

This is a copy of handwritten memoirs of **Arthur Henry Kelfield (Harry) Wray** (born Umzinto, Natal, South Africa 31 December/1903, died Melbourne, Australia, 5 June 1978). He was the son of Arthur William Wray (born England 1853, died Umzinto 1909) and Kate Weir Swan (born Grenock Scotland 1868, died Johannesburg, South Africa 1961). Harry had two younger sisters, Enid m. Matthew Allen (1905-1983) and Margaret m. Ralph Ince (1907-1983).

Harry Wray worked as a station bookkeeper in Western Australia until he enlisted in the Army in April 1941. He served with the 2/2 Independent Company on Timor from December 1941 to December 1942, and later as an instructor at Canungra Jungle Warfare Training School. He married Agnes Valmai (Val) Leech (born Prahran, Victoria, 1907 and died Donvale, Victoria, 1984) on 8 September 1943. They had one child Christopher Charles Hamilton Wray, born 21 June 1945. After the war Harry Wray worked as an accountant and business executive with companies in the Collins House Group (Melbourne), particularly Gold Mines of Australia and Western Mining Corporation (WMC). He retired as company secretary of WMC in 1969. These memoirs were written during his retirement.

Harry Wray Memoir

My mother and I arrived at Fremantle on the Branch P&O ship *Bendigo* or *Ballarat* on 4th January 1927. I travelled on both *Ballarat* and *Bendigo* but am now unable to be sure on which occasions. Mother and I took rooms in a boarding house at the Mount Street end of St Georges Terrace. On the morning of our arrival I was looking through the advertisements in the *West Australian* while sitting on a park bench in the Government House gardens. The paper was full of the victory of 'Au Fait' in the recently run Perth Cup but at that time I little thought I would later become acquainted with the owners of that horse, who were shearing contractors and brought contract teams to shear the Yarraquin sheep for a number of years.

After a day or two in Perth I went to the Government Employment Office looking for a job. I was told of a job at Katanning on a vineyard growing currants and sultanas for the dried fruit market. When I said I would give it a go I was told to wait and after a few moments I saw a thin featured man in a blue serge suit and black felt hat peering at me through a partly opened door. I later discovered this person was the father-in-law of one of the vineyard owners. He apparently approved of me as I was informed that I should go to Katanning that afternoon by the Albany express and that I would be picked up at a certain Coffee Palace in Katanning the next day by a Mr Vic Bolton. As a new arrival in W.A. I was given a free rail ticket to my first job. I was surprised by this as I thought the concession was only granted to assisted immigrants.

After a far from express journey I arrived at Katanning in the middle of the night and went in search of the Coffee Palace. This turned out to be an unlicensed hotel, in other words a large boarding house. The name Coffee Palace was much in vogue for unlicensed premises in W.A. and other States at that time.

Vic Bolton duly arrived driving a spring cart and we returned to his vineyard where I met his wife and his partner Alf Heighton. Alf had one time been a professional soldier in an English cavalry regiment and Vic had served in the First World War as a gunner. The vineyard was a new venture for the

district although many years earlier wine grapes had been grown successfully for a number of years.

I was accommodated in a draughty and tumble-down hut but had my meals at the house with Vic Bolton, his wife and Alf. My first job was to sew 'waggas', these were grain sacks split open and sewn together with twine and used to cover a rack of drying grapes in bad weather. Helping Alf to hoe paddy melons, a weed resembling somewhat a miniature root melon vine was the next job. Later followed the picking and drying of currants and sultanas on the racks. Last of the crop came the lexias (raisins) which were dipped into a vat of boiling caustic soda solution to split the skins and help the drying process.

On Sundays Alf would go out with the Bolton's Pomeranian dog to shoot rabbits for our meals during the following week. Vic loaned me his single barrel shot gun and I usually accompanied Alf and the pom. Strange as it may seem, the pom was a good little hunting dog and would point at rabbits in great style and chase out any hiding in hollow logs. On one of our rabbiting trips the dog dived into a hollow log but nothing came out so Alf poked into the log with a stick and out came a large snake at his feet. Alf did not see the snake until I called out to him not to move. I then shot the snake, dangerously close to his foot. All the excitement and risk to Alf's toes was for nothing as the snake turned out to be a large and quite harmless carpet snake.

Soon I was sharing the shed with another man who had been engaged to help with the grape picking, however he did not last long as he preferred the life in Katanning to being away in the bush. After his departure I was invited to move into the house where I shared a room with Alf.

The house was one of the first built in the district and was made from huge mud bricks, sun dried and painted over with white wash. One night I was awakened to the smell of dust in the air and Alf calling out 'What's happened?' He lit the candle and we found a block of dried mud about twelve inches thick and eighteen inches long balanced on the edge of a book shelf at the head of my bed and other blocks from the collapsed wall scattered around the floor on my side of the room. I escaped serious injury by a very small margin. We were quite unable to account for the collapse of the wall as it had always appeared quite sound.

After the currants and sultanias had been harvested Vic informed me they could no longer afford outside help and so I returned to Perth. Mother had rooms at a large house opposite Parliament House and owned by the then Lord Mayor of Perth who was also the proprietor of a milk and dairy produce business. I found a room nearby and commenced to look for work. Seeing an advertisement for a Jackaroo cum Station Bookkeeper on a sheep station I managed to convince one of the two owners that I could drive a model T Ford and in other ways was the man he wanted. I did not tell him that the last time I had driven model T was when I learned to drive at the age of thirteen and any driving had always been under strict supervision. Of course I had driven many other makes of car since, but the model T was not quite the same thing. As it happened I had a model T instruction book and I studied this in the train on my way to Cue on the Murchison.

After a long train journey of over 24 hours I arrived in Cue late at night. The next morning I was picked up by Bill Wells, the manager of Webb's Patch station. The station covered over 800,000 acres and was about 80 miles from end to end with varying widths. The name Webb's Patch came from an area on the station when a prospector named Webb had found gold, which then became the centre for a number of small mines.

Mr Wells introduced me to the retiring bookkeeper and then took me to drive the Ford utility while the bookkeeper was ordered into the back of the utility. After a nervous start I managed to get to the homestead without incident; it was only four miles from Cue and I hoped to get in some driving practice before we had any more jaunts together. Mr Wells had informed me that the bookkeeper was the worst driver he had ever come across and had more punctured tyres than any man he knew. I could only hope I would do better.

After lunch Mr Wells said we would drive out to the shearing sheds about 12 miles away. The road out was better than many on the property but at this first experience it seemed the worst I had ever encountered. Two wheel treads with tree stumps in the centre and more stumps close to the outside edge of the tracks is what was called a road. The road curved through the bush and with so many curves it would have broken a snake's back. This trip out and return from the shearing shed was the first of hundreds I took over

this road in the following years. Pieces of steel lying on the road and the jagged remains of splintered mulga stumps played havoc with tyres unless one paid great attention to steering. The model T Ford tyres fitted onto rimmed wheels and if you had a puncture it was a matter of getting out the tyre levers and patching the tyre; no spare tyres as now and one had plenty of exercise with the pump.

On the first mail day after my arrival at Webb's Patch the bookkeeper who would soon be leaving, went into Cue with me in order to introduce me to the various people there with whom I might have dealings in the future. The bookkeeper was on three months leave from the Taxation department and against departmental rules had taken a job while on sick leave. We visited the Post Office, the garage, the general store and the bakery. There were three hotels in Cue at that time as well as a hairdresser, a men's outfitter, an iron monger and a news agency. Like many old mining towns in Western Australia the Post office, the Bank, Road Board Office and the Police Station were well built, substantial buildings. Close to the main street stood the remains of the Cue brewery and at the corner of what had been a town block one of the two remaining two story buildings stood gaunt and alone, all of the other buildings having been removed. This was the Masonic Hall and was surrounded on the back and sides by a high corrugated iron fence. The barber, a leading Mason, told me he heard his young son and a friend talking about a visit to the enclosed yard of the lodge. It appears that they had climbed over to collect empty soda water bottles of the old fashioned marble sealed variety in order to break them and remove the glass marbles. While in the yard the intense heat caused a bottle to explode with a loud bang. This caused the boys to take fright and leave in a hurry. The barber heard one boy say 'I told you they had a man with a gun on guard at the Masonic Hall. We were lucky he didn't hit us'. The barber thought he would discourage any further visits by telling the boys to keep away from the Hall as a further visit might result in them being shot.

The town was named after William Cue, an American who first found gold in the area. While in its heyday, with a number of profitable gold mines working, the town had a population of over a thousand and on Saturday nights a band played in a rotunda in the centre of the main street. The rotunda was

built over the well that had been used by the early miners and bore a plaque in memory of the 'Indomitable pioneers' who had opened up the district. By the time of which I am writing the rotunda only proved to be an obstacle to drunken car and truck drivers who seemed to have difficulty in avoiding it.

An old timer who had worked in one of the larger mines told me that the mine owners had difficulty in keeping miners as the mine 'talked' unceasingly; that is to say the earth movements, although not sufficient to cause a fall of rock, made groaning sounds and gave the impression a major collapse was imminent. The old timer said he worked there for some time but eventually he left as he could no longer stand the constant noises underground.

The Road Board Office was run by the Secretary, known as 'Shakey Boy' on account of his trembling hands. He was assisted by a typist. This Road Board covered the Cue and Day Dawn areas and was in effect the local municipal office. On one occasion while in his favourite bar, Shakey Boy was assaulted by a boisterous drunk who threw his arms around Shakey Boy and kissed him. It appears the drunk had heard someone mention Shakey Boy's name which happened to be the same as that of a well-known Perth bookmaker. The drunk had apparently won a good amount on a double which he had placed with the bookmaker and showed his gratitude by hugging the astounded Secretary, who of course had no idea why he should be assaulted in such a manner and being much affronted, had the drunk charged with assault.

One weekend, soon after my arrival at Webb's Patch, the Overseer arrived at the homestead. He had been in the bush for some time and was to have a few days at the homestead. The Overseer had come to W.A. from Victoria some time back with the idea of buying a property in partnership with a friend who had accompanied him from Victoria. The two, who both belonged to well-to-do families had many letters of introduction to the leaders of Perth society. The Overseer and his friend, instead of looking for a property, entered into the social round and had a very good time. The friend, who had more sense, could see that all prospects of buying a property were fast disappearing and left for home. The Overseer told us that he had spent all his money on the gay life and in drink. Mr Wells named him 'Drunken Duncan'.

With all his money gone he had to look for a job and had ended up an overseer at Webb's Patch Station. Mr Wells, who was of the old school and a hard man to please, did not have a very high opinion of Drunken Duncan.

It so happened that the Annual Hospital Ball was to be held at Cue on the Saturday night while Duncan was at the homestead. Duncan was keen to attend as he had heard some of his society friends from Perth were visiting at a station in the district and would be present. As he wanted a hair-cut and to buy some clothes I took Duncan into town on Saturday afternoon. First stop was at one of the pubs and there he stayed. When I had more than enough of the bar I went out to attend to some business at the Post Office and so on. The Police Sergeant bailed me up in the street and asked me to drive him to Day Dawn. I drove him the four miles to Day Dawn and waited while he attended to some business there. Once back in Cue the Sergeant said 'Get that friend of yours and take him home as he is heading for a night in the lock-up'. I persuaded Duncan to come out of the bar and finally arrived back at the homestead with him half asleep. I often wondered if the Sergeant's request that I drive him to Day Dawn was his way of finding out if I was capable of driving or whether I was in Duncan's condition. It appears that while I was at the Post Office Duncan had been out of the bar and nearly involved in a scuffle in the street. It was probably this which had attracted the attention of the police to him. Mr Wells was not in sight when I unloaded Duncan and put him on his bed to sleep off his binge, but at dinner Mr Wells said 'I bet Drunken Duncan is out to it'. Next morning Duncan was packed off to his quarters at the shearing shed 12 miles away.

I had not been more than a few weeks at Webb's Patch when we heard that Mr Ted Clarkson, the joint owner with his brother Sam, hoped to sell the property and that Ted, the prospective buyer and his elder son would be arriving in a day or two to make an inspection. The inspection took a few days and ended with agreement between the buyer and the vendors. Ted Clarkson had a habit of talking to himself and Bill Wells told me that he heard Ted discussing with himself for hours at night whether he would or would not accept the purchaser's terms and finally after weighing the pros and cons with himself announced in a loud voice that he would sell on the proposed terms

and that his brother, who left the main business arrangements to him would no doubt agree.

The Webb's Patch homestead, a large house, was at one time the residence of the manager of a mine in Cue. When the mine had closed down the house had been bought by the Clarksons and moved in sections out to its present location where the house had been re-erected. Like most gold-field houses of the era the dividing walls consisted of hessian stretched over the frame and then covered with wall paper. Consequently the rooms were far from sound proof and this was how Bob Wells could hear Ted's soliloquies. As the prospective purchaser Mr Butcher and his son Jack were in the room on the other side of Ted's they too would hear his discussing the sale terms with himself and would have known his decision well before he told them of it.

Ted Clarkson had come up in a car driven by his nephew who was known to his friends in Cue and elsewhere as Buffhead. He had a shock of straw coloured hair, hence his nickname. They had come up from another Clarkson property, a cattle station at Mount Jackson. While still on that property on route to Webb's Patch they noticed a calf a short distance from the road with a tin can jammed on its nose. They stopped and found the calf would not allow them closer than fifty or sixty yards. Buffhead proposed trying to knock off the tin can with a bullet. His uncle told us he agreed to him attempting this as the calf would surely die if the tin remained stuck on its nose. Buffhead was an excellent rifle shot and knocked the tin away with the first attempt. The calf had not suffered any serious injury and it was soon grazing as if nothing had happened.

Ted Clarkson decided to go back to Perth by train and I took him to Cue early in the evening as he was to visit friends in Cue before catching the train later that night. As we approached a cyclone type metal gate about half way to Cue I found to my horror that the brakes were not working and we hit the gate with sufficient force to break the catch. When Ted had recovered from his shock I told him the brakes had failed. He immediately accused his nephew Bill (Buffhead) of being responsible for the mishap as he had used the car to visit friends in Cue the night before and according to Ted, was very rough on cars.

In due course the Butcher brothers arrived at the homestead. Jim [John Herbert Butcher – CW] the younger brother first by car, followed by his brother [Charles John Butcher - CW] together with his wife and infant girl in another car. Bill Wells left the homestead and took up his quarters in a two-roomed hut near the shearers' quarters. This hut had a calico ceiling to stop the condensed moisture from the tin roof dropping on the occupants. The calico had a bulge in the centre of one room where a large carpet snake coiled up to sleep. Bill regarded the carpet snake as a pet and a first class rat catcher and would not hear of it being moved, although Fraser, who occupied the next room wished it anywhere but in the hut. The arrangement was for Wells to remain as Manager until after the mustering and shearing had been completed then the brothers would take over management.

As the Butcher brothers did not care for the name Webb's Patch they changed it to Yarraquin and from then on the station was known by that name. Mr Wells, when he heard of the change of name, said it would bring bad luck. As it turned out he was correct in his prophecy as both the brothers died on the station while still young men.[John in 1929 – see below, Charles in 1931 when crushed beneath the wheels of a wagon - CW]

Jim Butcher had two expensive hand-made saddles and insisted on lending one to me one day when I went out to muster the killing sheep. I received so many cautions about getting scratches on the saddle that the whole time I was out in the paddock, which was several miles wide and long that I spent more time keeping clear of anything that might scratch the leather than in looking for the sheep with the result that it took me longer than usual to bring in the sheep.

Soon after the Butchers took up their residence at the homestead I went out to join Wells, Fraser and the carpet snake at the hut near the shearing shed in the capacity of Jackeroo. One night we were awakened by the cook's gong at the mens' quarters a couple of hundred yards away. It was pitch dark but that was not remarkable as we were always called before day-break, but on this occasion the cook had excelled himself; his clock had gone wrong and he had breakfast ready at 2am. This cook fell out with one of the station hands who claimed that one of the cook's scones was so hard he could use it to hammer a nail into the wall and then attempted to do so.

One of the station hands at that time had an old tray truck loaded with his belongings, among which was a petrol case filled with pads of zinc shavings. He made no secret of the fact that he took jobs at Government Batteries from time to time and used the zinc pads to surreptitiously obtain illicit gold.

Among the station hands who came, stayed a while and moved on, was an ex-jackaroo from the Eastern States who caused some comment with his riding breeches so much so that he had a fight with another station hand in the horse yard at the shearing shed. The fight only came to an end when a brawny Irish station hand banged their heads together and told them to 'Knock it off'. The peacemaker explained he could no longer allow such inept fighters to continue pounding the air. Another station hand, Wally, was the beneficiary of his father's estate, receiving three amounts each of 600 pounds. Each time he received his share of the estate he set off for a holiday in Geraldton and managed to get no further than the nearest pub. When Wally received his third and final instalment of 600 pounds he was at a place called Pindar and spent some of the money treating various hangers-on in the pub there. Although getting steadily worse for the drink he had consumed he kept on insisting he was to catch the train to Mullewa on route to Geraldton. He was still insisting he would catch the train long after it had gone.

One of the boundary riders who remained at his job for years until eligible for the old age pension was known as 'Wingie' as he had lost an arm when a teamster on the gold fields years before. He had fallen under the wheels of a wagon while drunk. He lived on his own at an out camp and rode around the windmills on his quiet old horse. He climbed the old-fashioned windmills in his area, holding on by his teeth to a leather strap which he fixed to the windmill tail. He applied oil to the windmill mechanism from a bottle when necessary. Before he left this job these windmills had been replaced by new automatically oiled ones which saved him from the really rather hazardous climbs. Wingie had a telephone at his hut and it was a fixed rule that he telephone the homestead each night. In this way a check was kept on his welfare.

Stanley, an ex-cabin boy on a ship on the Singapore – Saigon run tired of the sea and took a job as a station hand. He had no idea of horsemanship

and was constantly falling from a little pony with a body like a barrel. One day the pony shook herself and Stanley was sitting on the ground. However later when riding a horse called 'The Jumping Frog' he hung on until the pony tired of leaping over the fences in and out of the brush sheep yards after taking fright at something. He admitted he did not know how he stayed aboard. The Jumping Frog had been bought cheaply by the Clarksons in Geraldton. The former owner had been in constant trouble with his neighbours as the pony was always in and out of their gardens. The Jumping Frog was really an annoying jumper and one day I saw her with hobbles on her front legs bounce her way to a fairly high gate, then hobbles and all, bounce over it.

Another horse, a huge ex-racehorse had been sent up with the idea that he would be fast enough to head off the brumbies which roamed the bush out towards the Inglewood end of the run. The trouble with this animal and the reason for his retirement as a racehorse was that he was liable to cross his legs when galloping and come crashing down. We took care not to go galloping about on him. Up to a canter he was quite safe but was so tall it almost required a step ladder to mount him. A further saddle horse, 'Cranky' apart from a fondness at time to spinning around like a top as one mounted him, seemed as a general rule, a tractable animal, but he too had a hidden vice. On occasion he would act in an entirely unpredictable way. One day I was at a huge granite outcrop in the utility some miles from the homestead with the yardsman. We had gone there to collect flat slabs of granite to use as path paving stones. The slabs, two or three inches thick were easily prised from the weathering surface of the main outcrop. We found a tyre on the utility had a puncture and no pump in the utility. The yardsman walked back to the homestead to get the pump while I mended the puncture. He returned riding Cranky and handed me the pump whereupon the horse apparently took fright and went crazy, pig-rooting and jumping from rock to rock. The yardsman had little experience with horses and I feared he would be hurt or killed as it seemed Cranky might fall as he continued his crazy behaviour among the granite outcrops. It ended when Cranky pig rooted to the edge of a huge slab of granite with a drop of about twenty feet before him. The horse's head and neck were over the drop and his front feet on the edge of the rock when he suddenly calmed down and let the yardsman slip off his back. There were

other episodes when Cranky behaved in keeping with his name until finally he was cantering down to the gate of the horse yard and when he showed no sign of slowing as we neared the gate I hauled on the reins to pull him up without success and then tried to turn him away. Cranky carried on as if nothing was ahead of him and crashed head first into the gate. The gate was about six feet tall and wide and made of angle iron and wire. As Cranky hit it, the gate fortunately gave way to some extent but Cranky went over backwards and ended with his four legs in the air. I was able to throw myself to one side and escaped with minor injuries. Cranky scrambled to his feet and apart from a graze on his forehead was none the worse. We came to the conclusion there was something wrong with Cranky's eyes and this was the cause of his peculiar and dangerous behaviour at the time.

Soon after I joined Wells, Duncan and the overseer at the shearing shed, we moved out into the centre of the run to commence mustering for shearing and for the next six weeks or so were far from any amenities. The nights were bitterly cold and the days hot. At night we rolled ourselves in a blanket and for an outside cover a sheet of canvas which was more or less waterproof and provided protection from the dew. Old Mr Wells seemed comfortable enough but Duncan and I spent half the night piling wood on the fire which had been lit for cooking in the first place. While blazing the fire half roasted us and when it burnt down we froze. The two or three native and half-caste musterers were suitably amazed at our efforts to warm ourselves. The aboriginals make a very small fire and sit right over it to warm themselves.

Mr Wells would not allow anyone to take a camp bed or mattress with them as he said there was no room on the cart. To keep Bill Wells' good opinion it was necessary to endure all hardship without complaint. Anyone who was sluggish in rising in the morning was no good according to old Bill. In fact he made things needlessly tough in order to try out any new hands. Although over 70 years of age at the time he never asked anyone to do what he could not do himself.

During the mustering I walked too close to a young horse early one misty morning and received his two hind hooves just below the belt. The kick lifted me off my feet and planted me sitting on the ground. I did not feel any ill effects from the kick at the time and went out mustering with the others. That

afternoon I was galloping through the scrub to head off a small mob of sheep when a large tree loomed up. While I was trying to decide which way to steer old Dulcie she decided to go her own way to the left while I was thinking of going to the right. The next thing I knew I was rolling head over heels, blue sky and red earth alternately visible as I rolled over and over. I caught Dulcie without trouble, mounted her, and not feeling the best set off for the camp. I had a watch in a leather pouch on my belt and in the fall a metal stud closing the pouch had been driven right into the centre of the watch with disastrous results for the watch.

Back at the camp I found myself a mass of bruises from the fall to say nothing of two purple horseshoe shaped bruises on my lower abdomen. For several days I was unable to walk and if I needed to move had to crawl on my hands and knees. When I had more or less recovered one of the Butcher brothers came along with a supply of stores for the camp. When he heard of my accident he said I had better see the doctor in Cue, so next day I set off to Cue in the old Ford utility we had at the camp. The doctor could not find any signs of lasting injury and all he could do was marvel that I had not been fatally injured by the kick.

Mustering the sheep was far from an easy task when there are wells and troughs. The practice was to cut off the water to the troughs and round up the sheep which would come in for a drink and finding no water hang around the empty trough. However on one paddock at that time, about ten miles long and seven or eight miles wide, it was not so easy. In many spots in the paddock the Parakelia was abundant. This is a low level creeping plant with small fleshy leaves which contain a certain amount of water. The sheep like Parakelia and while this is about they get food and water from it and do not need to visit the well. At that time the sheep in the long paddock at Yarraquin would only see a man at mustering and shearing time and as a consequence were very shy and wild.

During the time we were mustering for shearing we heard that Jim Butcher was very ill with appendicitis and that a surgeon was flying to Geraldton and would then travel by a hired car to Cue. The surgeon operated on Jim at the Cue hospital but the operation was too late and Jim died [he died on 23 June 1929 aged 26 – CW]. Shortly after Jim's death I was taken

back to the homestead to do the bookkeeping and other odd jobs that had been done by Jim previously. Of course life at the homestead was a good deal more comfortable than out camping in the bush where we had a very unsatisfactory camp cook who managed to allow most of the sheep mustered one day to escape back into the bush by forgetting to close the gate. He became even more unpopular by washing the dishes in the fresh water brought in kerosene tins especially for cooking, as the well by which we camped was too salt to drink. The sheep, who do not mind brackish water, did not care for the salty water at this particular well. The horses would not drink the water and had to be taken to a well some miles away.

The Cue Police Sergeant had told Jack one day when he saw him in town that a certain prospector of German origin had given him the tip that other prospectors at Tuckabanna had been shooting Yarraquin sheep for mutton. Tuckabanna was a small gold bearing area dotted with shafts, some being worked and others discarded. A small number of prospectors worked the local mines. Apart from the German, a powerfully built man, the majority of the other miners were Italian. The German informer said he would let the Sergeant know when the next killing of sheep was planned. The Sergeant was of the opinion that that the informer wanted to get hold of a mine being worked by an Italian which was fairly profitable and hoped by devious means to get him jailed and out of the way. It seemed probable that the informer had eaten stolen mutton himself. In due course the informer gave the Sergeant a date and said the sheep killing would take place at day break. On the day, well before day break, the Sergeant, armed with his service revolver, Jack with a 32 automatic pistol and me with my 44 Winchester rifle, arrived in the area. The Sergeant had warned us that some of the alleged sheep stealers were quite capable of taking a pot shot at us with a shotgun or rifle. We prowled about the proximity of the mining area until well after sun-up, hopefully unobserved and as we could not see any signs of illegal, or in fact any activity at all, we returned to the homestead for breakfast. A time after the abortive stake out I was near one of the miner's huts and the occupant called out; 'Want to come and see if I have any mutton or skins?' I laughed and passed on. News of our early morning visit had apparently gone around.

On another occasion, when Jack and his wife had been on holiday in Sydney, one of the Tuckabunna miners gave the Sergeant and myself a good deal of trouble. The Italian in question took his kangaroo hound and got through a fence into the paddock adjoining his mine to hunt kangaroo for meat. He was reported missing by some of his friends and the Sergeant took a black tracker and went to look for him. I spent a good deal of time looking for him too until I found he had left the paddock he first entered and had headed across country. His dog had more sense than its master and we could see by his tracks at a trough at Connoley's Well that he had a drink and turned for home where he was taking his ease when his master returned a few days later. If the lost man had stayed on the same side of the fence at Connoley's Well instead of crossing into the next paddock he would have found his way home by following the fence line, but like most lost people he seemed to lose all common sense. The missing miner finally ended at the homestead of another station miles away and stayed there until the station people went into Cue for mail a day or two later. The Sergeant was furious at not being advised by telephone when the man had arrived at the homestead as the search continued until he was taken into Cue. A para in the local paper commented on the help given by some in the search and the lack of help by thoughtless people who allowed the search to continue when a telephone call would have saved a number of people a good deal of lost time.

This same Sergeant told me one of his first assignments after joining the force was to play the part of a miner at Berambin which was, as it happened, not far from the boundary of Yarraquin towards the other end of the run. The Sergeant, being a new chum miner, heard the other miners calling out for him before firing to make sure he was out of danger. He said they would not have been calling 'Look out Mick' if they had known who he was and why he was there. The Sergeant finally had the evidence he required and at a smoko one day went around and arrested three miners for gold stealing. The other miners sat around watching but took no action. The gold thieves were locked up in the Mine Manager's office and on the advice of the Mine Manager the Sergeant stayed there too. It was as well he did as during the night his tent was blown up. For a long time after this his nick-name was 'Bomber Mick'.

There was a story, said to be true, that in the coaching days the coach loaded with gold from Sandstone, or out that way, arrived at the Berambi hotel on the evening of a local ball. The gold escort thought they would like to join the festivities so hid the gold from the coach in the surrounding bush. A jolly evening was enjoyed by all but when the escort troopers woke next morning, uncertainty existed as to where the gold was hidden. The members of the escort lost their jobs and so far as is known the lost gold is still to be found. The pub building was bought by a station owner when the mine closed down and the pub was no longer profitable. He moved the building to his property and used it as his homestead.

The only other incident of any note concerning the police was when I happened to see the door of the chaff room at the homestead horse yards open. The door was kept closed as one horse had managed to get into the chaff room and gorged itself from a bag of oats. As I was about to close the door I saw a young man asleep on top of some chaff bags. When I wakened him and asked what he was doing there he made some unconvincing reply about being on the tramp and having a rest on the way through. I went back to the homestead and told Jack about the visitor and his poor excuse for being there. Jack telephoned the police and was told that a chap answering the description of our visitor had been in Cue recently and was wanted for questioning. The police constable said he would be right out and not to go near the visitor until he arrived. By the time the constable appeared at the scene the visitor had disappeared. As it was by then well into the evening it was arranged that the constable would go back to Cue and return in the morning with a black tracker. The constable duly arrived next morning with an aged aboriginal man and an equally aged woman. The tracker set off from the horse yard and tracked the missing man into the cow paddock; the constable following with me tagging along to see the trackers at work. The old woman did most of the work while her man sat in the shade of a bush watching and then following to catch up when she was too far ahead. As the country was of a type that made tracking difficult the woman would be at a loss at times and the old man would get up and assist all the time grumbling at her lack of tracking skill. I watched this procedure for a mile or two and then returned home. The constable and tracker followed the roundabout trail through the

bush back to Cue when the wanted man was found hiding in old mine workings and gave up without offering any resistance.

The usual procedure at the Cue police station was for minor offenders in the lock-up for a few days to be offered good meals cooked by the Sergeant's wife if they did a little light work. If they preferred to do nothing they would get strict regulation rations. It was not uncommon to see prisoners working around the police station quite happily without any supervision.

There were a number of characters in and around Cue. One man who lived in a humpy a mile or so out of town had a dog with a sheep bell attached to his collar. This was to prevent him straying out of hearing distance. The dog's master had been tried for attempted murder; he had posted a parcel bomb to a man in Yalgoo. A friend of mine was in the Yalgoo Post office when the man to whom the parcel was addressed called for his mail. The Post Master told him he had a parcel for the man but it was very heavy and he would have to open it then and there to prove it did not contain gold, which was prohibited from transmission by mail. As the parcel was opened it exploded. My friend said that it was a violent explosion and it was a wonder that no-one was seriously hurt. Although the police were alleged to have found a metal sheet at the supposed sender's camp with pieces cut out which matched pieces of the bomb recovered in the Post Office, no conviction was recorded. The alleged bomber made beautifully executed models from odds and ends. I saw one model of a gold battery stamp driven by a little windmill. The idea was to place a piece of meat at the back of the stamp and a small race leading up to it. Ants, going for the meat would go up the ramp and were crushed by the stamp heads as they pounded up and down by wind power.

The local carrier, who was a fine looking old man with a huge moustache, had an old horse which pulled his dray. This horse, when having a spell on the Cue common had twice fallen down old abandoned mine shafts and each time had landed on ledges not more than 12 to 15 feet from the surface and luckily been found soon after falling. In each case a makeshift crane was rigged by willing workers and the horse successfully hoisted to the surface.

One old aboriginal woman was unlucky enough to fall down a shaft. When she had been missing for a time her old man managed to pick up her

tracks and found her. The police and townspeople went to help when the news reached them and the old woman was hoisted to the surface after the constable had been lowered down the shaft and tied a rope around her. On her arrival at the surface her old man found she had broken his pipe in the fall and started to beat her up for this carelessness until stopped by the onlookers. The woman was none the worse for the fall.

Another local character was the aged Mother H., who, if reports were correct, had been a popular prostitute years earlier. She lived in a humpy out on the common and came in each pension day to collect her pension and purchase supplies for the next fortnight, then after some refreshments she would heads off home. The police kept an eye on the old pensioners and if any were not sighted at reasonable intervals they would be paid a visit to make sure that all was well. When Mother H failed to turn up on one occasion the Police Sergeant set off for her humpy and when close by called out; 'Are you there Mother H?' He was greeted with a hail of abuse and requests that he help her. Mother H had sat herself on the edge of a beer case to put on her boots, which she always wore, but overbalancing and falling backwards, she ended up in the box with the edge on which she had been sitting under her knees. She was too old and feeble to pull herself up and out of the box and had been in that position for three days calling for assistance which never came. It was fortunate the weather was cool at the time and that the Sergeant visited her. After a few days in hospital Mother H was able to return to her humpy and usual routine.

Outside one of the three remaining hotels were several large pepper trees. A man, tired of life, hanged himself from the branches of one by the front door of a hotel. The father of two daughters pulled up his car by the tree and spotted the suicide's feet dangling above his head. Her managed to get his daughters into the hotel without them noticing anything untoward and then notified the police. At the inquest the father was asked why he had not immediately cut down the body and his sensible answer was that it was more important not to subject his daughters to the shock of seeing the hanging man than to cut down a body already well and truly beyond aid.

Among the town's identities was the baker who, when acting as master of ceremonies at a ball, would call out; 'Back up your heifers for the next . . . '

A crippled store assistant, was said, when a young boy, to have shot his father when he was beating the mother in a drunken frenzy. The local tailor was a short and immensely corpulent man who was a very fine tailor. He looked most impressive when once a year, he turned out in full evening dress to attend the Hospital Ball, accompanied by his wife wearing the dress in which she was married many years before. During the heat wave when the night temperature was not much less than the day the tailor, who had a weak heart at the best of times, was overcome by the heat. He told me that his wife saved his life by making him lie on the floor under a large table and she hung wet sheets around the side and ends of the table to keep him as cool as possible.

Jack Butcher, his wife and child set off for Sydney for a holiday and were away for a month or so. At that time we had a well drilling plant in operation. The man in charge was an excellent driller but had a troublesome cook and offsider. They went into Cue one weekend and came out with a supply of grog. An inflexible rule at Yarraquin was that any employee could drink himself silly in town but under no circumstances was allowed to bring any drink onto the station property. I went out to inspect operations not long after their visit to town and found that the cook and offsider had a supply of drink. The driller, who had a bottle on hand himself, had no excuse for allowing his men to break the rules, so he and his crew were sacked. When they arrived at the homestead the cook was most belligerent and made all kinds of threats. I ran into him in Cue on a later date when he was mad with the grog and wanting to fight me. The last I heard of him was that he had lost himself up the road and was being tracked by the garments he shed as he went. This is a common thing to do for a person lost and perishing for lack of water. I never heard whether or not the cook had been found. I sent Jack a telegram to tell him the drill crew had been sacked and why. Someone in the Post Office spread the contents of the telegram around the town. There was no secrecy about the contents of telegrams. We soon obtained a new and thoroughly satisfactory driller and crew.

A letter from Sydney told me that the station cook was to be given her marching orders before the family returned. This young woman was an English migrant of good education and, I believe, well qualified in the

domestic arts. At first her cooking was very good indeed but it had been going off for some time, hence the instructions to get rid of her. One morning at breakfast time I heard a terrific row going on in the kitchen. The cook and housemaid were doing battle, no holds barred, with the yardman looking on. It turned out that the cook had been staying in bed until breakfast was ready while the yardman prepared the meal. This was a good opportunity to get rid of the cook and she went off with the yardman, a married man with several children and with the immigration authorities on his track over unpaid ship fares. Although the cook was aware of the yardman's family she told me that she loved him. The last I heard of her was that she had a well-paid job as cook at a Perth hotel and the yardman was taking things easy at her expense.

Not long before the Butchers returned a truck loaded with camping gear and stores pulled up at the homestead and the two men with the truck asked to be directed to the road to Sandstone. As they were about to drive off one of them, who did most of the talking said; 'I suppose if a sheep barked at us it would be alright to shoot it'. I said it would not be alright and to leave the sheep alone. Off they went. The next day I went out to the far end of the run to Inglewood and took old Ted with me for the trip. Ted, a pensioner, pottered around in the garden and did odd jobs. On the way to Inglewood we saw the truck on the roadside a few hundred yards from a well. As this was a Government well travellers were entitled to make use of the water. There was no sign of the two men. On our way back from Inglewood the truck was still there and the men too. I left the utility near the gate alongside the well and walked over to have a look at the camp as I thought the men might have killed a sheep. There was nothing suspicious to be seen and after passing the time of day I was informed they had been having a rest and would move on in the cool of the evening. When I returned to our car I saw Ted had my .44 Winchester rifle across his knees. He said; 'I was watching those fellows. One of them is a bad one. He would kill his granny for sixpence'. It was just a feeling he had and I made light of it at the time. It was not until a good time later when I saw a photo in the paper of Snowy Rowles, who had been convicted for murder, that I realised Ted had been right in his instinctive feeling. The man accompanying Rowles was probably one of his victims. Rowles went into partnership with someone, preferably a truck owner with

some money or property and then murdered the victim and disposed of their bodies in the bush. [Rowles is known to have murdered three men and is believed to have killed more – CW]

Another coincidence in connection with Rowles was that a chap later working on the Station told me that he had been given a job by a garage owner in Meekatharra to drive a car that had been hired by two men. He said he thought something peculiar was going on as the two passengers examined camp fires along the Rabbit-Proof fence and sorted through the ashes. Early one morning he drove them to a spot designated by them and was told not to move from the car. His curiosity now fully aroused, he left the car and followed them through the bush keeping well out of sight. When the men reached a small shack, one went around the back and the other ran to the front door, a revolver in his hand. There was nobody in the shack and the driver made haste back to the car. When the passengers returned to Meekatharra they told the driver they were from the Police and to keep everything he had seen or heard to himself. It was not until much later when news of the Rowles case broke and I read the accounts of police efforts to catch Rowles and find the remains of his victims that the account of the driver of the hire car became clear.

Well before Rowles was caught there were rumours of strange happenings along the rabbit proof fence. I first heard of these when at Inglewood. I went into the room of one of the two men stationed there and saw a shot gun and repeating rifle propped against a bed-head. I was told they were both loaded and when I expressed the opinion that it was a dangerous practice, I was told the reason. At one time Inglewood had been used as a cattle station and had a large homestead, a house moved from a closed down mine. Inglewood, later a part of Webb's Patch (then Yarraquin) also had good cattle and sheep yards and a large shearing shed where the sheep at that end of the property could be shorn. The far boundary of Inglewood was the rabbit-proof fence which was not all that far from the homestead and the rumours of strange happenings along the fence caused tension to the two men at Inglewood.

[The first set of reminiscences ended here. In about May 1931 Harry Wray left Yarraquin Station and travelled to South Africa, where his mother and sisters were living, then on to Britain where he stayed for several months. He returned via South Africa arriving back in Western Australia in April 1932. Late in life he typed a further set of reminiscences which are set out below CW].

The M.V. 'Thermopylae' arrived at Fremantle on 8th April 1932 and I took the train to Perth. I had written to Mr Butcher asking if he knew of any suitable job for me and soon after I arrived in Perth I heard that he was looking for a bookkeeper at Meeberrie, a sheep station he owned about 135 miles from Mullewa. Mt Murchison which is shown on most maps was roughly in the centre of this property which so far as I can recall was between four and five hundred thousand acres in area.

It seemed that the bookkeeper then at Meeberrie was not giving satisfaction to the manager and appeared to be unpopular with most people with whom he came in contact. The bookkeeper was a tall ex-Indian Army officer and the only thing I really remember him for was his short cropped hair which he kept that way with the aid of a pair of hand worked horse clippers. I think he was clever to trim his hair so neatly with such an awkward implement. My arrival back in Australia looking for work gave Mr Butcher the replacement he had been looking for at Meeberrie and it was not long before I took up residence there.

Meeberrie homestead consisted of the main house surrounded by a wide verandah leading off at one corner to the store and the main house toilet. Next to the store was the laundry and Mr Butcher's suite of bedroom, bathroom and toilet. The suite was reserved for Mr Butcher's sole use and as a special concession I was allowed to use his bathroom and toilet. I only used the bathroom when I wanted a hot bath as I had another bathroom with cold water only on tap. From the end of the building just described was another consisting of a row of rooms with a verandah at the front and back. The room nearest to the house was the office, the next my bedroom, then a spare bedroom and another bedroom usually regarded as the overseer's bedroom on the rare occasions he visited the homestead. The last room in the row was the cold-water bathroom. All these buildings were of solid granite blocks

shaped and neatly cemented into position by two master stone masons. A short distance from the office wing was another granite building housing the Delco electric generator and batteries and a large wood shed complete with circular saw and petrol engine to drive it. All the buildings were roofed with corrugated iron. Near the wood shed was another row of rooms of wood with an iron roof to house station hands and provide them with a bath room.

Close to the mens' quarters was a rail fence with a gate and beyond a large gravelled area with a huge cart shed, petrol storage room, harness room, loose boxes and a mouse-proofed chaff room all under the one roof. As was the case with the homestead the walls of this building were of granite with an iron roof. The mouse proofed chaff storage, although designed to be mouse proof was always inhabited with mice which had been imported in the fresh supplies of chaff. Before a new supply of chaff was unloaded into the store room we had a mouse hunt and killed off as many of the resident mice as possible. On one occasion we collected a large number of mice of all sizes in a kerosene tin and presented them to a tame native turkey we kept in the homestead garden. This bird gorged himself on mice until he could eat no more and slept off the surfeit in the shade of a tree for the rest of the day. Just beyond the building described was a cow shed and cattle pen with the blacksmith's shop and a storage shed close by. Another stock yard suitable for cattle, horses or camels lay a couple of hundred yards away and further on again the fence along the road. Not far from the homestead were two wells equipped with windmills which pumped water to an enormous tank on top of a twenty foot stand alongside the homestead.

In front of the homestead there was a circular lawn with a gravelled drive around it. To the left were a fair number of orange trees, and to the front and other side shrubs and vegetable beds. When first built the homestead was sited on what had been a cattle camp and this had resulted in the area having been eaten out and nothing but a bare and dusty area remaining. Mr Butcher had a liberal area around the homestead fenced off and gave strict instructions that under no circumstances whatsoever was this area to be used for grazing. After a number of years this reserve began to recover and by the time I arrived at Meeberrie it was thickly covered with trees and scrub, and after rain with various pools full of water and covered with green herbage, it

was quite park like. Visitors who had seen the area when first fenced never ceased to wonder at the manner of its recovery.

The usual residents at the homestead were the Manager, Les Macpherson, his wife and two children, a boy and a girl; a cook, who was usually a woman although at odd times a man was employed; and a housemaid. All these people were housed in the main homestead building. The Bookkeeper [Harry Wray at all relevant times, CW] and Overseer, when at the homestead, had rooms in the office wing previously described. Also there was a Yardman who had a room in the mens' quarters, and Paddy, a half-caste stockman who lived with his wife in a small wood and iron house a few hundred yards away. The yardman and any station hands who happened to be at the homestead had their meals in a dining room attached to the homestead kitchen. The cook and housemaid ate in the kitchen or mens' dining room as they pleased. On Christmas Day the cook (if a woman at the time) and housemaid always had Christmas dinner in the homestead dining room as one of the family for the day. The manager was well known for his request of 'pass the mustard Mary' on sitting down for a meal, regardless of the dish. Mrs Mac was an amiable lady of more than ample proportions who suffered a great deal from migraine and consumed astonishing quantities of Aspirins to relieve the pain. She also made no secret of being terrified of thunderstorms.

For the first few years of my stay at Meeberrie the children were educated by a resident governess. The first two were young and attractive young women, and later for some time by an ageing French lady. All I can remember of the first governess was that in running races around the circular drive in front of the house she fell flat on her nose, and that at a party at Murgoo attended by the Macphersons, the governess and myself that she was surrounded by the young men of the district attracted like bees to a honey pot. It became a rather wild party; the grog flowing as was usual at such events. Mrs Mac was playing the piano and the governess and her attendants all singing, when according to Mrs Mac I came on the scene and said to the girl: 'You are wasting your time here. Come and dance', and then led her off to where dancing was in progress. Mrs Mac said she could not forget the stunned look on the faces of the girl's admirers as she was led off.

The property at Meeberrie had been divided into fenced paddocks each as nearly as possible four miles square with a well and a windmill in each corner. Some critics considered Butcher mad to spend so much money on fences and wells but he was proved right in bad times as the sheep could never be further than a couple of miles from a drink and in times of drought this kept many sheep alive who otherwise would have died. The surveyor who worked out the division of the property into the desired paddock sizes was the father of the first Miss Australia. [Frank Ernest Mills; his daughter Beryl Lucy Mills (1907-1977) won the inaugural Miss Australia quest in 1926. CW] He did all the necessary measurements by wheeling a bicycle with a piece of red rag tied around the front wheel. As he knew the diameter of the wheel it was a matter of counting the revolutions to get the distances. He must have walked many miles on this job.

All wells were equipped with windmills, large storage tanks and troughs. In a few cases it was not possible to get a water producing well at the corner of a paddock and in these cases the wells were located as near as possible and the water piped to troughs at the corner. The windmills were turned on and off automatically as the tank emptied by means of a fairly simple arrangement of levers wire and float. All windmills were equipped with deep well pumps which saved the necessity of climbing down the well to effect repairs to the pump. By disconnecting the pump rods the rods could be pulled up through the pipe, each length disconnected until the last length with the pump plunger reached the surface when the leather buckets (the usual cause of failure) could be replaced. It was then a matter of reversing the procedure. In case of some serious breakdown or a pipe rusting through the rods, the pipe column might have to be pulled up to the surface; this of course being a major job and hard work.

The Murchison River ran through the property and in case of flood the river overflowed its banks and could spread out for a mile or more on each side of its normal course. When we heard of rain in the Peak Hill district (Peak Hill was about 200 miles away as the crow flies) we would send a reply-paid telegram to the Police Officer or Post Master there asking for the amount of rain registered there. We then had a good idea of how much flooding in our area was likely and could calculate when the flood water would arrive. It was

then a matter of shifting all stock from areas likely to be affected. Not far from where the river entered the run there was a permanent spring which had never been known to fail. Sand washed over the spring and covered all traces, and unless one knew the exact location of Elizabeth Spring its existence was not apparent. After a flood the usual practice was to dig away the sand and allow the spring to flow and form a pool which would remain in the bed of the river until the next flood choked the flow.

There were other pools here and there along the river bed which lasted as watering places from weeks to months according to size and location. The larger pools all held small fish of two varieties both of which were edible if one did not mind the bones. The remarkable thing about these fish was that if the pool dried out the fish disappeared into the mud and sand and as soon as the pool filled again however long after the fish would be back again. The frogs and other forms of water life had the same ability to disappear and to reappear after rain.

One day we were crossing the river at a ford where the river bed was fairly narrow with the steep high banks and to our astonishment found a couple of feet of water flowing over the crossing but upriver. At the time we were expecting flood waters down the river late that day or early the next, however a flow in the wrong direction was something completely new. The explanation for this phenomenon lay around a bend and a short distance down the river where a large and deep creek entered the main river bed. A heavy thunderstorm had flooded the creek and a large volume of water poured into the river where the bed was fairly narrow and the banks high. The water from the creek hit the opposite bank and flowed to right and left consequently the water flowing to the right went upstream and made it appear that the river was flowing in the wrong direction. The heavy flow from the flooded creek did not last long; as the flow decreased the water all ran downstream. However at first sight we really thought we were seeing things with the river apparently flowing backwards.

As a boundary rider lived in a hut on the other side of the river supplying him with provisions became a problem if the river remained flooded for any length of time. On a couple of occasions Paddy and I took out a supply of stores and a small boat to a pre-arranged spot (by telephone with the

boundary rider). We loaded the boat and with Paddy rowing crossed the shallow flood waters until we reached the main channel where the river ran with great velocity. By the time the small boat was loaded with several bags of flour, and many other provisions, Paddy, who was a hefty plump fellow and myself, we had very little freeboard, not more than a couple of inches. Consequently great care had to be taken in crossing the main stream where the water fairly boiled along the sides of the boat. Of course it was necessary to row across at an angle with the current in order to make a safe passage. Trees rising from the rushing stream were another hazard to be avoided. Once safely across we piled the stores on high ground and left them to be collected by the boundary rider. In returning we rowed upstream in the calm water well away from the main stream to a suitable spot and then crossed once more with the current. At the time we made these really rather hazardous crossings without any thought of the danger and risks involved. When I think of it now and of the slim chance of survival had we struck a snag or the boat being swamped, I think we were mad to have taken the risk for the miserable pay we received in those days.

The main road to Mullewa and eventually to Perth crossed the Murchison on Billabong Station which adjoined Meeberrie. With a flood the crossing was impassable until a fine concrete bridge was built. This bridge was useful except in a big flood when the approaches which were lower than the bridge were under water making the bridge useless. I believe there was some controversy over the site for the bridge and some opponents to the site on which it was built were able to say 'I told you so'. Sir Charles Kingsford Smith, in the days before his epic flights, was on his way from Carnarvon to Perth when he found his progress halted by the flooded river in the pre-bridge days. He drove back to Billabong station and borrowed some iron tanks. He built a raft with the tanks and ferried his car across the river.

Not far from the homestead was what we called the lake. This was a depression which filled when the river was in flood and although not more than about a couple of hundred yards wide at most was of considerable length. One morning Macpherson, Sopp the shearing contractor and myself were bathing at the lake and I commenced to swim across to the other side. When about half way across I knew I could not make it and turned back.

When not far from where I started I was wondering if I would make it. Macpherson and Sopp apparently realised all was not well and Sopp, the only swimmer of the two, came to the rescue, however his well-meaning but inexpert life-saving methods made my struggle to the shore all the more difficult. I was glad to reach the bank safely and told my friends that I had not taken into account that I was still weaker than I imagined possible after a recent appendix operation [in 1933, CW]. Our so called lake was always an interesting spot with a variety of water birds landing and taking off from the surface.

Here the typewritten memoir ended.

Harry Wray – record of travels 1921 -1942.

Left N.Z. 13/4/1921 SS *Westralia* for Melbourne. Departed Melbourne about end April 1921 on SS *Ulysses* for Durban.

Passport renewed at Durban on 8/11/1926. Arrived Fremantle from Cape Town on 4/1/1927.

Australian passport issued 23/4/1931. Left for UK towards end of May 1931 (arrived Colombo Ceylon 3/6/31). Arrived UK latter part of June 1931. Left UK for Durban December 1931. Arrived Cape Town 23/12/1931.

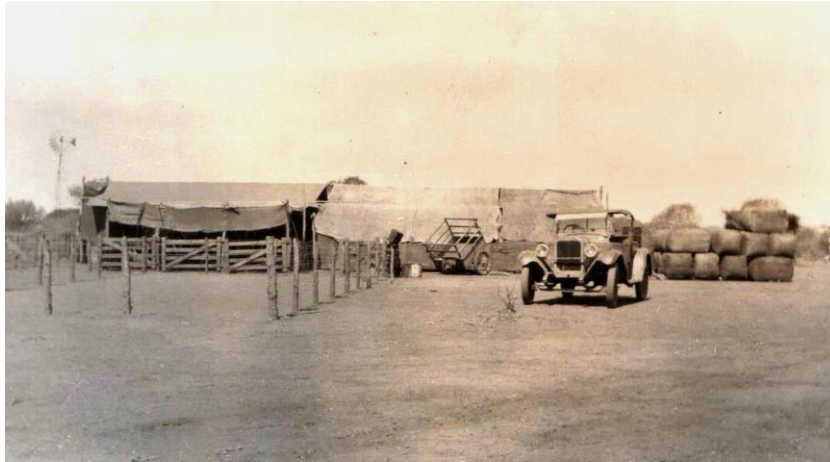
Left Durban and arrived Fremantle 8/4/1932.

At Yarraquin Cue April 1927 to May 1931.

At Meeberrie via Mullewa April 1932 to 7 April 1942. Enlisted AIF 9/4/1942.

Photographs

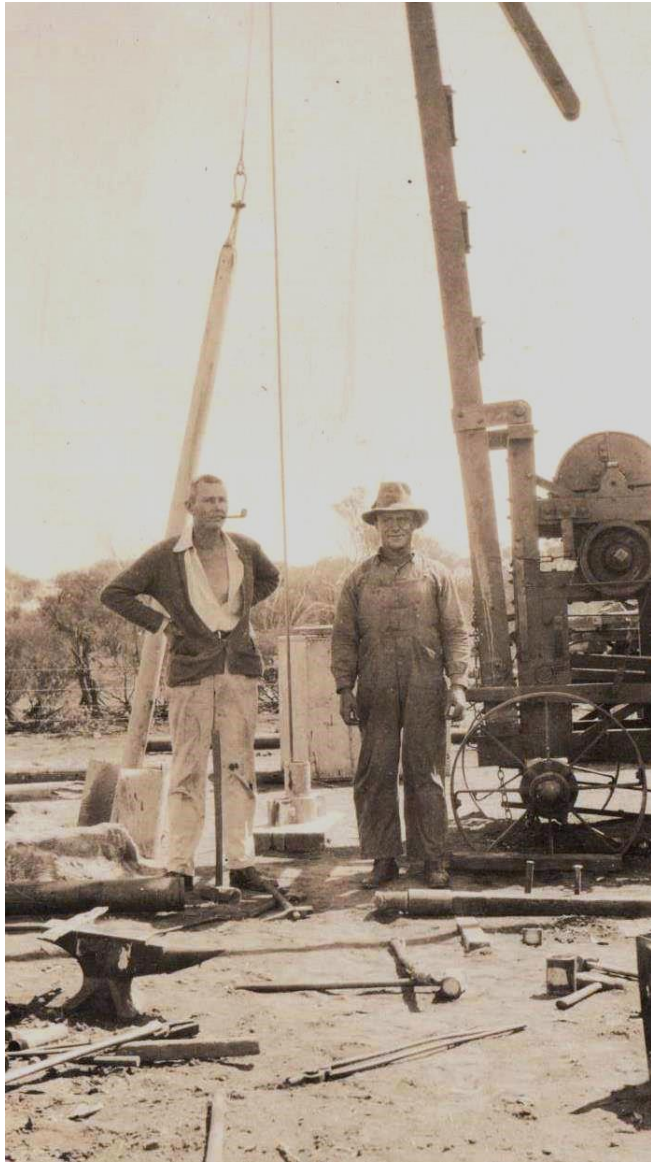
I attach photographs taken by Harry Wray during his time in Western Australia. Unfortunately he did not say when the photos were taken, or indeed add any comments about them so scenes may be of Yarraquin or Meeberrie. I have grouped the photographs by theme or subject matter.



Hauling kangaroo from well into which it had fallen.



The Butcher family outside Yarraquin? Or the Macpherson family (station manager) outside Meeberrie?



Harry Wray (left, with pipe) with drilling gear and contractor.



Drilling crew at work.



Aboriginal stockmen (with woman and child) and men prepared for ceremonies.



Aboriginal men preparing for corroboree



Sheepyards showing sheep before shearing (below) and after.



Prospectors for gold on old diggings in Cue area.



Old style transport



Modern transport



More old style camel transport.