of N.S.W. I have just heard, 9 p.m. that they are in the township again.

(Sd.) The Postmaster, Jerilderie.

This was the startling news which was served up at the breakfast tables of the peaceful and law abiding citizens of N.S.W. and Victoria, on the 11th Feb. 1879. Terse, yet containing much information and proving the resourcefulness of the postmaster, it caused consternation to some; for clearly it was striking successfully at the vital part of our trade and credit. And amusement to others, for were not the traps getting served out with their own sauce. Kelly had pursued the same tactics here that he did at Euroa, for we find upon the day the robbery was taking place at Jerilderie Superintendent Winch was sending round notice to the principals of the various banks throughout Melbourne to be upon their guard as a raid was about to take place upon some of the Melbourne suburban branches.

Kelly had lost several of his best bush scouts, who were amongst the sympathisers in the Beechworth gaol, but there can be no doubt that several of the agents in the pay of the police were friendly

/to him

to him, hence the misleading information the police received every time he contemplated a raid.

It was the beginning of Feb. which is the hottest part of our Australian summer, when it is not unusual for the thermometer to indicate 110 degrees, and even more, of heat in the shade. One of those days upon which a bushman throws himself under the shade of a tree with a sigh of relief and a full appreciation of the scriptural text, "Like unto the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." All animals, except those in the employment of man, had sought the friendly shade of anything that cast a friendly shadow. The air shimmered and scintillated over the hot dry earth as it does round the mouth of a furnace, and the sun in the cloudless sky appeared through the heated and hazy atmosphere like a mass of molten metal. When Aaron Sherritt, who had a selection of land upon the Woolshed creek about 10 miles from Beechworth, found the water in his paddock was exhausted.

Outside the furthest corner of his land there was a permanent water hole and as it was necessary that the cattle should get water immediately he went down to alter the fence so that they could gain access to it. This he could do as the water hole was upon crown lands. When working here he saw 4 men approaching on horseback. He soon recognised them to be the 4 outlaws with whom he was familiar. Three of them came up to where he was working the fourth, Ned Kelly, remained at a distance, and in the manner of a man who was tired by a long ride he threw his leg over the saddle and sat as ladies do upon horseback, placing his hand under his chin he seemed absorbed in thought and did not approach Sherritt nor speak to him. After the usual salutations, Byrne told Sherritt that they were going to stick up a bank on the Sydney side and wanted his assistance. Sherritt objected, he said he had his land fenced, there was nothing against him, it was his intention to get married and pursue an industrial life, and he considered it would be foolish of him to plunge into trouble with them. Byrne acknowledged the force of Sherritt's reasoning at the same time, he seemed very much disappointed and before going away he said; "Well good bye, if there is any talk of our having been here we will know where it comes from." Byrne and Sherritt were schoolmates and Sherritt often saw the outlaws after the murders were committed. Ned Kelly had been several times in the house of Sherritt's parents and when there had nursed the baby, and made himself so much at home that he helped himself to whatever there was to eat in the house. After one of the bank robberies Byrne had forwarded Sherritt some money said to have been as much as £100 but the person by whom the money was sent appropriated it and this being unknown to both Byrne and Sherritt a gradual estrangement took place which ended in Sherritt becoming an agent for the police, stipulating that should he be instrumental in effecting the capture of the outlaws Joe Byrne's life would be spared. Sherritt, however, was not successful and was ultimately murdered by Byrne.

Jerilderie township in '79 had a population of about 300. * 40 miles north of the Murray river and about 90 miles north of the ranges in Victoria where the Kelly's had their "strongholds" and numerous friends and relations. Morgan, the bushranger, occasionally visited this part of the country but as it is a dead level and almost

* If is the name of a rich grazing and agricultural country about

treeless part of the country he generally kept more to the westward in the Piney ranges.

The outlaws had the advantage of a full moon on their journey to and from Jerilderie, and with good horses it was quite possible for them after the bank robbery on Monday and Monday night to reach their homes, in the ranges, before daylight on Tuesday. They first put in an appearance here on Saturday night the 8th Feb. when the two Kellys called at Davidsons Hotel representing that they had come from the back blocks of the Lachlan. They had some drink and introducing the subject of the Kelly gang they were informed by the barmaid that the people of Jerilderie thought they were brave men but regretted they had shot the police. Pleased with this tribute to their celebrity they remained until nearly midnight, during their stay the barmaid entertained them with several songs about the Kelly gang which were then sung nightly at the different theatres. In one of the songs they took an especial interest. "The Kellys have made another escape, keep it dark." And they had a good time of it for a couple of hours. It speaks well for Kelly's moderation that on a hot summer's night he was able to resist the fascination of the wine cup and the agreeable nature of his entertainment in order to follow up the hazardous life he had chosen for himself. There were two policemen at Jerilderie Sr. Const. Devine and Md. Const. Richards. At midnight on Saturday these two men were in bed when they heard a man calling them to get up immediately as they were required at Davidson's Hotel where murder was being committed. The constables in their anxiety to learn what was the matter came out only partly dressed. They found a man on horseback who, when they had advanced to make inquiries, jumped off, and placing one arm under the horse's neck and the other over the horse's wither he presented two revolvers at them, one in each hand, at the same time calling out to them; "Hands up I'm Kelly." Unarmed and surprised in this manner the constables had either to obey or be shot. Especially as Kelly was immediately joined by the other three members of the gang. Kelly being informed of the names of the constables said he had come to Jerilderie to shoot Devine, "Who was worse than a black tracker." Mrs. Devine hearing this became terrified and rushed out in deshabelle, crying out, "For God's sake don't shoot my husband". Kelly told her not to be alarmed that he would not shoot him if he was obedient.

The police were placed in the dining room under guard and their clothing and firearms were seized by the gang. The next day, Sunday, they placed the constables in their own lockup thus reversing the proper order of things by trapping the traps. During the night they had slept in turns two sleeping whilst two kept watch. The court house was about 200 yards from the police station, and owing to the Catholics having no place of worship in the township mass was celebrated in this building. Mrs. Devine had charge of the court-house and it was her duty to prepare it for the religious service. She was taken down for this purpose on Sunday morning by Ned Kelly who was dressed in police uniform and permitted to do the work under his superintendence. During the day the Kellys showed themselves in the township dressed in police clothing and having Constable Richards with them to allay suspicion.

/The outlaws

The outlaws had publicly introduced themselves as being from the back blocks the evening before, and it is scarcely possible that some person who had seen them did not recognise them this day. If any did suspect them they kept it secret and it came as a surprise to those who were bailed up the next day, especially the bankers. On the forenoon of Monday they took their horses to the blacksmith to be shod and paid for that work in the ordinary manner. After returning to the police station the two Kellys again dressed themselves in police clothing, and they all went down to the township taking Richards with them and leaving Devine in the lockup. Richards was compelled to introduce his two apparent comrades to the landlord of the Royal Hotel in their true characters, after which they secured all the inmates of the hotel and putting them in a large room added to their number those who came to the hotel for a drink or any other purpose. The branch bank of N.S.W. was quite close to the hotel, and about noon Byrne entered the bank by the back door. Mr. Living, the teller, hearing a noise at the door leading into the banking department from the back, thought it was the manager, Mr. Tarlton, and paid no attention to it for a moment. On looking round to see why Mr. Tarlton did not come in he saw a strange man who appeared to him to be either drunk or a lunatic. He ordered the man out and told him to come in at the front, if he wanted to do any business; but as the man paid no attention to him he went forward to eject him, when the stranger drew a revolver and covering him said, "Bail up; I'm Kelly". Mr. Living was of course surprised but he said, "You're joking, you're not Kelly." Byrne said he was and that resistance was useless as the police and nearly every man in the township was bailed up.

Mr. Living told me that his first intention was that of resistance, and there was a loaded revolver under the counter at his back, but Byrne was so threatening in his attitude, he thought he would not have time to get it, and it was a mercy that he did not attempt it as Byrne was almost immediately joined by Ned Kelly and Hart the former in police uniform, and if he had entered into conflict with Byrne he would naturally have appealed to Ned Kelly, whom he took to be a genuine policeman coming in at an opportune moment, to aid him and the result may be imagined Byrne betrayed the same nervous agitation here that he did at Faithfull's creek station, his voice was husky and his hand shook very perceptibly.

After securing Mr. Living, his assistant clerk and the firearms, they proceeded to look for Mr. Tarlton, who could not be found for some time. He was subsequently found in ignorance of what was occurring in the bathroom taking a bath as he had just arrived home after a ride of 40 miles. Mr. Living who heard him in the bathroom opened the door and said; "Dress yourself here are the Kellys at last." Mr. Tarlton thought it was a joke but being confronted by some armed men who pushed past Living he recognised it was serious. I asked Mr. Living if they expected a visit from the outlaws; he told me that the possibility of a visit from the Kellys must have been a frequent topic of conversation amongst all the bankers who lived within striking distance of them. They, in Jerilderie often spoke about the

/possibility of

possibility of it, and made some preparation but when the outlaws did appear they were taken at a disadvantage and completely surprised. Hart was left in charge of Tarlton until he dressed, during this operation Tarlton was too inquisitive to suit Hart's views and he threatened to shoot him if he didn't look lively and quit asking questions. When dressed Tarlton was taken into the hotel and put into the dining room with the other prisoners. As he was going into the hotel he saw Byrne hit the Chinese cook a tremendous blow under the ear to hasten the celestial movements, as he had refused to go into the dining room. Hart and Dan Kelly were left in charge of the prisoners whilst Ned Kelly and Byrne robbed the bank. Hart who was irritable and petulant threatened a great many times to shoot some of the confined persons, and seemed particularly anxious to murder someone. Kelly procured a sack and taking Living with him he and Byrne proceeded to rob the bank, informing Living, who told him there was not more than £700 in the bank, that amount was no good to him he wanted £10,000 at least. The local schoolmaster coming into the bank was informed by Living how matters stood and ordered by Kelly to jump over the counter and lend a hand. The teacher expressed his inability to do this.

Kelly drew one of his revolvers and repeated his demand. The threatening attitude of Kelly accelerated the teachers movements, and he got over the counter in a manner which proved he had an altogether too modest opinion of his own agility, and rendered the required assistance by holding the sack open. The teller's money amounting to £691 was put away in the bag but Kelly was not half satisfied with this amount, like Oliver Twist he asked for more and had better success. There was another drawer in the safe which he wanted opened but owing to it having a check lock, Living could not open it himself and tried to put Kelly off by telling him there was nothing valuable in it. As the drawer could not be opened and Byrne was taking steps to open it with a sledge hammer, Mr. Tarlton was sent for and on the drawer being opened the reserve cash amounting to £1,450 was added to that already in the sack. Kelly also searched through the securities in the bank his object being, as he said himself, to get the deeds of township allotments. Other papers such as stock mortgages he removed and stating it to be his intention to relieve poor men of their liabilities, he brought in two of his prisoners from the hotel and got them to burn these documents in the yard of the bank. Three gentlemen in ignorance of what was taking place went into the bank, and Kelly calling upon them to bail up they were alarmed and ran out of the building, two of them succeeded in getting away but the third, Mr. Rankin, a magistrate, was less fortunate, and he had a very trying adventure. He unfortunately ran into the bar of the hotel where he was confronted by another revolver in the hand of a more dangerous ruffian, Dan Kelly. Stopped in this manner he was quickly caught by Ned who followed him, "His face distorted with passion, the foam flowed from his lips, and his eyes glared like those of a wild beast." With excited gesture cursing and blasphemous, as if he had been suddenly stricken with lunacy, he dragged Rankin into the passage of the hotel, stating that he was going to shoot him; placing him against the wall he crossed his hands, in each of which he held a revolver, and putting the barrels of revolvers up against either of Rankin's cheeks he seemed demonical. In this trying position Mr. Rankin was credited with

/extreme coolness

extreme coolness which had an effect upon Kelly, and the other prisoners in the hotel crying put with horror interceded for mercy. Kelly cooled down and said he would not shoot him just then but told Hart, whom he addressed at Jerilderie by the name of "Revenge", if any one showed the least resistance to shoot Rankin first. Byrne in the meantime had been at the post office and had there given cause to the postmaster to send the telegram which is at the head of this chapter. The outlaws shouted freely and paid for all drinks with the stolen money; and the gang proceeded from labor to refreshment, and refreshment to labor, and back again throughout the whole day. In the time they had devoted to labor they had deprived several citizens of their watches and other valuables besides looking after anything they could find of first class value, in the shape of horse flesh in the township. Amongst those losing their watches in this manner was a Mr. Gribble a clergyman, it was taken by Hart. The clergyman appealed to the higher court over which Ned Kelly presided in person. The appeal was upheld and the watch was returned to him but very ungraciously and reluctantly, by Hart who said a clergyman was no more to him than any other man. A racing mare belonging to a young lady of the township was also returned to her by the intercession of the same clergyman. Kelly leaving the petty robberies to his mates took Living and Richards with him to look for the local journalist. From the safety of their sanctums the editors of the numerous papers in the colonies were promulgating moral doctrines about the vast amount of harm which the outlaws were doing to Australia particularly in regard to Australia's intention upon the purse of John Bull. There was no paper that had not several leaders upon the subject of the outlaws, condemning the police for inefficiency, and reflecting upon the timidity of the citizens who submitted to be bailed up without resistance. There was only one of these editors who had an opportunity of looking down the barrel of Ned Kelly's revolver, and that was the gentleman Ned Kelly was now in quest of. He was one of the three who had entered the bank when Kelly was robbing it and succeeded in getting away when Rankin was captured. Being introduced to the journalist's wife, Kelly inquired for her husband stating that he wanted him to print his autobiography the manuscript of which he held in his hand. The journalist had not turned up since his escape from the bank and; "his wife--than whom nobody could know him better--- suspected that he would be found dead somewhere killed by fright." This was disappointing to Kelly who looked upon his reminiscences with all the favor of a young author upon his first literary production, and he offered the manuscript to the journalist's wife for publication. But, notwithstanding his celebrity, he had no better luck than falls to the lot of other literary aspirants for his contribution was "declined."

Under these circumstances Mr. Living requested Kelly to let him have the MSS and he would get it printed, this Kelly did saying, "This is a bit of my life, mind you get it printed, I will complete it later on." Mr. Living was removed to Melbourne, on his way down he parted with this document but it came into his possession again, when he permitted me to read it in the original. It was written in a fairly good hand by whom was not know, but it was supposed to be by Byrne. The greater part of it was published by one of the Melbourne papers on the 18th Feb. '79. This paper being promptly condemned next morning for,

/"devoting two

"devoting two columns of space to the circulation of a string of lies ---permitting those cowardly murderers to enter upon a public defence in the most insidious manner." The paper attacked replied. "The letter of Edward Kelly, the outlaw, recently given in these columns, is fair example of the legitimate duties of a reporter. The clumsy fabrication of the misguided young savage is given as fresh delivered from his lips. It is as important to the public as the deposition of an "unwilling witness" is to a detective. The history of the Kelly gang is part of the history of the time, and the wild nonsense of the conceited desperado is part of the history of the Kelly gang."

It must not be imagined from the above that the article was altogether apologetic for the writer vigorously attacked the enemy for publishing "Crimes and Criminals" and "The Autobiography of a Bushranger." Each treats the unpleasant subject from a heroic point of view, and the narratives of successful villany are without any sort of "moral" either to warn or instruct." Having started his narrative on the way to fame and a large circulation Kelly returned to the hotels and whilst in one of them placed his revolvers, nine in number, upon the bar counter inviting those present to take them up and shoot him if they liked but if they did the township would swim in blood." Richards thought this a favourable opportunity to take Kelly and proposed to some of those present to tackle him first if the others would assist him, but as there was a feeling amongst them that any attempt to capture Kelly would lead to a great deal of bloodshed, not necessarily their own, Richards could get no promise of assistance.

Jem Mace, the prize fighter and champion of the world, was in Melbourne at the time of the Kelly outbreak, and his fame had evidently made Kelly jealous for he issued a challenge to him in the following language. "They talk of this Jem Mace as the champion of the world, why if they can arrange a meeting so that I am safe from being taken, I will fight him, or any other man in the world, and lick him too." What possibilities of money making are spoiled by the interference of the police. So much was the public excited by the deeds of the Kelly gang, that if a fight could have been arranged between Kelly and Mace it would have been the greatest draw that ever took place in the annals of the prize ring, and the promoters would have obtained a high price for admission. After thus challenging the whole world Kelly proceeded to address those present in the following language. "Boys I will tell you why I am an outlaw and how I have been treated by the police in Victoria. When I was accused by Fitzpatrick of shooting him I swear I was 400 miles away from home. When I heard of the way he treated my sister I hurried home and found I had been accused of shooting Fitzpatrick. I don't like to present a revolver at any man as it naturally makes him tremble, unless I am compelled to do so, and what must have been the feelings of my sister - a mere child - when she had a revolver put to her head demanding her to submit her virtue or be shot by Fitzpatrick? I don't deny having stolen horses and having sold them but of shooting Fitzpatrick I was entirely innocent. When outlawed I was only three weeks married. When we came upon the police they were all fully armed. All I had was an old rifle which was shaky, and I didn't intend to kill

/the police

the police but is there one amongst you who would not have turned round had your sister been treated as my has been. Suppose you came home and heard that two or three detectives had been to your house and presented revolvers at the head of your mother and sisters -- saying, "Where is this Ned Kelly?, if you don't tell us where he is we will shoot you. Why no man could stand such a fright as that much less a woman. Was it not enough to make me turn outlaw and shoot those b--- police."

The bush orator, who can address an audience without being interrupted by a drunken man, will establish a record. Kelly had to submit to the inevitable, for the usual hard case was present as drunk as many drinks taken that day could make him, and he interrupted the speech in the manner of his kind. The speech is not worthy of notice only as a sample of the eloquence of a bushranger, and a laudable attempt to gain a record by placing the maximum number of lies in the minimum of space. Kelly after his arrest denied nearly every assertion he made in this speech. Williamson, one of the prisoners convicted of assaulting Fitzpatrick, admitted that the constable's account was in all the essential particulars correct. Yet there were some people who believed Kelly, and who looked upon him as an exponent of truth, a defender of virtue and a hero who was driven to crime by the tyranny of the police. The press records of the Kelly gang in the Melbourne public library are very much mutilated and if the character and career of the outlaws depended upon tradition I imagine that in course of time Ned Kelly would come to occupy a position in history similar to that occupied by Robin Hood of whom it is recorded, "That he was honestly dishonest for he seldom hurt any man, never any woman, spared the poor, and only made prey of the rich."

The outlaws having returned to the police camp burned their old clothing and dressed themselves in new suits taken from one of the stores in the township. Ned Kelly and Hart had here an altercation which resulted in Kelly taking off his coat and challenging Hart to fight him. It was not a magnanimous action on the part of a man who had so recently challenged the champion of the world, as Hart could not have been much more than 9 stone in weight, and he declined the proffered encounter.

At Jerilderie as at Euroa the identity of the gang was known to many who were in no wise hampered in the capture of the outlaws had they chosen to do it. Joe Byrne left, with the valuable swag which they had accumulated about an hour before the others. During a part of this hour Dan Kelly and Hart treated the people of Jerilderie to an exhibition of horsemanship by galloping up and down the street flourishing their firearms, and crying out "Hurrah for the good old times of Johnny Gilbert and Ben Hall," and proving to the eight seers generally that the cow-boys of Texas are not in it when the Australian bushranger turns out.

They left the township amidst the cheers of some of the spectators. Calling at Wannanurrathey inquired of Mr. Mackie, the manager, if he knew where his brother was explaining that their business with him was to shoot him for assisting Messrs. Living and Tarlton to

/ride off to

ride off to Deniliquin, as they had done immediately Kelly left Jerilderie. Mr. Mackie of course, declined to give them any information about his brother. The circumstance will show quickly and thoroughly Ned Kelly was served by his scouts, of whom he must have left several in the township to watch what steps were taken by the townspeople. It was the uncertainty of how many sympathisers by whom Kelly was surrounded, and to what extent they were prepared to go that caused many of the people whom Kelly bailed up to submit tamely. They were no doubt also influenced by the abhorrence which the ordinary citizen has to shedding blood or taking blood money, and not unnaturally looked upon it as being the duty of the police to arrest or shoot the outlaws. Many of them could have aided the police by riding to the adjoining townships, and using the wires, but in this case they would have been marked men and might have found it necessary to leave their homes to save themselves from being murdered. At Jerilderie the outlaws were armed to the teeth, besides magazine rifles they carried a great number of revolvers. Ned Kelly had his belt stuck full of these weapons, being in a position to discharge 80 shots without reloading, whilst each of the others could discharge about 40; and as they had devoted nearly the whole of the previous day to cleaning and oiling them they were all in first class order. In describing the bushrangers it was said Kelly is nearly 6 ft. high. He is well built and appears a very active and powerful man. He has a thorough command of the gang, and allows nothing to be done without his sanction. Dan Kelly a moderate sized man with a fine pair of dark eyes. Steve Hart a small man fidgety but not nervous nor frightened. Joe Byrne nearly 6 ft., effeminate cast of countenance. Nervous disposition, quiet manner, appears to the casual observer an inoffensive man.

Autobiography of Ned Kelly.

Perhaps it is a misnomer to call this an autobiography as, although Kelly could read and write a little, he did not possess sufficient education to write this letter. It was however acknowledged by himself to be "a bit of his life". I will not offer any apology for briefly submitting a portion of it which refers to my own narrative, and making a few comments upon other parts of it. It is not usual to hear a prisoner in his own defence before he is arrested, but it was at this time in the career of Kelly that the letter was made public and as we have had a number of witnesses giving evidence against him we will now give him an opportunity to defend himself. Kelly opens his narrative by an altogether impossible account of how in his 14th year he fought a farmer, the farmer's wife and two constables, the constables having to get the assistance of others before they could take him to the "logs." This was a fair start for a good yarn, but instead of being rewarded for this early exhibition of his exuberant pluck he was fined £2, and sent to gaol for three months, besides being bound over to keep the peace for one year. Before the year had expired Wild Wright came over from Mansfield riding a mare belonging to the postmaster of that town. Wright lost the mare and Kelly lent him a horse instead, undertaking to look for the mare and return her when Wright brought back his horse.

/He found

He found the mare and was shortly after arrested by Md.Const. Hall for stealing her. Hall was a well known character in the Victorian police for nearly 40 years; a man noted for his intrepidity and eccentricity he was called Mad Hall to distinguish him from several other members of the Force of the same name; he was a powerful man, and the way that Kelly described how he rolled him from one side of the street, in Greta, to the other, occasionally mounting him like a horse and "digging his spurs into his fat sides" must have emanated from a malicious desire to humiliate Hall. There is one portion of Kelly's statement true. He tried to get away on the mare and also to disable Hall by the use of the stirrup iron and leather used as a slung shot, when Hall attempted to shoot him three times the revolver missing fire each time. I have looked Hall's evidence up and I find that this was correct. Thus the firearms supplied to the mounted police and the knowledge the men possessed of how to use them cost the Government according to a reliable authority over £100,000 and the loss of several valuable lives.

Kelly was found guilty of "receiving" and sentenced to three years hard labor. He proceeds to state that when he went to gaol he had about 30 horses "as good as the world could produce, when he came out he had only 2 or 3; the police having stolen all the others and sold them to the navvies when he was in gaol." In this connection he mentions the name of a most respectable member of the service who is recently deceased. Accusing him of being the greatest horse stealer that ever was in Australia, which was a malicious untruth, he acknowledged that he himself, and a person named George King, were two of the greatest horse stealers that had ever been in Victoria. After giving an imaginary account of the attack upon Fitzpatrick he stated those convicted of the assault upon Fitzpatrick were innocent. "It will pay the Government to give those people who are suffering in innocence, justice and liberty --- If not I will be compelled to show some colonial stratagem which will not only open the eyes of the Victorian police and inhabitants, but also the whole British army. --- Fitzpatrick will be the cause of greater slaughter to the Union Jack than Saint Patrick was to the snakes and toads in Ireland." He then complained about the papers calling him a murderer. "But if I hear any more of it I will not exactly show them what cold blooded murder is, but wholesale and retail slaughter something different to shooting 3 troopers in self defence, and robbing a bank."

We now come to his account of the police murders. "When I heard about the reward for my arrest I came back to Victoria but knowing that I would receive no justice I did not give myself up. I found my brother Dan working at Boggy Creek. We did not think that the police would follow us where we were digging in the creek near Tabletop. Dan was making good wages as the creek is very rich within half a mile from where I shot Kennedy. I was not there long, and on the 25th Oct. I came on police tracks between Tabletop and the Bogs. I crossed them and returning in the evening I came on a different lot of tracks making for the shingle hut. I went to our camp and told my brother and his two mates. My brother went and found them camped at the shingle hut, about a mile from his own hut.

/We saw

We saw they carried long firearms and we knew our doom was sealed, if we could not beat them before the others came. --- As we had only two guns (an untruth) we thought it best to try and bail those up and take their firearms, ammunition and horses when we could stand a chance with the rest. We approached the spring as close as we could get to the camp. --- We saw two men at the logs. They got up and one took a double barrelled fowling piece and fetched a horse down and hobbled him at the tent. We could have shot these two men without speaking, but not wishing to take their lives we waited. McIntyre laid the gun against a stump. Lonigan sat on the log." This account of Kelly's that I had the gun close to me is not correct; the gun and my revolver were both at the tent. "I advanced, my brother keeping McIntyre covered --- and had he not obeyed my order or attempted to run for the gun, or drawn his revolver, he would have been shot. But when I called on them to throw up their hands McIntyre obeyed and Lonigan ran some 6 or 7 yards to a battery of logs, instead of bolting behind the one he was sitting on. He had just got to the logs and put his hand up to take aim, when I shot him that instant. --- As soon as I shot Lonigan he jumped up, and staggered some distance from the logs without his hands raising and then he fell." He then proceeds to relate the conversation he had with me which does not differ materially from that related by myself. "Our two mates came over when they heard the shot fired and went back again for fear the police might come to our camp while we were all away and manure Bullock Flat with us." A ludicrous statement, and for a colonial a fair attempt at a bull.

"I stopped at the logs and Dan went back to the springs for fear the troopers would come in that way. But I soon heard them coming up the creek. I told McIntyre to tell them to give up their arms. He spoke to Kennedy who was some distance in front of Scanlon. He reached for his revolver and jumped off on the off side of his horse and got behind a tree, when I called on them to throw up their arms, and Scanlon who carried the rifle slewed his horse and as quick as thought fired at me with the rifle without levelling it, and was in the act of firing again when I had to shoot him and he fell from his horse. I could have shot them without speaking but their lives were no good to me. McIntyre jumped on Kennedy's horse and I let him go as I did not like to shoot him after he had surrendered or I would have, as he was between me and Kennedy therefore I could not shoot Kennedy without shooting him first, Kennedy kept firing from behind the tree. My brother advanced and Kennedy ran. I followed him. He stopped behind another tree and fired again. I shot him in the armpit and he dropped his revolver and ran. I fired again with the gun and he slewed round to surrender. I did not know he had dropped his revolver. The bullet passed through the side of his chest, and he could not live or I would have let him go. Had they been my own brothers I could not help shooting them or else them shoot me." He then proceeds in a long tirade against the police abusing them as "big bellied, splay footed, sons of Irish bailiffs." Threatening the civilians who took arms against him, he said he would peg them down upon an ant bed and pour their own fat boiling hot down their throats. "Those who would be so depraved as to take blood money, will be outlawed.. And they, theirs and all belonging to them exterminated off the face of the earth. The enemy I cannot catch myself I shall give a payable

reward for I do not call McIntyre a coward for I reckon he is as game a man as wears the jacket, as he had presence of mind to know his position directly as he was spoken to and only foolishness to disobey."

Kelly always endeavoured to make it appear that he was defending himself when he shot the police, but always admitted that his was the attacking party. He incurred no more danger in shooting Lonigan and Scanlon than he would have done in shooting two kangaroos; he simply gave the men no chance to injure him, and might as well have shot them down without challenging them, as they scarcely had time to realize their danger until they were shot... At the trial I described the murderous attack made upon us as I have described it in this narrative. Whilst Kelly's mates were alive he did all he could to remove the burden of murder off their shoulders, when they were dead the necessity for doing this had passed away, and my statement that there were four armed men actively engaged in the attack was not questioned. Kelly had two opportunities of doing me irreparable injury. I was his prisoner for over half an hour during any moment of which he could have shot me, but as I believe he shot at me as I was escaping, and told me after his arrest that if he had thought my escape was possible he would have shot me at once, I must be excused for not being indebted to him upon that occasion. But he could have done me a greater injury, he could have lied and said many malicious things against me which would have been readily believed by a number of people.

But from all that I can learn, from officials and others, he never spoke ill of me, and I cannot help expressing it as my opinion that he had some manly qualities which were not possessed by the other members of the gang particularly his brother Dan.

At Jerilderie Kelly said that McIntyre was as brave a man as Kennedy ... Mr. Tarlton told me this and he also gave it in evidence at the Melbourne trial. The Melbourne Evening Herald was the only paper which noticed this portion of the evidence, and its note was not correct. But the following day, 1st Nov. '80, it published a correction. Mr. Tarlton personally attending the Herald office for the purpose of requesting the Editor to do so. ...

CHAPTER 6.

Search for the Outlaws

Before the Kelly outbreak there were 75 constables in the North Eastern district a few months after there were 215, besides a large



number of men from the permanent artillery. If the retrenchments in the police were carried out by the Government in opposition to the desire of the higher officials, as has been stated, the country was beginning to realize that a Government may be parsomony loss a considerable amount of money.

Immediately after the Jerilderie raid the N.S.W. Government offered a reward of £4,000 for the capture or death of the outlaws. The Victorian Government also increased the reward to a like amount; this being the fourth time the Victorian Government had increased the reward within a period of four months. The reward now offered by the two Governments amounted to the large sum of £8,000 or £2,000 each. This was a heavy load for each man to carry, and a big temptation to the cupidity of those who were in a position to earn it. When it is taken into consideration the severe punishment provided for those harbouring or assisting the outlaws, it proves what good friends they had or how well they must have been rewarded by the gang for their assistance; their career lasting for nearly two years, and then they were only captured through their own folly.

Several detectives were sent up to the district, and bodies of police consisting of 7 or 8 men, accompanied by a tracker, and a pack horse for carrying their swags, were sent out into the ranges to search for the outlaws. These search parties were not discontinued until the third of July '79. Superintendent Sadlier was opposed to them, considering that the search for the outlaws might be continued for 20 years and the gang not be captured in the absence of any information. Our Government also got the services of a lieutenant, a sergeant and 6 black trackers from the Queensland Government. They arrived at Benella on the 10th March '79. The men were more intelligent and better trackers than our own blacks, they and the lieutenant remained in the colony until after the destruction of the outlaws, but the sergeant returned to Queensland after several months unsuccessful searching for them. The sergeant's place was taken by trooper Kirkham of the Victorian police, who applied himself with such assuidity to his new duties that he learned to converse with them in their own language, and completely gained their confidence. The Victorian mounted police has attracted to its ranks many men from professions which do not usually furnish recruits to the Force of the older countries. Mr. Kirkham, the son of a London comedian, possessed of a good tenor voice and histrionic ability at an early age followed his father's profession, his forte being variety and burlesque. He is one of the men mentioned by the late Mr. Hare in "The Last of the Bushrangers" as a thoroughly reliable man without a weak spot in him anywhere." After the destruction of the gang he resigned his position on the police to follow an engagement on the stage from which he retired a few years ago to enter into business. He, and his talented and attractive partner, frequently take parts in concerts in the cause of charity. Md. Const. O'Loughlin, now Sergeant O'Loughlin, was another of Mr. Hare's reliable men. It was he who discovered the notorious Deeming's murdered wife hidden under a hearthstone of a cottage at Windsor.

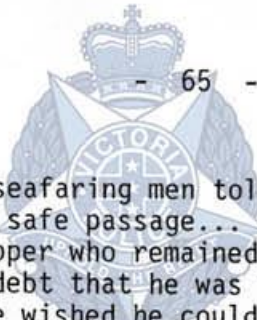
After spending 3 weeks in hospital I returned to duty. The first duty I had to perform was to act temporarily as Chief Secretary's orderly. I found this billet a very disagreeable one.

The Chief Secretary was apparently annoyed by the numerous callers, and as I did not know who to announce or who not to announce I fear that here as everywhere else through life the persistent got ahead of the worthy. To add to my discomfort a number of those seeking an audience were offering their services to catch the Kellys, and it was a subject constantly talked about. As I was an object of attention, and frequently the subject of unpleasant remark, I never made myself known unless to avoid conversation of a disagreeable nature. Thus one gentleman proceeded to talk about the Kelly gang and informed me that he did not blame McIntyre for his action during the murders, but he thought he had not shown up well since he had not proceeded back immediately he had recovered. I told him I was McIntyre and the bell ringing for his admission was a relief to me if not to him

Another gentleman called several times and I understood him to be a representative of several public servants who were anxious to catch the Kellys, and who were applying for leave and equipment for that purpose. I think his proposal was not favourably received, but judging by the persistent and energetic manner in which he returned again and again, he was quite capable of catching the Kellys, if he could have found them, and I am sorry he and his associates did not get an opportunity to distinguish themselves. I do not know whether these gentlemen had any special qualifications for finding the bushrangers, indeed it was quite possible they had not even the most rudimentary knowledge of the difficulties surrounding the work they were so anxious to undertake, but it did not require much discrimination to see that their representative was fairly bubbling over with pluck, and no doubt his associates were in an equally effervescent state.

At the time the Clarke brothers murdered the 4 special constables in N.S.W. it was remarked by the Sydney press, "The history of bushranging in Australia cannot show an instance of an organised body having done what the ordinary police have failed to accomplish." Many citizens have done good service in suppressing bushranging but they have not been members of an organised party, formed by Government to capture the bushrangers and acting independently of the police. I did not remain long at this duty and when relieved I was attached to the detective office as a plain clothes constable. The duty I had to perform here was to see that the outlaws did not escape by the seaboard. Whilst occupying this position my energies were not confined to the one object of preventing the escape of the Kellys. I was shown several people whose departure from the colony was considered undesirable. These were generally persons under bail, or suspects whom it was considered premature to arrest unless they were about to leave the colony. If the outlaws had had a reliable agent and plenty of money it would have been possible for them to escape my vigilance and that of the detectives to whom they were unknown, but should they have thought to escape, the moral effect of the knowledge that the seaboard was closely watched would have had a deterrent influence upon their attempting to escape in that direction, and the large amount of money offered for their arrest would have been a great temptation to the cupidity of those who would be inclined to aid them.

/Some of the



Some of the seafaring men told me that for a lump sum they could get the Kellys a safe passage... I remember one instance in particular of a Yankee skipper who remained at this port so long and ran his ship into so much debt that he was in the last stage of financial despair. He told me he wished he could come to some terms with the outlaws to remove them from colony it is not usual for a man to tell a member of the police that he is willing to commit a crime and those doing so are generally not likely to carry out their threats, but in this instance we knew what a tight place this gentleman was in and he was not considered unworthy of special attention. His debts and troubles so multiplied upon him that he sought refuge in suicide.

In June '79, there was information received that 4 passages had been suspiciously engaged on board the sailing vessel "Victoria Cross" bound for San Francisco. I was ordered to proceed down the Bay with an officer and several men from the Russell Street barracks. As the "Victoria Cross" was lying at the Heads prior to her departure we went down the bay in a steam tug leaving at midnight. We searched this vessel and another one which lay there, and remained down the bay two or three days. The captain of the V.C. came from the same city as I do myself and he told me he had jestingly remarked to some person that he thought his passengers (he had only four) must be the Kellys as there was something suspicious about them. In anything connected with the Kelly gang a little spark created a great blaze and hence our expedition.

There were many rumours of some of the outlaws having visited Melbourne and also of Steve Hart gallivanting about the country on horseback dressed in female attire. I very often visited the places of amusement thinking some of them might have the temerity to come to the city. The theatres had seized upon the unsuccessful hunt for the gang as a means of amusing the public, and many were the jibes cast at the police and the comic songs sung about catching the Kellys ... There was one song a favourite for a long time in which each verse gradually brought you up to expect a climax of an heroic nature and ended with the refrain. "And the police have captured, ----- another old horse." After a long pause the sarcastic emphasis with which the last three words were sung invariably "brought the house down." On the 18th Feb., a few days after the Jerilderie bank robbery I made another formal application to be allowed to return to my district, drawing the Chief's attention to the fact that now the identity of the two unknown outlaws was established and most likely they would all be destroyed in an encounter with the police thus doing away with the necessity for my evidence.

I had another interview with the Chief about this application. He told me that he could not permit me to return as I was doing good service where I was, to content myself and after the Kelly business was over he would do anything for me that lay in his power or his influence could command. Under the accumulating cares and worries of his office Captain Standish broke down, mentally and physically, and died before he could fulfil this promise. He retired from the police in Sept. '80, a month before the trial of Ned Kelly, and died shortly after.

/Capt. Standish