

Melton Family History Group Inc

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Registered 6th Dec 1994

December 2020-January 2021

Meeting Times: 6:30pm on the second Thursday of each month except for January

Venue: Melton Library – McKenzie Street, Melton

Membership Fee: \$25 per year payable July each year prior to August A.G.M.

Correspondence: P.O. Box 2094 Melton South, Victoria, Australia, 3338

President: Judith Bilszta

Vice President Janeen O’Connell

Secretary: Ian Bowey

Treasurer: Deborah Slattery

Email: sec.meltonfhg@outlook.com

Web site www.meltonfamilyhistory.org

Committee Members: Sue Morton Pauline Stotten

2020 /2021Monthly Meetings at Melton Library in McKenzie Street.

12 th November 2020	Held via Zoom
12 th December 2020	This special Saturday event will be held at The Willows, starting at 2:00pm. We are unable to hold our normal monthly meeting on the 10 th of December due to other events being held on the same day.
11 th February 2021	T.B A
11 th March 2021	T.B.A
8 th April	T.B.A

All dates and times are subject to change

Update: Cancellations due to the Corona Virus:

Our annual General Meeting was held via 'Zoom' on Wednesday the 7th of October. Despite a few technical glitches just before the start of the meeting, everything went relatively smoothly. Thanks to all who took the time and trouble to attend.

With Trevor Kay stepping down from his role as President, Judith was appointed as his replacement. Many thanks to Trevor for all his achievements during his time as President. Congratulations to Judith, whom we all know will perform in her role admirably. Deb, Ian and Sue retained their roles as Treasurer, Secretary and Committee Member respectively. Pauline became the second Committee Member, whilst Janeen replaced Judith as Vice President. Congratulations to all.

We have taken out a free 'Zoom' account. This allows us to hold meetings at any time. The group has continued holding their weekly sessions, with Melton Library's Nicole Hilder hosting. Our November monthly meeting was held via 'Zoom'.

With government restrictions now being eased, we are allowed to restart our Wednesday morning help sessions from the 2nd of December. Masks must be worn inside the library and only a limited number of volunteers are able to use the computers at any one time.

A virtual tour of Melton Cemetery was held via 'Zoom' on the last Tuesday of October. Participating members read out details of some prominent Melton residents who were buried in the Melton Cemetery. This event attracted a number of viewers. Congratulations to Melton Library's Nicole Hilder for organising the event, as well as all participants.

The following sad story concerns one of the families in Judith Bilszta's contribution.

THE MELTON TRAGEDY

(BY OUR OWN REPORTER) 27 June 1886 The Herald

The great consternation exhibited in the Melton district since the awfully sudden deaths of Joseph Williamson, shepherd; Mary Commerford, the wife of John Commerford, a shepherd employed at the Rockbank station, owned by Mr W.J.T. Clarke; a child, Hannah Commerford, aged three and a-half years of age, and Catherine Commerford, aged two – the children of the latter – has not been allayed, considerable anxiety being felt as to the real cause of death. It will be remembered that Mrs Commerford died on the 12th inst., Joseph Williamson on the 14th inst., Honora Commerford died on the same date, and the other infant, Catherine Commerford, on Friday the 15th inst.

Investigations have been held by Dr Rae of Bacchus Marsh, the district coroner, and from the evidence taken up to yesterday, it appears that the Commerfords and their family, with two shepherds named respectively Edward Dougharty and Joseph Williamson, with a watchman named George Taggart, resided at the hut known as Montgomery's house, on the Kororoit Creek – Dougharty for about twelve months, and the others for only three to four months. All the people living at the hut were in the habit of partaking of mushrooms gathered on the plains, with the exception of two children at present living.

A number of spurious mushrooms, known as toadstools, were about the plains and near the house. The man Williamson, since dead, used to eat some of those. Joseph Commerford explained at one of the inquests that he had often eaten the mushrooms, and afterwards felt a burning sensation in his throat, and was generally very ill. His children suffered from diarrhoea, vomiting and gradually wasted away till they died.

The house where the melancholy catastrophe took place is situated in a healthy locality, adjacent to the Kororoit Creek, and about four miles across the plains from the township of Melton. The hut, which is built of stone, with a galvanised iron roof, contains six good-sized rooms, and is known as Montgomery's house, from the fact that it was formerly occupied by a person of that name. The appearance presented when our reporter yesterday visited the house, which is distant about three miles from Rockbank station, was that of the most

complete desolation, the place being quite deserted, though, we believe two shepherds now sleep there. The windows were broken, and the cold blast of a winter wind whistled through the tenantless domicile. The only appearance of animal life in the house was a poor cat, which meowed piteously when a stranger approached, and immediately wished to form an acquaintance, as if glad of the appearance of a human being.

The interior of the building is portioned off into six rooms of very good dimensions, and a passage or hall running through the house separates them. It is well and substantially built, and doubtless could be made a very comfortable place of residence if kept in anything like a decent order. The rooms are large enough, and from looking at their contents one would be likely to be able to form a minimal-eye sketch of the habits of the occupants.

The skin of a huge snake was suspended over the fire-place of apparently the principal room. A few books of favourite British authors were lying about, and a few pieces of German music were scattered about. Beds or something evidently intended for that purpose, were in the various rooms – one of them adored with an opossum rug, and the others with articles that evidently were blankets, but having to all appearances never undergone the process of ablution, they could scarcely be recognised.

The whole house presented the appearance of filthy, squalid misery. From what we could learn, this state of being was not the fault of the proprietor of the station or his overseers, for when the shepherds have the appliances and do not take advantage of such benefits to keep the place clean, they have themselves to blame if sickness is the result. Of course the fact of so much illness being in the house is some excuse, and the desire of the overseers not to enter the premises when a female was there, to some extent explains the wretched appearance presented, I thought probable that the deceased persons died from drinking out of vessels used for mixing chemical compounds for sheep-washing, but it is said that the hut was well furnished with cooking and drinking utensils, and that there would be no reason for any person to take any vessel from the home station.

We learned yesterday morning, whilst in conversation with a farmer that his son had been attacked in a similar way to the deceased persons – viz, vomiting and diarrhoeas, after eating mushrooms, but now he was as well as ever.

The adjourned inquests were held yesterday. The first was of the body of Mary Commerford, the wife of John Commerford, and commenced in the afternoon at half-past 3 o'clock at the Raglan Hotel, Melton. The evidence taken on the previous occasion was read by Dr Rae, district coroner, Bacchus Marsh and that gentleman then explained to the jury the inquest had been adjourned for the purpose of having the stomachs analysed. The report of Mr Sydney Gibbons on the analysis of the stomachs of Joseph Williamson (shepherd), Mary Commerford (the wife of the shepherd who lived at Montgomery's house), and Catherine Commerford (aged two years) and Honora Commerford (aged three and a half years), was kindly supplied to us by Dr Rae, the coroner.

From the report it seems that Mr Gibbons received the stomachs in four scaled jars, on the 18th June, from Constable McCanny. The stomachs and portions of other viscera were examined, but no traces of arsenic, corrosive sublimate, strychnine, lead, oxalic acid, opium, or antimony were found in them, nor signs of any other poisons. There were no traces of the structure of mushrooms; but this was not to be wondered at, in as much as the stomachs were empty, and there were no means of detecting the poison of fungi. The structures might have been removed by vomiting or otherwise, as was likely in the present case. Their presence could only be inferred from the symptoms apparent, and the indications from the absence of the poisons. The report concluded by stating that if any further experiments would be made the stomachs would be kept by the analyst.

Agnes Tarleton, the wife of Digby Tarleton, a dealer living at the Kororoit Creek, near Melton, said that she knew the deceased, Mary Commerford, and saw her daily during her illness, which lasted about a fortnight.

She complained of her chest being very painful, and said she had a very bad cold. The week she died she said she had been eating mushrooms, and was always very bad afterwards.

Witness said, "then why do you eat them?" And she replied that the men brought them in, and when they were cooked she used to take a fancy to them. Witness had often eaten mushrooms, and was always ill and vomited afterwards. Knew the difference between mushrooms and "toadstools", but one night shortly before the deceased died witness picked a lot of mushrooms. She could not, however, say that there were no toadstools amongst them, and it was dark at the time she washed them. Deceased also ate some, and the result was that she and witness were very unwell. On the day of her death she complained of numbness in her hands and feet, and said she felt very unwell. She was, however, going about the house, and witness advised her to go to the hospital, as there was no medical aid near, and her husband could not procure any. Witness went down to the house that night and found deceased dead.

The coroner then summed up and pointed out to the jury that from the report furnished by Mr Gibbons, analytical chemist, there were no traces of acute poisoning, but it was more of a chronic character. He had taken particular trouble to ascertain the signs exhibited by persons suffering from mushroom poisons, and though he did not wish the jury to take his remarks as evidence.

He had learned that toxicologists had described the symptoms, and the post-mortem appeared as exactly similar to those of the deceased.

A number of the jurymen expressed themselves as dissatisfied that the cause of death was not more definitely stated. The jury then retired, and, after about twenty minutes consideration, returned a verdict that deceased Mary Commerford, died on the 12th inst. from eating poisonous mushrooms.

The adjourned investigation on the body of Joseph Williamson was then proceeded with and after the coroner had read over the evidence given on the former occasion, he said there were no other witnesses to be examined, and the jury returned a verdict that the deceased died from eating poisonous mushrooms.

The adjourned inquest on the bodies of the children, Honora Commerford and Catherine Commerford, was then resumed, and after the jury had answered to their names the coroner remarked that three jurymen – Messrs McIntosh (foreman), McMillan, and Devine – who had entered into recognisances to appear that day at 10 o'clock, failed to do so; they had sent a requisition to postpone the inquest, but he had advised them that this could not be done. They had absented themselves till five o'clock, and this course could not be taken as a precedent though he was aware that they had to go to Melbourne on business - in reference to the 42nd section of the Land Act – yet the case before them was of as much interest to the public as their own was to themselves, in as much as if they did not appear a new jury would have to be empowered, and the bodies exhumed. On a future occasion if such a course were adopted he would entreat the recognisances, and call upon them to pay the full penalty.

The previous evidence was then read over by Dr Rae. The symptoms set forth were similar to those shown by the adult deceased, as well as their appearance after death. Mr McIntosh, a jurymen (the foreman), expressed his surprise, after the coroner had read over Mr Gibbons' report that the Government analytical chemist had stated that the poison was of a vegetable character, whilst Dr Bone, who had made the post-mortem examination, was of the opinion that the poison was a mineral one. The coroner again read Dr Bone's evidence, and said there was extreme probability that the deceased children died from mushroom poisoning from the post-mortem appearance and the evidence given by the other witnesses. The jury in this case also returned a verdict that the deceased children died from mushroom poison.

The inquiries then closed.

Transcribed by Judith A. Bilszta FRHSV



News from Melton City Libraries

Virtual Tour of Melton Cemetery wrap up

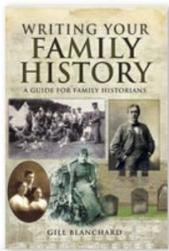
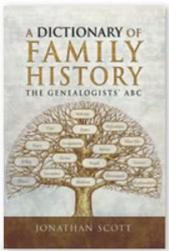
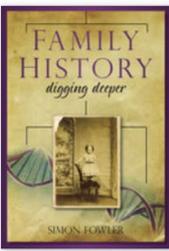
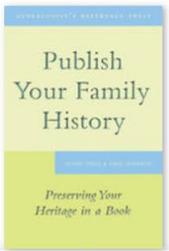
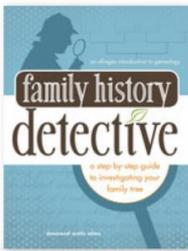
Subtitles are currently being added for the Virtual Tour Cemetery Tour event in October by Melton Family History Group and Melton City Libraries. The finished video will be added to the libraries online community heritage collection. A promotional video will also be created on the Melton City Libraries Facebook page. Thanks and congratulations to the Melton Family History Group on such a successful event.

New Family History ebook shelf

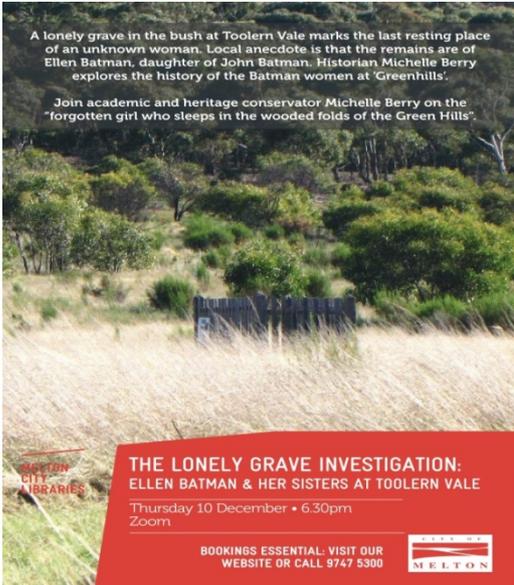
Melton City Libraries has created a Family History “shelf” in our Borrow Box (Bolinda Digital) ebook collection. Available to down via the eCollections page <https://www.melton.vic.gov.au/Out-n-About/Libraries-and-learning/Libraries/eCollections-1>

Family History

[more >](#)

				
Preview Borrow	Preview Borrow	Preview Borrow	Preview Borrow	Preview Borrow
Writing your Family History Gill Blanchard Non-Fiction — Reference eBook	A Dictionary of Family History Jonathan Scott Non-Fiction — History, Reference eBook	Family History, digging deeper Simon Fowler Non-Fiction — Reference eBook	Publish Your Family History Susan Yates and Greg Ioannou Non-Fiction — Lifestyle - Wellbeing, Reference eBook	Family History Detective Desmond Walls Allen Non-Fiction — Reference eBook

Upcoming Events



A lonely grave in the bush at Toolern Vale marks the last resting place of an unknown woman. Local anecdote is that the remains are of Ellen Batman, daughter of John Batman. Historian Michelle Berry explores the history of the Batman women at 'Greenhills'.

Join academic and heritage conservator Michelle Berry on the "forgotten girl who sleeps in the wooded folds of the Green Hills".

**THE LONELY GRAVE INVESTIGATION:
ELLEN BATMAN & HER SISTERS AT TOOLERN VALE**
Thursday 10 December • 6.30pm
Zoom

BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL: VISIT OUR WEBSITE OR CALL 5747 5300



10 December, 6:30pm. The Lonely Grave Investigation: Ellen Batman & her Sisters at Toolern Vale

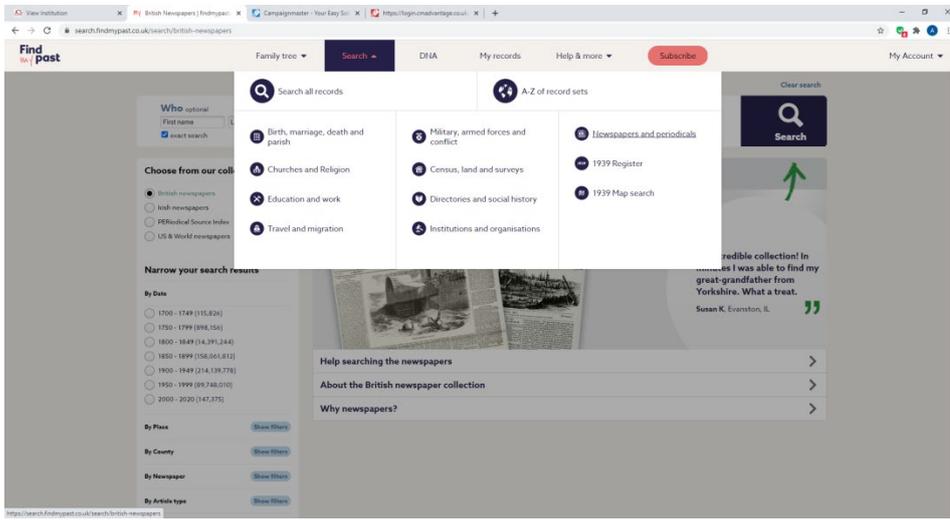
Book via the library events calendar

<https://bit.ly/LonelyGrave>

https://melton.webwiredsolutions.com.au/main/calendar.php?m=75&event=book&event_id=11693&t=1607518800

Accessing the British Newspaper Archive.

You can access the newspapers on the British Newspaper Archive through Melton City Libraries via your Findmypast remote access account by clicking search at the top of the screen and then click Newspapers and periodicals (see screenshot) - this essentially gives you access to the newspapers on BNA but is just updated a bit slower i.e. newspapers added to the archive this week won't be available until next week.



To remotely access Findmypast is simply a matter of contacting Melton Library's Nicole at nicoleh@melton.vic.gov.au Nicole will then send the password and details to log in.

The following article, written by Donald Mackintosh for *The Express* in 1934, is taken from the Melton District Historical Society Inc. Newsletter, November-December 1994. They say, 'It certainly shows that Melton had its fair share of "heroes" back then, a trend which has continued to the present day. Thanks again to Bob Macdonald for his contribution.'

Melton – Village of Stars

It would be difficult to find throughout the world a village with as small a population as Melton (250 persons) that can claim in its vicinity so many stars in art, sport and other spheres of life as can Melton, 24 miles from Melbourne, and here is a list of a few.

- Professor Harry Richards** – Geologist, one of the world’s foremost.
 - Vera Carew** (Mrs Jim Foran) – Singling in England with her husband and daughter. L.A.B., R.A.M., R.C.M.
 - Marjorie Myers** (Mrs Bert Butler) – Pianoforte and twice winner in South St Competitions.
 - May Ferris** (Mrs. T. L. Barrie) – Gold medal for highest marks in the Commonwealth for LCM exam, London College of Music.
 - Annie Riddell** – Singing.
 - Miss A. Ross** – Pianoforte.
 - Joan Richmond** – Motoring.
 - Hector Fraser** – Won the Monte Carlo Championship with the gun.
 - Donald Mackintosh** – Highest Aggregate with the gun against all nationalities, London, Paris, Monte Carlo.
 - Late Donald Mac Donald** – Journalist, The Argus.
 - Paddy Hehir** (Parwan) & **Hubert Opperman** – World Champion Cyclists.
 - The Welkin** – Famous Melton racehorse, sired winners of £225,000 in stakes.
 - Gloaming** – on nearly £40,000 for Mr. E. D. Clarke who established the Melton Stud Farm and has won in stakes £129,000.
- Carbine, Malva, Gloaming, The Welkin, Trivalve, Phar Lap and Red Leap grazed at Bacchus Marsh.

A poem written by Donald Mackintosh, 1934

To Melton
 My native village by the burn
 No matter where your children roam,
 Each wandering pilgrim, on return
 Still fonder calls you "Home Sweet Home".
 The proudest village of the plain
 Your stars in sweet succession rise;
 And from their dust may rise again.
 A legend – to immortalise.

Top 5 most unusual Australian occupations (article taken from Ancestry.com.au)

When the first fleet landed in 1788, the convicts were skilled in more than 80 different trades and occupations. Some of these trades were useful in starting a colony from the ground up, others not so much. Some occupations stayed in existence, but many are no longer in use. Here are 5 of the most unusually named occupations that have been practiced in Australia.

1. The “knocker-upper”

What did people do before iPhone alarms to wake up in the morning? They employed a “knocker-upper”. The knocker-upper was paid to wake up people. They would use a truncheon to tap on the door or, if on an upper floor, a peashooter to send these little missiles to tap on the windows. The activities were repeated until the person was up for work... there was no snooze button!

2. The ‘tweenie’

Employed as a ‘tweenie’? then you’re a maid who works “between stairs” to help the older housemaids and cooks in their duties. And on the subject of domestic servants, you really didn’t want to be a ‘vassal’ – they were the lowest ranked servant in the house.

3. The ‘battledore maker’

Often the word to describe the occupation gives no clue at all to its meaning. Take for instance a ‘battle maker’. This job had nothing to do with battles, or doors, but was the art of making beaters, usually from cane or reed, to remove dust from cloths of floor mats. It appears to have been a seasonal job undertaken around the time of a spring clean.

4. The ‘scourger’

In the 1822 muster, there were five ‘scourgers’ working in the colony (information available on Ancestry.com.au). their role? To wield the whips over any misbehaving colonist sentenced to receive the lash. There was one for each district in New South Wales at the time: John Roach worked in Sydney, William Reynolds at Windsor, William Yates at Liverpool, James Walton at Parramatta and William Edwards at Argyleshire.

5. The ‘pettifogger’

The origin of some surnames harks back to our ancestors’ occupations. Ones such as ‘Taylor’ (a spelling variation of the occupation of tailor), and Cartwright (maker of carts) are fairly simple and self-explanatory. But you may not be so happy to have the surname ‘Pettifogger’ – it meant you worked as a dodgy or shyster lawyer.

The above article is by courtesy of Judith Bilszta

Excerpts from Trove

This is the third in a series of articles about framing reprinted from the *Bacchus Marsh Express*, transposed from the *Australasian*.

Owners of properties described:

Mr. H. Werrabee Staughton, Mr. Samuel Hall, Mr. Samuel Kitson, Mr. Archibald Campbell, Mr. James Campbell (brother)

References to: Mr. Lyle, Mr. Morley - horse breeders Mr. Beattie - sheep breeder

Mr. H. Beattie, Messrs. T. & L. Learmonth – cattle breeders

“Farming In The Melton District”, *The Bacchus Marsh Express*, 25 November 1876, p. 3, @ <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article88347971>.

FARMING IN THE MELTON DISTRICT.

[From the Australasian Travelling Reporter.]

THE Exford Estate, belonging to Mr. H. Werribee Staughton, is one of the largest properties in the district, over 13,000 acres being comprised within its boundaries. It lies nearly due south from Melton, the northern boundary extending to within a short distance from the township. The homestead is situated at the junction of the Toolern Toolern Creek with the Werribee River, about four miles and a half distant from the town of Melton. The property originally belonged to the father of the present owner, who resided upon it for a very long period, and it has been in the possession of the family for about 35 years. The greater portion of the land is moderately timbered, and with the exception of some 20 or 30 acres under cultivation for hay, is entirely devoted to grazing purposes. About 150 acres have been sown down with English grasses and lucerne mixed, with very satisfactory results. Both sheep and cattle are kept, and during the last few years much attention has been paid to the improvement of both. The present season has been a very trying one, owing to the long continuance of dry weather, and all classes of stock on this station have suffered considerably, owing to the scanty supply of grass. This season there are 10,000 sheep, principally crossbred between Cotswold rams and merino ewes. The rams now in use are pure-bred animals from the flock of Mr. Calvert, and fresh blood is introduced every season. According to Mr. Staughton's experience, the first cross produces the most profitable class of animals. There are about 500 head of cattle, a mixed herd, with a large proportion of Herefords among them, pure bulls of the breed having been used for several years. The bulls now in the herd are Sir Benjamin [sic], by Commerce, bred by Mr. H. Beattie, of Mount Aitkin, six years old, and Sarpedon the Second, bred by Messrs. T. & L. Learmonth, Grungal, Murrumbidgee, now about two and a half years old, which cost Mr. Staughton £300. Among the young stock are several pure Hereford heifers that promise well, the more noticeable being one, 20 months old, by Sir Benjamin, and another, aged nine months, by Sarpedon, both of them being very perfect in shape. Mr. Staughton is very partial to Herefords, and considers them to be a very useful class of cattle, as they are hardy and will thrive on poorer feed than any other breed. The homestead is very conveniently arranged, and the various buildings about it are of a superior description. No expense appears to have been spared in their erection, and they are more substantial and commodious than are generally to be found on sheep and cattle stations. They include a range of stone stables and men's rooms, which have a neat and comfortable appearance. In another range of stone buildings, equally as substantial as the first, several rooms are also set apart for the use of the men employed, and two of the largest are used as blacksmith's and carpenter's shops, each being fitted with all the necessary appliances. A fine stone barn has been erected, measuring 90 feet by 30 feet, with a slated roof; and on one side of it a lean-to has been built running the whole length, which is used for storing hay, spare stables, &c. The residence of the proprietor is situated some little distance away from the farm buildings, on the top of a steep slope running down to the Werribee. The house is a neat and comfortable-looking structure, and its situation is a very pleasant one, commanding extensive and beautiful views over a large extent of country. In front of the residence about six acres have been enclosed with a substantial ornamental paling fence, on a bluestone foundation, and laid out as a garden and orchard. That portion of the ground near the house has been planted with a good selection of ornamental trees, shrubs, and flowering plants, most of them appearing to be doing well, and some have made fine growth. In one corner an aviary has been formed, containing a number of pheasants, and Mr. Staughton is endeavouring to breed from them, in order to acclimatise these birds upon his estate. The lower part of the ground is planted with fruit trees and vines, various kinds of vegetables growing among them. Every part of the garden appears to be kept in excellent order, and the trees generally speaking are healthy, and growing vigorously. On the opposite side of the river is the woolshed, which is a large substantial-looking stone building, with an iron roof, in which provision is made for 14 shearers and 700 sheep at one time. Adjoining the Exford estate is a large farm containing 1,300 acres, which has been occupied for nearly seven years by Mr. Samuel Hall, who uses it for grazing purposes. Until within the last year or two it was usual to crop about 40 acres every season, but at the present time only 14 acres are in cultivation, for hay. Two years ago 11 acres were sown with lucerne, which has done exceedingly well, and furnished a large supply of food for the stock during the present unusually dry season, when but little grass could be obtained. Five acres have also been sown with lucerne and prairie grass mixed, and the results have been very satisfactory to Mr. Hall, and both of these valuable forage plants seem to thrive with each other. About 200 head of cattle are kept – a mixed herd of very good quality, with a large sprinkling of the shorthorn blood among them, Mr. Hall having for several years past been endeavouring to work into that class by using pure-bred bulls. Dairying is carried on upon an extensive scale, buttermaking being the specialty. Among the horse stock on this farm are two very good colts by Mr. Lyle's Young Lord

Clyde-one four and the other two years-old. The residence is a well built and conveniently arranged stone building, with a slated roof, and the various out-offices are of a very substantial description. The whole of the property is securely fenced and subdivided into nine paddocks.

One of the richest portions of the Melton district, from an agricultural point of view, is the locality known as the Green Hills, which is situated a few miles due north of the town. It consists of a valley flanked by low ranges on either side, the Toolern Toolern Creek, a never-failing stream, flowing through it. Formerly a great deal of the land was under cultivation, and very heavy crops were generally obtained, but of late years dairying has been the principal occupation of the settlers, the locality being especially suited to that pursuit. After leaving the town of Melton, we pass for some distance through flat open country, nearly the whole of which is used for grazing, but there is now but little grass to be seen, and many of the cattle appear to be literally starving. Several small farms are passed, but there is nothing calling for any special remarks until we arrive at the farm of Mr. Samuel Kitson, which is situated on the right-hand side of the road, four miles from Melton. This property contains 700 acres, and has been occupied by the proprietor for over 20 years. Formerly as much as 200 acres of land was under crop every season, but cultivation has almost ceased within the last two years, as the feeding of sheep and cattle has been found to give better net returns. Very heavy crops were sometimes obtained during the first few years the land was under cultivation, and wheat grown upon this farm obtained a prize medal at the London Exhibition of 1862. About 130 head of cattle are at present on the farm, a mixed herd with a large admixture of Hereford blood among them, a pure bull of that breed, by Commerce, bred by Mr. H. Beattie, having been running with them for some time. Butter-making is now the principal occupation, from 15 to 20 cows being in milk throughout the year. There is a small flock of about 50 sheep, and among them are animals of very good quality. A commencement was made by the purchase of sheep from the flock of Mr. Beattie, of Mount Aitken, and rams bred by Mr. Rutledge have been introduced since. Among the horses is a promising yearling colt by Mr. Morley's Muir Lad, which, from present appearances, is likely to develop [sic] into a fine animal. On the opposite side of the road from Kitson's place is a largegrazing farm of 1,500 acres, which has been occupied for the last five years by Mr. Archibald Campbell. Formerly, a good portion of the land was under cultivation, but of late years the whole area has been devoted to grass. There are now about 1,000 merino sheep upon the land, and a mixed herd of 60 head of cattle. Mr. Campbell does not breed either sheep or cattle, but finds that it answers his purpose best to purchase stock and fatten them for market. The present season has been a very unfavourable one, owing to the prolonged dry weather, which has caused feed to be unusually scarce, and another great evil is that the run is badly supplied with water. The adjoining farm to the north belongs to Mr. James Campbell, brother to the owner of the last one, and has been occupied by him for about four years. It contains 500 acres, none of which has been put under crop this season, owing to the long continued dry weather; but the two previous years about 150 acres were in cultivation. Last season's crop included 60 acres of wheat, which grew very well, but suffered a good deal from rust, and a few acres of Tartarian oats, the remainder of the land being under English barley. Mr. Campbell's system of cultivation is to crop the land two years in succession, and then to sow it down with rye grass and white clover, leaving it to stand four or five years before it is broken up again. About 200 acres is now under rye grass, and last year half of it was cut for seed, of which a large quantity was obtained. There are about 60 head of cattle generally kept upon this farm, and from 15 to 20 cows are in milk throughout the year, whose produce is made into butter. Mr. Campbell makes it a practice, after the crops are harvested, to purchase about 300 lambs every season to fatten for the market. He has also tried wethers for the same purpose, but finds that lambs give a much better return. The proprietor's residence is a neat and comfortable weatherboard structure, and the various outbuildings are substantial and well arranged. Among the latter there is a fine roomy weatherboard barn with a galvanised iron roof, with a commodious six-stall stable attached to it on one side. Surrounding the residence is a moderate-sized garden, which has been recently formed, and planted with a good selection of fruit trees.

The above article is by courtesy of Robyn Hunter

One final note:

On behalf of all committee members, may we wish you all a Merry Christmas, with a safe and Happy New Year.

Thank you all for your continued support in this trying 2020. We look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Regards,

Ian