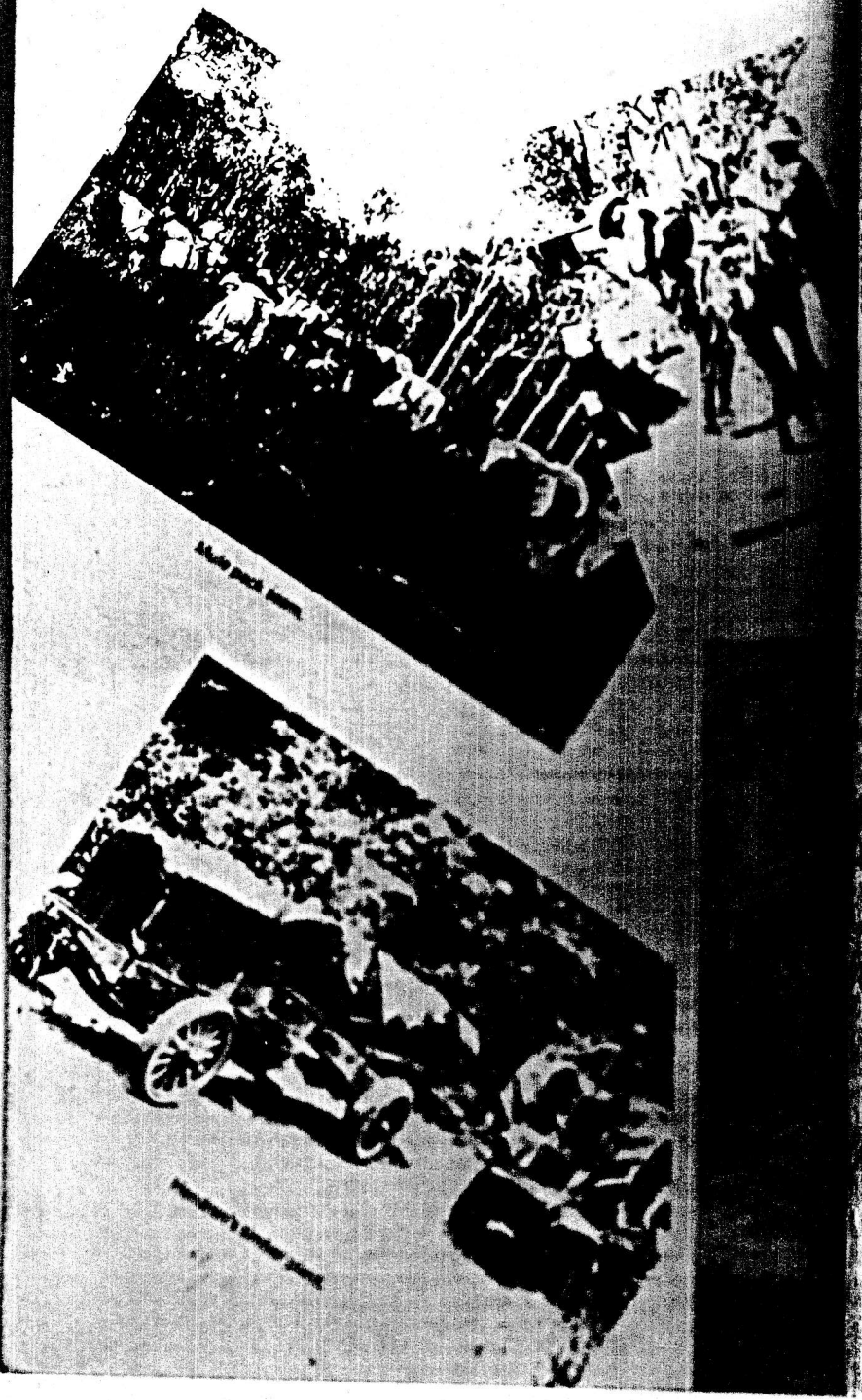


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MEMORIES OF KANGAROO HILLS

By Ernie Kruger



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THIS BOOK BELONGS TO
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Published by the author, Mr. Ernest Kruger,
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This book is dedicated to my little friend David Davidson who was accidentally killed on Greenvale Station on 17th December, 1982.

FOREWORD

This novel has been written at the request of many country people who wished to know how their forefathers pioneered the Kangaroo Hills district. A vast amount of praise must go out to these men and women who struggled to support their families and encountered so much hardship and personal grief so that their descendants could enjoy a better lifestyle.

The author has attempted to generalise more than personalise and apologises to any person or persons not particularly mentioned in these writings.

These writings are not a true history of the district, but are based on facts - although in some cases dates may not be accurate.

A percentage of profit from the sales of this novel will be donated to the Royal Flying Doctor Service and costs of editing and printing have been kept to a minimum so that the selling price of this book would be reasonably balanced with the quality of the contents.

*Ernest Kruger.
June, 1984.*



The Author and his wife, Marg.

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EWAN - TOWNSHIP IN HISTORY

Towards the turn of the twentieth century the mining fields of Kangaroo Hills, and the little town of Ewan, were of little significance to North Queensland.

Gold appeared to be the most sought-after metal and since this had not been found on the Kangaroo Hills field, prospectors moved on to where the "Yellow Fever" (gold) was known to be.

Alluvial tin was found in payable quantities at the head of Oakey Creek, and at the Pineapple and Three Mile Creeks between Mt. Fox and Hidden Valley. This latter valley is about four miles long and half a mile wide and terminates at the heavy scrub country.

A small township sprang up in the area. Mr. H. Bosworth built an hotel at the top end of Hidden Valley. This hotel later was to be shifted down about five miles and rebuilt on the Running River.

Although Mr. Bosworth became blind this did not deter him, with his wife, from carrying on the business. They had a family of three boys, Arthur, Herbert and Leo, and two girls, one of whom became Mrs. Sam Allen who was to become the owner of nearly all the land from the Royal Hotel to the Commercial (now Belvedere) Hotel in Ingham. This land has now passed to new ownership.

The other daughter, Gertie, married a policeman named Haberman. He later resigned from the force, first taking over the Commercial Hotel in Ingham before starting to farm in the Ingham district.

Arthur Bosworth began rearing cattle on the Hidden Valley property but later shifted to Ingham. He married Miss Hobbs, sister of Sam Hobbs, and took up country towards Forrest Beach and this property is still owned by his sons,

Blake, Herbert and Alan, and their families.

Herbert Bosworth left the Hidden Valley property early in the twentieth century and his daughter took up nursing, becoming matron of the Ingham hospital, a position she retained until retirement. Many patients owe a lot to this woman for her kindness and skill.

Leo Bosworth lived at Hidden Valley until his accidental death. A daughter (Mrs. Rosendale) still lives at the township of Hidden Valley which is some three miles further down the Running River from the old Homestead Hotel. Leo's other sons, and his daughter still reside in North Queensland.

The Bosworth Hotel was known as the "Mountain View" and the "tin scratchers" imbibed freely and often at this water-hole. Dad Bosworth was the chief entertainer and, although blind, he could play a very sound hand of cards once he was told what cards he had been dealt.

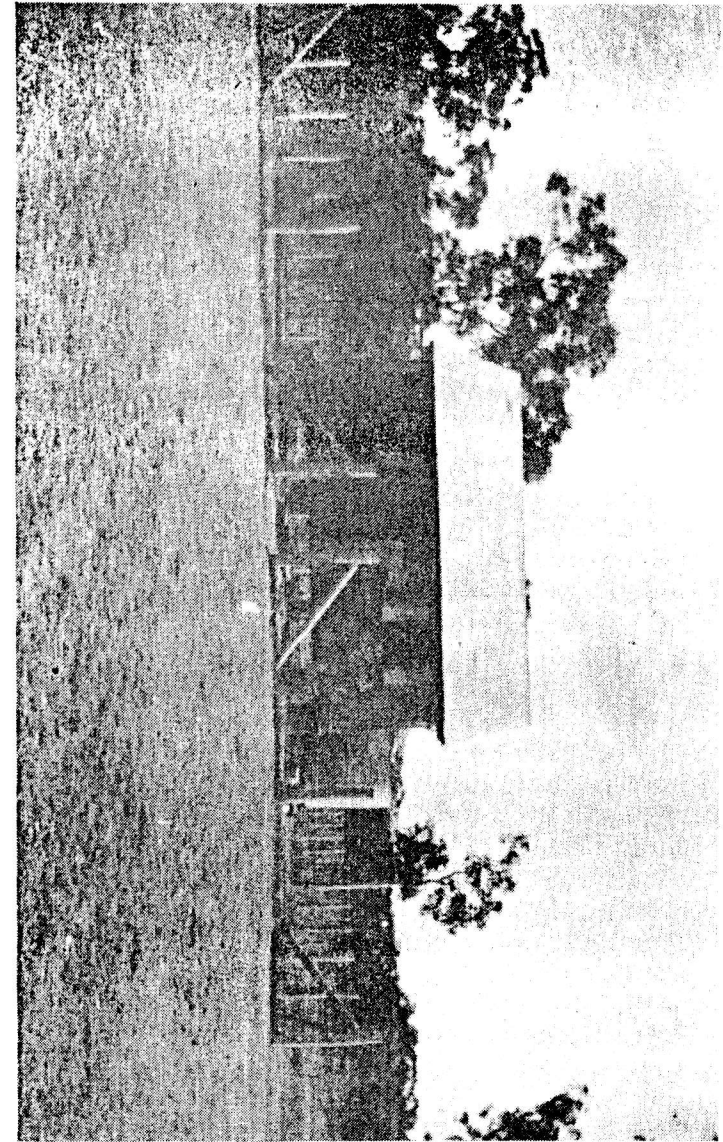
Stan Rosendale, husband of Mrs. Rosendale, passed away recently. He had worked alluvial tin at Hidden Valley for years. One of their daughters, Mrs. Sharp, and her husband who is a veteran of the Vietnam war have built their home at the site of the old Mountain View Hotel. Their children attend the State School at Hidden Valley.

The first school to be erected at Hidden Valley was the school building which was transported from Ewan in the 1930's and rebuilt at Hidden Valley. Another state school was built at Paluma.

In later years the Hidden Valley school was closed and the parents were obliged to take their children to Paluma for education, a distance of some 13 miles.

Owing to lack of child numbers the Paluma School was eventually closed and for some years mothers were forced to educate their own children.

After some years of battling the parents convinced the Government that a school at Hidden Valley was necessary and a new school was erected, thus giving the children a better education.



Ewan School which was taken to Hidden Valley.

The old school house at Paluma still stands and is used for camping, etc. of child groups from other schools.

In recent years a Mr. and Mrs. Hopkins of Melbourne and more recently of Charters Towers saw the potential and applied for a liquor license at Hidden Valley. This license was granted and they built a small hotel and overnight huts. This venture proved to be very successful and after building up their business they sold out to another investor who is conducting a solid business.

Mr. and Mrs. Hopkins purchased a very modern home on Oakey Creek adjacent to the Shrimp Battery. This home was previously owned by Des and Bill Reddie, former partners in J. & W. Reddie of the Sardine Tin Mine. Bill and Des recently purchased an hotel at Hughenden and word has got around that it is a meeting place for all Ewanites travelling through the west.

Dad Bosworth had an excellent knowledge of Australian obscene language - much to the embarrassment of his wife when visitors were present. On one occasion his son, Arthur, was to arrive at the hotel with a visiting parson and Mrs. Bosworth had solemnly tutored Dad regarding his language.

When Arthur did arrive he also brought a porcupine for their little private zoo. As he introduced the parson, he threw the bag containing the porcupine into Dad's armchair. Dad was yarning to the parson and invited him to be seated. Then Dad himself flopped into his own armchair only to let out a stream of oaths as he contacted the spikes on the porcupine.

The Mountain View Hotel later was to become an overnight stop for many travellers going to and from Ewan.

The grazing property surrounding the Mountain View Hotel was subsequently sold to a Mr. Moody who, after a few years, sold to B. Guild.

Charlie Furber of Einasleigh, purchased the property from Bernie Guild in 1935 and shifted down with his wife and young family.

Charlie was a most reliable drover for some forty years

and many thousands of bullocks were driven by him and his employees to the Townsville Meatworks. He reared a large family and his property at Hidden Valley was run by some of his sons, and his wife, whilst Charlie, with others of his sons, was droving during the meat season.

As age catches up with us all, so it did with Charlie and he was forced to retire, leaving his grazing property to his sons. One, Ted, managed the property until he met his untimely death from snake bite.

Mrs. Ted Furber (nee Vida Myers) carried on management until her son Brian (a young man who has made a name for himself as a rough rider) joined his mother and bought out the remaining shares of the Furber family.

Before losing her husband, Mrs. Vi Furber also lost one of her small daughters who was drowned at the junction of Pine Creek and Running River.

As the word spread regarding the tin finds at the head of Oakey Creek, more miners moved in to try their luck. Mr. Frank Fraser of Ingham whose grandson Lex still owns a considerable amount of property in Ingham, was instrumental in having the first dray hauled up the mountainside to Red Hill which is close to the Mt. Fox district.

One miner named Bert Kruger who had recently arrived found alluvial tin near Red Hill in 1902 and recovered some twelve tons of tin concentrates from the workings. This hill was later named "Kruger's Hill" on the Kangaroo Hills district map.

As the 1902 drought persisted Bert Kruger and his partner built a dam and awaited the breaking of the drought. No rain was received for months and they just had to sit it out until the wet arrived when they got sufficient water to wash the dirt.

Quite a lot of the tin was contained in a soft rock formation and had to be carted with pack horses across to the Hidden Valley battery for treatment.

A small battery was set up at Hidden Valley to treat ore.

At this time copper and silver-lead had been found at and around the small settlement of Silver Town, two miles from where the township of Ewan was later established. The silver-lead was of poor quality and, being so far from a railhead, was not viable. The copper was of good quality and John Moffatt of Irvinebank became interested and placed a smelting plant on the bank of Running River.

Copper and a minute amount of gold were found about this period at Argentine which was situated about halfway between Ewan and Ravenswood Junction, now known as Mingela. Copper was worked at Coppermine Creek, about 14 miles from Argentine and the old chimney still stands on this site.

A master carpenter named Ramsay built an hotel at Argentine. He was also one of the pioneer teamsters in this district and ran the first mail contract from Ravenswood Junction to Ewan and district. Previously, the mail was run in two stages, the first by a chap named Quinn and then by Ramsay.

The building of the smelter brought an influx of workers, the two main copper workings being at McAuley Creek and the Theckla Mine on Oakey Creek. The ore was carted by pack teams, by wagon and dray teams, but the quantity and quality of the ore was not sufficient and Mr. Moffatt closed the plant in or about 1903, and transferred his interests back to Irvinebank.

One worker at the copper smelters was a blacksmith named Joe Gossner. Joe married a Miss. Ramsay from Argentine Hotel and they settled in Ewan. After the smelter closed Joe worked at the Mount Brown Battery and on one occasion welded a three-inch ramshaft in the forge (a fire blown by air bellows). The shaft was swung on chains and when both sections were white hot they were swung onto an anvil and welded.

This job allowed the battery to continue crushing; otherwise there would have been a month's delay in

obtaining a new shaft from Townsville.

Joe Gossner later turned to cane farming near Ingham and his sons Les and Ewan became blacksmith welders and body builders at Trebonne. Ewan Gossner still lives at Lucinda near Ingham and his youngest sister Beryl lives near Ingham with her husband Jack Larsen.

About the turn of the century lode tin was being worked at Kallanda and Waverley and it became necessary to form a company and build a crushing plant (battery) at Waverley. Several miners moved to this area from Irvinebank and Herberton. An hotel was built at Waverley and taken over by Dave Jones and his wife, Sarah. Previously they had conducted an hotel near Charters Towers.

Unfortunately, the main ore crushed was green and red chloride, a stone which is very tough so that only a low tonnage could be treated daily. The company put in a set of rollers to break down the ore to a smaller size, but the rollers were not a success.

After the Waverley battery closed, miners drifted away, leaving only a few prospectors. The battery was dismantled and shifted to the Kidston mine and re-erected to crush all the ore from this mine. A dam had been built to supply water.

When the Waverley battery was being shifted the big steam boiler was carted by George Brabon. It was a delicate job transporting the high load along the sides of the ridges down to Oakey Creek. The wagon could not travel on the crest of the ridges because of large outcrops. George used wire ropes, attaching them to trees, on the top side of the wagon to avoid a capsized.

When the wagon-load was safely down from the hills, and across Oakey Creek, George produced a bottle of rum to celebrate the occasion. He received \$100 (fifty pounds) for this load - big money in those days.

Mrs. Dave Jones continued to live at Waverley with her family.

The eldest daughter, Mona, married a chap called Martin and left the district. Mona's husband was killed some years later in the Mt. Mulligan disaster.

Mrs. Jones's two sons, Alf and Pat, worked the tin around Waverley and also had a pack team which transported the prospectors' tin to Ingham, and brought foodstuffs back to Kallanda and Waverley.

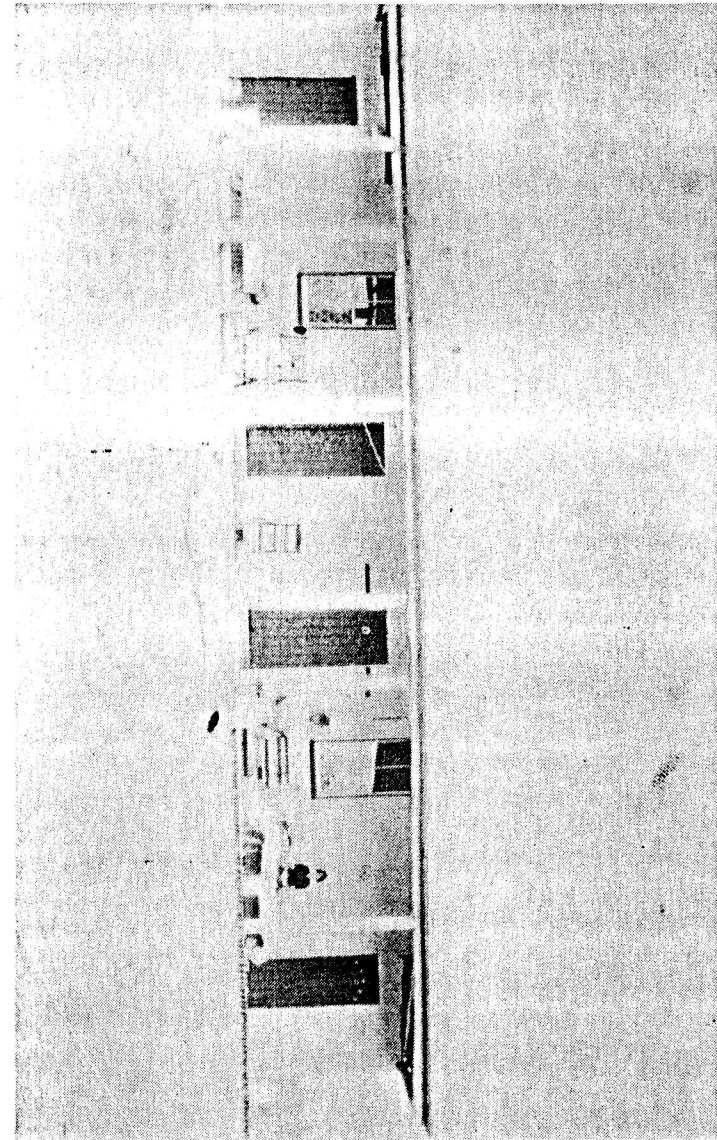
Ted Fanning also ran a pack team to and from Ingham for years.

Mrs. Jones re-married a chap, Alexander, and bore him a son, Adam, and two girls, Eileen and Audrey. Jenny Jones, the younger daughter of the Jones's marriage, shifted to the township of Ewan in later years and ran a small grocery business there. She married a policeman named Don Moriarty. Strangely enough, both Eileen and Audrey were to marry policemen, one named Hogbin and the other, Clay.

Mrs Alexander, formerly Jones, shifted to Ewan about 1920 and had the Waverley house rebuilt at Ewan. She resided there until the end of the second world war when she and her husband moved to Townsville where they resided until their deaths.

A chap named Dave Grey started a small battery near Water Cress, between Waverley and Mt. Fox, crushing ore for the prospectors in that area. He was also agent for the metal buying firm of O.T. Lempriere of Sydney. He closed down operations about 1929.

Waverley Hotel.



TOWNSHIP AT THREE MILE

A Charlie Morris started a store. George Mitchell and Bill Fanning who were brothers-in-law, started two butcher shops. Fanning took the first dray up Fanning Track. A Mr. Harvey had the hotel.

Charlie Morris took up a piece of country now named Taravale, and adjoining the mountain property, which he later sold to Dick Guild.

This block of country was very rough and was commonly known as "Hell Hole". Dick, however, was a big rugged man of exceptional strength and no day's work was too long for him.

Men who worked for Dick spoke well of him, but said that he was always in a hurry to get a meal over so that more work could be done in that day. He would make the tea long before the bully boiled as he said, "that is as hot as you will drink it".

Dick and Mrs. Guild lived on the property for some years and had a family of seven children. Mrs. Guild moved to Ingham and Dick bought a house opposite to the General Hospital. This house was burnt down in very recent years.

Dick continued to live on the property with his youngest son, Bernie, until his untimely death from pneumonia. Bernie and his sister, Lettie (who was holidaying at the property), had to wait about 12 days before they could get their father across the flooded Running River for medical attention.

The writer met them about half-way down the range on Jacobson's track. Dick was in very poor shape, but was still riding a horse in the rain: even at that stage showing a lot of guts.

The property passed to Bernie, the youngest son, who

later married Jessie Rankine (nee Milton) from Allendale. Bernie was found dead on this property in the early 1950's. Alfred Stanley Jones's body was also found with Bernie. Alfred was a highly-respected alluvial prospector, and a well-read man who could talk on any subject.

Allendale originally was owned by Sam Allen who was mentioned earlier as having married a Miss. Bosworth. This property later was sold to Bob Milton from Charters Towers.

As well as grazing, Bob started a butcher shop and with the assistance of his sons and daughters, had a flourishing business with surrounding farmers, delivering first-quality fresh meat to their door.

The butchering presently was taken over by Charlie, the eldest son, and was re-sited near Yuruga. Charlie and his sons conducted the enterprise for a number of years.

After Charlie Morris closed his shop at the small township of "Three Mile", he had the hotel licence transferred to Francis Creek and built an hotel. This he named the "Miners' Rest".

He sold the property to Joe Pappin and his wife and they conducted the hotel for a couple of years. Owing to the slump in tin prices, they were forced to close, and continued to live on the property until Joe's death years later. They reared a large family, all of whom turned out to be good workers who knew what it was to battle for whatever they won.

Three of the Pappin boys, Clem, Jack and Bill, made a name for themselves wood-chopping at the annual shows.

The Pappin and Milton homes were only some four miles apart, and both were on the Jacobson's track which linked up with the Ingham-Townsville Road. This meant a lot of the travellers from Ewan and Hidden Valley could accept the hospitality of these two families.

Mr. Castles and his wife settled at Kallanda (a tiny township about four miles east of the Waverley tin field). Alluvial tin was being worked there and Mr. Castles took up

a claim successfully.

He always had faith in the floating of a company and in dredging the area. In the early twenties he was successful in floating a company and an experienced engineer, Fred Thomas, was appointed to manage operations. Fred later married a Miss. Mahoney of Ingham.

Motor trucks were purchased and all piping, steam engine, and boiler, was placed on site. The power plant was erected on Oakey Creek and the water pumped some three miles to the site of operations. One of the drivers of the plant was Castles' son, Arthur, whilst another son, Alf, was on the trucks.

After a short period of operation, the company found the overburden had too much clay and was very difficult to shift with the water nozzles, and operations were halted. Some years later the C.S.R. Company bought the piping and engine. These were transported by motor vehicles to Victoria Mill at Ingham.

Roy Jensen later worked this property and, eventually, a young man named Druce Becke became owner of this alluvial area. He worked this by sinking a shaft through the overburden to the wash which contained tin. The wash was then hauled to the surface and treated.

Druce, his wife and family lived there for many years and, after Druce's death, his son Clive carried on operations together with a partner named Barry Elliott. Clive has now sold to Eddie Harper from Hidden Valley. Eddie is removing the overburden with a D9 Caterpillar dozer, and recovering good quantities of tin.

Clive Becke and his young wife still live at the site but are interested in building up a flock of Angora goats for commercial sale.

Mr. Castles' home at Kallanda was a weekly meeting place for all the miners who awaited the pack-horse service from Ingham. This pack-horse mail service was begun by Alf Benham, a son of Fred Benham, who is now an inmate of the

Senior Citizens' home at Mareeba. He began the run in the early twenties.

Delivery of the mail would be taken at Upper Stone, some 20 miles from Ingham, on Monday of each week. He then would travel to Mt. Fox, staying there overnight. On the Tuesday, he would proceed to Kangaroo Hills station, across to Kallanda where he would again spend the night.

The day following would see the journey continued to Waverley, then down Oakey Creek to the Sardine tin mine and Shrimp Battery (both the latter are mentioned in detail in these writings), then into the township of Ewan. The next day travel would be made to Hidden Valley, across the Pineapple and Three Mile, and down the old "Tin Track", back to Upper Stone.

This service was taken over in succeeding years by Geoff Challand who ran it for a short time. After Geoff was called to arms, the service was continued by Dick Wallis of Ingham until 1946 when Cecil McMillan, known as "Old Mac", assumed the service. "Old Mac" was the last of the pack-horse mailmen and retired from the run in 1956.

The mail was then taken by motor truck by Arthur Milton, Jack Fraser snr. and, later, "Bully" Robinson.

This mail track passed over some very rugged country and costs were rising rapidly. When fresh tenders were being called the Government Department was amazed that such high-priced tenders were received for such a short mileage and decided to investigate.

Officers were sent to Ingham and together with the Ingham Postmaster, Mr. Lynch, set out with two four-wheel-drive vehicles to travel over the route. Things went well until the rough country around Waverley and Oakey Creek hove into view. The officers' facial colour changed to a pasty white and they sat petrified with their eyes glued to the supposed road (quite different from their easy chairs in their offices and bitumen roads to their homes).

The Ewan mail service via Waverley was immediately

Alf Benhams and Royal Mail.



cancelled and a new service via Paluma and Hidden Valley was born.

The contract was later cancelled and a new service begun from Ingham to Kangaroo Hills, on to Blue Range, Camel Creek, Valley of Lagoons station, and back through Oak Hills station.

Prior to this service Valley of Lagoons, Wairuna and Oak Hills stations received mail via Abergowrie by pack horse with H. Grant as mailman for a number of years.

Before Alf Benham commenced the mail run to Ewan, mail was brought from Ravenswood Junction, now known as Mingela. This run, too, is detailed further in these writings.

After the turn of the century prospectors started to move in around the tiny township of Ewan. George Mitchell who had been butchering at the Old Tin township, began another butchering business as did a chap named Paddy Finnerty.

Two Scotch men named Lennox and Rennie, had the only two-storey house ever to be built at Ewan. John Lennox was to figure prominently in mining and battery operations in coming years. Both these men were confirmed bachelors. A company, of which John Lennox was manager, built a five-head stamper battery at Mt. Brown on the western side of Ewan, and crushed stone for prospectors.

A very rich mine which was called Mt. Brown, was discovered about one mile north of the battery. This mine produced 93 tons of prill ore.

Around this period Fred and Jessie Benham came to Ewan prospecting and found the Metropolitan and Cleopatra mines which were sold to the company managed by John Lennox. The ore from these mines, and several others like the Gladstone, Xmas Gift etc., was crushed at this battery. The battery was powered by steam and the driver was Fred Blakoe. In coming years his foster-son, George Blakoe, also became a steam engine driver.

All the families of Carlsens, Simpsons, Irwins, and Hills,

School Children at Ewan and Teacher, A. Hewson.



had built homes along the bank of the Running River but upstream from Hans Carlsen and his wife, and this section of Ewan always was called Mt. Brown.

At the turn of the century a Miss. Bowes started a private school about one mile from what was to be the centre of Ewan township. Her brother was a prospector and when he left the district she did too. This left Ewan without a school. Parents got together on the matter. One of these was Bert Kruger who had moved from Kruger Hill near Mt. Fox, married Susan Watson who had come to Ewan to visit her sister, and finished up working for Mrs. G. Mitchell.

A Provisional School was built on the most stony ridge (the children knew because there was always some skin missing from accidents on the stones), about half-way between Mt. Brown and the centre of Ewan township.

The first teacher to be supplied was John Hassell, an elderly be-whiskered gentleman. He walked everywhere and even carried a little swag and his billy can, and walked to and from Ingham for his holidays.

An hotel has been erected about 3/4 mile east of where the school afterwards was built. T.J. Guinane of Ingham established a general store across the gully from the hotel. "T J" also had the non-official post office. He was a wise businessman and not without some Irish wit.

Being the Postmaster he would see all the parcels coming through from mail-order firms, and on one occasion was heard to say, "If they have got money they buy from the mail-order firms, but if they are short, they buy from T.J. Guinane" - and he said to listeners, of one customer, "He said he would cross the gully to the pub and then come back and pay me. That was six months ago. I guess he has crossed a lot of gullies since then".

HAWKERS

As was the normal practice in early times, hawkers used to travel through all the outback settlements. The Kangaroo Hills mining district was no exception.

The first hawker to travel into the Mt. Fox and Waverley areas was an Indian named Charlie. He travelled with pack-horses and carried a varied assortment of dresses for the ladies, all kinds of shirts and trousers for the men, and quite an array of sweets and clothing for the children.

Charlie was later murdered when he was hit with a bottle as he was climbing through a fence to get a billy can of water. Although suspicions were strong, no one ever was proven guilty.

A few years later Tommy Casasine, supposed to be Charlie's nephew, commenced a hawking business. As his uncle had done, he used pack-horses and carried large tin trunks filled with all sorts of clothing and sweets, as well as mouth organs and cheap jewellery. Tommy, a lean, tall and strong man, always wore a turban and a revolver. He would walk behind his small team of pack horses and lead his saddle horse.

Great excitement prevailed when it was known that Tommy had arrived at a station or at the townships of Ewan or Waverley. He would camp at two or three different sites when in Ewan so that ladies and children did not have to walk too far in order to visit and to inspect his wares. Each night families would be at his camp site fitting on clothes and boots.

He would stay about a week and then shift on to the stations - or back to Ingham to pick up more clothing supplies.

As was normal with an Indian, he would not eat any

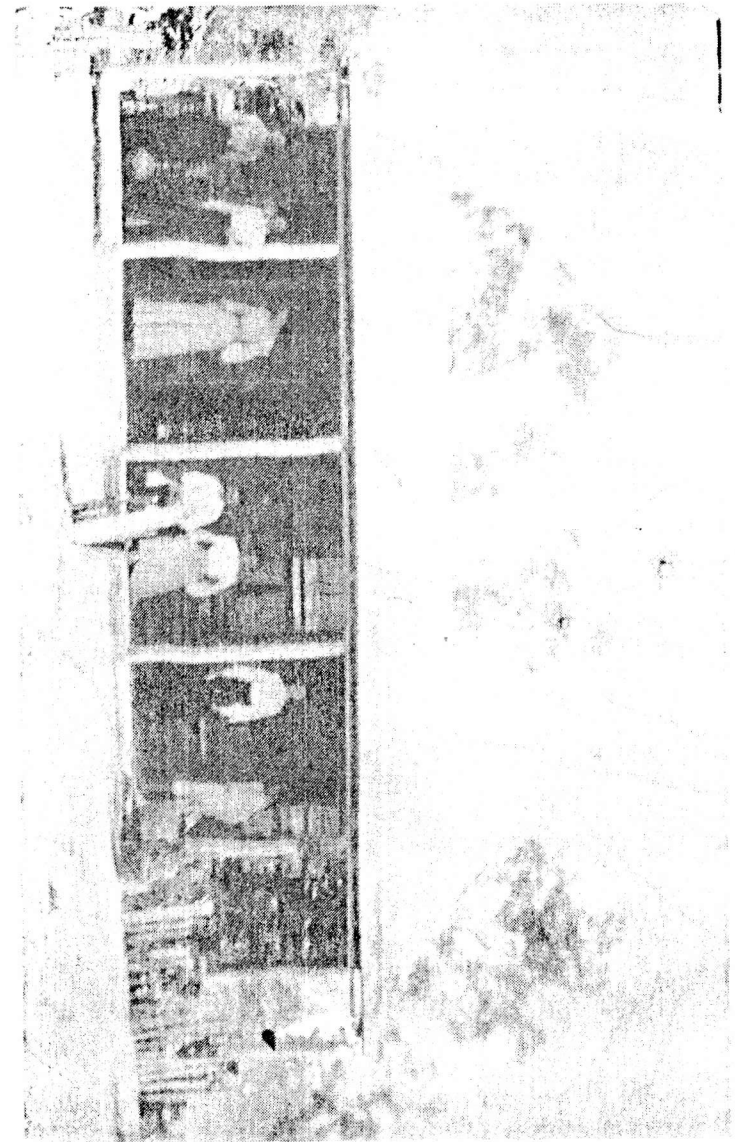
meat killed by anyone other than himself. He did, however, make an exception for Mr. George Hill senior, an old prospector who had befriended him at one time. He would get George to kill and dress a goat for him when he was moving on.

Tommy suddenly stopped coming around and it was rumoured that he had returned to India.

The next hawker, in the person of Bill Norris, came to Ewan in a wagonette hauled by four horses. He was on the road for three or four years before starting a general store across the road from the Ewan hotel. This venture did not last, as he was forced to charge cash since he had very limited capital. This did not suit the prospectors as they rarely had any cash and could book up groceries and clothing with storekeepers in Townsville and Ingham, paying when they had recovered some tin.

The last person to attempt to hawk was a Ron Short who made a few trips around 1940 and 1941, with a motor van, but was not very successful.

Ewan's First Hotel.



EWAN'S GROWTH

As Ewan began to grow several prospectors from the north came to try their luck.

Three McIntyre brothers, Charlie, Jack and Hughie, came to the field. Charlie was an exceptionally good prospector and found more tin shows than any other prospector in the district.

The decline of Ewan started about 1908 and the company sold the battery at Mt. Brown to the McIntyre brothers. Previous to this era, Hans Carlsen and his wife and family moved into Mt. Brown with wagon and team, building a house about half a mile away from the Mt. Brown battery.

Mrs. Carlsen had two daughters by a previous marriage, Mrs. Syd Smith and Mrs. Ted Deighton. Syd Smith was a teamster and Ted Deighton became a very capable underground surveyor.

Hans and his wife had five children in their marriage. Susan became Mrs. S. Simpson and Alice married Alf Irwin. Both these girls had large families.

Of the boys, Julius married a Miss. Days who was a sister to Mrs. George Hill snr. (George is mentioned later in this writing). Peter married Muriel Mitchell, second daughter of George Mitchell, the butcher of Ewan at the turn of the century. The remaining son, Hans, never married.

George Hill snr. and his brother Tom, came out from England and after working on the Queensland railways, George came to Ewan. He was an expert rifle shot and trained two of his sons, Bill and George, to use firearms. These three became kangaroo shooters for a number of years and were widely known for their skill.

Bill afterwards took on droving and at one stage had two droving plants operating. He followed stock for the rest

of his active life, working mainly for Mr. H. Powley of Allensleigh.

A new hotel was built in Ewan about 1907 and the first publican was a chap named Parsons. A little later W. (Bill) Conroy started a general store close to the new hotel. When the old hotel closed, T.J. Guinane built a new general store closer to the dance hall and new hotel.

Ewan at this time was a dying mining settlement and several prospectors had drifted away, but established families could not afford to shift.

A new low-grade ore body was discovered some nine miles south-east of Ewan and became known as the Kidston.

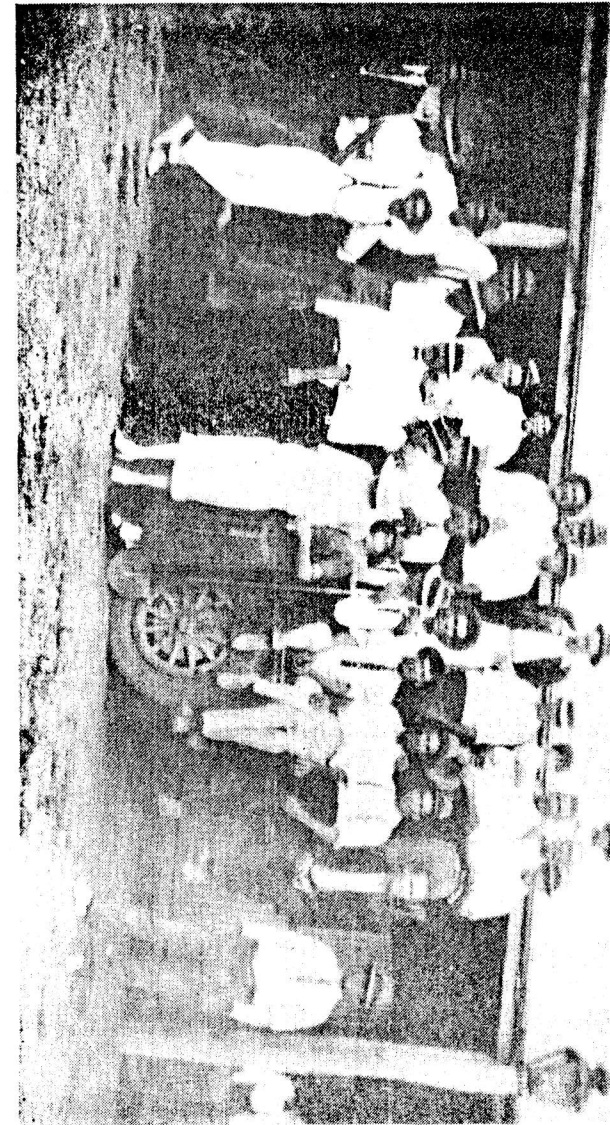
Lennox and Rennie, the two Scotsmen, formed a company and took over the Kidston. They had the Waverley battery shifted by horse-wagon and re-built at the site of the mine. A dam was constructed and operations commenced, thus providing employment for the local men.

The company struggled along until 1914 when Mr. Rennie went back to Scotland in an attempt to raise more capital. World War One broke out and he could not return. Due to lack of finance the battery and mine at Kidston closed down.

Bert Kruger, the writer's father, cut cord wood and also worked in the Kidston mine six days a week. He would walk nine miles across mountainous country after work on Saturday. On Sunday morning he would cut and cart enough wood and water to last the home a week (all wood and water was carried on his back). He would walk back, on Sunday evening, the nine miles to work, carting his week's supply of food.

This was just one example of how these men had to work to exist and raise a family.

After the closure of the Kidston mine about a dozen families remained at Ewan. The men could not get jobs and tried to eke out a living for themselves and families by working alluvial and lode tin.



Picnic crowd at second Ewan Hotel.

The alluvial tin was extracted from the dirt by using small sluice boxes, banjos and jigs. This meant that the dirt had to be carted by dray, wagon or pack-horse to wherever there was water enough to wash the soil. The washing of the dirt was a back-breaking job and the return of tin concentrates for a ten or twelve hour day, was very small.

Alluvial tin was found in creeks and gullies: the beds of these creeks and gullies which were composed of rocks, sand, etc., had to be dug up with pick or mattock. A 3/8" or 1/2" screen was set up and after forking out the stones from the dug-up materials, the finer material was screened. It was this material that was then carted to water for the washing treatment

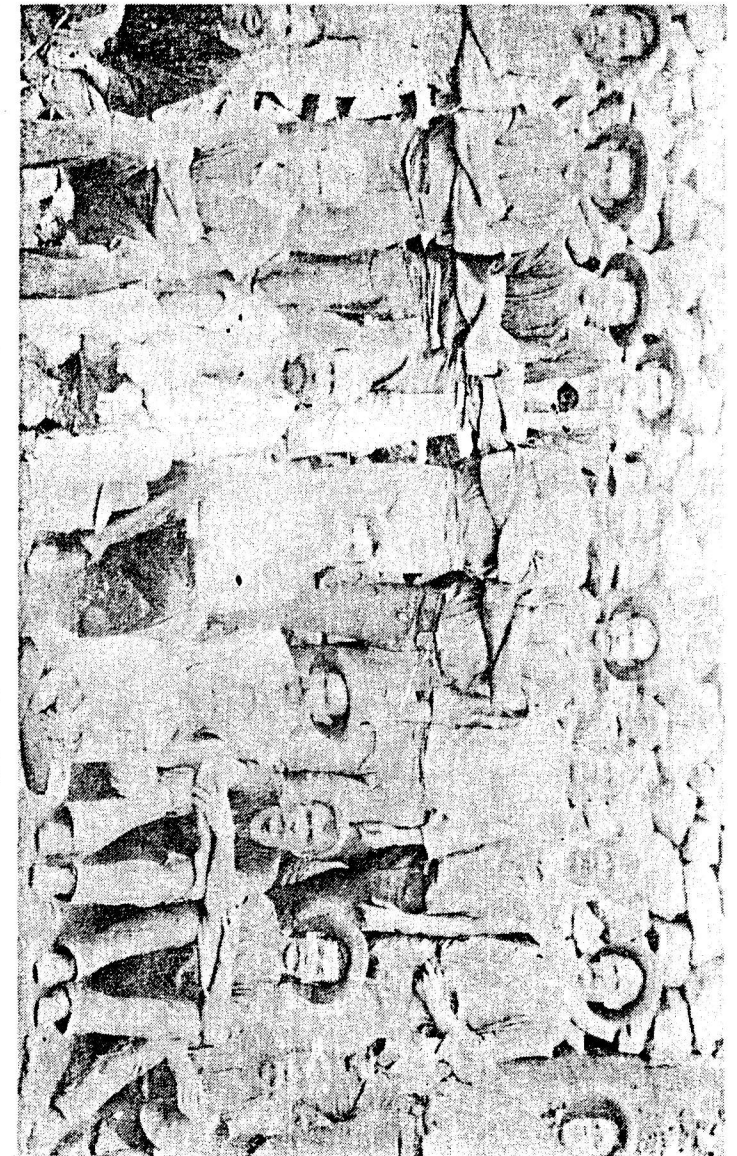
The lode tin was found in solid rock formation. The lode containing the tin would have shed, over hundreds of years, small particles of tin into the little gullies and it was here that the prospectors would pick up what was known as the "trail".

In wet weather small, specially constructed iron dishes were used and after panning (reducing the dish contents with water action), some particles of tin may show up in the dish. As tin is much heavier than dirt, it sinks to the bottom of the dish.

If this occurred, the prospector would try more dishes of dirt until he found the lode. In dry weather when no water was available, a small quantity of fine dirt would be placed in the palm of the hand. The prospector would shake his hand and blow the dirt with air from his mouth. If any particles of tin showed up, more samples would be taken and blown until the lode was found.

Some prospectors would take days to locate the lode only to find that it was useless (a squib); some may produce a couple of cwt of ore (tin-bearing rock), or maybe a ton or two of ore. If the lode proved to be any way productive a shaft was started.

In some lode formations, the first three or four feet of



Group of Miners at Metropolitan Mine.

shaft would be sunk with a pick and shovel, but in other lodes solid rock was encountered from the extreme surface. When solid rock formation was struck, explosives had to be used.

The prospectors had what was known as a set of drills, ranging in length from six to thirty inches. The sharp end of the drill, called the bit varied in width—the shorter drill having the wider bit. The reason for this was the wearing effect on the extreme edges of the bit from solid rock.

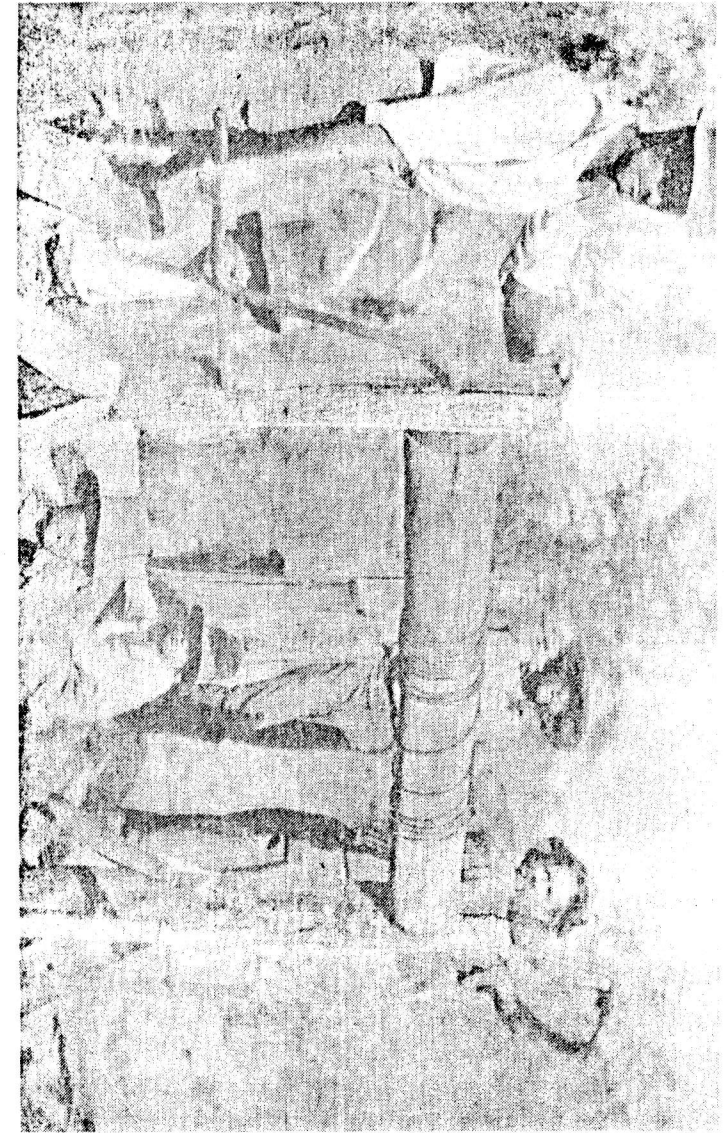
As the hole being drilled became deeper a longer drill was used. Water was placed in the hole to stop wear on the bits and a four-pound hammer was used by the prospector with which to hit the drill. At the same time, he partially revolved the drill with his other hand.

After some two or three hours of drilling, depending on hardness of the rock, a charge of explosive was used to break up the solid rock.

In most cases, the broken rock was thrown out with a shovel up to the depth of about eight feet. After this depth, a windlass was erected and the rock hauled up by bucket made from greenhide (bullock's skin) or iron, on the windlass. As the shaft got deeper, timber had to be placed skilfully in the shaft to stop any collapse, and ladders installed.

Perhaps the most back-breaking job was the treatment of tin ore by what was known as a "Spring Dolly" process. This method was used when the ore was very rich with tin and only small quantities of ore were available. It was a hand-operated small weight of about 80 lbs suspended on a springy sapling. The weight was fitted with handles and the operator had to pull down on the handles and the spring of the sapling would lift the weight up again. A small grate was set below the weight so the ore was crushed fine enough to allow it to be washed in a sluice box. The author had personal experience in all the mentioned methods of extracting tin.

When a prospector gathered about five tons or more of ore, he would have it transported to McIntyres' five-stamper



Prospectors at their mine in 1907.

battery for treatment, the battery charging \$2.00 (one pound) a ton to extract concentrates from the ore. The concentrates then were transported to Ingham by pack team or to Townsville by horse wagon, shipped to Sydney and sold either to O.T. Lempriere & Co., or T.H. Kelly & Co.

The families around Ewan at this time were all very poor and lived in iron houses with single walls, no ceilings, and earthen floors. Large jute flour bags were sewn together and placed as floor coverings.

Every family owned some goats and their milk and flesh was used extensively. Some families had gardens, but water had to be carted from the Running River for these to survive. Sometimes people had a horse or two and water could be packed up from the river, but other people carted the water in buckets or four-gallon kerosene tins strung on yokes across the shoulders.

The Kruger family had a ten billy-goat team hitched to a 38 gallon wine cask, fitted up to roll on spindles, within shafts. The kids had to cart three loads each morning before school, and four loads each evening after. Arthur and Alf Castles as children at the 15 mile, also had goats to cart wood and water.

Ingham and Townsville storekeepers were very generous and would allow lengthy credit terms to the prospectors. In some cases, they were never paid as "fly by night" people skipped town.

The year 1915 brought drought and water became very scarce. People were forced to dig down some three or four feet into the sand in the river and fit in homemade pine boxes covered with lids to keep out the animals. Troughs were made from old hollow logs, and ends from canvas bags, and pine boards were fitted. Water was bailed from the boxes and poured into the troughs so as to water the prospectors' goats, horses and cattle.

As the First World War raged and the price of tin rose, several prospectors drifted in from other places in

Queensland, and from other States. More tin ore was now being found, the old McIntyre battery was wearing out and unable to cope.

FLOOD

In early 1918 the heavy clouds were forming up and light rain began falling. Gradually the rain became heavier until, between sunset and daylight, some 22 inches had fallen towards the head of the Running River, and 18 inches at Ewan.

The Running River was running a banker and still rising. Water entered houses in the Mt. Brown section of Ewan and the Wood, Mulhall, Julius Carlsen, G. Hill, Irwin and Simpson families were badly affected. After the flood some of these families built their houses on higher ground.

A chap named George Brabon was camped about six miles up the Running River from Ewan. About midnight he remembered that Mrs. George Irlam was living further up the river with her family and that her husband was away. George caught a saddle horse in the pouring rain and, although about five miles separated George from Mrs. Irlam's camp, he had to ride approximately ten miles to skirt the steep mountains. He swam his horse across two swollen creeks in darkness and heavy rain, arriving at Mrs. Irlam's camp just as floodwater was entering the first hut.

A tent was pitched on higher ground and George was satisfied the family was safe. He cooked them a damper and then rode back to his own camp.

George just took this sort of thing in his stride; he was an excellent bushman and a teamster by trade. Whenever he was seen riding around in a white shirt, "someone must be sick", and George would be off to try and render some assistance.

In 1918, John Lennox and his company decided to form a new company and this was named the Kangaroo Hills Mining Syndicate.

This Syndicate brought the Kidston mine battery into Ewan and set it up on the same old timber frame remaining from the copper smelter. The object of the Syndicate was to crush for the prospectors and also to crush the mullock heaps from some of the old mines as stone which was unpayable earlier was becoming more valuable as prices rose.

During 1919, two prospectors named Jack Mulhall and Alex Lane discovered a very rich tin show on Oakey Creek, about 4½ miles from the Ewan township. They named the show the "Sardine", as they had eaten tins of Sardines that day for lunch.

News spread quickly and a lot more interest was shown in mining around Ewan.

A prospector named Peter Christensen who had come to Ewan in 1920 from Nettles Creek in the Herberton area, found a very rich lode of tin on Oakey Creek, about four miles upstream from the Sardine Mine which was now operating at full capacity.

Peter called the mine the "Canary", and after some negotiations, sold the mine to John Lennox who was general manager of the Sardine and K.H.M.S. Battery. John Lennox sold to the Sardine Tin Mining Co. and they started to develop the Canary. This mine turned out to be the producer of some 300 tons of tin concentrates and, at its peak had about 20 employees.

Peter had a family of four sons, Charles, Edward, Eric and Fred. All these sons are still living in North Queensland and all have now retired from their respective work in mining, barbering, and cattle.

Two other prospectors, Frank Cullen and Jim Keogh, both good tin men, produced a lot of tin concentrates from several lodes in the Ewan district. One of these lodes was the "Titanic" which originally was found by "Bricky" Ward and worked by him and the McIntyre brothers.

Cullen and Keogh later sold the "Titanic" to the Brilliant Extended N. L. of Charters Towers but they



John Lennox, Mining Adventurer.

produced very little tin and closed down operations.

Fred Blakoe and his foster son, George Regan, after having a small battery on the Burdekin, decided to build a battery on a big poor mine they had found on Oakey Creek about two miles downstream from the Sardine Mine. This battery they called the Shrimp.

The Shrimp Battery was built by Norman Powell Snr. and his son Norman from Charters Towers. Both these men have now passed on, but the large business owned by them in Charters Towers is still operating under the name of "Norman Powell" and is still owned by their descendants.

The Blakoes got a grant from the State Government and erected their battery. Both the Ewan and Shrimp batteries had suction gas engines fitted instead of steam. John Lennox negotiated with John Mulhall and Alex Lane, formed a no-liability company, and bought the mine. Mulhall and Lane retained some 10,000 shares in the venture, but later sold them.

Some of the directors of the new company, now called the "Sardine" Tin Mining Co. N.L., were old Charters Towers identities. Men like Angus McCallum, Dick Medley, Dick Tyrell and Don McCullum.

Most of the shareholders in the Kangaroo Hills Mining Syndicate were also shareholders in the Sardine Tin Mining Co. It was, therefore, arranged that all ore from the mine would be carted into Ewan and crushed at the battery there.

With the Sardine Mine under the management of Joe Pryor, the battery controlled by Tom Hill snr., and the Canary under the eye of Dudley Geary with Denny Donovan as mine boss, all working the shifts, there were about fifty men directly employed and another ten or so men on contracts for wood for charcoal burning for the suction gas engines and timber for the mines.

An example of how tough some of these old miners were was exemplified when at starting time at the tunnel mouth of the Sardine Mine, the old winding-engine driver,

Bill, approached his mate Denny, carrying a pair of horseshoe pincers. Imagine Denny's surprise when old Bill pointed to one of his four front teeth and said "Yank her out, Denny"!

After some argument Denny extracted the tooth and work continued as usual.

Old Bill afterwards said that if he had had to go to Ingham, he would have been away at least three days and this meant loss of work for his mates who depended on the winding-engine, and besides, "the bloody thing was painful".

With so many miners working in the district, more lodes were found, especially on or around the Oakey Creek area. Although some of these lodes produced some rich ore, none of them could be compared with the Sardine or Canary.

In the early 1920's, two Charters Towers brothers named William and John Reddie, took over the Shrimp Battery on lease from the State Government and commenced crushing stone for the miners. Later, the Reddie brothers bought the Shrimp Battery.

William Reddie was an associate of the Charters Towers School of Mines and so was of assistance to the prospectors in analysis and classification of metals.

Jack Reddie was a horseman and became interested in racing, riding in quite a lot of these events. He later married Miss. Emma Peut and reared a family at Ewan. More of this family later.

Men who had been gold miners in Charters Towers came out to work at the Sardine and Shrimp mines, some bringing their families. The township of Ewan began to grow and two small tent settlements sprang up at the mine sites. The State School numbers rose, too, to over fifty children.

As was always the case where gold or tin was mined and treated there were the few chaps who did not care for work and tried to live the easy way by stealing. Ewan was no exception and quite a few chaps rode around like gentlemen, always had money in their pockets and did very little work. It was not hard to guess where their money came from.

The Ewan battery worked two shifts six days a week, and employed no night watchmen. Sometimes there would be as much as three tons of tin concentrates lying unpackaged at the Battery and the thieves had a great treat. Most of the thieves had their own pack horses to transport their pickings to Ingham, but on one occasion some of them hired a motor truck to take about 30 cwt. of their ill-gotten gains to the Ingham Railways.

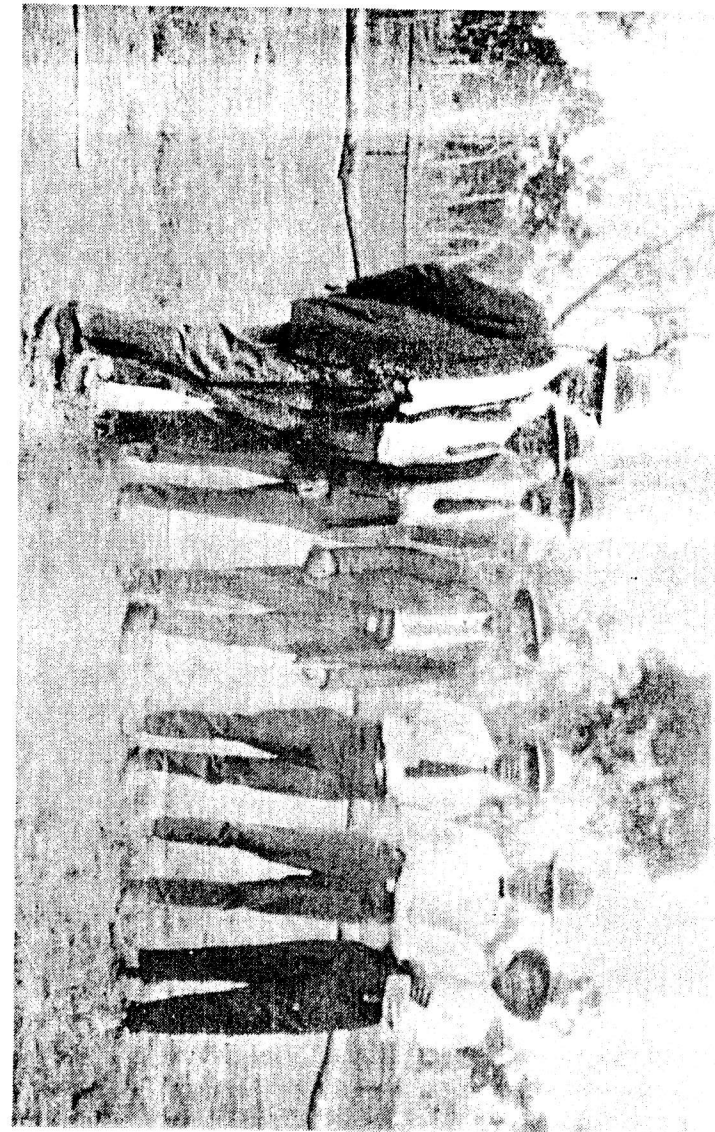
One old chap who worked at the battery packaging the tin concentrates had his own method. He wore larger boots than necessary and at knock-off time would pour the tin into his boots and limp across the Ewan flat to his home. One afternoon a person was at the old chap's home talking to his wife. Knock-off time arrived and the old chap was limping home. The visitor asked, "what's wrong with Jack"? and his wife quickly replied, "poor old fellow, he suffers greatly from Rheumatism".

Although tons of tin was thought to have been stolen from the battery no one could convince the General Manager to employ a watchman.

After Kruger Bros. purchased the battery any miner who had ore being treated was allowed to camp at the battery and this also became a practice at the Shrimp and Endeavour Batteries in later years.

Some of the thieves then went further afield and stole the ore from the prospectors' mines, mixed the ore with other stone and carted the shandy to the batteries for treatment. One young chap was caught by a prospector one night in the act and was hit over the head with a pick handle. He was in very ill health for some time, but refused to say what happened.

In the mid 1930's a Frank Cullen and his two sons Dom and Tom were working a very rich tin mine at White Springs in the Tinvale area, and suspected that their tin ore was being stolen at night time. As water was very scarce they had to camp about four miles from the mine. Frank decided to give



Group of stalwarts at children's annual picnic.

the thieves a scare and one night returned to the mine armed with a .22 rifle, carbide light, swag and a book. He read for a couple of hours then decided to call it a day, put out the light, and went to bed.

After a short time Frank heard some stones moving near the ore heap. He sat up, reached for the rifle and waited. It was not long before two humans appeared and Frank fired a shot at the first shadow and rushed towards the mine in the dark firing more shots as he ran. One thief ran back along the pad and escaped; the other thief, realising he could not retrace his steps, raced over the end of the mullock heap down into a ravine, scattering loose rocks, with Frank still firing an occasional bullet over his head.

The next morning Frank told his story to his sons but was not believed until they made an examination and found bagging which the thieves had tied around their boots to obliterate their tracks. They had apparently discarded the bagging in order to speed up their escape and no return visits were ever recorded.

RACING AT EWAN

Although there had been a racecourse near the junction of the Running and Burdekin Rivers, this had become defunct. With the revival of mining the race fever grew and a straight three-furlong course was made, with the winning post right in front of the hotel.

There was no feeding or paddocking of horses, and no registration of jockeys. It was post entry and you could ride your own horse.

Later some land was kindly loaned by Mat Sharman who had a small grazing block and also was the town butcher.

A Race Committee was formed and, of course, everything had to be registered, the horses paddocked, correct weights allotted and jockeys and colours named etc, and the course had to be circular. Races were held twice a year, April and October. Horses came from quite a few surrounding properties such as Hillgrove, Allensleigh, Christmas Creek and Kangaroo Hills, Dotswood and Fanning Stations.

Horses also entered from Ingham. One competitor was a saddler, Joe Aldridge, who was a very good supporter. Joe later became a publican at Ewan.

A big influx of people would arrive — mainly from Ingham — and two days of racing and two nights of dancing were assured.

A race meeting in Ewan really was something. With very little money about, families could not afford to buy lunches, etc., at the racecourse and so a picnic spirit prevailed. Arrival would be in buggies, sulkies and spring carts. Several people rode horses or bicycles to the course. The horses all had to be tethered or else they would clear out for home. So the picture presented was a vehicle under every shady tree — and horses tied nearby.

Mothers would have prepared lots of sandwiches and placed these in small tubs, inside a damp cloth so as to keep the bread fresh. Plenty of cake also was included. It was the fathers' job to light fires and boil billies at lunchtime. (The races started at 10 a.m.)

The people would return home after the races—and attend a dance at night-time. The dance was held in a hall which had been built years before, but was in a remarkably good condition.

The first occasion that chewing-gum was introduced for sale at a race meeting, the children were bewildered and bought all that they could afford. They could not understand why they could not swallow the gum although they chewed it for hours.

Gum was stuck on and under seats — the kid's hair — and everywhere — much to the sorrow of parents as they also finished up with gum on their dresses and suits. Two children found that while eating peanuts and chewing gum, they could swallow the lot. Alas, there were two very sick kids and the old remedy (castor oil) was used!

On Sunday, races were held on the straight track for unregistered horses. One of these races almost ended in tragedy for Roy Featherstone of Kangaroo Hills station, when his horse fell, breaking Roy's wrist and leaving him also with head injuries and a severely gashed chin. Roy had to be transported by buggy (a three day trip) to Ingham Hospital. The accident left Roy partially deaf.

Arthur Featherstone, Roy's eldest brother who was one of the leading amateur jockeys, was later killed at Oak Park races.

It was very seldom that some humorous incident does not crop up at a sport meeting or other gathering and this was to happen at the Sunday races in the early 1920's.

A teamster's wife owned a nice type of a horse named Silver Dollar which in the words of the owner was a champion trotter. The lady demonstrated by riding the horse



Pat Jones with a winner.

around at various speeds of trotting. She then attempted to organise a trotting event and finally talked a Mrs. Ogston (who owned some show horses) to enter a horse and Fred Featherstone decided to enter his old horse just to make up the numbers.

Unknown to the teamster's wife the horse Mrs. Ogston entered was a well-known trotter from the Ingham district and she generously offered both her competitors a big start in the race. Mrs. Ogston refused to accept any start and confessed that her horse was a trotter of some repute, but the teamster's wife was adamant that her horse was the best.

After some delay the race starter decided to start the two horses from scratch and give Featherstone's horse a big start.

The race was to be one mile in length; the starting post was East of the hotel and the horses were to trot up past the hotel to the top of the straight racecourse and back to the hotel.

At last the race got underway and as the horses came up past the hotel Silver Dollar ridden by the teamster's wife was in front and his Jockey was happily waving to the crowd. Silver Dollar was still leading at the turn but alas, Mrs. Ogston extended her horse and very quickly took the lead, winning by about half a furlong.

The teamster's wife then gave vent to her feelings and went on to say that she had been conned into the race and used language which should not be used on Sundays. The Jockey who got most of the cheering and attention was Fred Featherstone whose horse finished some one and a half furlongs behind the second horse.

No more was ever heard of "Silver Dollar" and the rumour circulated that the teamster had found a place for him in the wagon team.

Some other leading old-time jockeys who come to mind were J. Reddie, W. Foster, J. Irwin, S. Donovan and Ted Griffiths.

Races continued at Ewan until the late 20's, but with only one meeting per year as station people were too busy to attend the April meeting.

The Ewan Race Club was revived in the early 1930's but interest waned and activities ceased.

In 1955 a Mr. Purdy of New Moon station outside Ewan, who had been a leading amateur jockey, did a lot of ground work in restoring racing in Ewan. The first meeting was held in October of that year.

First president of the re-formed Ewan Race Club at old Ewan, was Mr. Fred Purdy, followed by Warren Mathews, Mr. Mac Core with Mr. D. Davidson as vice-president.

Finance was very short and G. & M. Gore at times loaned the club monies for improvements.

Having a good hard-working group in the Reddie, Jones, Davidson, Furber, Core, Matthews and Petersen families, plus other willing workers such as L. Crouch, J. O'Shea etc., it was not long before the club was financial.

Mr. Mac Core resigned as president after doing an excellent job for many years. One thinks he was feeling a little aged or, as the bushman says, "a bit long in the tooth," and now sits back as a committee member, and can socialise more.

Support for the reformed club came from graziers such as R.L. Atkinson and two sons, Alan and Robert, Jack and Olga Matthews (nee Core), Mrs. D. Von Wald and sons Graham and Robert, Mac and Jean Core, Mr. & Mrs. G. Core snr. of Blue Range, Mr. & Mrs. W. Allingham of Hillgrove, Artie Knuth and his son Charles of Virginia, Tom and Brian Kirkwood of Kirkland Downs, Alf Jones, A. Hill, W. Hill, Jones and Reddie families, Toby Atkinson, Camel Creek, R. Wakeford, D. & R. Davidson of Zig Zag station, and many others too numerous to mention. To these I apologise, but assure them their support was very much appreciated by the club.

Mr. Purdy later had a severe accident which eventually

led to his death. His station, New Moon, was purchased by Jack Matthews and Miss. Iona Spears (Jack's step-daughter). Iona later married a Mr. Petersen ("Snow") and both became stalwart supporters of Ewan racing. "Snow" became a leading jockey together with D. Core, T. Kane, A. Atkinson, P. Woodhouse and others.

In late 1956, Mr. W. Little, the Ewan publican, was injured fatally at a Ewan race meeting.

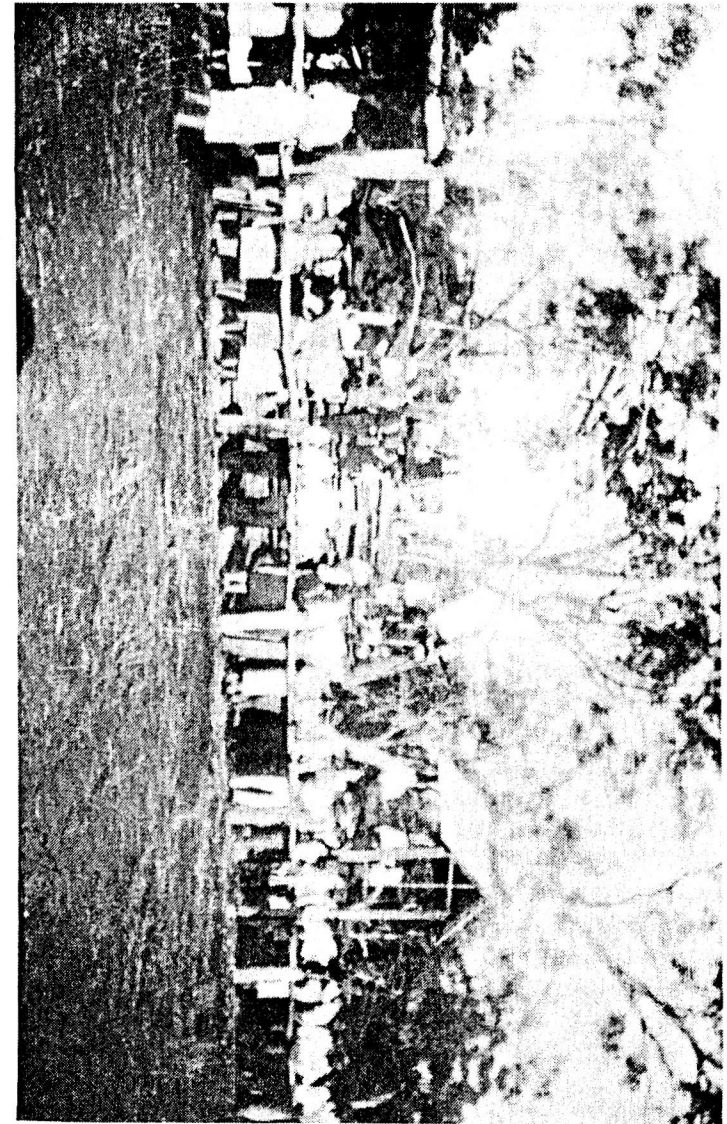
Early in 1970 the Ewan Race Club, in its wisdom, decided to secure a piece of land from the grazing property of Spyglass, the piece chosen being a flat at the junction of Bluewater and Stockyard Creeks, adjacent to the Lynd Highway. This proved to be a very good choice, although some of the other patrons disagreed at the time.

Several grazing properties, and other members, erected permanent huts and galleys, bringing tents and caravans at race meeting times. The racecourse was completed together with a dance hall, meal rooms and permanent booth house. A large area was allotted for the public toilet, hot and cold water both being available in the showers. The water was pumped from Bluewater Creek, into a ten thousand gallon tank on a little ridge, and reticulated to all areas.

New supporters such as Sandy Knuth of Plumtree Creek, Viv Keen of Christmas Creek, E. Masterson of Wyandotte and many other owners and graziers such as Yardleys, K. Thomas, J. Hassett, W. Collins, Les Mayne, W. Reddie, T. Sheahan, I. Crisp of Upson Downs, to name a few, joined in as, having a bitumen road passing right by the course, made it more convenient, plus the fact that prize monies had been increased. The club must appreciate this support.

With the resignation of Mac Core, Mr. Graham Von Wald of Gainsford, was elected as president. Mr. Peter Roberts was appointed secretary, taking over from Mr. E. Matthews whose father, Mr. J. Matthews and he, had been secretaries and treasurers for some years, after Mr. L. Crouch

Race crowd at Ewan, 1921.



and Mr. J. O'Shea resigned.

For a number of years Mr. R. Atkinson (Toby) of Lincoln Springs, supplied all the power for the dance hall and booths from his mobile generator.

Perhaps the biggest step forward in the past year or so was the securing of a power line from NORQEB. This saves 90% of the supporters from having to transport generators and fuel. Comfort is now the key word at the Ewan races. Hot meals or sandwiches are "on tap" at the dining rooms operated by the Sub-Normal children's department. Ice-cold beer and soft drinks etc., are handled by the Townsville Apex Club at very reasonable rates.

In 1983 further improvements were made to facilities at the racecourse. Septic systems were installed and the Dance Hall extended. All labour on these jobs was voluntary except specialist work.

The ladies must be commended for their contribution as they worked at painting and cleaning for days. No award or penalty rates apply to these people. If a job is to be done it is done and everyone pulls their weight.

With the facilities now available the Ewan Race Course must rate among the best country amusement places in North Queensland. This Club has a distinct advantage in that any work is made much easier by the generous loaning of machinery such as tractors, trucks, dozers, loaders, welders etc. by the surrounding Graziers.

Any family wanting an exciting weekend in the country is well advised to visit the Ewan Races which are usually held in the final week of September. If city drivers are a little scared of driving on dirt roads, they can drive all the way on bitumen by travelling a few miles further.

It has been the practice of late years to hold a children's fancy dress dance on the night preceding the races. Mr. and Mrs. Bert Core, and the School of the Air Educational couple, organise the event. Mr. and Mrs. Davidson and Mr. and Mrs. W. Reddie supply and serve all the supper for the

children.

On one occasion, Mr. and Mrs. Core could not attend the meeting but in a call for volunteers, Iona Selk and Mrs. A. Wilcox, were quick to step into the breach and so the children were not disappointed.

The social life commences some eight to ten days prior to the actual races. Some owners take their horses directly from the paddocks to the yards at the race course.

Parties are held at different camps each night and sometimes during the day. The first thing which greets a visitor is a chap holding out a can of beer or a bottle of spirits with the invitation "have a drink."

The day after the meeting (Sunday), a general meeting is held and afterwards a final party takes place and it is all over for another twelve months.

As is inevitable, over the years several fatal or near fatal accidents took place.

In the early 20's, a near fatality occurred on the old Ewan racecourse when a horse ridden by Frank Jansen was crowded and, as the course had no inside running rail, the horse hit a tree, driving its shoulder back into its stomach. The horse had to be destroyed and Frank was unconscious for some hours. The offending jockey, Ted Griffiths, was sent out for twelve months.

Between the years 1955-1982, some very sad happenings have been recorded.

Firstly, Mr. W.G. Little was fatally injured by a horse at the old Ewan races in the late 1950's. "Snow" Petersen and Peter Woodhouse, both of whom were top jockeys and part of the life of the meetings, were both fatally injured during the 70's whilst mustering cattle on the properties.

Another great supporter in Mr. Jim Woodhouse, who was judge for years, passed away in the 1970's.

These fatalities and deaths left a big gap in the lives of their widows and children and also brought sadness to many folk who knew them well. The author expresses his deep

sympathy to these people.

Other supporters who have passed away since the 1982 meeting are Mrs. O. Von Wald (Patron of the Club), Ted Core and Vern Wakeford.

EWAN IN THE 20's

In the early 20's, Ewan was a thriving township. Dances were held every second Saturday night. Cricket and tennis were played every weekend and fishing parties visited the Burdekin almost weekly, and the race meetings were then held twice a year.

The little town now contained a General Store (J. Sommerville), Hotel, Police Station, and Butcher Shop which supplied fresh meat once a week.

Incidentally, the original Police Station had been burnt down in 1911. The Government then rented a building from John Lennox, on a temporary basis; the new Police Station was built in 1936 – quite a temporary arrangement!

At Show time at either Townsville or Charters Towers, the Sardine Tin Mining Company did cease operations, and also at Christmas, for three weeks. Of course, these were unpaid holidays.

The Charters Towers men who formed the largest percentage of miners, would travel home to families. A lot of local people also would take advantage of the holidays to visit Charters Towers, Townsville or Ingham. As the only means of transport to Ingham was by saddle horse, nearly all the people would go out to Charters Towers, the road being quite good for sulkies and buggies, etc.

The average time for the trip of 100 miles to Charters Towers, was three or four days. An assortment of vehicles would file along the road through Ewan, many of the younger men even riding bicycles.

During the last week of the holidays, vehicles would commence returning to Ewan. Each and every one back to the hard old grind.

As was always the case, school children looked forward

to the end of the school year. Four or five "donation" lists were circulated around the district and quite an amount of money was donated, even by old bachelors. The School Committee would organise a picnic and dance, up to 9 p.m., for the children. The teacher did not wait for the picnic, he would hire a horse from one of the parents, and pay a lad to accompany him to Bosworth's "Mountain View" Hotel, the first day, and then down to the railhead near Ingham the following day.

Similar arrangements were made for his return trip next year.

Christmas to those bush kids was something special — all the mums would be making hop and ginger beer. There would be lollies and nuts, things which were luxuries in those days. Above all, they would have ham, something which was seen once a year only by poorer families. Some of the fathers even managed to procure a few bottles of room-temperature beer. (No ice or refrigeration in those days).

Surprise parties were held — picnics and dances were held over Christmas and New Year, and then it was back to the hard old grind for another twelve months.

The year that John Sommerville decided to open a general store was very dry and stock was in very poor condition. Julius and Peter Carlsen and Oscar Ramsay set out to Townsville with their horse team wagons and were due back before Christmas with Sommerville's store's initial order and several Christmas orders for the Ewan families.

On the return trip from Townsville the horses became too weak to travel with the loaded wagons and the teamsters were forced to camp for some weeks where there was some grass for their horses. Julius and Peter Carlsen arrived in Ewan with their loads on Christmas Eve but Oscar Ramsay sent word that he could not arrive for some three weeks.

A lot of families who had their Christmas order with Ramsay faced a bleak Christmas but the mothers found some money somewhere and Christmas stocks were purchased

from Sommerville's new store. This was something they could ill afford but they could not disappoint their children.

When Ramsay's team did arrive all these children had a second Christmas spree so things were not so bad after all.

John Lennox was the first person to own a motor car: he bought a Model T Ford and to most of the kids this was fantastic. A trip to Charters Towers in this car certainly was an adventure. John Lennox would pay a man to take two horses to the Burdekin crossing six miles away, to pull his car across. The next creek was Marsh's and the car would wait there while the horses walked the five miles from the Burdekin to Marsh's Creek.

Many creeks such as Breddens, Walkers and Stockyard, had still to be crossed before reaching the half-way mark at Hillgrove station. The road from Hillgrove to Charters Towers was reasonably good except for Big Sandy (now called Hann's Creek) where a Mr. Wheeler would pull the car across with more horses. The procedure was reversed for the return trip.

Speaking of the Hillgrove—Charters Towers road. A total stranger arrived at Hillgrove and was greeted by a dark boy named Jack. The traveller asked Jack, "how far to the Towers?" Jack replied, "suppose you walk 50 miles, suppose you ride 46 miles, but suppose you go in Mr. Allingham's (the station owner) Tuff, Tuff, you there now."

The author's first ride in a motor car was from the Burdekin River to Ewan, a distance of six miles. Jack Kruger who was employed by the Kangaroo Hills Mining Syndicate of which John Lennox was General Manager drove Lennox to Hillgrove Station just before Christmas, 1922. Tom Hill, Battery Manager went along for company. When they reached the Burdekin on the return trip they had to leave the car and swim the river and walk to Ewan.

The T Model Ford car sat on the far bank of the Burdekin for some three weeks before the water level was low enough for the car to cross. Jack Kruger and the author

rode ponies and Julius Carlsen (a teamster) took chain horses to the river and the car was towed across. Julius very kindly drove the ponies home with his chain horses and his nibs climbed into the motor car with Jack.

Owing to the rain the road was boggy. Julius had taken the short cut home and we were left on our own. An eight-mile trip took two hours and motor cars were not very popular in the author's mind at that time.

The horse and buggy days were now drawing to a close. John Lennox got rid of his model T Ford and bought an Overland Six which had more power and much wider tyres, and could negotiate the Sandy Creeks.

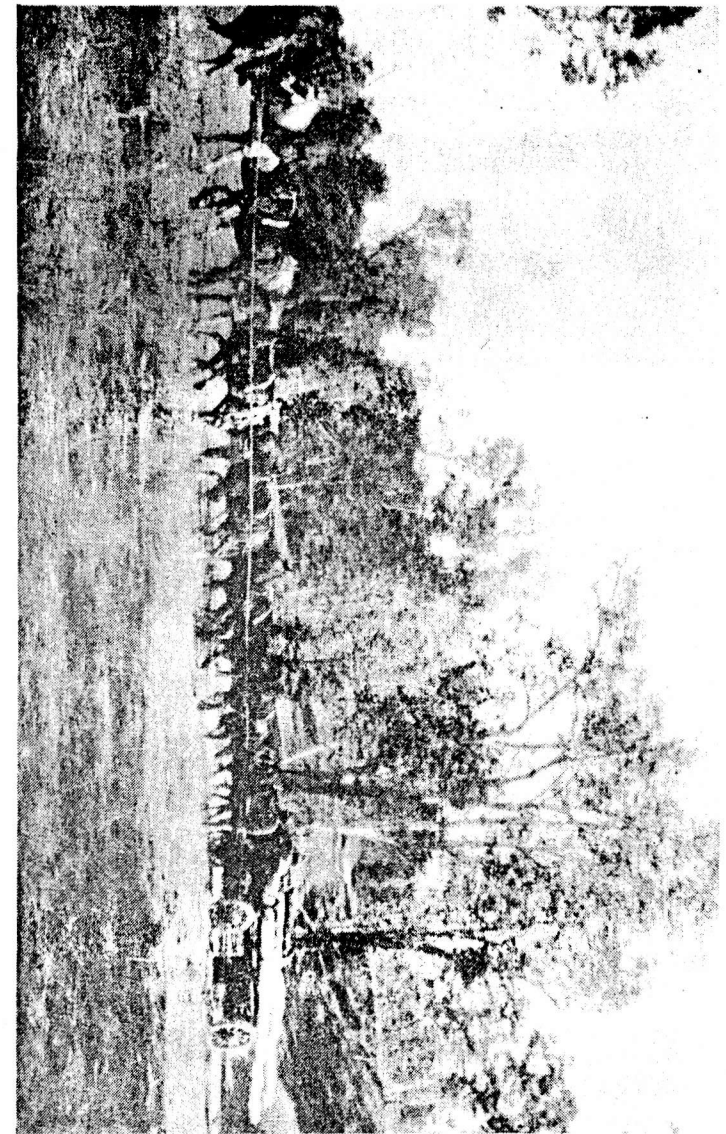
Alf Castles from Kallanda (Fifteen Mile), was to make the radical change in Ewan. He bought a three-speed Dodge 30 cwt truck and came into Ewan and secured the contract to cart all the stone from the Sardine Mine to the Ewan battery, and the tin concentrates to Ingham.

Alf was a good bush driver and was used to rough roads. He chose to travel out through Kangaroo Hills station and then on to Mt. Fox, and so into Ingham through the Stone River area. No money was spent on the back roads by the councils in those days. You made your own way. Some years, the Ewan Progress Association (after six months' negotiation) would receive \$60 (30 pounds) to spend on some 30 miles of road towards Mt. Fox and Ingham.

The motor transport age now had hit Ewan and men like Pat Jones, Charlie Christensen, Alex Christensen, Percy Dickson and others, bought motor trucks to start carting. This meant that the residents of Ewan now could get fresh fruit, bakers' bread and other luxuries from Ingham.

Pat Jones almost lost his truck when it stalled in rising flood waters in a creek near Kangaroo Hills station in 1927. The truck was recovered and towed to the station, dismantled, cleaned and re-assembled but refused to start. Later it was towed to Mt. Fox by Bill Hunter's horse team.

Pat rode a horse to Ingham and secured the services of a



Julius Carlsen team crossing the Alice River near Townsville.

mechanic called Mackay but they could not get to Mt. Fox for some weeks because of the 1927 flood.

Some years later a near-fatality occurred at Walker's Creek on the Ewan—Charters Towers road. Jack Reddie, his wife and family and his brother Bill, were returning to Ewan after spending Christmas in Charters Towers. Their lorry became bogged in the sand in Walker's Creek when a big storm broke bringing down a "banker". They salvaged some possessions before flood water covered the truck. One, or all, of this family could have drowned but for quick thinking.

One brother had to walk miles to the nearest telephone to ring Stanger brothers motor dealers in Charters Towers. A mechanic was sent out—the engine, etc., had to be dismantled completely, cleaned and re-built, at the scene of the accident.

The bush spirit prevailed, and the Reddies travelled to their home at the Shrimp battery, much lighter in the pockets but happy in the thought that things could have been much worse.

Around this same period one of the Stanger family was called out to a breakdown on the Hillgrove station road, and was driving along merrily in a tourer . . . when the engine failed. After checking, he found that the petrol tank which was held on by two metal straps at the rear of the car, was missing.

The cars in those days had a vacuum tank system which held about one quart of petrol so the car had travelled quite some miles after the tank fell off. The Stangers, being experienced bushmen, always had a bicycle strapped across the back of their vehicle on bush trips, so it was on to the bike and go back for the petrol tank.

After riding some seven miles, the tank was found lying on the road with the filler cap uppermost so that very little fuel had been lost. The tank was clamped on the handle-bars of the bike and taken back to the car, wired on with wire cut from a station fence, and the trip continued.



Granddad Carlsen and his wife in their buggy.

TRANSPORT

At the turn of the century, horse and bullock teams were a common sight. Praise must go to these pioneers of transport.

Kangaroo Hills mainly was served by pack team from Ingham. Most of the packers resided around Ingham and would take up provisions to Mt. Fox, Hidden Valley and Ewan, bringing back bags of tin concentrates.

Some of the early packers were Bill and Ted Fanning, Bill Henderson, Lou Baillie, Bill Althaus, Arthur Bosworth, Dick Guild and Chum Johnson.

The wagon teams took supplies from Townsville to Georgetown and the Gulf. The road crossed the range at a point known as Hervey's, continued past Dotswood Station, the Copper Mines and Argentine, across to the Burdekin River, crossing it at the junction of Marsh's Creek. It then followed the Burdekin up, veering away towards Georgetown and surrounding smaller towns.

Some teams would branch off this road near Running Creek and take supplies to Ewan. Supplies also were brought from Ravenswood Junction (now known as Mingela) to Ewan.

A wagon team consisted of some twenty horses, two horses in the wagon shafts and eighteen (three abreast) in front of the shafters.

Many wives travelled with teamster husbands to act as "spare boy" and cook. Quite a few babies were born under wagons with husband or another teamster's wife acting as midwife.

Station owners would get six months' supplies into their storerooms before the wet season started. This created many problems for the teamsters as the average rainfall for this area

was not high and very little rain fell from April to December each year.

With heavy frosts in the winter months, grass became very dry and bush fires were common, resulting in horses becoming very poor in condition. Teamsters would then travel in twos or threes and horses were taken from one team and hitched to the normal wagon team (these horses were known as side) so as to haul the wagon and load across sand creeks and up steeper banks. At times the horses became too weak to work and the teamsters were forced to camp where they could get grass and water for the animals.

The teamster never was idle and whilst they were waiting for rain to bring the grass to fatten their horses, they would repair harnesses and shoe horses.

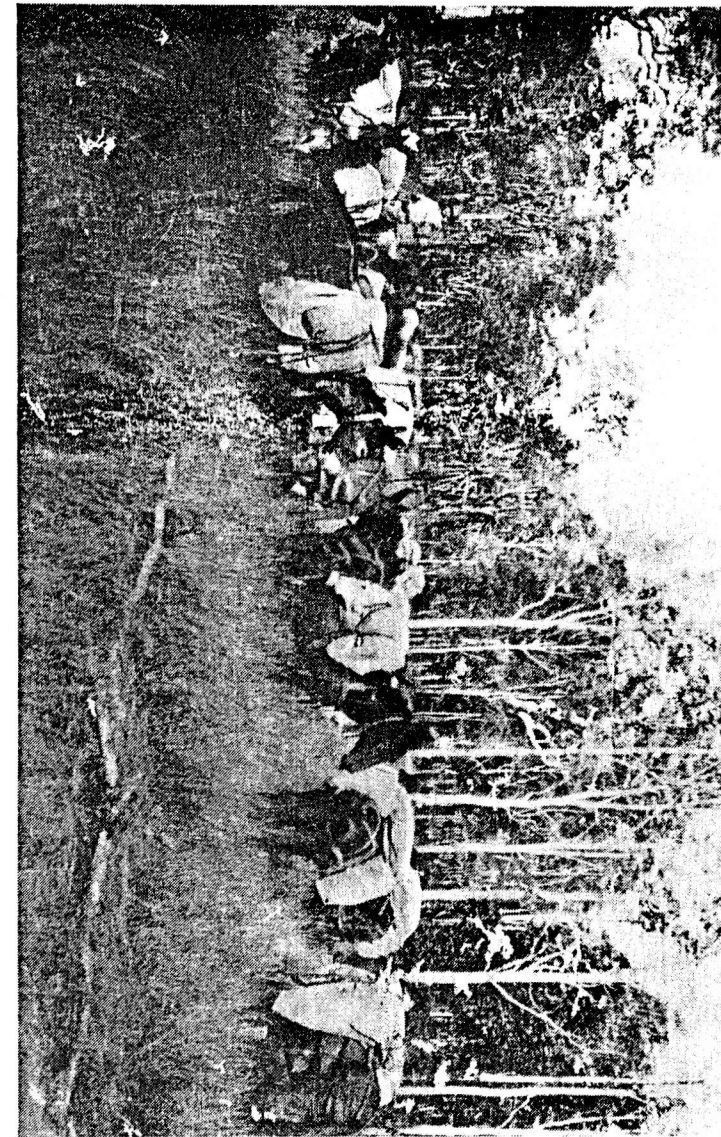
The teamsters with the stronger horses would struggle on to their destinations and deliver their goods to the stations.

Those teamsters who had to camp and rest their horses and wait for rain, were in more trouble if an early wet season arrived as they then had to contend with boggy roads, flooded creeks and rivers and would arrive at their destinations weeks beyond the normal time, but no one growled.

This was the only means of transport and outback people took these things in their stride. Their needs in food and clothing were very simple. So long as they had flour, tea, salt, sugar and syrup, together with cream of tartar and carbonate of soda (no self-raising flour in those days), they could exist and still work hard.

It leads one to wonder how the present-day people would have survived a wet season some fifty years ago. It is common to hear a broadcast of how food was dropped by plane to some family after only a few days of rain. Nobody appears to keep more than a few days' food in their houses because of modern transport.

People years ago kept three months' provisions in their country storerooms. In our house of two adults and three



Mule pack team.

children it was common around December to have nine fifty-pound bags of flour, three seventy-pound bags of sugar, three six-pound tins of tea and four or five seven-pound tins of butter together with rice, dried peas, dried apricots, peaches and apples, cream of tartar, bi-carbonate of soda, pounds of salt, etc. in our storeroom.

This was no isolated case; everybody made provision for the wet and we were all very poor people, but food was put before holidays; not like today where people get trapped in other towns on their way home from holidays and have no money left to pay their way.

The first mail run from Ravenswood Junction to Ewan was started by a Mr. Ramsay who had a bush hotel at Argentine which was on the Townsville—Georgetown road. Mr. Ramsay had three sons, Oscar, Leslie and Reg.

Jim Dobbins, who later married a Miss Ramsay, was the first man to drive the coach on the Ramsay mail run. Later, Leslie Ramsay took over and ran the service like a mini Cobb & Co service. He had a spare set of coach horses at the Fanning and Dotswood stations, the Cooper mines, Argentine and the Star station.

The coach terminated at the Star station unless Les had passengers, and if this was so, he would run the coach a further 35 miles to Ewan, taking a spare boy and two spare coach horses.

In the wet season, Les would use pack horses and sometimes the township of Ewan was without mail for four or five weeks due to flooded rivers.

In later years, Harry Parker from Charters Towers, took over the mail contract and ran it on the same lines as did Les Ramsay.

The next contractor on this mail run was Harry Clarke of Ravenswood Junction. Harry ran a pack horse service only and continued to do so for some years. He was very reliable and held the contract until the mail service from Ravenswood Junction was discontinued.

Miners loading a mule with ore.



The new service came from Ingham via Mt. Fox and Waverley, and was conducted by Alf Benham, as mentioned earlier in these notes.

After the Sardine Mine was found, several Charters Towers and Townsville teamsters came to Ewan. Men like W. Covington, Ab Leach, the three Hackett Brothers, Tom Davidson, Reg Hanley, Arthur and John Bryant, Jim Breddan, the three Ramsay brothers, Lynham brothers, and many others, carted in supplies from Charters Towers and Townsville, returning with loads of tin concentrates to these towns, for shipment to Sydney.

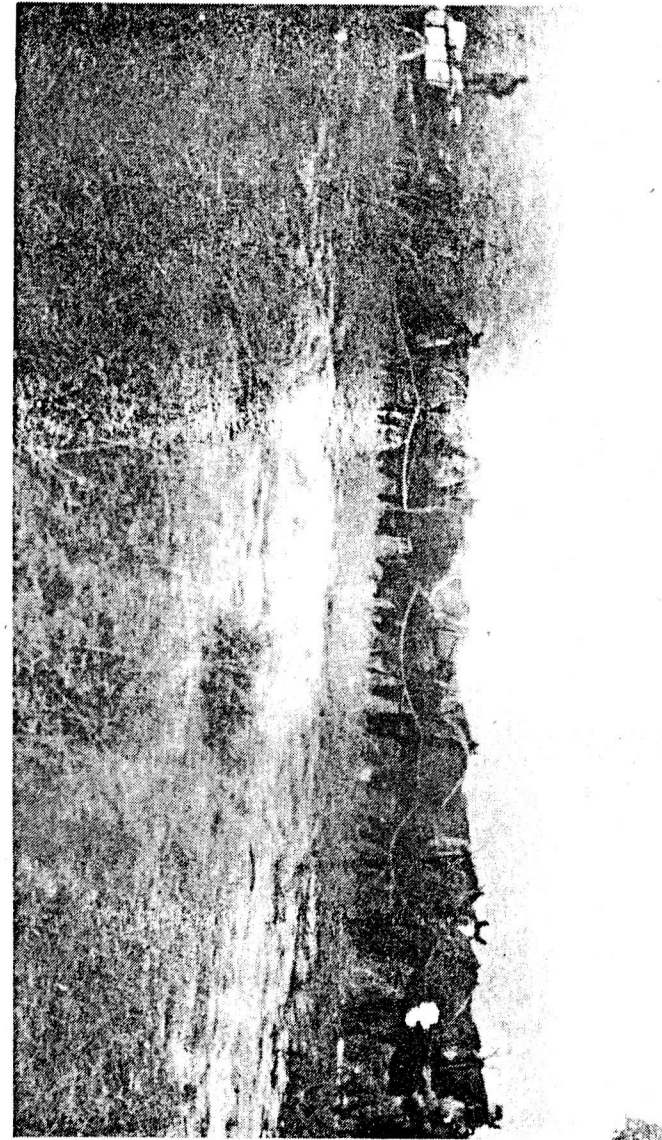
O.T. Lempriere and T.H. Kelly were the main Sydney buyers. These firms appointed local agents who would make advance payment on bags of tin concentrates. A final payment would be made on receipt of the assay and the price was received from the Sydney buyer.

Pack teams were still operating from Ewan to Ingham. At this time Vigo Larsen sold his mule team to W.S. Simpson (Tiff) who operated for some years, eventually selling to Tom Pryor (son of J.H. Pryor, manager of Sardine tin mine).

In the very early 1920's, it was quite common to see ten or twelve wagon teams in Ewan at the one time and the sound of horse bells from these teams, plus all the bells on locally owned horses, made a lot of noise around the countryside.

The wagon teamsters had to cross the Burdekin River about six miles from Ewan. This was a heavy pull through the sand and the teamsters would endeavour to leave Ewan early enough to enable them to cross this river before sun-down, and while their horses were still hot and would pull much better than in early morning.

Most of the teamsters were kindly men and when crossing the Burdekin you could watch them moving up and down the lead, cracking their whips and clad in shirt only (having removed trousers to avoid wetting them in the stream), but rarely striking a horse.



John Bryant's wagon team.

On one occasion, a teamster had just got his loaded wagon to the bottom of the bank and was giving his team a short spell when he chanced to look upstream to see a four-foot wall of water moving down (result of a sudden storm upstream in the Clarke River area). He unhooked his team at the shafts and called to the leader to "git up" and the team moved up the bank leaving two horses in the shafts of the wagon behind.

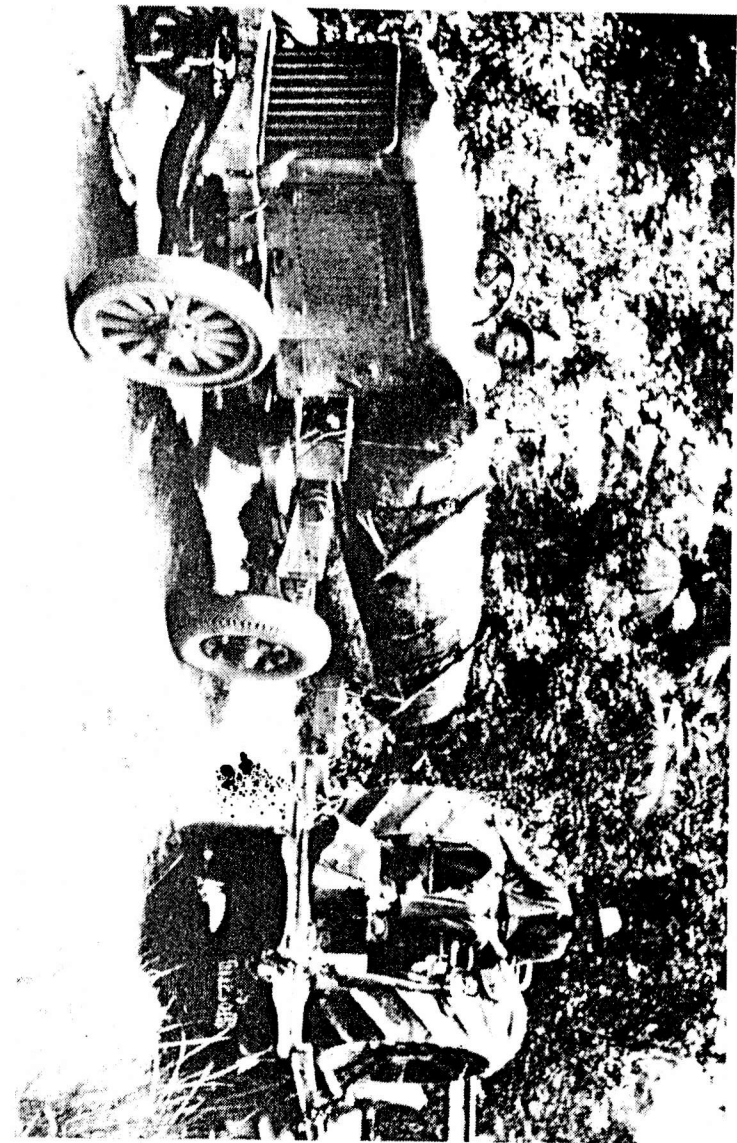
He managed to free the shafters and sat on the bank watching as his loaded wagon, swag and food was quickly covered by flood waters. It was about three weeks later that the wagon was recovered with the load of tin concentrates still intact, in the bags.

In the stormy season a wall of water is common in larger creeks and rivers in this country and very few bushmen will camp overnight in beds of these waterways. The author and a friend, W.R. Little, witnessed a wall of water in the Burdekin at 2 a.m. and within ten to fifteen minutes, there was about 12 feet of flood water flowing down the river.

In the mid 1920's, a short-cut road was opened from Ewan to Mt. Fox, through Anakie and joining Ewan via Kangaroo Hills station—Ingham road at Hendren's Sawmill on Michael Creek. Although this road cut off some twenty miles, it was very rough and steep and three-speed gearbox trucks had difficulty in climbing some of the hills.

The advantage of this road was that it cut out some sandy creek crossings, and two bad patches of black soil on the previous road, in the wet season.

In 1926 the Ewan Hotel was purchased from Joe Aldridge by Mr. W.G. Little of Ingham. Mr. and Mrs. Little had three children, Trixie, William and Leslie. Trixie was an accomplished pianiste and proved to be very valuable in that capacity at dances when she would oblige with extra music, sometimes assisted by Miss. Mary Sharman on the violin. Mary had a beautiful voice and would render songs like "Danny Boy" and the "Rose of Tralee," to the enjoyment of



Hendren's timber plant.

the dancers.

Young Bill Little bought a truck and was a general carrier for quite a number of years. Leslie also became a truck driver and in later years drove timber and transport trucks throughout North Queensland.

Trixie married a policeman named George Schnitzerling and left the district. George is now deceased.

In the 1920's, Mr. Archie Hendren and his son Ken started a sawmill at Mt. Fox. Ken was an all-round athlete and his name often came up in conversation on sporting.

Other men who moved into the logging at Mt. Fox were Gino Paris and Ben Moretti. These men hauled the logs down the Mt. Fox range and later had two sawmills operating, one which they purchased from the Hendrens and another ten miles further along the range, at Cleanskin Creek.

A Mr. Bill Fullerton, and Mr. Hayden, also had sawmills in this locality.

Gino Paris still owns and operates a sawmill in Ingham.

In later years, Mr. Eric Myers of Ingham formed a company which was named Foxwood and operated on a large scale both on log and plywood timbers. The manager at Mt. Fox was a Mr. Robert Grazioli, who also was a partner in the company.

Some years later Foxwood closed its Mt. Fox sawmill operation and transferred all the plant and machinery to Trebonne, about five miles from Ingham.

Quite a large quantity of bridge timbers was hewn at Mt. Fox. Mick Lynch and his son, Jim, cut vast amounts of girders. They also built bridges for the Hinchinbrook Shire Council.

In the early 1940's, Mick and Jim moved to Kirrama Range, north-west of Cardwell. Mick cut girders and Jim drove trucks and tractors with the author, for Roy Armstrong and Roy Crisp, for about two years.

Mick later worked on Blue Range station yard building for about 20 years before retiring to Mt. Fox where he

passed away.

Mick had one sister, Mrs. Mullins, who owned the Royal Hotel in Ingham for years. He had also other sisters who worked like men in logging, further south. They were recently written up in a southern magazine.

Jim Lynch contracted TB and spent twelve months undergoing medical treatment in Brisbane. He was advised by the doctors to go further west. The first job he got was off-siding for a windmill expert around the Richmond area. Jim later purchased his own plant and gradually worked his way up to Katherine in the Northern Territory.

In the wet season of each year he would get employment at the Darwin Power House. After some years he sold his windmill plant and took a permanent job with the Power Authority. One of his jobs was checking out the power plants as far south as Elliott.

Jim married a Brisbane girl and resided in Katherine. He passed away in recent years.

A Mr. Bert Hamilton, who was a widower took his family to Mt. Fox in the early 1930's and got a contract for bridge timber. He was an expert broad-axe man and he quickly taught his trade to his five growing sons, all of whom became experts in timber.

One daughter, Maud, lost her first husband, a Mr. Judd, and later married W.R. (Young Bill) Little from Ewan. They are now retired and living at Innes Estate near Townsville. Another daughter married Les Little. One daughter, Addie, married a Mr. Dave Scott in Ingham. One son, Ernie, was appointed by Main Roads as a foreman of a girder gang at Mt. Spec during the big push for bridge timber in 1942.

Each broad-axe man was given an offsider and asked to finish one thirty-foot girder in a twelve-hour day. As some of the men were not producing a girder a day, Ernie spoke about it and one chap, not knowing Ernie's capabilities, challenged him to turn out one girder a day.

The next morning Ernie brought his axe and, after the

men appointed an offsider for him, he set to work. Imagine the surprise of those men when Ernie had his girder finished before lunch. He had no trouble from that time on in getting a girder a day from each man.

In 1941 the Japanese came into World War II and made very quick advances towards the Australian North East Coast. The residents of the coastal areas such as Cooktown to Townsville became very concerned for the safety of their families, especially when the then Federal Labor Government decided not to defend Australia north of Rockhampton. Fortunately the American Army and Air Force landed in Australia and moved their strength to North Queensland. The Australian and American Air Forces challenged the Japs in the Pacific and won the Coral Sea battle, thus halting the enemy's advance.

Numerous families left the main towns and moved inland and some of these families moved into the Ewan district until the scare was over.

The Australian armed forces were moved from the south to Rollingstone in convoys, one of which was 30 miles in length. The author, who was driving a loaded timber truck from Mt. Spec to Townsville, met this long convoy between Rollingstone and Townsville and together with many other drivers sat and waited until the convoy stopped for a quick break. It was a sight never to be forgotten: large trucks, utilities and official cars lining the road, stopped on creek banks, in creek beds and on the open road for miles and miles. The troops were kept at Rollingstone for some weeks and then sent to their different destinations.

The Americans set up a Radar Station at Mt. Spec and had some 100 officers and men stationed there. Most of these men had never seen timber trucks and jinkers loaded with log timber; some were fascinated but others were scared of riding in them, especially when travelling down the Mt. Spec range. At each bend the noses of the logs would swing across from one side to the other. Some Yanks never took their eyes

off the logs until the bottom of the range was reached.

Fortunately Rollingstone Hotel was situated a few miles further along the road to Townsville and these lads could soothe their nerves with a few whiskies before proceeding on their journey.

In 1942 an American transport plane strayed off course in the Burdekin river region, was short of fuel and the crew had to parachute to safety. The Commander at Mt. Spec sent rescue trucks to the area and all the crew was found unhurt except for one with a broken leg. One chap had landed in a tree and another had landed in the midst of a mob of bullocks which was being driven to the meatworks. The wreckage of the plane was later found and salvaged.

TELEPHONES

In 1922, Ewan made quite an advance in communication. A telephone line was built on trees from Hillgrove to Ewan, a distance of 46 miles. The line was built along the side of the wagon road, along the side of the Burdekin River, so that repairs to the line would be easier.

Now, Ewan, for the first time had telephone contact with the rest of the world.

This telephone service to Ewan did not prove very successful. The single wire had been attached to trees with fixed insulators and tie wire. The continual swaying of the trees broke the tie wire allowing the main wire to rest on the metal Goose Necks thus partially earthing the line. The main wire also would rub through and down would go the line. Limbs falling from trees would snap the line and, again, communication was broken.

The Sardine Co. would pay 22/6 (\$2.25) per day to anyone who had horses (with a maximum of three days), to travel to Hillgrove station and repair the line.

Eventually the line became useless and after twelve months negotiation with the Government, the line was re-built with swinging insulators, but still was not a success. This line was scrapped and a new one erected from Paluma to a small Post Office on Running River, 18 miles from Ewan. A Party line was built to consumers at Ewan, Oakey Creek and New Moon stations. This line is still in existence and has been a blessing to these people.

PROGRESS PAUSES

In the late 20's the Canary mine closed. The world depression was now being felt by all industries.

The price of tin fell to 19/- (\$1.90) a unit, realising only \$133 (sixty six pounds ten) a ton for 70% metal.

In late 1929, the Sardine mine no longer was a viable proposition and the company ceased operations. Tenders were called for the purchase of the mine and machinery. The successful tenderers were J. & W. Reddie of the Shrimp Battery. John Lennox purchased the Ewan battery and closed it down.

Ewan appeared to be doomed and families such as the Irwins, Julius Carlsens, who had been residents of Ewan for many years, moved away to Ingham.

Shortly before leaving Ewan, the Julius Carlsen family lost their youngest child, Freddie, in a freak shooting accident. He had been shot in the back with a .22 rifle. His eldest sister, Mary, who was a young teenager, carried her little brother almost a mile to Bert Kruger's house and then ran another mile to ring the ambulance and arranged with John Lennox to bring his car to meet the Ingham ambulance. He was taken to Ingham Hospital, but died on the operating table.

One source of income for the residents of Ewan was kangaroo shooting and men like George Hills snr, and his two sons Bill and George, and Alf Glendenning, were specialists in this trade. They could shoot a kangaroo whether it was stationary or moving, and rarely wasted a bullet.

The O'possum season opened for about one month every second year. The young men of the district then were out in force getting O'possum skins. These were done up in bundles and sent to the southern buyers. Anyone who

wanted their money quickly would sell to Alf Glendenning who was very fair with his prices.

After the Sardine closure, all their miners and battery workers shifted out looking for work.

John Lennox and Jack Kruger went to Kilkivan to work at a Cinnabar mine and treatment plant. Jack Kruger nearly lost his life at the retorts as he was overcome with Cinnabar (Quick Silver) fumes. He then decided to return to Ewan and take over the battery where he had been an engine driver and tin dresser for some years. He married Iris Zabel in Kilkivan in 1933 and returned to Ewan. As he could not operate the battery on his own, and he did not have enough finance to employ labour, his brother Ernie left his job at the Vacuum Oil Co. in Townsville, and joined Jack.

The battery was in a very run-down condition. It was decided to try to buy it in that condition instead of doing all the repairs and still pay rental to John Lennox, the owner. Moreover, there were a few thousand tons of tailings in the river behind the battery, and situated in the battery machine area.

After some negotiations with John Lennox, the Kruger brothers bought the tailings and battery on time payment. Twelve months later a utility and truck were purchased, again on hire purchase, and a start was made on re-treating the tailings.

With the depression starting to lift and two batteries, Ewan and Shrimp, in operation, prospectors drifted back to the district. Some good mines were opened in the White Springs and Tinvale areas, across the Burdekin towards Charters Towers. Perhaps the best mines found were two located by Frank Cullen and his sons, Don and Tom, and also the very rich mine worked by Alf Hammond and Fred Powell.

The ore was transported to Ewan battery by pack teams, wagon and by the three Hackett brothers (Bill, Joe and George) – wagon teamsters in earlier years who had

moved with the times by purchasing motor lorries.

Tin miners also were found in the Biscuit Creek area between Ewan and the Kangaroo Hills area. The best mine here, possibly, was that worked by Ted and Norm Smith of Charters Towers.

For the first time in many years prospectors began to find tin in payable quantities between Hidden Valley and Mt. Zero, about 25 miles towards Paluma, from Ewan. Probably the best mine was worked by Johansen and Lambert. This was rich and produced quite a few tons of tin.

Ewan now seemed to get a second lease of life. Bert West and W.R. Little built a battery on Oakey Creek, about four miles upstream from the Sardine mine which J. & W. Reddie still were operating.

Kruger brothers were crushing full time. As well as treating tailings, carrying stone for the prospectors, they were carting and crushing hundreds of tons of mullock heap which was too poor for prospectors to handle.

With the Mt. Spec road finished from the coastal highway to Paluma, and many of the worst patches of road from Paluma to Ewan up-graded, traffic started to flow to Townsville in late 1938.

In late 1940, Jack Kruger passed away and his brother Ernie carried on the business until 1942, when worsening war conditions forced closure of the business.

Jack Kruger's widow Iris married Adam Alexander Junior and they moved to Southern Queensland, but later returned to live in Townsville. Adam died a few years ago and Iris has now moved to Charters Towers to live. There were two children, John and Dell from the marriage of Jack and Iris Kruger. John Kruger Junior joined the staff of the National Bank and is at present Branch Manager at Mareeba. He and his wife Margaret also a former employee of the National Bank, have three children.

Dell Kruger married a master builder, Owen Eade of Townsville. They have three daughters

Ernie Kruger married Marguerite Smith of Charters Towers and after several years in batteries, timber and motor business they have retired to live in Ingham. There were two daughters to this marriage, Helen and Grace. Helen married Jim Danaher of Townsville. They had two daughters, Sharon and Michelle. Little Michelle passed away at the tender age of four. Sharon attends St. Patrick's College in Townsville.

The second daughter, Grace, joined the public service at Ingham Court House. In 1968 she resigned, went to England and was fortunate enough to secure a position in Queensland House. After four years she returned to Townsville on transfer to the Justice Department and at present is Clerk of the Court at Cloncurry.

Iris and Adam Alexander had four children, three boys and one girl to their marriage.

The battery later was sold to Dr. Wooster of Mackay and managed by Pat Carr, but only worked for a short period owing to shortage of ore. A bushfire completely gutted the building in later years and the pieces of machinery were taken away.

West and Little sold their battery to Ted Young in the early 1940's. This plant was taken over by Pat Jones and his four sons in later years, and successfully operated for several years, finally being sold to R. & B. Mining Company. This company operated only for a very short period before abandoning the field. The old battery is now unserviceable and rusting away.

The Kangaroo Hills mining field then had just one mine, the Sardine which was still operated by J. & W. Reddie, the ore being crushed at their own battery. They were not receiving satisfactory prices for the concentrates from the Australian buyers because of impurities in these concentrates.

William (Bill) Reddie secured an overseas market for one so-called impurity, "Stanite." This changed the whole future for the operation of the mine.

After the passing of Bill and Jack Reddie, Jack Reddie's

two sons, Bill and Charlie, took over operations and for some years sent all the concentrates overseas. They netted quite a comfortable living. Both young men married and now have young families.

The mine and battery were put on the market and several large companies were interested. In 1981 Loloma Mining Company purchased the complete business for an undisclosed amount. Bill Reddie remained with the new owner but later resigned. Charlie bought a grazing property out near Winton.

A few large mining companies such as B.H.P. have prospected the Kangaroo Hills mining field in recent years, but have not disclosed their findings.

The South Alligator Mining Company bought a lease from Tom Cooper, close to the Burdekin River near Blue Range and Mt. Fullstop station homestead. This area had been known for years as good alluvial ground, but no one had sufficient finance to bring water from the Burdekin to sluice the district. South Alligator built huge dams and installed the latest pumping and sluicing equipment, and this has really paid off. Large amounts of tin concentrates are still being produced.

Small pockets of alluvial tin have been worked in the sands of the Running River in recent years. Lance Petersen has recovered quite a lot of tin in his operations on Spinifex Creek about eight miles from the old township of Ewan.

Little or no prospecting is being carried out by small prospectors on the old tin field. Cattle, kangaroos or rabbits have taken over the land from which much wealth was derived in earlier days.

GRAZING AND DROVING

At the turn of the century, all available grazing land had been taken up along the Burdekin and Running River areas, for grazing purposes.

There were some big spreads such as Lyndhurst, Valley of Lagoons, Christmas Creek, Greenvale, Hillgrove and Dotswood, most of which were close to, or bordering on, the Burdekin River. Boundary fences were rare as the properties were so large and cattle easily could stray.

At mustering time notice would be given by the station owner to all surrounding owners, and these had the right to attend the muster themselves, or send one or more of their employees, to attend the muster to watch their interests, but also to work in the muster.

These musters provided work for a number of stockmen from the Ewan mining district, and further afield. Pack horses were used, and sometimes the station buggy, to transport the stockmen's swags and food. A camp was set up at one of the station yards, miles from the homestead, and the cook took over the job of providing the food for hungry stockmen.

The menu was very limited. The main diet was dry salted meat and damper with jam and syrup. Homemade bread sometimes was sent out from the station homestead and the boss might allot himself a little butter which, of course, would be in a melted state by mid-day as there was no refrigeration in that country.

The cook would try his best to make up tasty foods. Sometimes he would serve up curry and rice, stew, boiled corned meat (salted meat), Shepherd's pie or mince (if he had a mince machine), but the main ingredient in each dish was dry, salted meat.

Dampers were made from plain flour, cream of tartar, soda and salt to taste. The mixture was cooked in a camp oven which was placed in hot coals and covered with hot ashes. The general run of dampers was good, as most of the cooks were well experienced in damper making.

The stockmen worked seven days a week from daylight to dark and slept in swags under the stars.

This country can be extremely hot in summer with temperatures soaring to between 100 and 110 degrees F (40 to 45° C) with winter morning temperatures dropping to freezing point.

Even wireless sets (radio) were non-existent and the only amusement stockmen had was music from a mouth organ or from a concertina played by one of their lot. Some of these musicians could play quite well whilst others would even cause the dingo to howl in sympathy.

The station owner supplied all the horses for mustering, but the stockmen had all to be reasonably good riders. The head stockman would just point out a horse in the yards and say "that one is yours, Jack." The stockman caught and saddled the brute, then swung into the saddle, sometimes only to see the rest of the boys grinning. Then, and only then, would he realise that he had been given a buck jumper. Nothing like getting one of these on a cold morning when the stockman's hands are so cold he cannot even feel the reins or the bridle.

The station owners in most cases did not break in their own young horses but employed a professional breaker on contract. The breaker usually employed an offsider and they would rope and handle the young horses, teach them to lead on foot and on horseback, then mouth them by driving them around and controlling them with reins, from behind. Finally, they would ride each horse a number of times. The animals then were turned over to the owner, or head stockman, for the stockmen to ride.

After all horses had been saddled, the head stockman

would tell the riders which part of the country, normally called the "run", that he wanted mustered, and the day would start. Riders would carry their lunches in the saddle bag, and the quart pot in which they boiled and brewed tea, would hang on the sides of their saddles.

Ninety per cent of the riders were experienced and knew where to find the cattle. These were herded into small mobs and driven to an appointed place and handed over to the tailers. Tailers would ride around the herd, letting them feed but not allowing them to stray.

In the afternoon all the riders would congregate and take the mustered herd to the stockyards where they would be yarded for the night.

Next morning at daylight, cattle would be drafted into the various yards, and branding began.

A fire was started and branding irons heated. A rope would be thrown on a calf. In some cases these calves could be twelve months old and quite large. The calf was then hauled over towards the yard fence where three or four stockmen would wrestle it to the ground for the branding, ear marking and castration operation.

This work would continue until the calves were finished. Cattle would then be taken in various directions and freed. Just imagine the state the men would be in after wrestling the stock for hours in four inches of dust, on a hot day, and drinking water from water-bags. At dark it was off to the nearest dam or waterhole for a bath and back to the camp to eat more salt meat, etc. Tomorrow would be just another such day — off to muster and brand, etc.

The wages paid to stockmen were small and the hours long. On one occasion a visitor said to a stockman, "Jim, you have long hours here." Jim promptly replied, "No, mate, our hours are the same length as yours but we use more of them."

After the wet season the meatworks would commence killing but before this happened, they sent their buyers to the

station to select the bullocks and speyed fat cows, and to set prices. The station owners were advised the date upon which the buyer would arrive and it was the responsibility of the owners to have the cattle either yarded or paddocked, ready for inspection by the buyer.

Most of the stations had two musters early in the year and during the second muster the bullocks for the works would be drafted into a special paddock to wait inspection. Weaners would be taken from the breeders later in the year and paddocked until such time as they forgot their mothers.

When the droving season was approaching, station owners contacted their favourite drover and made arrangements for their meatworks cattle to be picked up on a certain date. The drover was paid so much a head to deliver the cattle to the meatworks.

The drover had what was called a "droving plant." This consisted of several saddle horses for the actual drive, pack or buggy and horse to cart the food tent and the stockmen's swags and, last and most important, the drover had some "night horses."

Stockmen would contact the drovers and tie up a job. They were told on what station to meet the drover and plant. The mob was taken over by the drover and started for the works. A mob consisted of 500 to 1,000 animals.

A Stock Route ran from the Georgetown area down the Burdekin country, across Dotswood station and so down the Old Hervey Range Road to the Townsville works.

As these cattle came off big spreads and were mustered only, and worked through the yards, a few times a year — and in lots of cases bullocks were camp drafted, they were very nervy (jumpy). Campdrafting was done on an open, flat piece of country. A few quiet cows were placed over to one end of the flat and the mob to be drafted was put toward the other end of the flat.

Special horses called "camp horses" were used for this operation. The station owner or the head stockman, would



Killing for meat on the droving trip.

tell the stockmen which bullock or cow he wanted taken from the mob and across to the quiet cows. The stockman then rode in and cut out, and kept out, the beast until it went across to the quiet mob. This was no mean feat, requiring good horse and good horseman, or in some instances, good horsewoman.

The aboriginal boys became expert horsemen and good stockmen. They enjoyed this type of work and were strong competitors for white stockmen.

Taking all these factors into consideration, the drover had quite a few jumpy mobs to contend with in the trip to the works. The mob travelled an average of 10 to 12 miles a day, feeding as they travelled. Late in the evening they were settled down for the night.

The first few nights a double watch was kept on the mob, especially if they were a bit wild. The stockmen, or now drovers, rode around the mob, each doing so for about two hours singing, whistling or playing a mouth organ. Anything to make a constant noise and so not frighten any of the mob. Some of the singing was worse than the howl of the dingo.

Special horses were used for the watch work — horses which were experienced and would not attempt to gallop between trees growing close together or under low-hanging limbs on trees.

If the mob galloped off from the camp ("rushed"), it was the job of the watching drovers to try and gallop their night horses to the leaders of the cattle and turn them. If they could do this, the mob would begin to move in a circle — this was called "ringing." Once this can be achieved, the whole mob will commence "ringing" and it is quite a sight to see 1,000 beasts running around in a circle — but a very pleasant sight for the drovers.

Quite some danger lies at the drover's camp site if the mob rushes in that direction. Men scatter from their swags and make for the dearest decent sized tree, but their rest is

Road through Mt. Fox in early 1930's.



now spoilt as all hands have to catch a horse and join all others in settling down the mob once again.

On one occasion a young drover on watch was chastised by the head drover for not getting up to the lead in one "rush." His answer was that the "bloody tail" was fast enough for him.

On another occasion, a contract drover had a useless young fellow on a trip and this lad had done everything wrong. Wet weather set in and they came to the Burdekin River which was running a part banker. The drover, having decided to swim the mob across, gave the young chap a horse that was a good swimmer and told the lad to swim ahead of the leading cattle and they would string out behind him. It was impressed upon the young man that no matter what happened, he must not turn back.

Everything went well until the new chum had almost reached the other bank. He looked back and saw a bow in the line of bullocks, caused by the strong current of water in the flooded stream. The new chum turned his horse back to take the bow out of the line and so caused the whole mob to commence ringing in the water.

The old drover slipped down from his mount and prayed quietly for just one small favour — that the new chum be drowned.

Most cattle would settle down after a few nights on the trip and then only a single watch would be kept. On some occasions, beasts from one particular station on the Burdekin, would be on the road for twelve days and "rush" every night.

When the mob arrived at the meatworks, the beasts were checked by their head stockman and then taken over by the meatworks' stockmen.

It was off to town for the drovers' men and, after a day or so, back to pick up another fresh plant and horses, and proceed to take delivery of another mob.

A tragedy occurred in the late 1930's when a well-

known and experienced drover named Barney Langden lost his life in the flood waters of the Burdekin River.

Barney was bringing a mob down on the Ewan side of the Burdekin during the wet season, because he could not cross the flooded river. As this track consisted of many stony ridges, the cattle were getting very sore-footed. Barney went ahead to find a crossing in a creek which was full of flood water backed up by the Burdekin. If he could cross this creek with the mob, they would be able to travel on sandy river banks and give their hoofs a chance to heal.

Apparently on entering the water Barney's horse must have slipped on a bank hidden in the dirty water. In doing this, it was surmised that the horse threw up his head, hit Barney in the forehead knocking him unconscious, thus causing him to drown.

The Ewan police constable and his aboriginal tracker located the body in about 12 feet of water and after swimming across flooded Oakey Creek with the body, contacted Charlie Christensen of Ewan. Charlie organised a small party and took his little four-cylinder, two-wheel drive utility, through boggy country, and so brought Barney's body to Ewan for burial.

W.G. Little of the Ewan Hotel, who was a carpenter, constructed the coffin from a large table from the Ewan Progress Association Hall, and Barney duly was buried.

Mrs. Langden, Barney's mother, and her son travelled all the way to Ewan from Townsville, over bush roads, as soon as the country was dry enough. They went around and thanked each and every person who had assisted in the very sad episode, and paid all costs of replacing furniture, etc.

Thousands and thousands of cattle were driven over the Stock Route during the years of droving, and this provided work for many white and coloured men. This changed, and changed drastically, with the advent of motor vehicles.

In the late 1920's, station owners purchased small motor trucks and commenced carting their own supplies

from Charters Towers, Townsville and Ingham. This spelt the end of the wagon teamsters and fresher goods could be landed at the stations. Potatoes, onions, butter etc., started to appear on the tables. Life was becoming a little easier in that the employer and employee could travel to town by motor car or truck.

At Annual Shows and Christmas time, most graziers would supply a truck to take employees to town for a fortnight.

Perhaps the coloured employees enjoyed themselves the most. They usually went into Charters Towers and had a big camp near the Sports Reserve.

In those days coloured employees had money to spend when they hit town as most of their pay was compulsorily banked.

The taxi drivers had a great time driving them to and from town. New clothes of the brightest colours were bought and parties held nightly at their camp.

THE BREAK-UP OF LAND

The Queensland Labour Government decided to buy up some of the larger properties and Lyndhurst and Dotswood were two in the Burdekin area which changed hands. The Government started State butcher shops in the larger towns, and Townsville was one of these.

Like all Government ventures, these stations showed substantial losses and were re-sold to private enterprise in 1929. The Government, in its wisdom, decided to cut down the size of the big stations and so encourage toward closer settlement, with the result that when a lease expired, it was partly resumed and the resumed portion put up for ballot.

Christmas Creek station was then owned by Bill McDowall, his daughter Mary and son, Bob. The father died and Mary, who then was Mrs. George Core, bought out her brother who then bought Abbingdon Downs near Georgetown. George and Mary Core then sold to Beak Pastoral Co., and returned to town, but the call of the bush was too strong and when the two blocks, Tupples and Mt. Dudley, were cut from Christmas Creek, they balloted and won both blocks. They combined the blocks and named them Blue Range station, in about 1920.

Percy Edwards was the first manager of Christmas Creek for Beak Pastoral Co., and transferred to Blue Range as head stockman when Ike Jansen was appointed manager of Christmas Creek. Percy Edwards later became a partner with Mrs. Bob McDowall in Abbingdon Downs.

Ike Jansen drew a block now known as Gadara when it was resumed from Greenvale. George and Mary Core later bought Gadara from Jansen. They also re-purchased Christmas Creek from the Beak Pastoral Co., for \$10,000 (five thousand pounds), with 2,000 cattle on the property.

Incidentally, the Blue Range homestead was carted from Charters Towers by a teamster named Bill Freeman.

The Christmas Creek block was resumed in 1959 and the ballot was won by Cec Kean. His son, Viv, took over from him after a few years.

After George Core died in May, 1965, Blue Range was divided, the daughter, Olga and her husband, Jack Matthews retaining the homestead block, and Mac (the son), his wife and family taking over the other half now called Mt. Fullstop.

Mac Core married a Miss. Jean Ferguson whose father was one time manager of Dostwood station, and later Lawn Hills. One of Jean's sisters married Mick Costello of Fanning Downs and another sister married Dick Fraser of the Frank Fraser family of Ingham. Dick later had properties near Richmond and Clermont, but now has a property near Rockhampton.

Mac Core has now retired on Mt. Fullstop and his son, David, and his his wife, Des, manage the station. The younger son, Grahame, has a property in central Queensland, and their only daughter, Jenny, resides in Townsville.

Jack and Olga Matthews' only son, Eugene, manages Blue Range stock while Jackie (their daughter), and her husband, Chris Heath, manage Valpra, another property acquired by the Matthews family.

Olga Matthews' daughter by her first marriage, Iona Spears, who first married Snow Petersen, purchased New Moon station from Fred Purdy. There were two children of the marriage, Wendy and Jim. Snow was accidentally killed on horseback whilst mustering. Iona later married Glen Selk and they still own New Moon and later purchased another small property near Bluff Downs station.

Gadara was sold by the Core family to J. Baillie and son, from Ingham, in the 1970's. The old lady, Mary Core, passed away in February, 1980, at the grand old age of 94 years. She had been an expert horsewoman and hard worker, and



Fancy Dress at Blue Range Station, 1930.

together with her husband George, had built quite an empire for her descendants.

Three brothers, Bob, Tom and Henry Atkinson, came to the north as very young men. Bob and Tom settled on properties around Mt. Garnet, and Henry purchased Greenvale station. Henry later acquired Wyandotte station, a property which had been cut off Valley of Lagoons. When Henry passed on he left Wyandotte to his son, Dell, Camel Creek to his youngest son Ray, and Greenvale homestead block and a small property called Helen's Hill (near Ingham) to his eldest son Jim.

At this time Jim was living at Helen's Hill. He married a Miss. Mary Milton and made his home at Greenvale.

In 1957, a large part of Greenvale was resumed and put up for ballot. Jim Atkinson decided to hold the portion known as Lucky Downs. Jim passed away about four years ago but his son Henry (Boy), his wife, and Mary Atkinson (Jim's widow) still own and manage the property.

Just prior to the Atkinsons leaving the old Greenvale homestead, a light aeroplane crashed on take-off from the airstrip, killing the pilot and two passengers.

Dell Atkinson sold Wyandotte station to Vince Swayne of Ingham and retired to Malanda where both he and his wife passed on. Wyandotte later was sold to Ted Masterson from Mareeba and Ted later sold to Percy Edwards who moved down from Abbingdon Downs.

Ted Masterson's son, Eddie, bought Wyandotte from Percy Edwards. Eddie and his wife, who was a Miss. Atkinson of Lucky Downs, still own and manage Wyandotte.

Percy Edwards bought a large dairy farm at Malanda which he later sold, retired to Mareeba where he passed away. Percy was a first-class cattleman and also a very successful racehorse owner.

Ray Atkinson died quite a young man and Camel Creek was in an Estate for some years. The eldest son Rob (Toby) managed the property for some years. Camel Creek, like all



Mrs. Irwin whose sons worked in the cattle industry.

the other stations, had blocks resumed.

Toby Atkinson finished up with a block on the eastern boundary which he named Lincoln Springs. He, his wife and son, Peter, and daughter, Bronwyn, still reside there.

Keith Atkinson, another of Ray's sons, owns and manages the original Camel Creek block.

The Valley of Lagoons was purchased by J.S. Love in the late 1920's. He also owned Gainsford and three other stations further north-west. After J.S. Love's death, Dick Chapman was appointed general manager of the J.S. Love Estate. Dick resided at Gainsford station.

After Dick resigned to manage his own small property near Charters Towers, Jim Woodhouse was appointed general manager and he elected to reside at Valley of Lagoons.

About 1963, the trustees of the J.S. Love Estate, decided to sell all the stations. Jim took up a block near Lyndhurst station. He later retired to Townsville, leaving the property in the hands of his son, Don.

Jim had a good knowledge of racing and was a great help to the Ewan Race Club where he was judge for many years. He passed away about four years ago. Jim's son, Peter, who is mentioned earlier in these writings, was a leading amateur jockey. He married a Miss. Lil Collins who now resides in Charters Towers with her young family.

The R.L. Atkinson family bought Valley of Lagoons station and the younger son, Alan, still manages this property.

Gainsford station was purchased by Mrs. O. (Dixie) Von Wald and her sons, Graham and Robert, in 1963 after selling her half share in Abbingdon Downs to Percy Edwards.

Robert and Dixie both sold their interests in Gainsford to Graham and his wife (a former Miss. Collins) and this couple ran a very successful cattle property. Dixie bought a small property closer to Charters Towers and her son Robert manages this.

Dixie's only daughter, Margaret, married Bill Collins of

Somerset. They later sold this property and at present Bill is farming a large block of lucerne on the Burdekin River near Gainsford station.

The Von Wald and Collins families are great supporters of amateur racing, especially the Ewan Club.

Perhaps one of the biggest spreads was Hillgrove station, purchased by the Allingham family before the turn of the century. Three sons, Jack, Joe and Bert, eventually owned and managed Hillgrove, Fletchervale and Gainsford stations.

In later years J.S. Love purchased Gainsford and it remained in his Estate until purchased by the Von Wald family.

Before 1920, there was a privately owned racecourse on Fletchervale station and many good times were enjoyed by surrounding graziers and invited guests. After a few years, however, the course was closed.

The Allingham family also owned Kangaroo Hills station but sold it to a chap named Barnes; and a few years later re-purchased it. Years later, Jos Allingham moved to Kangaroo Hills station which he then owned. He also purchased two smaller properties towards Charters Towers — Southwick and Emu Valley.

Jos Allingham and his wife Violet (nee Miss. Black of Pajingo) have both passed on and their only son, A.J. (Bunty) Allingham now owns and manages these properties.

Jack Allingham retained Hillgrove station and also acquired Fletchervale. Jack married a Miss. McDonald, daughter of Dr. McDonald of Ingham. Both Jack and his wife are now deceased. Bill, son of Jack, acquired Hillgrove, and Dr. Jock Allingham and his family own and manage Fletcher-vale.

In later years Bill Allingham moved to Biloela and since that time had the misfortune to lose his wife. Bill's daughter, Eve Mann and her husband Tom, live on and manage Hillgrove.

Years ago a Mrs. Zillman of Starbright station, which

adjoins Hillgrove, was attacked by a coloured boy who was a stockman on Hillgrove. This lady showed great courage in fighting off the rape attack, grabbed a gun and fired a shot over her attacker's head. He was later arrested and convicted. No doubt some of these bush women had a lot of courage!

In latter years Hillgrove has lost a number of blocks by resumption, some of which are Battery owned by Peter Johnson of Ingham; Spyglass owned by Gordon Gaynor; New Moon owned by Iona and Glen Selk; Dotswood owned by Angus Co. The last big spread on the stock route to Townsville has had several resumptions made like Lassie resumption from Hillgrove owned by Warren Matthews; Payne's Lagoon, Nicholas; Kirkland Downs, Tom Kirkwood; Laroona, A. Glenwright, and several others.

The whole idea of resumption is for closer settlement. Young men who had learned the cattle industry are given a chance to earn a living, and with the help of the "School of the Air," quite a lot of pressure is removed from the wife of the grazier.

The mining industry after World War Two was really in the doldrums.

Mat Sharman sold his small cattle property and butchering business to Cecil Milton from Ingham. Mat had a fall in Charters Towers shortly afterwards which caused his death and left a wife and a daughter, Mary who had married Henry Patterson and resides in Townsville, and a son, Mat, who resides in Sydney. Mrs. Sharman passed on a few years later in Townsville.

Alf Jones, a well-known local Bachelor, purchased a small cattle property from the estate of John Sommerville. This property and the property now owned by Cecil Milton were now wedged between the larger properties of Kangaroo Hills, Hillgrove and Dotswood. Tragedy struck Cecil when his wife was killed accidentally when she was cranking a four-wheel-drive truck in an enclosed shed. The truck had been left in gear and crushed the unfortunate lady against the wall

of the shed.

Cecil then sold to his cousin Doug Davidson and his wife Rose (Miss. Aplin from Georgetown). Doug and Rose kept this holding which they named Zig Zag for some 19 years, then selling same to Dale Milton and his wife Rosemary (Miss. Johnson of Georgetown) in 1979. Dale and Rosemary still own and manage the property.

Doug and Rose Davidson bought Greenvale station from Ian Crisp and his wife Desley, in 1979. Ian had divided the property into two, retaining one which he called Upton Downs. He also purchased an adjoining property known as Pandanus, formerly owned by the Benson brothers.

Doug and Rose had the misfortune to lose their only son, David, when he fell from a truck recently. The author's sympathy goes out to this couple in their sad bereavement.

Alf Jones, who owned the other small property in Ewan was killed accidentally by a tractor in 1969 and his property was taken over by his two nephews, Pat Jones jnr. and Neville Alexander.

Some two years ago Neville sold his share privately and Pat bought Neville's half share of the Special Lease of land. Pat and his wife Colleen (nee Zabel) now own and manage the small holding. Pat also does mining etc., to supplement his income.

After the death of Bernie Guild at Taravale station his widow managed the property until their son Lawrence was old enough to take over. Lawrence married and took his bride to live on the property. Lawrence Guild also has cut thousands of sleepers for the Queensland Government Railways.

Ron German and his son Bill, together with Mrs. German own the property next to L. Guild and these two men also cut a lot of sleepers when they are not attending the stock.

S. M. Robinson (Bully) bought a small cattle property near Kallanda some years ago. Bully was badly smashed up

when a bucking horse hit him against a tree and he was left with a very noticeable limp, but he has carried on his work despite his disability.

Another man to make his mark in the raising of cattle was Denny Sheahan. Denny is a son of Dan Sheahan Senior of Ingham. Dan was cane farming at Long Pocket near Ingham for years and raised quite a large family. He was quite a poet in his own fashion: his most noted verse was "The Pub with no Beer".

All Dan's sons were interested in primary production. Most of them were good horsemen and often assisted at the Rodeos as pick-up men.

Denny Sheahan acquired a grazing block on the Douglas River. This block was originally part of Kangaroo Hills station and was sold to Denny in about 1963. He later drew another block in a ballot. This block was part of Oak Hills station.

Quite recently Denny's brother Tom purchased a block known as Redbank Holdings from a Mr. Don Condon. This country was originally part of Greenvale station, then became part of Camel Creek station after the death of Mr. Henry Atkinson Senior.

Denny and Nancy Sheahan were dealt a very bitter blow when they lost one of their teenage sons in a motor accident near Ingham.

In recent years a Rodeo has been held on the Sheahan property to coincide with the "School of the Air" Christmas Break-up. The Ingham Lions Club members travel to the Sheahan property and conduct the booth; various ladies take over the food section and men like Denny Sheahan, Dale Milton, Brian Furber and many other willing helpers keep the Rodeo and other sporting activities running smoothly. This Rodeo gives the novice buck jump riders their opportunity to show their skill, but in some cases the horses and bullocks tend to outclass these riders and it is a case of "Bite the Dust" son.



The Author on his pony in 1924.

Grazing families from all the surrounding stations attend this function and also quite a sprinkling of town folks. All proceeds from this function go to charity and each year it is extended, so that enlarges the scope of amusement.

It is a credit to these folk, who after all are the backbone of the country, for the way in which they work so hard even in their supposed leisure hours for the benefit of less fortunate people.

Perhaps the two greatest advances made in the mining and grazing country around Kangaroo Hills mining field was the advent of four-wheel-drive vehicles and the advance in motor technology and refrigeration.

The four-wheel-drive vehicle released from Army surplus, meant that miners and graziers could go places where before they were forced to use pack horses.

The kerosene refrigerator took drudgery out of living in the bush. People could keep fresh meat for a much longer period, and they could have a cold drink such as town people enjoy.

The people of Ewan and the graziers all began installing kerosene refrigerators and thus life became bearable in hot summers. Living was to improve even further when electric refrigeration became available. Stationary engines, both diesel and petrol, were installed to drive generators which, in turn, operated refrigerators, cold room and lighting. The only drawbacks were breakdowns, and having to leave someone on the property at all times to attend the engines.

At long last fresh food could be kept frozen.

In recent years, NORQEB has erected power lines to most properties in the Ewan, Burdekin, Mt. Spec and Mt. Fox areas, and although the initial cost is very high to each consumer, the long term benefits will offset this expense.

Droving cattle by foot has now ceased and large, powerful trucks fitted with trailer, and double-decker transports and travelling dog vehicle, assure that cattle can be shifted quickly from point A to point B.

At the close of 1982 which has been exceptionally dry, two things yet have to be solved — bushfires and droughts. These are things with which the primary producer will still have to battle for many a decade to come.