

*A  
History  
of  
Lindenow.*



## **Foreword.**

“Our land abounds in Nature’s gifts.”

Despite the brave words of our national anthem, Australia is uniquely lacking in nature’s gifts. Few parts of the continent are blessed with that most basic of essentials, a reliable and abundant rainfall. Consequently, the continent lacks the rivers, and canals constructed to link them, which in more favoured parts of the world for centuries have provided the means of transporting heavy and bulky goods.

Its soils, too, are largely shallow and lacking in fertility. Where other continents have the advantage of extensive fertile, well-watered plains, Australia vast spaces are largely desert or semi-desert. Australia does not have one native animal that could be used as a beast of burden. There are none that could be domesticated to provide milk or meat or fibre for human use. This prevented the evolution of its earliest inhabitants from hunter/gatherers to farmers, without which towns and cities did not develop.

The native population had to live off the land and was therefore nomadic. Having no other means of transporting their belongings, they had to carry all their possessions.

The first Europeans to discover the north west of the continent found no reason to either trade with or settle in this new land. They were much more interested in products from the lush, tropical islands to our north.

Even when Captain Cook discovered the better-endowed east coast, Britain saw it mainly as a place to dump its unwanted. The first convict settlement almost failed in its first year because of the inability of its inhabitants to live off the land. This was, in part, because the authorities in Britain failed to ensure that farmers were included in the First Fleet. The Governor promised the first freehold title to anyone who was able to sustain himself and his family on a block of land.

As the Colony grew, pressure from recurring droughts forced pioneers to venture into unexplored parts of the continent seeking land suitable for agriculture. Officials were unable to regulate this expansion and it was a case of “first in - best dressed”. On the other side of the world, the invention of the steam engine was about to trigger an industrial revolution that was to change the world as never before in history.

It was almost 52 years after the arrival of the First Fleet before Europeans first saw the area that is Lindenow today.



## **The first Europeans.**

Early morning on January 18<sup>th</sup> 1840, a party led by Angus McMillan, the explorer credited as the first European to reach the area today known as "Lindenow", departed from the camp where it had spent the night. The camp was north of the present town of Bairnsdale, near Wy Yung. Unable to find a crossing place over the river he had named the "Mitchell" after the Surveyor-General of New South Wales, the party travelled up-stream.

The steepness of the northern escarpment made access to the banks of the river difficult but beyond could be seen extensive undulating land with not a mountain in sight, a welcome contrast to the country over which the party had travelled for weeks. McMillan and his party travelled upstream almost to the site of today's Calulu Bridge before he found a suitable place to ford the river.

McMillan's employer had asked him to look for land suitable for grazing. In later years McMillan told of his feelings as he grasped the potential of the land he was now traversing.

*"..I gave it the appropriate name of Caledonia Australis. It was then I keenly felt that I had a noble and glorious task to perform, and that I was only an instrument in the hands of the Almighty to accomplish it. Here was a country capable of supporting all my starving countrymen lying dormant.*

*At noon, found a crossing place, which was rather deep, for the water came into my holsters. After crossing, had a piece of bread and tea. Could not get Johnny to look for opossums, as he said that if he barked a tree with an iron tomahawk, that the wild blacks would soon track us and attack us, as he said he would sooner return back to his tribe than hunt on dangerous ground. Beautiful country on the banks of this noble stream. Travelled 10 miles from the crossing place. Some time about five camped on a chain of pools, fine open forest."*

That was McMillan's account of the day his party travelled from Wy Yung to Providence Ponds through the area known today as Lindenow. McMillan was, however, rather reticent about the country he discovered at the time and did not officially record the names he had given many of the geographical features.

McMillan was frustrated in his attempt to reach Corner Inlet by high water levels in the Latrobe River. This, with other indicators, suggests that it was a wet summer for high river levels to be experienced in late January.

A few weeks later, Count Strzelecki also explored the area and gave different names to many of its features, some of which stuck, including the name Gipps Land for the whole region. He gave the Mitchell River the name, "Macarthur". He described the area as follows: -

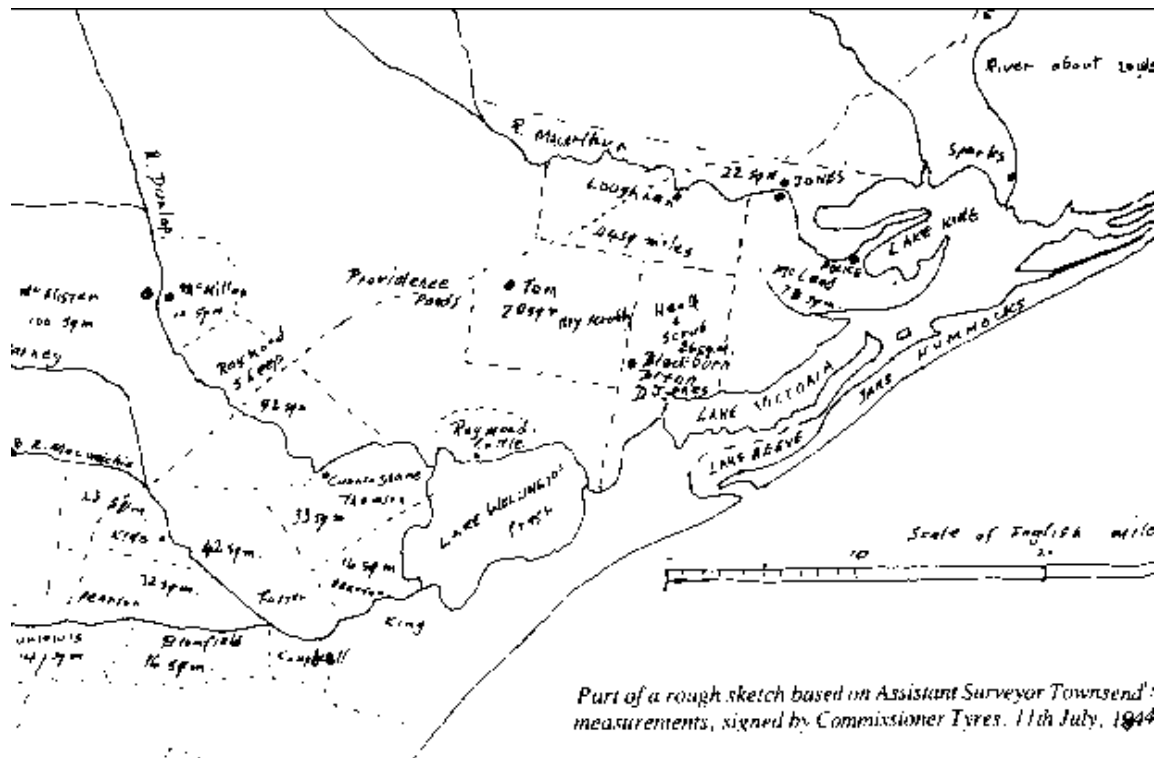
*"On leaving the River Macarthur and its beautiful valley, spreading deep and wide its luxurious pasture, the country assumed in the direction of S.W. by W. a slope of fine forest, gradually almost insensibly, descending to the sea coast, and such clear pastoral ground, that, steering the mid course between the dividing range and the sea coast, it enabled me to maintain for days a crow-fly direction."*

Unlike McMillan, Strzelecki reported to the authorities his opinion of this hitherto unexplored land. In India, J. Davidson Smith heard about his glowing account. He made a deal with Loughnan and Taylor to claim some of this land and to manage it until he was ready to migrate to this new country. At that time, agricultural land in most of the world, including Britain, was largely in the hands of the "landed gentry", who owned large estates farmed by tenant farmers and often included whole townships. Many of the early settlers expected that system would also apply in this new country and if they grabbed a large slice of land, they, too, would become squires.

## The Squatters.

It was 2½ years before any Europeans arrived to settle in Caledonia Australis. On June 20th 1842, after a long journey through the Australian Alps, Loughnan and Taylor, together with Frederick Jones and others arrived at the Mitchell River Crossing with their stock. They each chose the areas of land that they would occupy and proceeded to mark out land to be included in an “**Application for a License to Depasture Crown Land beyond the limits of Location.**” The Government of New South Wales would process this application.

The following map indicates the boundaries of the runs occupied by this group and others occupied shortly after by the Tom Brothers and McLeod.



Frederick Jones took up land north of the river extending from Lake King (McMillan had named it Lake Victoria but Strzelecki's name stuck) to the mountains. He named his Run, "Lucknow". It has been stated that Jones gave it that name because he was in "luck now", not after Lucknow in India.

Loughnan and Taylor took up about 44 sq. miles on the south side. Its boundary ran roughly south from the vicinity of the present Wy Yung Bridge for about 5 miles, then generally in a west north westerly direction to about the present Meerlieu Road, then north to the river.. This run was given the name, "Lindenow". It has been suggested that this name came from India but this has not been verified. (The western boundary was later extended to Providence Ponds.)

Loughnan and Taylor applied for a license to occupy this land. However, J. Davidson Smith claimed that he had made a deal with Loughnan and Taylor in India to claim land on his behalf. When he discovered that the application was not in his name, Smith tried to gain possession for himself. His lawyer was unsuccessful in dislodging Loughnan and Taylor and in 1848, Smith sent his 18 year old son, J. Digby Smith, to claim the property. He met with no more success.

Meanwhile, Loughnan and Taylor had purchased the licenses for Emu Vale from the Tom Brothers and Deighton from Thomas Blackburn.

Thomas Blackburn came from Monaro in 1844 and claimed land west of the Bairnsdale Run and south of Lindenow Run, extending to Lake Victoria. When Blackburn took up Deighton in 1844, he

gave 2 square miles in the southwest corner to David Jones, a shoemaker employed at Deighton. He, in turn, applied for a license for this land giving its description as “on an angle of backwater from the Lake”. This was a very vague definition of its boundaries. The application went on to state, “My agent, Mr. F. Taylor of Gipps Land has been duly instructed to pay the stipulated fee to the Sub-Collector Melbourne and receive the same when ready.” Frederick Taylor was the partner of Loughnan.

In 1844, it was estimated that there were 177 men, including 33 “ticket of leave” holders, 26 women and 17 children in Gipps Land, many of them at Port Albert.

On July 15<sup>th</sup> 1845, John Scott with his wife and family arrived from Monaro to take up the Run he called Delvine. This family was to play a significant role in the Lindenow District in the years ahead. The death of an infant of this family in the 1846 led to the establishment of the Delvine cemetery, which provides links to many of the early residents of the Lindenow district.

### **Wheeling and dealing.**

There were no officials to record boundaries of the Runs claimed by squatters in the early 1840s so there were many disputes. Inquiries were conducted to sort these out towards the end of the decade.

On Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1848, David Jones submitted an “Application for a lease of waste Lands of the Crown beyond the settled districts in the Colony of New South Wales”.

The application was made in accordance with an Order in Council published in the Government Gazette of New South Wakes on October 7<sup>th</sup> 1847. He claimed that the land he was applying for was in his possession at the date of the order-in-council and had been for 42 months previously. The area claimed was 9,600 acres. He described the boundaries as follows: -

#### **Bounded**

On the southward and eastern by Jones Backwater & Lake Victoria

On the west by a NNE line from Jones Backwater to Jones waterhole in the forest

On the north by an east line from Jones waterhole in the forest joining McLouds boundary at Lake Victoria

In the southward and westward by Lake Victoria.

In 1848, Jones sold his license to Thos. Butler. Commissioner Tyers warned Butler that he was not entitled to the amount of land, 9,600 acres, that Jones was offering him. Butler went ahead with the purchase but had further problems with Commissioner Tyers. In 1848, he sent his returns of stock to Tyers for signature but Tyers refused to sign until the fees had been paid. Apparently sensing something was amiss, Butler travelled to Melbourne to pay the fees only to be told by Treasury officials that the fees could not be accepted without Commissioner Tyers signature on the return.

After three weeks of trying to get the situation resolved, he wrote to C. J. La Trobe, Superintendent of the Port Phillip District seeking help. At that time, there was no access track to Melbourne and he would have travelled by boat from Port Albert. His frustration was understandable.

Melbourne 9th. September, 1848

To His Honor  
C. J. La Trobe Esq  
&c &c &c

Sir

Allow me to draw Your Honor's attention to the following; In March last David Jones made application for a lease of the run in Gipps Land called "Deighton", which I have since purchased with the approbation of Mr. Tyers and it has since been transferred to my name with the sanction of the Government.. I sent in my returns to Mr. Tyers for his signature in the month of July, who's answer was that he would not sign them until the license had been paid. I immediately proceeded to Melbourne and tendered the License money at the Treasury,

The answer I got there from Capt. McCrae was, he could not receive the money without Mr. Tyers signature to the returns. As I am ignorant how to proceed in this matter & having been detained here for the past 3 weeks, at great expense & inconvenience I beg Your Honor will be pleased to instruct me in what way I should act as I am fearful of losing the run thru' some informality.

I have the honor to remain  
Your Honor's most obed. Serv't  
Thos. Butler

### **Winners and losers.**

Loughnan and Taylor were soon in conflict with Butler over the boundaries. This led to legal action by Loughnan and Taylor to prevent the issue or transfer of a license over the land in dispute to Jones or anyone else. In his application for a license in 1844, David Jones had named Frederick Taylor as his agent with instructions to pay the stipulated fee to the Sub-Collector, Melbourne.

The dispute was eventually resolved in 1850 by Commissioner Mair who took evidence at Flooding Creek (Sale). One of the witnesses to give evidence was Joseph Evans.

In the matter of Thms Butler Deighton & Messrs Loughnan & Taylor

Joseph Evans being duly sworn states

In the year 1844, I was a shepherd in Mr. Thomas Blackburns employment at Deighton, and received instructions from him not to cross a ridge lying to the southward of Jones water hole with my sheep. To the best of my opinion a ridge running about southeast from Jones water hole to Mr. McLouds boundary was described by Mr. Blackburn as the division between him and Jones' portion of the lease. I am not aware of any disputation between those two persons as to their boundary, at the time alluded to. I have watered sheep at an area of the lakes about three miles below Mr. Jones' hut, taking them from the hut at the lakes station east by south and then in a westerly direction. While I was shepherding at the lake station I watered many sheep at the place described, there was no other place to water them at. Sheep were fed from that hut on that plain lying about south west.

The plain and watering place described were within Mr. Jones' boundary Line. Jones allowed the sheep to water at the area of the lakes hut but not to feed - they were to go off in the direction they came.

his  
Joseph X Evans  
mark

Sworn before me  
at Flooding Creek  
this 9th day of  
March

On June 18<sup>th</sup> 1850, Butler wrote an impassioned plea to the Superintendent of Port Phillip District for the case to be re-opened as his prime witness at the inquiry, Richard Butler, was too drunk to give evidence. The Commissioner reported in favour of Loughnan and Taylor. La Trobe noted on the report that,

"A Protest has been entered by T. Butler against the supposed decision of the Commissioner. Referred to Commissioner who disputes the grounds of the protest. I see no reason whatever to advise His Excellency to withhold his approval and confirmation of the Commissioners recommendation."

Meanwhile, J. Davison Smith had taken legal action to assert his claim to the Lindenow Run. In view of the old adage that possession is nine points of the law, he must have had convincing evidence to support his case as it was upheld. Loughnan and Taylor did not give up the property easily. Loughnan was reported to have produced a sword with which he attacked Smith's horses and bullocks. It was also reported that one man had his collarbone broken in the melee that developed over the ejection of Loughnan and Taylor from Lindenow Run.

### **A Ticket of Leave.**

Joseph Evans was born in London on Nov 7<sup>th</sup> 1817. In 1832, he was sentenced to transportation for 14 years for picking pockets. In 1833, he arrived in Sydney and in 1838, was granted a Ticket of Leave to work for Stewart Ryrie at Monaro. In 1843, he was granted a Pass Port allowing him to be employed by Thomas Blackburn of Monaro for 12 months. Blackburn may have employed him specifically to assist to move his stock from Monaro to Deighton.

On March 17, 1847, Joseph Evans married Sophia Ruxton in St. David's Church, Hobart Town. Their first born, Elizabeth, was born on Dec.18<sup>th</sup>, 1847. No birth certificate has been located but her marriage certificate (to George Telfer) states that she was born at Lindenow. That would have referred to Lindenow Run. It is possible that when Loughnan and Taylor acquired Deighton Run, Joseph was 'acquired' with the property and that, now having a young wife, it was decided that they would be more useful at Lindenow. From his evidence referred to above, he must have had a very lonely existence looking after sheep down near Lake Victoria – a dramatic contrast to his childhood in London.

The 1856 Electoral Roll records Joseph as being employed on Lindenow Run. By that time, Elizabeth was joined by brothers, Frederick (1850), Joseph (1852), John (1855), and George (1856). She was to have seven brothers before a sister arrived, followed by two more brothers and another sister.

When, in 1860, Joseph registered the death of his father-in-law, Maurice Ruxton, he gave his residence as Lucknow. His son, Joseph, claimed to have been born and raised on the property selected by his father at Wuk Wuk. This property was not selected until 1868 so it appears that the Evans family moved there between 1856 and 1860 while it was still part of Lucknow Run.

In the summer of 1851, severe drought afflicted the Port Phillip District culminating in Black Thursday. It was described in the Picturesque Atlas of Australia – 1888.

### **Black Thursday 1851**

*The year 1850 had been one of exceptional heat and drought. Pastures had withered, creeks had become fissured clay-pans; waterholes had disappeared, sheep and cattle had perished in great numbers, and the sunburnt plains were strewn with their bleached skeletons; the very leaves on the trees crackled in the heat and appeared to be as inflammable as tinder. As the summer advanced the temperature became torrid, and on the morning of the 6th. of February, 1851, the air which blew down from the north resembled the breath of a furnace. A fierce wind arose, gathering strength and velocity from hour to hour, until about noon it blew with the violence of a tornado. By some inexplicable means it wrapped the whole country in a sheet of flame -fierce, awful and irresistible. Men, women and children, sheep and cattle, birds and snakes fled before the fire in common panic. The air was darkened by volumes of smoke, relieved by showers of sparks; the forests were ablaze, and, on the ranges the conflagration transformed their wooded slopes into appalling masses of incandescent columns and arches. Farmhouses, fences, crops, orchards, gardens, haystacks, bridges woolsheds were swept away by the impetuous on-rush of the flames, which left behind them nothing but a charred heap of ruins and a scene of pitiable desolation. The human fugitives fled to water, wherever it could be found and stood in it, breathing with difficulty the suffocating atmosphere and listening with awe to the roar of the elements and the cries of the affrighted animals. Many lives were lost and the value of property and livestock destroyed on "Black Thursday" can only be vaguely conjectured. Late in the evening, a strong sea breeze began to blow and the next day dawned upon blackened homesteads, smouldering forests, charred carcasses of sheep, oxen, horses, poultry and wild animals, and the face of the country presented such an aspect of ruin and devastation as could never be effaced from the recollection of those who had witnessed and survived the calamity".<sup>1</sup>*

A New Colony.

The population of the Port Phillip District in 1850 was approximately 88,000, mostly in Melbourne, and it must have been spread very thinly indeed in the rest of the District, especially Gippsland. The British government was under pressure to allow the district to separate from New South Wales and become a self governing colony. There does not appear to be much information about the attitude of Gippsland residents to that move or whether they were even aware that they would be part of the new colony.

A few months after the agony of Black Thursday came the ecstasy of "Separation", closely followed by the euphoric discovery of gold in the new Colony. Given the primitive means of communication then available, news of the finds quickly spread around the world, People flocked to the Colony, increasing its population sixfold in a decade.

A new Parliament House was required for the Colony of Victoria, named after the popular young Queen of England. Competitive designs were invited and after some consideration, the plans of Knight and Kerr were accepted. Early in 1856, a contract was let for the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly Chambers. A Royal Commission in 1886 reported that: -

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<sup>1</sup> Australia The First Hundred Years.

"Great celerity was used by the contractors, and, despite the serious delay caused by a strike among the workmen, in order to maintain the newly established eight-hours system, in which they were entirely successful, both Chambers were in a comparatively completed state before the end of the year".

Electoral rolls had to be prepared. The first session of the first Parliament under the Constitution Act was formally inaugurated in the new Chambers on Nov 25th., 1856.

Requirements for enrolment for the Legislative Assembly were: -

*Natural born or naturalised British subjects, above the age of 21 years, who shall have resided in the Colony of Victoria for one year previous to the date of registration, and have any one of the following qualifications: -*

*A freehold estate of the clear value of £10.*

*Be a householder within the district, occupying any house, warehouse, countinghouse, office, shop, or other building or premises, of the clear annual value of £10.*

*Be in receipt of an annual salary of £100.*

*But no person shall be entitled to be placed on the electoral roll unless he shall have been in possession of his qualifications for a period of at least six months previous to the registration.*

*And no person shall be entitled to be registered unless he shall have paid up all rates and taxes, except those becoming payable within three months before registration.*

*And no person who has attained the age of twenty one within two years after the passing of the Constitution Act shall be entitled to be registered unless he shall be able to read and write.*

\* \* \* \* \*

Names of those enrolled on the 1856 Electoral Roll, their qualification to be registered, which includes the name of their employer where applicable, have been extracted for the following locations.

### **Lindenow.**

BROAD, Thomas	Lindenow	wages	£100 p.a.	
BAIRD, Henry	Lindenow	wages	£100 p.a.	
CONNOLLY, Denis	Lindenow	freehold	Lindenow	
EVANS, Joseph	Lindenow	wages	£100 p.a.	Smith
HALL, James	Lindenow	wages	£100 p.a.	
JOHNSON, Samuel	Lindenow	wages	£100 p.a.	
MCLAUCHLAN, Phillip	Lindenow	wages	£100 p.a.	
SAUNDERS, Edward	Lindenow	stockman	£100 p.a.	
SMITH, John D.	Lindenow	freehold	Lindenow	
SMITH	Lindenow	freehold	Lindenow	
WHITBURN, Henry	Lindenow	wages	£100 p.a.	Smith

### **Delvine.**

CALWELL, James	Delvine	salary	Delvine
HALL, Francis	Delvine	wages	£100 p.a.
SCOTT, John Sen	Delvine	freehold	Delvine
SCOTT, James	Delvine	license	Delvine
SCOTT, John jun	Delvine	leaseholder tenant	£100 p.a.
SCOTT, Peter	Delvine	carrier rent	Delvine

### **Mitchell River**

DAY, John	Mitchell	freehold	Mitchell River
FROST, William	Mitchell River	freehold	Nicholson River
FRASER, Alexander	Mitchell River	license	Mitchell River
KING, John	Mitchell River	surgeon	
SWAN, Samuel	Mitchell River	carrier, income	Mitchell River
WORSLEY, James	Mitchell River	freehold	Mitchell River

(The location of "Mitchell River" is uncertain. It may be the name given by Surveyor Pettit to a settlement surveyed in the vicinity of the present Princes Highway – Lindenow Road intersection or it may have been a general location given by people not employed on the established runs. BJE)

### **Bairnsdale**

BALLYCORN, Thomas	Bairnsdale	tenant	Bairnsdale
CAMPBELL,	Bairnsdale	license	Bairnsdale
JOHNSON, Thomas	Bairnsdale	wages	£100 p.a. McLoud
MCADAM, William	Bairnsdale	wages	£100 p.a. Bairnsdale
MCLENNAN, Norman	Bairnsdale	rent	Bairnsdale
MCDUGAL, Ronald	Bairnsdale	wages	£100 p.a.
MCLEOD, Archibald, W.	Bairnsdale	salary	£100 p.a.
MCLEOD, Archibald	Bairnsdale	salary	£100 p.a.
MCDUGALL, Peter	Bairnsdale	wages	£100 p.a.

### **Lucknow**

DAVIS, Samuel	Lucknow	wages	£100 p.a.	Crooke
ELKNIS, William	Lucknow	wages	£100 p.a.	Crooke
JONES, Frederick	Lucknow	license		
LYE, John	Lucknow			
MCALISTER, John	Lucknow	wages	£100 p.a.	Crooke
SIMPSON, Thomas	Lucknow	wages	£100 p.a.	Crooke
STEEL, Hamilton	Lucknow	fencer, wages	£100 p.a.	
TINCOMBE, George	Lucknow	superintendent salary	£100 p.a.	Crooke
WELCH, Patrick	Lucknow	wages	£100 p.a.	Crooke

The only enrolment from Deighton was Thomas Butler. No one from Emu Vale registered.

For the whole of the electorate, which extended from the New South Wales border to Cape Liptrap, except for the Port Albert area, only 390 men registered to vote. Women did not have the right to vote and enrolment was not compulsory.

## Stock and Land.

C. J. Tyers, Commissioner of Crown Lands calculated the amounts due to be paid by the various licensees for 1856. The details for local runs were as follows: -

*Sale 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 1856*

*“In pursuance of the Assessment Act, I hereby give notice that the undermentioned persons, being holders of Stock within the district of Gippsland are required to pay at the Office of the Treasurer, Melbourne, before the 31<sup>st</sup> May, 1856, Assessment on such stock, in accordance with the sums published in connection with their respective names.”*

### GIPPS LAND DISTRICT.

Name of License	Name of Run.	Horses	Cattle	Sheep	Assessment
BUTLER, Thomas	Deighton	2	350		£17/14/-
CAMPBELL and Co	Bairnsdale	50	750	236	£44/9/4
JONES, Frederick	Lucknow		700	3,800	£66/13/4
SCOTT, John	Delvine	22	1,020		£60/-/-
SMITH, J.D. & G.D.	Lindenow	130	1,000	6,000	£113/-/-
TAYLOR, Fred	Deighton		50	6,000	£52/10/-
TAYLOR, Fred	Emu Vale	7		5,000	£42/7/4

The Smiths built up Lindenow Run rapidly once they got control and quickly established a reputation for quality, especially of its horses. But the new Parliament was strongly influenced by recent happenings in Ballarat, the Eureka Stockade in particular. As the initial euphoria of the gold fever wore off, men started to look to the land for their future. It was becoming apparent that the government was moving towards breaking up the large runs taken up by the ‘squatters’ and opening up that land for closer settlement.



This would have been of great concern to the Smiths. After years of effort and finally court action to claim “Lindenow”,

Site of cemetery reservation.

Boundary of Lindenow Run

Possible location of Mitchell River township.

it was becoming increasingly clear that they were unlikely to keep the bulk of the Run for much longer.

On the other hand, there could be something to gain from the disputes about the most suitable place for a permanent crossing over the Mitchell River. There was strong support for a bridge to be built some five miles upstream from the present Bairnsdale bridge, above the navigable part of the river. There was a proposal to shift the government punt to this site which started a controversy. A petition supporting the present site was circulated and proved successful.

It may have been a tactic to encourage development of a township that an application was made to have a site for a cemetery reserved on Lindenow Run, not near the homestead, but one mile north of the Lindenow – Bairnsdale Road. The site overlooks a broad sweeping bend of the Mitchell River.

This reservation had been forgotten over possibly 100 years and the plans were discovered in government archives in 2002.

The reservation of 14 acres as a site for a cemetery at Mitchell River was approved by the Governor-in-Council in 1858. This suggests that those voters who gave their place of abode as Mitchell River may have lived in that part of present day Bairnsdale that was within the Lindenow Run.

The death certificate of Maurice Ruxton states that he was buried in Lindenow Cemetery in 1860. This information was provided by Joseph Evans, his son-in-law. This suggested that Lindenow Run, like other runs, notably Delvine, had its own cemetery.

Ruxton was buried without the services of an undertaker or clergyman and Digby Smith, owner of Lindenow Run was a witness of the burial.

When Runs were broken up for closer settlement, squatters retained a pre-emptive right to a considerable area of land and surveyors planned settlements and reservations for such purposes as cemeteries outside these areas. The site for Bairnsdale's cemetery was surveyed several years later just outside the pre-emptive right of Bairnsdale Run owners. This site is within the boundaries of the present Bairnsdale cemetery.

Reservation of land for cemeteries, like other reserved land, could only be altered by an Act of Parliament. Such an Act goes through State Parliament annually and often a number of changes are made. It is likely that there is a record of the revocation of this reservation buried deep in State archives. The fact that the survey documents were with Bairnsdale cemetery records suggests that coffins were relocated to that cemetery.

### **Take your pick.**

In 1860, Alfred Howitt, commissioned by the Victorian government to look for potential gold mining sites in the high country of the Great Dividing Range, found that enterprising prospectors had already penetrated this remote and difficult country. A number of potential areas were identified and small boom towns developed in various parts of the Mitchell River Catchment. Along with newly arrived migrants, many local men were taking their pick and shovel into the rugged mountains to try their luck fossicking for gold.

Howitt was also the first European to travel down the length of the Mitchell River, negotiating the gorge in a native bark canoe. An exceptionally talented man, he contributed greatly to the knowledge of East Gippsland in its pristine state, as well as contributing to the administration of the region. His skills as a bushman were recognized by the Victorian government when he was commissioned to lead the party to try to find the Bourke and Wills Expedition, which had left Victoria in a blaze of publicity to cross the continent from south to north. It was long past the time when it should have returned.

In 1860, the Victorian Parliament passed the first of a series of Acts designed to open up land for closer settlement by breaking up the large runs taken up by squatters in the previous 25 years. In order to ensure that the Acts achieved this objective, successful applicants were granted Improvement Purchase Leases. They paid a nominal rent of as little as £1/-/- per acre per annum and, providing they complied with the requirements to fence their allotment and to clear a minimum specified area, in as

little as five years they could be granted a freehold title. Blocks of land acquired this way were described as “selections” as applicants first pegged out the area they wanted and then applied for a lease.

Before this could be done, it was necessary to survey the Colony, dividing it into Counties, Parishes and Sections and Allotments to enable titles to be issued. Surveyors also had to make provision for roads and reservations for other purposes. They also surveyed settlements, such as at the Deepwater and Wuk Wuk. Some of these never developed. As the invention of the motor vehicle was a quarter of a century into the future, these surveyors showed considerable foresight.

Many prospectors found gold was not as easily found or mined as they hoped. There was a growing interest among those who had been lured to the gold fields in something more reliable, if not so exciting. The interest in blocks of land for agriculture grew rapidly.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1866, Pepe Jensen made an application under the 42<sup>nd</sup> Section Amending Land Act 1865, for a block of land south east from the site of the present Wuk Wuk bridge. The block extended 17 chains 70 links south and 10 chains to the west. (One chain =22yards. 10 chains is approximately 200 metres) and was 17 acres 1roods 8 perches in area.

The application was endorsed with the following comment: -

*This land was also applied for by Peter Clark who proved that he was the first to peg out the land although Jensen made his application to the contract surveyor half an hour previously. Under the circumstances the Commission recommend that the land be granted to Peter Clark. He refunded to Peppe Jensen the monies paid by him for survey fees.*

Pepe Jensen’s name was crossed out and Peter Clark’s name inserted. The area was also amended to 32 acres 3 roods 11 perches by extending the block eastward from 10 chains to 20 chains.

On Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> an order was issued to the government contract surveyor to survey the block, it was commenced on Oct 13<sup>th</sup> and completed on Oct 25<sup>th</sup>. The survey fee was £3/7/6. (\$6.75)

On March 1<sup>st</sup> 1871, Peter Clark applied under SECTION 31, LAND ACT 1869 to purchase the land. The Crown Lands Bailiff reported the following improvements on the land.

<i>40 chains two rail fencing</i>	<i>£40/-/-</i>
<i>6 chains of three rail fencing</i>	<i>£6/12/-</i>
<i>15 chains of log fencing</i>	<i>£9/-/-</i>
<i>Clearing 10 acres</i>	<i>£30/-/-</i>
	<u><u>£85/12/-</u></u>

This was referred to the District Surveyor Black to report if there are objections of a public nature against the alienation of said land, and, if not, state the upset price of the nearest land sold by the Crown before the issue of said license.

On March 13<sup>th</sup>, the District Surveyor advised, *“No objection to the alienation of this land. The upset price of the nearest land sold prior to the issue of this license £1/-/- per acre.”*

Shortly after, Frederick Evans, eldest son of Joseph Evans, purchased this block from Clark and ran a butcher’s business on the site. He later purchased a further 60 acres on its southern boundary from Dennis Connoly. This property, which he named Ripple Lea, has been in the Evans family name except between 1893 and 1913. During this time, it was owned by the Jacksons (who owned the tannery in Bairnsdale) and later the Goodmans (who are still nurserymen) of Bairnsdale.

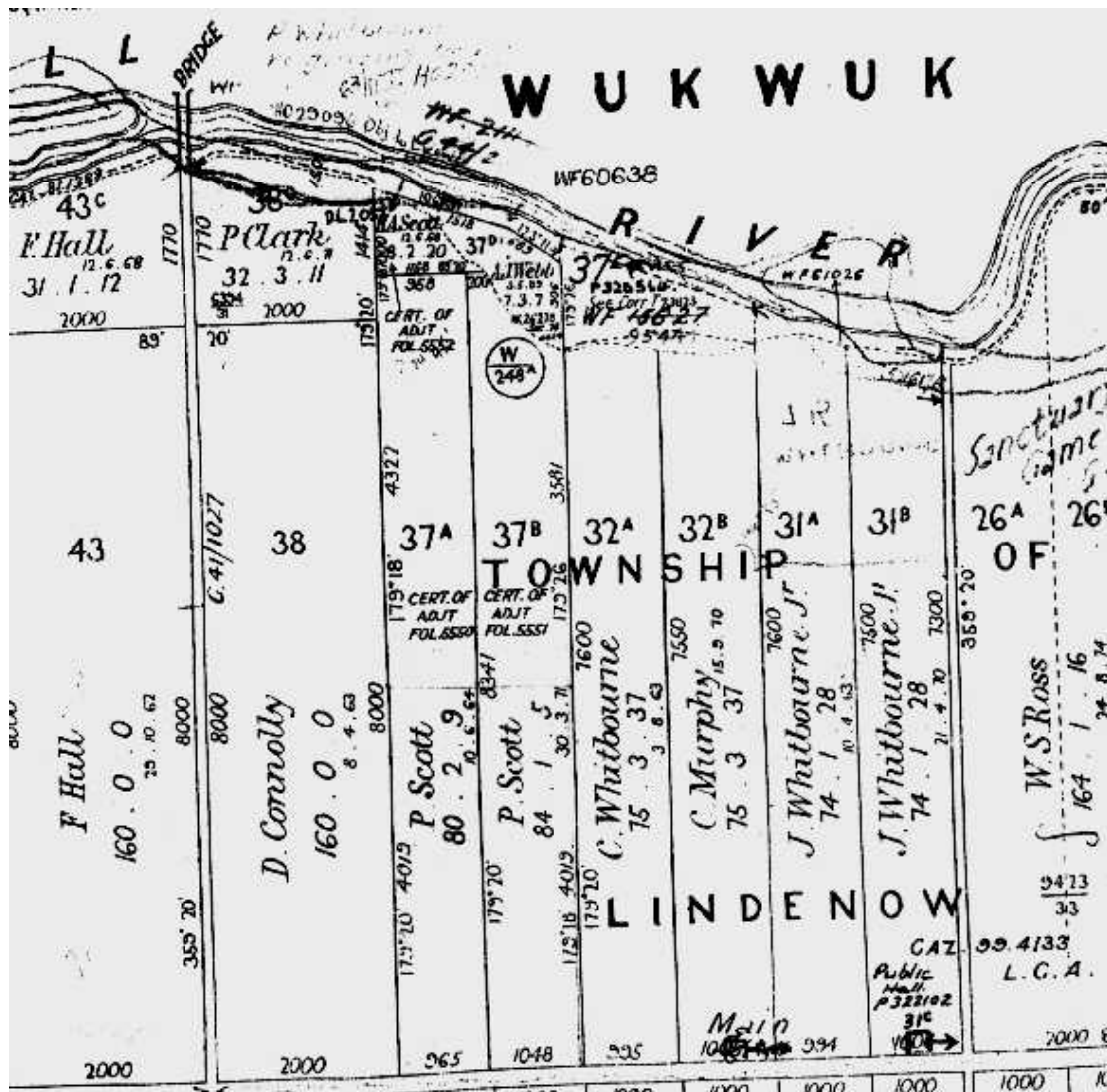
The Coongulmerang Parish map helps to pinpoint when the land now known as Lindenow was opened for selection. The family of John Scott of Delvine were involved in what must be a unique example of sibling unity by selecting adjoining blocks.



Catherine Scott was born at Monaro, NSW in 1839. At the age of 6, she accompanied her parents, some six siblings and a nephew when they travelled by bullock dray to take up a run, which they called Delvine. In 1858, she married Henry Whitbourne. He was killed as a result of a fall from a horse in 1862 leaving her with three daughters.

In 1865, she married James Mainwaring Murphy and had a further seven children. Her home for some sixty years was at the bottom of the hill on the western approach to Lindenow. Members of her family have contributed a great deal to the history of Lindenow.

**The settlement of Lindenow.**



It appears that these blocks were made available about 1864. Frank Hall, Dennis Conolly and John Whitbourne were sons-in-law of John Scott and Peter Scott and Catherine Whitbourne (later Catherine Murphy) were son and daughter. Another son-in-law, Edward Saunders selected the block next to W.S.Ross. Ross was a member of Howitt's expedition through the high country in 1860. (Perhaps someone can explain the reason for the small blocks along the river. Were they miners' rights?)

**On our selection.**

Joseph Evans had to wait a few years before he could apply for the block of land where he had lived for more than a decade. In 1868, he was granted an improvement purchase lease of 77 acres northeast from the present Wuk Wuk bridge and was granted a title in 1875. He lived there until his death in 1892. The property was then sold to Somervilles and subsequently purchased by J.R Whitbourne, who was married to Joseph's grand-daughter, Iza Evans. It was purchased by Joseph's great great grandson, Phillip and his wife, Sandra in 1992.

What went through Joseph Evans' mind upon being granted a block of land was not recorded but he must have reflected on his boyhood in London, where circumstances led him to pick pockets, the

months he spent on a prison hulk on the Thames at age 15 years, his fear of the unknown as he was transported to the other side of the world in a creaking, wallowing convict transport and his years as a convict on the lowest rung of the social ladder.

He was then assigned to a settler who was free to thrash him for any real or imagined misdemeanor and who could hold the threat for returning him to convict authorities on the slightest pretext. He was unable to write until he was almost 40 years old so it was probable that he had lost all contact with any family left behind in London.

Now he was a landowner in his own right – a dream he could never have contemplated had he remained in London. He also had a wife and nine sons and three daughters. The eldest of these had married into respectable families and were landowners also.

The land was covered with substantial trees, mainly red gum. Cattle and sheep were grazed under the trees but it soon became apparent that, during inevitable dry spells, the trees used up all the moisture. Clearing the land was usually by ring barking the trees. A photograph of the Wuk Wuk bridge taken about 1886 shows how large the trees were. It appears that ring barking was under way at that time.



*Wuk Wuk Bridge c 1886.*

Another explanation for the defoliated trees may be the reason stated in a paper written about 1889 by Alfred Howitt on *The Eucalypts of Gippsland* in which he attributes defoliation and demise of the red gums on the plains between Bairnsdale and Stratford to the absence of “the annual bushfires” which allowed plagues of insects to defoliate the trees in successive years. In the summer of 2004-2005, there has been a remarkable absence of Christmas and cockchafer beetles that often strip eucalypts of their leaves. This may have been because of the widespread fires throughout the Alpine country 2003.

The trees on the hills of Wuk Wuk were probably dwarfed by those growing on the rich alluvial soils of the Lindenow Flats. It is possible that, in addition to the steepness of the escarpment on the northern side of the river, the density of the vegetation on the flats was a reason for McMillan traveling so far upstream before crossing the river.

The extent of the vegetation shown by the photograph helps to get the scheme to build a dam on the Mitchell River at that time into perspective. The northern channel was planned to end where the top of the hill can be seen through the trees. This scheme was in the minds of farmers at the time the photograph was taken.

At that time, irrigation schemes in the Colony were constructed by a trust set up for each scheme. Landowners on the Mitchell River flats took a petition to the Colonial government for a scheme to irrigate the river flats and this was approved. Landowners on the higher land expressed interest in the scheme as did the residents of the growing township of Bairnsdale for a town water supply.

This resulted in a second petition to the government for a larger scheme which was also duly approved. This whole process took about six months. Work commenced in the late 1880's and the stone wall was constructed across the river. The trust, however, ran out of money and work was suspended. In 1893, one of the biggest floods on record not only dampened interest in irrigation but also showed up flaws in the construction of the dam, which began to fail.

In 1996, a Royal Commission was held into irrigation projects throughout the Colony as other irrigation trusts were also in financial difficulties. The Royal Commission found that there was inadequate engineering investigation of the site before construction commenced and what was thought to be bedrock was large fractured rock that allowed water to seep under the wall leading to its failure. The Commission found that irrigation projects were too costly to be financed by local trusts and some years later the State government established the State Rivers and Water Supply Authority which became a world leader in water conservation.



The weir would have stored very little water. Its purpose seems to have been to divert water rather than store it. The photograph may have been taken before the wall failed. The larger flow appears to originate from the gate to the northern channel. Construction of the channel was never begun. The Royal Commission also came to the conclusion that the district rainfall was in the high 20 inch rather than the low 20 inch rainfall zone as the locals claimed.

Joseph Evans' second son, also Joseph, was born in 1852. His obituary indicates that he ventured out at the age of 16 years and traveled extensively in eastern Australia. The pony measuring stick and other trophies mentioned are now in Bairnsdale Museum.

In 1879, he married Mary Whitbourne, daughter of Catherine Murphy and her first husband, Henry Whitbourne. Catherine was a daughter of John Scott, born at Monaro in 1839. At the age of six, she accompanied her parents on their epic journey through uncharted country when they occupied Delvine Run.

Mary was just three years of age when her father was killed when he fell from a horse while inspecting jumps at the Lucknow racecourse.

Mary and Joseph had five daughters and one son. Several of them attended Wuk Wuk school but, because of Joseph's wanderings buying horses, they led a somewhat nomadic life. Mary claimed that when they purchased Ripple Lea in 1913, she had moved 17 times.



The photograph, c. 1909, is believed to have been taken at Sandy Camp. Mary and Joseph are surrounded by their children:  
 Back , Iza, Frances and Joseph;  
 Front, Ella, Dora and Catherine.

Places where they are known to have lived are Stratford and Wagga Wagga, NSW and about 1887 to 1890, they were licensees of the Golden Age Hotel in Omeo.

On Sundays, Ripple Lea was usually host to many visitors, mainly from Mary's side of the family, who spent the afternoon talking together and partaking in a generous afternoon tea.

Like most farms on the Lindenow Flats, Ripple Lea was devoted mainly to growing maize. There was no mechanical power and about eight to ten draught horses were kept to pull the farm machinery. A significant part of the farm was used to grow oats for chaff required when they were working and some was also needed for grazing when they were not.

The population of Wuk Wuk grew and a school was opened in August 1886 with 28 children enrolled. Sixteen of them had been attending Lindenow school and four of them, Wy Yung. The youngest was just 2 years and 11 months old and several were under four. These were probably enrolled to boost the numbers and may not have actually attended until they were a little older.

Joseph Evans enrolled in February of the following year until April 1889. This may have been when his parents became licensees of the Golden Age Hotel in Omeo.

Names of parents or guardians and their occupations were as follows: -

Annie O'Toole	Teacher
Fred. Wm. Evans	Farmer/Butcher
Geo. A. Watts	Splitter
Thomas Fraser	Farmer
William Happerley	Bootmaker
Samuel Prout	Contractor

Francis Eccles	Groom
Alexander Telfer	Farmer
Francis Kennebury	Groom

As was the practice at the time, a number of children were in the care of guardians. As an example, Joseph Evans' younger sister, Frances, remained in the care of her uncle, John Evans, while her parents were in Omeo.

Between 1886 and 1914, 340 individuals were enrolled at Wuk Wuk School. Among them were Albert and Alex. Evans, sons of John Evans, who died together at Gallipoli. (See [A splendid type of manhood.](#))

One of the most significant developments in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the invention of the railway in the 1830s. Prior to that time, the fastest man could travel was the speed of a galloping horse. Australia lacked the rivers and water needed to sustain a canal system for transportation of heavy or bulky goods. This need was filled by bullock dray. This was at a maximum speed of about three or four kilometres an hour.

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, railways were extended throughout the Colony. In Australia, railways were mostly developed by governments. A rail service was a great benefit so there was intense competition between neighbouring communities to have a railway line through their area.

The invention of the motor car in the 1870s was to lead more dramatic changes but its use depended on the prosperity of individuals to afford one. Until the use of cars became affordable to the majority of the population, there was a need for shops and other services to be provided locally.

### **Walpa.**

In the 1920s, there was a saddlers shop on the southwest corner at Walpa, operated by Bill Garlick. There was a considerable demand for repairs to saddles and bridles, harness for buggies and jinkers, and collars and harness for draught horses. As cars, trucks and tractors became affordable, this trade slowly declined and Bill Garlick closed his shop and started up a farm produce business at Lindenow South.

The Walpa Post Office and Store was run by Ernie (Ikey) Young. As well as the Post Office, it was also the telephone exchange. Ernie's wife was Margaret (Mag) Murphy, a daughter of Catherine Scott, widow of Henry Whitbourne. The store carried a big range of groceries and other goods. George Beck was employed to ride around the store's customers every week or two to take orders, which he delivered the following day.

Many things were bought in bulk. Electric power was not yet available. Kerosene for lighting was purchased in four gallon tins. When these were empty, the tops were cut off; a wire handle inserted and became a handy container. One use was to heat water on the wood stove for the bath. Everyone relied on tanks for water so there was never more than an a few inches of water in the bath and children used the same water, perhaps with a little hot water from a kettle to warm it up a bit.

Sugar was bought in 70 lb bags which, like the kerosene tins, were converted to other uses when empty. One could become an apron or, which a light rope tied from the top to each corner, become a backpack. Most mothers made jam and preserved fruit using considerable quantities of sugar.

A treat for small children was a pennies worth of boiled lollies. Ernie kept newspaper cut into squares of about 30 centimetres, which he deftly formed into a cone, then filled it with a handful from his big bottle of lollies.

The mail came by train and a contractor delivered it around the various post offices. The arrival of the train was a daily spectacle. The train from Melbourne crossed with the one from Bairnsdale. The former could be seen coming for a considerable distance while the later was Almost to the station before it could be seen. The Station Master, Arthur Collins, would decide which was to come into the platform first and then set the signal that stopped the other outside the station.

After passengers had been dropped and boarded, the first train reversed and was diverted to a parallel track before the other drew into the station. There was usually an exchange of greetings between passengers on the two trains and for a few minutes, Lindenow seemed to be very important.

Not only groceries were delivered. Lindenow had a baker and Dick Avery delivered the bread. During the summer months, the same van was used to take school children down to the river for swimming.

There were several butchers who also delivered meat, not pre-cut as it is from the supermarkets, but cut, boned and rolled as required by each customer at their front gate.

On top of the hill, next to the store, was Gavin Johnson who had a small blacksmith's shop. Next to him, Jimmy Man Dean built his home. Jimmy was Indian but he did not wear a turban like Chunda Singh who had a farm on the flats. Jimmy was always friendly and knew everybody.

Mrs. Mahony lived along the back lane. She was a daughter of Janet Scott and wore the long black dresses and bonnets popular decades before. Her daughter, Mrs. Abel, lived opposite Telfers at Hillview. The Abels were a large family.

Elizabeth Telfer was the first child of Joseph and Sophia Evans, born at Lindenow in 1847. She died in 1932. George Telfer was a Shire Councillor early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One of their sons, George Stanley (Stan) Telfer was one of the most highly ranked soldiers in Gippsland. He won the Military Cross in the Great War and was Lieutenant Colonel of the 13<sup>th</sup> Light Horse in between the two World Wars. He also served in World War 2.

Jim Campbell also lived opposite Telfer's. He bought himself a car and taught himself to drive in his backyard where all he could do was to drive round and round in circles with the steering on full lock.

Cars in those days had canvas tops and celluloid windows which could be removed to allow cooling in hot weather. Windscreen wipers were operated by hand and car radios were unheard of. Roads were gravel surfaced and, around Lindenow, they were largely maintained by Tom Kerr using a draught horse and dray.

Most of the river flats were used for growing maize but sugar beet growing was also grown. The maize was planted "on the square", that is, a set of two or three seeds every three feet in rows three feet apart. This enabled the crop to be cultivated both ways for control of weeds. The three feet spacing of sets was achieved by a wire "chain" with a knot every three feet that tripped the mechanism of the planter giving a distinctive double click.

As the seedlings emerged, the skill of the person who planted the crop was evident to passers-by. There was a knack in swinging the "chain" across three feet at each end – pull too hard or too little and the cross rows were out of line and was very plain to see.

When the seedlings were about one inch high, the paddock was harrowed with onion harrows (light harrows with thin tynes) to smother the initial crop of weeds. This seemed to drag half the maize seedlings out as well but that was why three seeds were planted in a set – it was rare to pull all three out.

Over the next three months, the crop was regularly cultivated, firstly with a double horse hoe. This machine had wheels that could be steered to a very limited degree by the driver using his feet to try to avoid ripping out even more. The horses had a wire netting muzzle attached to their bridles to prevent them nibbling the tasty plants. When the crop grew too high for the double horse hoe, a single horse hoe was used. This required the driver to manhandle the implement while driving the hose. The horses soon learned to keep within the rows.

Soon the crop became too high and dense even for this implement and the weeds were kept under control by hand hoeing. This was often a very hot job as the crop blocked any breezes but not the hot sun.

The late Mr. Joseph Evans, of "Ripple Lea," Walpa whose death was recently reported in "The Advertiser" was well known as an excellent judge of horses. For many years he purchased horses suitable for Indian remount work on behalf of Messrs. Campbell and Sons (Kirk's Bazaar). McLean and Co. and the late Mr. C. Glasscock, by whom he was presented with a silver-handled initialled walking stick capable of expanding into a stick for measuring heights of horses. This uncommon article was in the deceased gentleman's possession for forty years. While in search of suitable remounts he journeyed into Queensland as far north as Rockhampton, through New South Wales as far as Bourke and through various parts of Victoria.

He was passionately fond of good horses and was all extremely good rider He made several excursions into the hills on horseback and became familiar with the country from Icy Creek, near Warragul, right to Kosciusko He could tell thrilling stories of experiences while driving horses and cattle out of the steep hills. and of journeys along the then fearfully boggy road to Melbourne with cattle and horses. On one occasion he yarded three horses which had bolted from the mob in Chapel Street, Prahran. After a swift run through the heart of the city from Chapel Street they were safely lodged in the Newmarket yards.

The late Mr Evans began his career by riding into N.S.W. in 1868, and followed shearing. He was acquainted with many sheds, and

was always "ringer" of every one in which he worked. On one occasion he rather unwillingly made the acquaintance of the notorious Morgan, but fortunately was not molested

In 1885 he won a silver cup presented by the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Co. for the best collection of cereals.

In 1882 he carried off a medal for champion prize for a draught entire at Bairnsdale Agricultural Show.

He was a member of the M.U.I.O.O.F lodge for about fifty years. Three years ago he celebrated his golden wedding. Among those present was his son-in-law, Professor Porteus, of the Hawiian University, who was in Australia at the time, making psychological investigations among the black tribes of central and northern Australia. Cr. T. W. Murphy, president of the Bairnsdale shire and president of the Gippsland Racing Association, is brother-in-law of the deceased gentleman. His demise has removed one of the earliest pioneers and his death is deeply regretted. He was one of the gold old type of citizen who always extended the warm hand of friendship to visitors to his home and judging by the large number attending his funeral. the scores of cards, letters and telegrams received by, his relatives, lie was both widely and favorably known right, through the eastern half of Victoria.

The Advertiser  
Friday, September 30, 1932.

## Faces of Lindenow.

This section for photos of Lindenow people.

Elizabeth Evans was born at Lindenow on Dec 15<sup>th</sup>, 1847. She was the first child of Joseph and Sophia Evans. She married George Telfer and lived at Walpa until her death in 1933.

She is pictured with her grand children, Margaret (Bondeson) and Douglas Telfer.



Joseph Evans was born at Lindenow in 1852, the second son of Joseph and Sophia Evans. He died at Lindenow in 1932. He married Mary Whitbourne, second daughter of Catherine Scott (Whitbourne, Murphy), born at Lindenow in 1861 and died there in 1945.



Joseph & Mary (Whitbourne) Evans c.1930

L – R.  
Bruce Fountain, Bruce Avery, Dennis  
Maginn, Doug Telfer.c 1935

