

THE CURRENCY LAD

A BIOGRAPHY OF

**HORATIO SPENCER HOWE WILLS
5 OCTOBER 1811 TO 17 OCTOBER 1861**

**AND
THE STORY OF HIS IMMEDIATE FAMILY
1797 TO 1918**

**USING CONTEMPORARY LETTERS, DOCUMENTS,
DAGUERREOTYPES, PAINTINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHS**

BY

**T. S. WILLS COOKE
1997**

Author and Editor's Notes.

The indented and italicised portions of this book are copies of, or quotations from, original documents coming either from Public Records or from the private collections of family members. In each case these are noted at the bottom left of the item which shows a document number used by me for filing and reference purposes, together with the initials of the family member from whose collection the item is taken. These are:

LWC Collection

Mr Lawton Cooke

THSW Collection

Mr. Tom Wills

TSWC Collection

Mr. Terry Wills Cooke

Where I have inserted a comment or clarification it is surrounded by square brackets. [for example]

I have not corrected these documents (except for normal spelling and punctuation to make for easier reading) and this is the reason for the vagaries of the spelling of place names throughout. H.S.H. Wills in particular uses different spellings for places and is often guilty of inaccuracies in dates as he relied on memory rather than written material.

I have been greatly assisted by my uncle Lawton Cooke, and my cousin Tom Wills, who have given me a great deal of information as well as allowing me to use items from their collections.

I have also been given photographs and other assistance from Mrs. Patricia Billings (the grand-daughter of Minna Spencer Wills), from Mr Cliff Cowdroy (a descendant of Eliza Wills/Antill), from Mrs Meryl O'Brien and Mr. Arthur Wills (descendants of Egbert Spencer Wills), from Mrs Betty Edward (the grand-daughter of Elizabeth Spencer Wills) and from Dr Geoffrey Buckwell (the great-grandson of Thomas Wills)

Gillian Hibbins went to much trouble to edit the book and to give me a number of pieces of information of great value for which I thank her most sincerely. Further I have been assisted with information by the State Library of New South Wales, The Geelong Historical Records Centre, The Bellarine Historical Society, Mrs Celene Muller and Ms Jan Worthington.

The great difficulty has been to decide what to leave out and there are many documents and letters which have not been used either because they are repetitious, too personal, boring or because there has just not been room to fit them in. However the whole is recorded for posterity if indeed posterity should be interested.

I have been surprised a great deal by the inaccuracies in some of the earlier works and, having gone through and checked my material on numerous occasions, I can see how it happens. Nevertheless I believe that this book is as accurate as I can make it.

Rather than go to the extent of a great many footnotes I have placed superscript numbers at appropriate places and the explanation of these notes is at the end of the book.

Finally I want to give my greatest thanks and love to my wife, Marian, who not only prepared all of this book from original, hard to decipher, material but even more difficult than that was the fact that she had to bear the load of my obsession with it, as it is the result of more than seven years work.

**This book I dedicate to my children Marcus Spencer
and Sarah Elizabeth.**

COPYRIGHT © T. S. WILLS COOKE 1998

INDEX

AUTHORS NOTES

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

CHAPTER	CONTENTS	PAGES
1	EDWARD SPENCER WILLS 13 August 1778 to 14 May 1811	1-10
2	SARAH WILLS (née Harding) from the trial to her death 1776 to 17 July 1833	11-16
3	THE CHILDREN OF EDWARD AND SARAH WILLS (excluding Horatio Spencer Howe) Sarah (Redfern/Alexander) Thomas Eliza (Antill) Edward Spencer Elizabeth Selina	17-28
4	HORATIO SPENCER HOWE WILLS - His early life and “The Currency Lad” 5 October 1811 to 21 August 1841	29-38
5	HORATIO S. H.WILLS - The Lexington period 21 August 1841 to 23 November 1852	39-59
6	HORATIO S. H.WILLS - The Belle-Vue period 24 November 1852 to 16 January 1861	60-94
7	HORATIO S. H.WILLS - The great trek and the massacre 17 January 1861 to 17 October 1861	95-119
8	ELIZABETH WILLS (née Wyre) 1817? to 28 December 1907	120-128

9	CATHERINE ROOPE (née Wyre) 1815? to 25 June 1893 and her husband WILLIAM 8 June 1801 to 20 August 1881	129-162
10	CULLINLARINGO 1861-1892	163-195
11	THOMAS WENTWORTH WILLS The “W.G.Grace of the Colony” and the “Founder of Australian Football” 19 December 1836 to 2 May 1880	196-226
12	EMILY SPENCER WILLS 25 December 1842 to 6 December 1925 and her husband H.C.A. Harrison - the “Father of Australian Football”	227-236
13	CEDRIC SPENCER WILLS 1 December 1844 to 1914 and his family	237-250
14	HORACE SPENCER WILLS 16 June 1847 to 9 October 1928 and his family	251-268
15	THE OTHER CHILDREN OF HORATIO and ELIZABETH WILLS EGBERT SPENCER ELIZABETH SPENCER EUGENIE SPENCER (DUCKEY) MINNA SPENCER HORTENSE SARAH SPENCER	269-280
	FAMILY TREES	281-284
	END NOTES	285-301
	THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF H S WILLS	302-313
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	314-315

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Page 316	Horatio Spencer Howe Wills circa 1855 (From the T S W C Collection)
Page 317	The grave of Edward Spencer Wills (From Bound for Botany Bay by Frank Clune)
Page 318	The home of Edward and Sarah Wills at 96 George St. Sydney (From Public Records)
Page 319	Sarah Wills (Redfern/Alexander) in later life
Page 320	Sarah and James Alexander in their carriage at Roke Manor Hampshire circa 1873 (Both from the Betty Edward Collection)
Page 321	Thomas Wills (From the Dr. Geoffrey Buckwell Collection)
Page 322	Eliza Wills (Antill) (from the Cliff Cowdroy Collection)
Page 323	Jane Howe (Harrison) (from "Running with the ball" by Mancini and Hibbins - The A. M. Smith Collection)
Page 324	H.S.H. Wills taken in 1859 (from a daguerreotype in the T S W C Collection)
Page 325	"Lexington" Ararat circa 1849 (From a glass plate in the T S W C Collection)
Page 326	"Belle Vue" Point Henry near Geelong circa 1940 (From "Running with the ball" by Mancini and Hibbins)
Page 327	H. S. Wills' grave at Cullinlaringo circa 1865 (From a glass plate in the T S W C Collection)
Page 328	H. S. Wills' memorial in St Marks Church Leopold (From the T S W C Collection)

Page 329	Elizabeth Wills (Née Wyre) in later life
Page 330	Four generations - Elizabeth Wills, Horace Spencer Wills, Eva Irene Wills (Cooke) and Sidney Bertram Wills Cooke in 1907 (Both from the T S W C Collection)
Page 331	“Cullinlaringo” Station circa 1885
Page 332	Australia’s first wool press at “Minerva Creek” with Horace S. Wills circa 1923 (Both from the T S W C Collection)
Page 333	Thomas Wentworth Wills circa 1864 (From the T S W C Collection)
Page 334	Emily Spencer Wills (Harrison) circa 1855 (From a daguerreotype in the T S W C Collection)
Page 335	Cedric Spencer Wills
Page 336	Elizabeth (Berry) Wills (Nee McDonald) (Both from the T H S W Collection)
Page 337	Cedric Spencer and Horace Spencer Wills in 1859 (From a daguerreotype in the T S W C Collection)
Page 338	Horace Spencer Wills circa 1872
Page 339	Sarah Eliza Wills (Nee Beswicke) circa 1872 (All from the T S W C Collection)
Page 340	Horace Spencer and Sarah Eliza Wills with their daughters (Back from left Hebe Eugenie and Ida Clare - Front from left Ethel Mary and Eva Irene with Sidney Bertram Wills Cooke (on his grandmother’s knee) taken 1910 (From the L W C Collection)
Page 341	Egbert Spencer Wills and his wife
Page 342	Mary (Née Beswicke) (From the T S W C and Arthur Wills Collections)
Page 343	Elizabeth Spencer Wills (Shaw) in middle life
Page 344	Eugenie Spencer (Duckey) Wills (Tyson/Cue) in middle life
Page 345	Eugenie Spencer and Minna Spencer Wills circa 1862/3 (All from the Betty Edward Collection)
Page 346	Minna Spencer Wills (Blomfield-Brown) in middle life (From the Patricia Billings Collection)

CHAPTER 1

EDWARD SPENCER WILLS 1778- 1811

Very little is known of the antecedents of Edward Spencer Wills, there is a record of his baptism on 11 September 1778 at St. Lukes, Old St. Finsbury, a suburb of London. In this he is shown as born on 13 August 1778 the son of Edward and Elizabeth Wills. His father's occupation was apparently "watchmaker".

His mother, Elizabeth née Price was born in St. Botolph's Parish in Bishopsgate London on 2 May 1742 and his father in St Andrew's Parish in Holborn London and baptised on 22 December 1741. They were married in St. Giles Cripplegate on 1 February 1761 and they were both buried in St Paul's Covent Garden, he in 1814 and she in 1822. He had five siblings, Elizabeth (b. 1763) Anne (b. 1765), later Mrs George Poole who died in 1800 leaving two children, Harriot (b. 1768), Sarah Anne (b. 1776), and Esther Ann (b. 1791).

Edward married Sarah Harding in 1795. She was from the same area as Edward and was baptised also at St. Lukes on 11 August 1776 and was thus two years his senior. Their first child, Sarah, was born on 23 April 1796 and she was baptised at St Luke's on 15 May 1796. This history really begins with Edward Wills' trial before Mr. Justice Heath on 20 March 1797, his crime being a hold-up in Longacre of three local citizens close to his home and stealing from them 11/9d. and a watch. The loot was found in his lodgings.

In both the indenture for his trial and transportation, and in the list of convicts on the ship, Edward Wills is shown as Edward Willis, but in a letter to my father's cousin Brian Wills from the College of Heralds dated 1950, the Windsor Herald states "the names Wills, Wylles, Willis and Wells became hopelessly entangled as spelling was not standardised and the spelling of Wills or Willis would have meant no different", although it is now known that Wills was the spelling which he used.

The indictment for his trial follows:

ASSIZES 237

INDICTMENT MARCH 1797

SURREY

Edward Willis late of the Parish of St. Mary Lambeth Surrey, Labourer¹ and James Dashper late of the same, Labourer, on the 13th January in the 37th Year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George III King of Gt. Britain etc. (1797) with force and arms at the parish aforesaid, in the Kings Highway thereon and upon Michael Martin in the peace of God and our said Lord the King then and there being feloniously did make an assault upon him the said Michael Martin in corporal fear and danger of his life. And did put one piece of the gold coin of the realm called a half guinea, one piece of silver coin called a sixpence and eighteen pieces of copper money called half pence.

These same men were charged in respect of Sarah Cordingley, widow, and yet a further charge in regard to John Martin.

*JURY FOUND GUILTY**SENTENCE: TO BE HANGED BY THE NECK UNTIL DEAD*

#7970300a U K Public records

Wills was found guilty on the charge of robbing John Martin, but in the case of Sarah Cordingley it was determined not to proceed with the charge. There was a right of appeal and Edward's father obviously used all his connections to assist. The three men charged had carried arms but had not used them.

First Edward appealed to the Duke of Portland, a leading figure in the government of the day and Secretary for Colonies, for his assistance in gaining commutation of the death sentence. His father prevailed upon one of the victims, John Martin, to intercede with Lord Hawkesbury, another member of the government and in whose service Elizabeth Wills' sister had been. Martin said in his appeal that Wills was young, married with an infant child, was from a good family and as a first offender deserved another chance.

There were supporting references before Mr. Justice Heath from the Curate and Church Wardens from St. Luke's, Old Street, his parish church, from Millar Ritchie, a printer who had been his employer and a further reference from Lord Liverpool through the advocacy of his agent Thomas Lock.

WHITEHALL 29TH MARCH 1797

Edward Willis and James Dashper having been convicted of Highway Robbery and having been humbly recommended as fit objects of the Royal Mercy.

His Majesty has now been graciously pleased to extend his Royal Mercy "on condition of their being transported for the term of their natural lives to the Eastern Coast of New South Wales, etc. etc."

#7970300 U K Public Records

Edward Wills had been in custody from his arrest on 14 January 1797 until his trial in March, and would then, upon conviction, have been transferred to one of the prison hulks lying in the Thames.

Much has been written about the atrocious conditions which applied to the convicts in these hulks. They were crammed together, ill fed, wore chains and laboured mostly in the naval dock yards close to where they were moored. Wills remained on these hulks until such time as it was his turn to join a convict ship to take him to New South Wales, and the following indenture shows that he and his two companions in crime were to be sent on the ship *Hillsborough* to the convict colony of New South Wales.

Edited extract from the Public Record setting out the indenture for the vessel Hillsborough to carry convicts to New South Wales including Edward Wills.

*"Hillsborough"
County of Surrey
General Sessions*

This indenture made the fifteenth day of December in the thirty ninth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third, King of Great Britain and so forth, and in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety eight Between Thomas Shelton of the session house in the City of

London Esquire of the one part and Daniel Bennett of High Street in the Parish of Saint John of Wapping in the County of Middlesex merchant of the other part who was at the General Session of the delivery of the gaol of our Lord the King of the county of Surrey holden at Kingston upon Thomas in the said County on the twenty first day of March in the thirty ninth year of the reign of our Lord the King, William More otherwise Morey and Michael Fitzpatrick were convicted of Felony and were ordered to be transported beyond the seas for the term of seven years to such place as His Majesty with the advice of His Privy Council should think fit to declare and appoint and whereas at like session holden at Kingston upon Thames aforesaid in and for the said County of Surrey on the twentieth day of March in the thirty seventh year of the reign of our said Lord the King [several irrelevant paragraphs omitted]

And whereas at a like session holden at Kingston upon Thames in and for the said County of Surrey on the twentieth day of March in the thirty seventh year aforesaid James Dashper, William Woodham and Edward Willis were convicted of felony for which they were excluded the benefit of clergy.²

But His Majesty having been graciously pleased to extend his royal mercy to them upon condition of their being transported to the Eastern coast of New South Wales or some one or other of the islands adjacent for the terms of their natural lives which being signified in writing by one of His Majesty's principal secretaries of State they were ordered to be transported accordingly

[several irrelevant paragraphs omitted]

And whereas His Majesty by his Royal command bearing date [illegible] issued on the thirtieth day of August last reciting the power and authority given to His Majesty in this behalf on and by a certain Act of Parliament made and passed in the twenty eighth year of his reign has been pleased to give orders for the transportation of all the several before named offenders And has graciously thought fit to authorise and empower the above named Thomas Shelton to make a contract or contracts with a fit person or persons for the effectual transportation of the said offenders and to take security from the person or persons so contracting for the effectual transportation of them pursuant to the contracts and orders aforesaid concerning them respectively now this Indenture witnesseth that the said Thomas Shelton by virtue of such power and authority and in consideration of the contract and agreement of the said Daniel Bennett here-in-after-mentioned and of the security given by him the said Daniel Bennett by Bond or writing obligatory bearing even date with these presents for the effectual transportation thereof hath contracted and by these presents doth contract with the said Daniel Bennett (he being a fit person) for the performance executors administrators and assigns doth covenant contract and agreed to and with the said Thomas Shelton manner following (that is today) that he the said Daniel Bennett his executors administrators or assigns shall and will forthwith take and receive all the aforementioned offenders and transport them or cause them to be transported effectually as soon as conveniently may be to the Eastern coast of New South Wales or some one or other of the islands adjacent pursuant to the sentences and orders aforesaid concerning

them respectively and shall and will provide such evidence as to the nature of the case will admit of the landing there of the said offenders death and casualties by sea excepted and produce the same to whom it may concern when lawfully called upon.

And shall not nor will by the lawful default of him the said Daniel Bennett his executors administrators or assigns suffer the said offenders or any or either of them to return to Great Britain or Ireland during the respective terms for which they were sentenced to be transported aforesaid.

In witness hereof the said parties to these present have hereunder interchangeables set their hands and seals the day and year first above written.

Sealed and delivered being first duly stamped and the convictions and sentences of William May, Steven Laws, Richard Ruff, Edward Ballard, Steven Freeland and John Skinner being first inserted in the presence of Jonathan Turner and R. Ford - Clerks to Mr. Shelton.

(These being created inclusions in this Indenture)

Thomas Shelton

Daniel Bennett

#7981215 U K Public Records

An excellent narrative of this appalling trip has been printed by the Library of Australian History and consists mostly of the diary of William Noah³ which describes the entire journey, but which also includes a list of the ship's company and a list of the 300 convicts embarked.

The date of the indenture is later than the date of the sailing of the ship and I presume that the indenture was not drawn up with the ship owners until after all were loaded aboard and they could be certain of what was what.

The voyage on the *Hillsborough* took 218 days. She sailed from England after much delay on 23 November 1798 and arrived in Sydney Cove on 26 July 1799. There were a number of free settlers on the ship amongst whom was Wills' wife, Sarah, and their daughter who was still less than 3 years old.

The convicts were ironed two together and were accommodated on the lowest deck where conditions were extremely grim, there being no direct access to outside light or air. Each man was given a wooden plank two feet wide as a bunk and a blanket and a pillow. The weight of the irons was 11 lbs. Wills joined the ship on October 18 1798 among a party of 56 from the prison hulk *Stanisklaus*. They were described by William Noah as "deplorable, ragged and alive with vermin".

The *Hillsborough* was one of a convoy of about 15 ships and there was some delay in their sailing because of storms. During the trip typhoid struck and 100 convicts died, one of Wills' two accomplices in the robbery, Woodham, being among them. The typhoid began on 12 November. The disease was carried by lice and, due to the lack of hygiene, it spread rapidly through the ship.

The convicts were given only 13 pints of water each to last them for a week. This was to be their ration throughout the journey despite the fact that their provisions were salt meat and they had to sail through the tropics in appalling heat. The journey began with a gale and one can only imagine the conditions as the convicts were locked below and many were seasick.

The convicts were deeply rebellious and the Captain and crew responded with dreadful cruelty. A number of the convicts had found ways to remove their irons, but this was reported to the captain by an informer amongst the convicts. They were thereupon all ordered on deck, had their irons examined and, if these had been interfered with, the convicts were punished by between 12 and 72 lashes. The Captain further threatened to hang any more convicts found interfering with their chains.

By March the ship arrived in Table Bay, now the site of Capetown in South Africa, where they stayed for some considerable time as a number of convicts were dying from typhoid and the ship had to be cleaned and provisioned. Conditions on the shore were also very poor, the convicts being forced to dig graves for their dead comrades whilst shackled together.

The Captain finally realised that the treatment he was meting out would interfere with the payment he was to receive for the delivery of live convicts, and conditions began to improve toward the end of May with liberty to go on deck at will if one was sick, as much water as was wanted, but by now the death toll had risen to 63 of the original 300.

The ship sailed down the “roaring forties” going through a number of terrible storms and arrived off Van Dieman’s Land (now re-named Tasmania) on 4 July. Fighting their way up the east coast of Australia, they arrived off Sydney Heads at 4 am on 26 July. At daylight the ship sailed up the Harbour and the convicts were finally unloaded on 29 July.

Only 205 of the 300 original convicts were landed in Australia, and of these 6 more died in the first few days. The *Hillsborough* had been one of the worst convict ships ever to bring a load to Australia, and Governor Hunter wrote to the Secretary of the Colonies, the Duke of Portland, acquainting him with the situation and describing the convicts on the *Hillsborough* as “a cargo of the most miserable and wretched convicts I ever beheld”. The reason for this was a difference in the payment method. Whereas previously the Government had paid £23 per head for every convict transported to Botany Bay, James Duncan of the *Hillsborough* was to receive only £18 per head with an extra £4/10/6 for every live convict arriving in Australia. When Edward Wills finally landed he had been on board for more than 9 months.

It is clear from subsequent events that Edward and Sarah Wills were extremely clever business people. As she was a free woman she had all the rights of any other free citizen and it was arranged that her husband was assigned to her as a convict servant. They began a trading business.

There are quite a number of reports in the *Sydney Gazette* of the period in relation to Edward and Sarah Wills and their business. These related to :

Edward Wills incautiously purchasing 7 ounces of silver which later turned out to have been stolen, and was required to pay 5 pounds to the orphans’ fund.

On 7 October 1894 two men were sentenced to 100 lashes and 3 years hard labour for carrying out a robbery on his premises.

An advertisement seeking 2 goats and 4 kids strayed from his premises at the brick fields for which a 10/- reward was offered.

On 20 January 1805 a woman was gaoled for stealing sundry merchandise from his house. She was heavily punished partly because she was a servant in the house and had betrayed that trust.

In April 1805 Edward Wills was offering a variety of goods for sale at moderate prices.

Wills’ house, from which he conducted his business, was near the hospital wharf in what is today George Street facing what is Essex Street. Wills was granted a

conditional pardon by Governor King on 4 June 1803 which enabled him to enter business on his own account. In addition to the successful business which they were conducting, Edward and Sarah's family was growing and he was prospering.

The first child born in the Colony to them was Thomas Wills, born 5 August 1800, he was followed by Eliza, born 10 September 1802, Edward Spencer born on 16 February 1805 and named after his father, and Elizabeth Selina born 30 November 1807.

The "Spencer" second name, first seen applied to Edward in his baptism record, has been applied through the family for several generations, including my own son. The reasons for this name are not clear but there was some notion in the older members of the family that there was some connection with the Earl Spencer, another is that the Harding family had some connection, in any case there has been a deal of research and no connection can be established so the reasons will never now be known.

In September 1805 Wills began a partnership with Mr. Reiby and began to engage in the seal trade both oil and fur, and as a result began to take an interest in shipping. In February 1806 the *Gazette* reported that the hull of a vessel being built for Messrs. Reiby and Wills was almost finished. She was quite large for the time with a 40 ft. keel, a 16 ft. beam and was rated at 60 tons. This ship was christened the *Mary and Sally* after Reiby's wife and Wills' daughter, and is listed in the assets in Sarah Wills' later marriage agreement.⁴ They also had a sloop, the *Raven*, and the sloop *Eliza*.

By 1808 the pair were making money very fast and all appeared to be going well. Edward Wills petitioned the Governor for a lease on the land in George St. on which the house was built in the following terms:

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF EDWARD WILLS RESPECTFULLY SET FORTH.

That your Excellency's petitioner arrived a prisoner in this Territory in the year 1799 and by his industry and good conduct was among the fortunate number to whom His Excellency the late Governor King was pleased to extend the Royal Grace.

That under the sanction of His Excellency the said Governor the petitioner made purchase of three small tenements as had been erected in an allotment of ground in High Street fronting the General Dispensary which he now occupies.

That the petitioner by proper attention to the interests of his family which now consists of a wife and five children has much improved his circumstances in life and has engaged in commercial concerns to a comparatively large amount which requires that he should enlarge his premises for the security of his property upon rightful representation of which necessity (illegible) His Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

His Honour was pleased in his great wisdom to grant unto Your Excellency's petitioner after he expended a large sum (several words illegible) and designed to complete the place in such manner as he respectfully considers would meet with your Excellency's approbation

That the petitioner therefore most humbly begs that in consideration of the foregoing circumstances thus candidly set forth Your Excellency will be graciously pleased to approve the act of His Honour the late Lieutenant Governor granting the petitioner a lease of his said premises which said lease is herewith rendered unto Your Excellency in conformity to Your

Excellency's proclamation in that behalf and for such Your Excellency's most humble petitioner as in duty bound will ever pray. And in conformity also to your Excellency's proclamation the petitioner humbly begs further leave to state that he has received from the Government herds for purchase six cows at the rate established £28 per head which full amount was paid by the petitioner by which turned into His Majesty's stores. With due submission most humbly subscribed by Your Excellency's very respectful petitioner.

*Edward Wills
#8080000 Public Records*

They continued to do well in their business until 1810, a year in which Wills free pardon was finally granted on 4 September after a further petition to the Governor sent in February of that year:

*14th February 1810
HIS EXCELLENCY L. MACQUARIE ESQUIRE
CAPTAIN GENERAL AND GOVERNOR IN CHIEF
The humble petition of Edward Wills
Respectfully sets forth*

That petitioner unhappily fell under the law 13 years ago and in consideration of his good conduct was conditionally pardoned by the late Governor King on the fourth of June 1803. That in consideration of his continued good conduct joined to that of petitioners having extensive mercantile concerns under engagement in which he has uniformly acquitted himself with punctuality and integrity It has been the pleasure of his Honour the late Lieutenant Governor to open a prospect of restored liberty by a grant of absolute emancipation which in obedience to your excellency's command he now most humbly and respectfully surrenders. That petitioner yet flattering himself that it will appear to your Excellency the extension of the Royal Grace hath been granted him from motives of true benignity alone. He most ardently prays your Excellency's liberal concurrence on the clement act and that your Excellency may from just consideration be graciously in mind to restore his prospect of returning liberty and for this and your Excellency's great goodness the humble petitioner as in duty bound will ever pray.

*Most humbly and respectfully subscribed by the humble petitioner.
Edward Wills
#8100214 Public Records*

The onset of an illness⁵ which eventually proved fatal prompted Edward to make his will :-

I, Edward Wills, now a resident in and to the town of Sydney, N.S.W. being of sane memory and sound understanding and being desirous of settling my worldly affairs not knowing when it may please Almighty God to call me into his presence I do hereby declare this to be my true last Will and Testament and that every other and former will and testament by

me at any time before made and executed to be null and void and of no effect whatever by this my said last Will and Testament I do therefore nominate constitute and appoint my loving wife Sarah Wills now also of the town of Sydney aforesaid to be my only Executrix and Administrix and I do give and bequeath unto the said wife Sarah Wills all and singular my estate and effects real and personal of whatsoever kind and quality the same may be and wheresoever and wheresoever the same or any or every parcel or part thereof shall and may be and be at the time of my demise and this I do in consideration as well of her constant kindness and affection towards me as the entire confidence,

I feel myself thoroughly satisfied in placing in her maternal love towards my children all of whom are the children of my much beloved wife to whose parental care and regard next to Almighty God I commit the future protection and provision of and for my dear children Sarah, Thomas, Eliza, Edward Spencer and Elizabeth Selina Wills and it is here my particular request that should my daughter marry contrary to the wish and consent of her mother Sarah Wills that the mother shall cease to give her any further assistance whatever.

And I lastly commend my body to the Earth from whence it sprang my spirit to the gracious and most merciful God who gave it and hope to die in charity with all men.

Will was witnessed by

Robert Campbell Jun. Thomas Abbott, Isaac Nicholls, David R. Underwood

and dated May 24th 1810

#8100524 Public Records

Wills was clearly concerned for his health, as two days after making his will he advertised in the *Sydney Gazette* that Mr. George Howe was to have charge of receiving all of his debts, some of which have been owing for many years and at the same time Howe advertised that unless people paid the debts owing to Mr. Wills he would take legal action.

In the last year of his life Edward and Sarah began to take a part in the Sydney society of the time. His George Street home⁶ became first a tavern and then a fashionable restaurant where he gave subscription dinners and the *Gazette* described one of these October 20th speaking of the “many loyal toasts and good humour” of the occasion. In November Wills opened a new warehouse and placed an advertisement thanking the public for their past patronage and welcoming them to his new premises where he offered a wide range of food stuffs and soft goods. By now it is clear that Wills’ health was failing rapidly, and in January 1811 he sold his 140 acre farm at Prospect complete with a shingled weatherboard house, and on May 14th, after a long illness he died in his house in George Street.

His obituary was recorded in the *Sydney Gazette* of 18 May 1811

Died - At his house in George St, on Tuesday night, 14th Instant, Mr Edward Wills, after a painful illness of nearly three months duration, in his 33rd. year.

The generosity of his disposition was evinced in all his actions - his integrity was undoubted, and he lived universally respected, and at his

death must be sincerely regretted by his most distant acquaintance, while his amiable Family and those who were happy in his friendship will be devoted by the melancholy event of a length of inconsolable affliction.

#8110514 Sydney Gazette

Wills' assets were enormous for the time, being valued at more than £15,000/0/0.

CHAPTER 2

THE MOTHER OF HORATIO S. H. WILLS

SARAH HARDING / WILLS / HOWE
1776 - 1823

Sarah Harding was born in 1776, we do not know the exact date but she was baptised on 11 August, and in 1795 she married Edward Spencer Wills. Of her antecedents virtually nothing is known. She is believed to have had two brothers and two sisters, Thomas, Samuel, Nancy and Mary. Only of Mary⁷ do we know anything in particular.

Sarah made the trip to Australia as a free woman on board the "Hillsborough" bringing a small daughter,⁸ and there is little doubt that her ability to provide Edward with sustenance on board was a significant factor in his survival.

She was clearly fairly well educated and a clever business woman, as evidenced by the success of their trading company. The letter written to her mother in 1808 gives a rather delightful picture of the times and of particular interest is the record of the rebellion against Governor Bligh, known ever after in Australian history as the Rum Rebellion.

May 1st 1808

Came to hand September 11 1808

Dear Mother,

We a few days back received a letter from Mr. Wills by favour of Captain. Brooks - he says you have not received a letter since the one dated 1805. But I hope my dear Mother you will not think we forget or neglect you, for that will never be the case.

We sent letters by the "Buffalo" and some money for you and Mr. Wills. We know no person on board the ship "Brothers" that we should wish to trust money with, but I expect the "Porpoise" to sail for England very shortly, and then I shall have the pleasure of sending some with safety.

I think you and my Mammy Wills found yourselves offended at not having a namesake and on that account we put ourselves to the expense of buying another little girl - and a very pretty little girl we have bought - her name is Elizabeth Selina - Selina is added by the request of a gentleman, her Godfather.

Sally⁹ has left school sometime back on account of her masters quitting the country.

But I hope we shall be at home soon for her to finish her education. She is very tall for her age, and as much like her father as she possibly can be. Thomas is at school and is taken great care of. Eliza is at school also. You would not know her from Sally at her age - they are so much alike. Edward is a fine little fellow - he is very big for his age and so saucy that he

says he can fight anybody. If you could see him, I know you would be delighted with his little tricks.

We have had a great change here lately. I have no doubt but you have heard the former character of Governor Bligh and if you have you will not be surprised at what has happened. He had not been here long when he began to take every shameful advantage of those that lay in his power. From some he took good houses and gave them bad ones - from others he took their houses and turned them into the street and made them no recompense whatever.

Some he stopped building. Others he made make improvements against their inclinations and on the whole endeavoured to crush every person as much as possible.

But at last the Officers and Gentlemen in general found themselves so much imposed on that they could put up with it no longer - and for the good of the people in general Major Johnson¹⁰ took up the cause - and on the 26th January quite unexpected and to our great surprise the Drum beat to arms, the soldiers marched to Government House, put the Governor under arrest and Major Johnson took the command. The Major is a good man and I hope what he has done will be approved of. I have the pleasure to inform you that we have got our [two words erased]

I must tell you, my dear Mother, that we are still making money very fast, and when we think we have got enough to live at ease we will come home to give our dear friends a party. I frequently please myself with the thoughts of our next meeting and return. Thanks to God for the provision he has enabled us to make for our children.

I am expecting every day to receive the letter my father spoke of in his. I hope you have sent me a long one or I shall make you remember it when I get hold of you - and if I have not more than one I shall be apt to chastise some other persons, but I will not say who for fear they should get out of the way when they hear I am coming.

Oh Mother, what a happy meeting will mine be with all my dear brothers and sisters - tell them I shall squeeze them till they think their lives in danger. They may think to have the best of me because I am a little older than them, but they are much mistaken for all the years I spent in this country I am to have over in London. God bless you my dear Mother.

I must conclude for all are in bed but me, and I am very sleepy and Betsy is crying and my feet ache with rocking and the candle is going out. Give my kind love to all my brothers and sisters, uncles and aunt, cousins and all inquiring friends.

*I remain, your ever affectionate daughter,
Sarah Wills*

Dear Mother,

I have only just room enough to send my love to you and all my wife's Brothers and Sisters. I hope with the permission of the Almighty to be enabled some way or other to make you amends for your goodness to them.

I remain affectionately

Edw. Wills

#8080501 LWC Collection

The baby she was rocking in the cradle was Elizabeth Selina who regrettably died aged 3 years and 2 months on 18 January 1811, not long before her father's death in May.

I have no idea what the erased words are, they were apparently removed way back in time. We know from Mrs. Roope's diary that she read the letter in 1862, so I believe that it must have been done because it refers to his convict past, not a subject suitable for discussion in the 1800s.

Sarah was pregnant at the time of Edward's death, and just on 5 months later she gave birth, at the age of 32, to Horatio Spencer Howe Wills on 5 October 1811.

George Howe had been a friend of Wills who had in fact entrusted him with the task of collecting all his outstanding debts, and it was in his honour that Horatio's third name was bestowed. Howe was a convict who arrived in Australia in 1800, having been convicted of robbery, sentenced to death and had that sentence commuted to transportation to New South Wales.

He was the son of Thomas Howe, the Government Printer on one of the islands in the West Indies and in 1790, aged 21, he went to London and worked on the staff of several newspapers having been apprenticed to his father in the printing trade. He married in about 1795 and his son, Robert Howe, was born late in that year.

On his arrival in Australia, as a convict, his former occupation led him to be appointed to begin the first newspaper in Australia, and he was appointed Government Printer by Governor King in early 1803. The first edition of the *Sydney Gazette* was printed on 5 March in that year, and was sold for 6d. a copy. The population of Australia in 1803 was just 7,000 souls, not many to maintain a newspaper faced with extremely basic printing machinery and a chronic shortage of paper. However the newspaper eventually flourished and Howe undertook other printing work, and issued the first book ever printed in Australia. He also conducted a stationery shop and tutored privately. He received his pardon in 1806.

Howe's first wife, the mother of Robert, died on the voyage to Australia and he had a defacto wife, Elizabeth, who bore him five children between 1803 and 1810. It is clear from later events that Howe was not an honourable man, and he jilted Elizabeth to marry Edward Wills' rich widow in 1812.

After their marriage George Howe moved in to the Wills' house in George Street bringing into the family his son Robert and his four illegitimate children. In November 1816 George and Sarah had their only child, Jane¹¹. Prior to their marriage Sarah, faced with the reality of the time that a wife's property became the property of the husband on marriage, entered into a legal arrangement to protect Edward Wills' property from George Howe.

DEED OF TRUST

Dated 28th September 1812

A true copy

*Mrs. Sarah Wills The Reverend William Cowper Mr. David Bevan and Mr.
George Howe - New South Wales*

This Indenture made the 28th day of September in the year of Our Lord One thousand eight hundred and twelve between Sarah Wills of Sydney Widow of the first part the Reverend William Cowper, Clerk, and David Bevan of Sydney Merchant of the second part and George Howe Printer of the Sydney Gazette of the Third part.

Whereas a marriage is intended by the Grace of God to take place and be solemnised by and between the said Sarah Wills and the said George Howe previous whereto the said Sarah Wills is fully and absolutely minded and determined and means and intends by these Presents in the most effectual and decided manner to secure to herself and to her own soul absolute and Exclusive Right and Disposal with a view to a Provision not only for herself but also for her children (as more particularly mentioned and described hereinafter) wholly and absolutely free from the Lett, Hindrance, Molestatione, Interruption, Power or Control of the said George Howe or of any person or persons whatsoever upon his account or under his authority under any color or pretence whatever All and Singular the Lands, Houses, Tenements, Warehouses, Goods, Property, Chattels, [Several paragraphs are omitted but the whole refers to an agreement to protect her property subsequent to her marriage as this was before the Married Women's Property Act which automatically now offers such protection.]

In Witness whereof the said parties have hereunto set their hands and seals at Sydney in the capital Territory of New South Wales and day and year first herein written.

Signed Sarah Wills William Cowper¹² David Bevan George Howe

Sealed and delivered (no stamps being used in this settlement) in the presence of M. Robinson¹³ and Isaac Nichols.¹⁴

Schedule or inventory referred to in this Deed comprising an account of the property assigned viz

A leasehold house warehouse and premises situate in George Street Sydney at Number 96

A farm at Kissing Point 25 acres

A farm near Sydney 30 acres

A farm at Lane Cave 30 acres

Two hundred pounds or household furniture estimated at £200

The Mary and Sally (Brig)

Stock in Trade part paid and part unpaid estimated at £2500 clear

Amount of debts due on notes of hand £2060 Taken from

Amount of debts due on assignment £1472 a statement

Amount of book debts £787 in the ledger

Actions at law depending £490

Two mares and two fillies

Three cows and three calves

Sydney September 28th 1812

Sarah Wills - George Howe

Witnesses

M. Robinson

Isaac Nichols

#8120928 L W C Collection

This proved to be a prudent decision for when Sarah applied to the Governor for a grant of the land in George Street in which she and Edward had built their house, and on which she had spent, by the standards of the time, very considerable sums of money, it

was granted, but under the rules of the time the grant of the land at No. 96 George Street was made in the name of her husband

In March 1821, and in her presence, Howe made a will leaving everything to her. Some two months later, immediately before he died, Howe secretly revoked this will, leaving Robert the printing business and leaving the house at No. 96 George Street to his four illegitimate children and Horatio Wills and Jane Howe, and making no provision for his wife.

Sarah was naturally enraged by this totally dishonest act, and litigation on the subject went on for many years. I have in my possession several documents¹⁵ relating to this litigation which was carried on behalf of the children by Edward's son, Thomas Wills, having as his lawyer William Charles Wentworth. During the litigation Sarah deposed that Howe had become mentally deranged prior to his death, seeking to have the will set aside on the basis that he was mentally incompetent at the time of revoking the will in her favour and making the new secret will. This litigation went on right up until the time Sarah died in 1823, and the final outcome was that the court ordered that the property should pass to her trustees for her children.

Sarah's will was made on 19 September 1821, two years before her death, and her two married daughters Sarah and Eliza were excluded on the basis that she had made provision for them on the occasion of their marriage, so her property was left to her children Thomas, Edward, Horatio and Jane. A codicil to her will contains the mention of her two brothers and one sister, which is the only document we have of any evidence of their existence.

The only sibling of Sarah's about whom we know was the youngest sister Mary who married in England about 1809 and whose two daughters came to Australia in 1824 with Sarah Wills' daughter Sarah Redfern. One of these girls, Selina, later married David Johnston, a relative of Sarah Wills' daughter Eliza (Antill).

After George Howe's death in May 1821 the *Sydney Gazette* was run by Robert Howe until he in turn died in 1829 by drowning due to a boating accident while fishing with his son. Robert Howe, like his father, was not honourable and was also fairly unprepossessing. He had an illegitimate son in 1819 and was finally married in 1821. In the period between 1821 and 1829 his wife Anne bore him four children.

He was a quarrelsome, unpleasant person being sued for libel on a number of occasions. There was a kind of serial sadness about his family. His son died after being bitten by a shark, and his wife's second husband was also drowned, as was one of his brothers.

Clearly the last twelve years of Sarah Wills/Howe's life were neither happy nor successful, and her marriage to George Howe was a failure.

CHAPTER 3

THE SIBLINGS OF HORATIO S. H. WILLS

SARAH WILLS /REDFERN /ALEXANDER

23 April 1796 - 10 January 1875

Sarah was born in England and made the long trip with her mother as a paying passenger on board the “Hillsborough”. She was brought up as a child with her parents and siblings at 96 George Street in Sydney, and was married on 4 March 1811 to Dr. William Redfern. She was at this time 14 years of age, and her marriage took place only two months before the death of her father, and 7 months before the birth of Horatio Spencer.

Dr. Redfern was born in either 1774 or 1775 and was a convict who had been transported to Australia for his part in the infamous mutiny of the *Nore* in May 1797.

He was tried for encouraging the sailors to resist their officers and on 25 August was found guilty. As a doctor he held officer rank in the Royal Navy, and there was a recommendation for clemency because of his situation as a professional, leading him to be more among the men than was normal for officers in those times, and his sentence was transportation for life.

He spent an unusually long period of four years in prison hulks before leaving England on the “*Minorca*” on 21 June 1801 which duly arrived in Sydney on 14 December of that year. He would have had an abnormally comfortable journey for a convict as he was assistant surgeon for the period of the voyage. Shortly after his arrival he was sent to Norfolk Island, a small island about 1000 miles off the coast of Australia to its east, which was the repository for recalcitrant convicts and was a harsh and terrible prison. He stayed there for six years firstly as assistant surgeon and then as surgeon, and the Governor of this tiny prison colony praised him as “conducting himself with such diligence and attention as to merit my approbation”, and as a result of his work Redfern was granted a pardon in 1803. However, he remained on the island until 1808 when he returned to Sydney with his *de facto* wife and a servant.

Upon his return to Sydney he was recommended to Governor Macquarie for appointment as assistant surgeon which was duly confirmed. Redfern was man of strong character and much ability and became a close friend of the Governor. He served in the first Sydney hospital very close to the home of Edward and Sarah Wills, and was their family doctor. He was about 36 or 37 years of age when he married.

William and Sarah Redfern became extremely prosperous. He had the right of private practice and accumulated significant wealth.

In December 1816 following considerable effort by Governor Macquarie the first bank in Australia was formed, and was called the Bank of New South Wales in which shares of £50 each were issued. It is extremely interesting to know that these shares were held by the Governor’s secretary, by Dr. Redfern (husband of Sarah Wills), by Captain Antill (later to be husband of Eliza Wills), George Howe (later to be husband of Edward Wills’ wife Sarah), and by Thomas Wills (the eldest son of Sarah and Edward and the brother of Sarah and Eliza). So the Wills family and their associates were the holders of 11 of the original shares.

In 1818 the principal surgeon, Dr. D’arcy Wentworth, retired and Redfern had expected to be appointed in his place.

Governor Macquarie in fact did recommend his appointment, but to Redfern's great disappointment the Secretary of State for the Colonies refused to confirm this and as a result he tendered his resignation on 24 February 1820 and retired on 24 October to live on his farm near Minto.

Their first child, William Lachlan Macquarie Redfern¹⁶, was born on 27 July 1819. By 1821 Redfern had received more than 3,900 acres in grants of land from Governor Macquarie, mostly out at Minto but there was a 100 acre grant just four miles from Sydney in an area known as Surrey Hills. Redfern built a large home called on this land which he named "Redfern" and it is now the site of an inner suburb of Sydney of the same name.

As Redfern had been given a free pardon he was free to travel and in 1821 William, Sarah and their son sailed for London carrying a petition to the Secretary of State, Earl Bathurst, to try to correct what many saw as a wrong relating to a ruling by the Judge Advocate which did not allow emancipists (those who had been freed or who had completed their term of transportation) to sue in the courts. This voyage was around Cape Horn calling first at Tahiti and then across the Atlantic to England.

Their second son, Joseph Foveaux, was born in England on 7 February 1823 but was to die aged only 7 years in April 1830.

During their visit to Europe Redfern visited the island of Madeira for the purpose of purchasing merino sheep and procuring vines which he proposed to bring back to Australia in order to improve the agricultural and horticultural stock in the Colony.

The family returned to Sydney in July 1824 and with them were William C. Wentworth, a close friend of the Wills family and Sarah's two younger cousins, Emily and Selina Willey. These girls, born in 1810 and 1811 were the daughters of Mary Willey, nee Harding, the younger sister of Sarah Wills/Howe. Redfern brought with him 14 merino sheep and a variety of fruit trees and vines.

They continued to live at their Surrey Hills house where Redfern carried on practice as a doctor but continued his strong interest in farming, and in 1825 they moved permanently to their Minto property "Campbell Fields" and he ceased medical practice.

Redfern was known to have an uneven temper and the Wills family were in a state of deep enmity against Robert Howe arising from the disgraceful trick played by George Howe on their mother Sarah. Robert Howe was a most unpleasant man and was constantly in disagreement with the young Horatio Wills, his apprentice. Robert Howe frequently made sneering references to Redfern in the *Gazette* and in November 1827 Redfern horsewhipped Robert Howe near the *Gazette* office. There was a sensational court case on the subject in January 1828 in which William C. Wentworth appeared for Dr. Redfern. Horatio Wills was also a participant in this brawl as he leapt in to defend his brother-in-law when Robert Howe's wife began to belabour Dr. Redfern with a broom. In the event Redfern was found guilty, but as the jury had recommended leniency Redfern's punishment was only a fine of 30/-.

Dr. Redfern travelled twice more back to England and on 17 July 1833 he died in Edinburgh where he had been living for some time supervising the education of William Lachlan Macquarie Redfern, always referred to in the family as 'Mac' to differentiate him from his father. He was buried in the Edinburgh cemetery. His wife Sarah was on the way from Sydney to England at the time of his death and did not reach London until some days after his funeral. He was extremely wealthy at the time of his death and at the public auction of his estate he was listed as having 100 acres at Redfern,

6,000 acres at Campbell Fields, smaller estates in Cabramatta, Emu Plains, Liverpool and North Geelong, 4,700 at Cox's River and more than 11,000 acres near Cowra.

Further, he had 8,000 sheep, a herd of Hereford cattle, stock horses and working bullocks. His executors were Captain H.C. Antill and Thomas Wills, both of whom were his brothers-in-law.

The agents for his estate were the merchant firm of Redfern and Alexander in which the partners were James Alexander and William Lachlan Macquarie Redfern, this firm being founded in 1838.

In the event Sarah Redfern became a very wealthy woman and on 24 June 1834 she married James Alexander. She was at this time 38 years old and was one year older than her new husband. They had but one child, again called Sarah, who was born on 9 February 1835. They lived in England for the rest of their lives carrying on business as merchants of considerable standing.

Alexander survived his wife by two years. William Lachlan Macquarie was married in 1842 in Glasgow, and had six children. Sarah was married in 1853 to Dr. Phillip Van der Byl and lived until 1905. They in turn had five children.¹⁷

Sarah Alexander was always close to her siblings and the following letter, which she wrote to her brother Thomas, was typical of her correspondence:

September 20th 1837

My dearest Brother,

I suppose before you receive this you will have been apprised of Mrs. Wills'¹⁸ intention of leaving London about December to join you in New South Wales. She is still at St. Omer and will continue there till within about a fortnight of the ships sailing. We have not yet heard of any vessel exactly suitable but no doubt about the time Mrs. Wills wishes to sail we shall find a comfortable one. She would prefer sailing later than December rather than being fearful if she embarks sooner that you might not be in Sydney to receive her. I hear dear little Kate¹⁹ is almost mad with joy at the thought of going to her dear Papa. I am much pleased that you intend residing at Port Phillip or some odd place. I do hope my dearest brother you will find it very beneficial to your health.

My own health and strength is so much improved since I came to this country that I indulge the hope that a cold climate will be more equally conducive to your health. But from what I hear of Rosa's²⁰ intended movements (just what I expected) I begin to fear for your happiness, for with her under your roof happiness is quite impossible either for you or Mrs. Wills. Let me therefore entreat of you on no account under any circumstances to let her live with you again. I shall advise Mrs. Wills to the same effect. Rosa told Mrs. Antill²¹ that she would never again live with her sister so long as she could get her own living, I wonder when she ever did so but with all her apparent professions, for they are only apparent, from the reservations contained in the above assertion I am convinced that Mrs. Wills would not have returned a month before she would have endeavoured to effect her purpose for she is only satisfied when she can be Mrs. Punchinello.

Mrs. Antill is the only one who can manage her and while she continues so kind as to be willing to keep there she can support herself if indeed that is in her power. I fear there is no chance of Mrs. Sherman sending for her,

poor thing, it would appear her husband has quite deserted her for he neither joins her nor sends her remittances. I cannot imagine what she is to do if he does not join her soon. I hear she has sold almost every disposable article in expectation of his arrival.

She says he does not know she is so destitute or that her allowance is stopped for as she has been daily expecting him and not thinking a letter would find him in America she has never written to him, consequently he may not know how she is situated. It is certainly very surprising she never did write and more so still that he does not join her or can give any reason for his long detention. I cannot understand it.

My dear James²² regrets that it will not be in his power for some time to send you the supplies you sent for. He has written to the person who supplies the firm with hops but they decline giving anyone longer credit than 6 months and as it is not in his power to advance the money he cannot send the things either for you or us till within six months of the sale of the next years wool, but he assured that at that time he will send them expecting either the wool or other to meet the demand when it becomes due.

Some of our wool brought only 1/2 per lb, the highest on the best has been bought in at 1/5 so that it will not realise near enough to pay James' share of the dinner which is a great disappointment as well as inconvenience. James is much vexed that he cannot for some time send you what you want but you will see it is unavoidable and as such excuse it. He says you may depend on getting the supplies in time for the summer.

There is a widow lady and her son going to N.S. Wales with the hope of bettering their position - they are the bearers of this letter. The eldest son John McCamish has lived for the last fifteen months with Mr. Alexander as clerk and he is an excellent young lad so industrious and clever that Mr. Alexander feels the greatest interest in him. He has advised his mother who is the widow of a navy medical officer to put both her sons on arrival to live with some respectable farmer till they have acquired sufficient knowledge of agriculture or farming to manage a farm for her and themselves, they do not expect any wages but Mr. Alexander and I think their services would pay fully for their food and that they would be an acquisition to anyone who would take them upon those terms.

If therefore you require such persons you would confer a favour on them and do me a great pleasure by taking both or either by endeavouring to procure them comfortable situations where they can benefit themselves by proper instruction or send them to our establishments and give our overseer directions to promote their ends by every means in his power. Their means are very limited and it is praise-worthy of the Mother which induces her to go where she thinks she can best promote the future interests of her children - Mr. Alexander will miss Johnny much but he takes so much to the mother's views and approves so much of her exertion to benefit her children to wish him to remain however useful he might be to himself. I think I need say no more to insure your kind interest in their welfare and any advice that you can give them will be gratefully accepted, both by them and us.

Mac intends to send the remainder of the documents by their conveyance. I have advised James to defer sending books to you till he hears further

from you on the subject, thinking the great reduction in your income from the reduced price of wool may alter your wishes respecting sending and that you still wish it will only be the loss of one year. I think you will approve of this advice I have given because it will be unexpected on your part to have all Mrs. Wills' expenses to meet from next year's remittance. Mrs. Antill mentions that you put one hundred pounds to poor Edward's²³ credit but my dear brother we had no intention when I wrote about Edward's then of mother's property that the debt should be paid by you. No, no my dear Thomas, you have been too generous to us already to allow us to fleece you in this manner.

I do not say that if the other partners are willing to pay their share of poor Edward's portion that we will not take it, but you must oblige us by not insisting that we take any part of it from you.

I consider that you have great claims both on Edward and on Horace²⁴ for what you advanced to them for so long a time - it would be hard indeed if you were to remain unpaid and we paid. I have not mentioned it to Mac but I am convinced he can never consent to allow you to pay one shilling of it for you are entitled to much more than your share of Edward's portion for all you advanced to him. Therefore my dearest Thomas as I consented on a former occasion to accept your liberality you must in this instance consent to keep that which is your own by every right and justice. You will therefore immediately take back the one hundred pounds you have put to poor Edward's credit with us.

Mac always speaks acknowledging your kindness when he comes of age for the trouble and anxiety our concerns have with you and surely he could never consent to take any share of poor Edward's debt from you when your own claims for previous support and maintenance would be more than your share of his portion would be. I hope you will not hesitate to claim what Horace is indebted to you upon the same account. His wants are not so great as yours never being accustomed to the same comfortable manner of living, and even if he were he is young and healthy and capable of working for his own living and all you have has been obtained by your own exertions. I hope, however, as far as we are concerned you will do yourself justice. James would feel very much hurt if you made the least objection to comply with our united wishes. Therefore I have said enough, James has informed me since writing the above that he thinks he can get blankets upon long credit so he will send them.

James gives me hopes that if you can write out a statement of the state of your health with very particular description of your symptoms that some of the very clever men of London or Paris might be able to restore it. They perform most wonderful cures at times, so I trust my dearest Thomas you will do so by the first opportunity.

It would be a great consolation to us all to know that everything which could be done has been tried to restore your long lost health. Mrs. Antill alarms me by saying your stomach still continues as bad as ever. I think that you never appear for any length of time to improve in health. I am also suffering great anxiety for poor Selina.²⁵ I never knew the hold she had on my heart till my fears are awaked for her safety. I shall be very uneasy till I hear again when I pray sincerely the accounts may be more

favourable. Dear Emily²⁶ writes me that Selina has a most excellent husband with whom she is most happy. I trust also that she herself is always as happy as the nature of circumstances will admit. I hear no talk of her marriage, I suppose she is quite determined to remain single and if she were not blest with a good husband I think her determination (if she has formed such a determination) is a wise one.

My dear Husband and Son desire me to present their most affectionate remembrances. My dear Son looks forward to great happiness when you meet and are better acquainted. He says he will not regret leaving his own friends so much as he should have in the anticipation of the kind friends and relatives he shall meet with in N.S. Wales.

He has written so fully to you and Mr. Gilchrist about our concerns that I need say nothing about them. We are highly satisfied with the minute and satisfactory accounts Mr. Gilchrist so frequently sends us.

With our united best love and remembrances, believe me, ever my own dear Brother,

Your truly attached sister and friend

Sarah Alexander

To Thomas Wills Esq.

c/- John Gilchrist Esq.

Sydney New South Wales

#8370920 T W C Collection

Sarah Wills/Redfern/Alexander died at Roke Manor in Hampshire on 10 January 1875. Shortly after her death her husband James Alexander printed a small octavo book of sixteen pages which included some letters from her telling of her feelings for him and about her death. In the opening to this book James Alexander wrote:

In printing these letters, which were quite unknown to me till the grave had closed over the beloved writer, I do so in the hope, with God's blessing, that they may be the means of urging so many whom she dearly loved to prepare for Eternity, the warm desire of her own heart, and the daily subject of her earnest prayers. One hour each week, in the company or with the help of a Christian friend, was devoted by her to earnest prayer in behalf of all whom she loved.

Till I read these letters I never knew that she had heart disease. This concealment of her own sufferings, to prevent anxiety and sorrow to others, was the habit of her life.

Shortly after our marriage I saw that society, beyond a few friends and relations, was not agreeable to her, although I did not know the cause. My happiness was to see her happy, and I now feel only too thankful to have been able to prove to her, as her letters so warmly express, that we were to each other "the happiness and the joy of life".

You are aware that she had an attack of paralysis so severe that her medical advisers did not give any hope that her life would be prolonged beyond a few days, but it pleased our Heavenly Father to spare her to us after the affliction for upwards of seven years. After the first three months of her illness she did not suffer much pain, and enable those friends at a

distance to form an opinion of the last four years of her life, in her residence at Roke, no doubt it will be as pleasing to you to read, as it is to me although in much sorrow, to recall the routine of her life. Our employments daily, with few interruptions, until within three days of her death, were very much as follows:-

At 8 o'clock I gave breakfast to her in bed

From ten till twelve I walked with her in her bath chair through the grounds and garden, which till nearly the close of her life gave her great pleasure.

From twelve till one her maid read to her.

From one to two I generally waited with her when the servants were at dinner.

From two to three we dined together.

From three till past five we went out in the carriage.

After tea one of the servants read to her till eight.

From eight to nine we played at bagatelle, which she greatly enjoyed.

After prayers, and when prepared for the night, I gave her supper.

During these years I made such arrangement that except for three or four days a month, when business called me to London, I never left her, and these partings, brief though they were, were always a cause of grief to her and of anxiety to me.

On Sunday morning, the 10th January, an attack of bronchitis, after four days illness, caused her death. She had had more severe attacks, being very liable to this complaint, both before and after being paralysed, but the loss of strength, so evident of late, did not allow her to rally as she had frequently done before. Her last wishes were all attended to, although I did not know them; and ere she was shut out of sight for ever, all her early beauty appeared to return to her, and you would have felt as I did, that her spirit had already been admitted to the glory of Heaven. May I add in her own words, "If we earnestly follow her advice we will all be reunited in our Father's kingdom of never-ending love and joy, and be for ever with the Lord."

"In Memoriam by James Alexander (Tertius)"

James Alexander survived his wife by two years.

THOMAS WILLS

5 August 1800 - 29 July 1872

Thomas Wills had an ordinary childhood and was just 11 years old when his father died, and so lived with Edward's other children except Sarah at 96 George Street. The first real news we have of him is of his marriage on 18 June 1822 to Celia, the daughter of Thomas' father's old partner Thomas Reiby and his wife Mary.²⁷ This marriage was to be extremely short lived and she died after an illness of some months on 2 October 1823 at her mother's home in George Street. There was one child of this marriage, Alice born on 6 May 1823 and she died before she was a year old on 14 April 1824.

In 1827 Thomas married again, this time on the island of Mauritius where he had been shipwrecked on the way back to Australia. He stayed with a Professor Barry who was teaching at the Colonial College in Port Louis and here Thomas met and

married Barry's sister Mary Anne. From this marriage there were two children, William Henry born 1 December 1827 and died in infancy, and Catherine Spencer Wills born 24 November 1831 who was later to become the wife of Captain Lewis Charles Conran, an aide de camp to Governor Latrobe. In addition Wills had a common law wife in England (where he spent a considerable time) whose name was Mary Ann Mellard and who took the name Wills. From this liaison there were four children, Arthur born 18 February 1857, Harry born 13 September 1858, both of whom had children whose descendants still live in Melbourne and England respectively. The other two children, Frederick, born 19 July 1860 and Charles, born 15 November 1861 both died in infancy.

In May 1827 Thomas and his wife arrived back in Australia on board the *Orpheus* and in 1828 they purchased Varro Ville at Lower Minto, 28 miles from Sydney which was very close to William Redfern's property at Minto. Varro Ville was 920 acres and was named, by the first owner, after an ancient Roman scholar.

This was the house visited and described in Horatio Wills' 1833 diary.

Thomas Wills had a remarkable career. He became the first Australian born Justice of the Peace in 1833 and in 1834 sold Varro Ville for £2,500.

Obviously his start was made possible with money from his father's estate following the death of his mother in 1823. He was a great traveller and had been to England already in 1826/27 at the time of his second marriage, and in 1837 his wife and daughter Catherine were again in England.

About this time, having heard much of the Port Phillip settlement, Thomas decided to move south. At the first sale of Port Phillip land, which was held in Sydney in 1838, he purchased 970 acres on the Yarra River on which he built a fine home named Lucerne, and in fact this house survived right through into the 1950s. In 1839 he overlanded to Melbourne and purchased a further 176 acres for what was then the enormous price of £2/10/0 per acre.

He appeared very keen on purchasing sites of land. He purchased half an acre in the city of Melbourne and in early land sales in Geelong he purchased several blocks near Point Henry and on the Bellarine Peninsula.

He continued to make money being one of the first subscribers to and an early senior manager of the Bank of New South Wales. After his move to Melbourne he became a trustee of the Savings Bank and president of the shire in which Lucerne was built. In 1843 he became a director of the Union Bank.

In later years he built another large home just across the river from Lucerne which he called Willsmere. This house too survived well into the second half of the 20th century.

Thomas died in 1872 and was buried in the Booroondara Cemetery in Kew, not far from Lucerne and Willsmere.

ELIZA WILLS

10 September 1802 - 30 September 1858

Eliza grew up with the other children and she married on 9 October 1818 to Major Henry Colden Antill. She was then only 16 years old. Her husband was 39 years of age, being born in the same year as Eliza's father. He was an officer in the army and had been secretary to Governor Macquarie since his arrival in 1809. He was a cousin to the former Governor William Bligh. We know that the Macquaries, the Redferns and the

Wills were fairly close friends and the witnesses at their wedding included William and Sarah Redfern and Thomas Wills.

The couple had 9 children, the first of them Margaret was born in 1820 and the last of them Selina in 1837. The other children were John Macquarie 1822, Alice Sophia (later Moggeridge) 1824, Henry Colden 1826, William Redfern 1828, Thomas Wills 1830, Edward Spencer 1832 and James Alexander 1834.

In 1819 Antill became a member of the committee of the school for Female Orphans and he was also on the committee of the Native Institution and the Bible Society. In 1820 Antill retired from the army and settled on land on the banks of the Georges River near Liverpool. He received a grant of 2,000 acres and settled down to build it into a magnificent property to which he gave the name Jarvisfield, built in 1823, and around which grew what is now the town of Picton. In December of that year he became a Justice of the Peace.

Antill sat for many years in the courts in that capacity, later he became a Magistrate and held this office through until his death. The Antills were very wealthy by the standards of the time and lived in considerable state.

Henry died in August 1852 then aged 73 and his wife died in July 1858 aged only 56. They are buried together with some of their children in the family vault built on the estate.

EDWARD SPENCER WILLS

16 February 1805 - 1828

Here for the first time the "Spencer" Christian name appears in Edward's children, it was Edward's second name but we know of no particular reason for it. There was a family belief that it was in some way connected with the family of the Earl of Spencer but this appears fanciful and there is no known reason why it should be so.

In his early years Edward farmed with his brother Thomas, but having decided to pursue a career in the law he went to England at the age of about 20, probably in 1825, to study first at Cambridge and then at Lincoln's Inn. For some reason he got into considerable debt as the letter from his sister included above shows, and for reasons which we will never know he committed suicide in London in 1828 by slashing first his wrists and then his throat.

ELIZABETH SELINA WILLS

30 November 1807 - 18 January 1811

This was the child named as the baby in Sarah Wills' letter of 1808 to her mother. She lived to be just over 3 years old and died before her father. I have found no record of the cause of her death, but infant mortality was extremely common in those years usually from such diseases as scarlet fever, whooping cough and typhoid.

JANE HOWE

9 November 1816 - 23 November 1880

Jane was Horatio's half-sister, daughter of George Howe and Sarah Harding/Wills/Howe who was married on 12 February 1831 to Captain John Harrison, at

which time she was just 14 and he was 28 years old, which sets his birth year as 1802 or 1803.

They had eight children, Adela (Addie) born in 1834, Henry Colden Antill (Coley) born in 1836 (his life and times are described in Chapter 12), George, Kate, Alice, Horace born in 1848, John and Ernest. In addition Captain Harrison had an illegitimate daughter, Fanny Isabella, born in 1830 the year before their marriage.

In 1833 John and Jane returned to England where he had been born and had served in the Royal Navy. They left England in *The Rose*, a very tiny vessel of only 40 tons, and after a perilous voyage, in which Harrison's father was lost overboard, they reached Australia.

From then until 1837 Captain Harrison ran a small fleet of trading vessels out of Sydney and Jane, as well as raising her family, studied singing and the piano. Harrison gave up his trading business in order to take up land in the Port Phillip settlement, no doubt this action greatly influenced Thomas Wills and later Horatio to follow. Prior to overlanding he collected his stock on a small property on the Molonglo, close to Burra Burra, the property being farmed by Horatio. He purchased stock from Redfern and from W. C. Wentworth and with Jane, Fanny, Addie and little Coley wended their way across the Murray and settled on a property, which he named Bendemeer, on the Plenty River outside Melbourne.

In the period 1842-43 Harrison decided that he needed more land, he made one abortive attempt to take up land in Gippsland and finally settled on a larger property outside Avoca on the Avon River which he called Swanwater. There the family grew up, being educated by a Governess. It was here also that, in an accident, Captain Harrison shot himself in the arm which became virtually useless. Harrison was a poor business man and about 1850 he leased his property and returned to Melbourne. He tried his hand, again, at trading during the gold rush with little success.

Captain Harrison died in 1867 and Jane lived on, relatively poor, until her death in Melbourne on 23 November 1880.

CHAPTER 4

HORATIO S. H. WILLS HIS EARLY LIFE AND “THE CURRENCY LAD” 5 OCTOBER 1811 - 21 AUGUST 1841

I have seen the birth and baptism certificate of Horatio Spencer Howe Wills in the New South Wales Public Records and he was born on 5 October 1811. Horatio himself gives this date in his 1833 diary although strangely enough in the last letter he ever wrote he mentions that he crossed the boundary of Cullinlaringo on 3 October, his birthday. I should add that Horatio was not at all good at recalling dates and he also often spelt the same word in different ways at different times - for example I have found four different spellings of “Cullinlaringo” in his own handwriting!

He was born about six months after the death of his father, and a further six months after his birth his mother remarried to George Howe.

Horatio apparently had a fairly normal childhood spent at 96 George Street Sydney with his brothers and sisters except Sarah (who had been married on 4 March that year) together with the children of George Howe, his stepfather. George Howe died when Horatio was 10 years old and his mother followed when he was not yet 12.

I am not certain whether he lived with Robert Howe or with Sarah, Thomas or Eliza after his mother's death but we do know that he was apprenticed to George Howe's son Robert as a printer in the *Sydney Gazette* office probably when about 15. He was clearly well educated prior to that, we know that he went to a private school in Sydney and in later letters he mentions meeting old schoolfellows.

In the *Sydney Gazette* in November 1826, when Horatio was 15 years old, Robert Howe advertised to say that his apprentice Horatio Spencer Howe Wills was missing and that “any one giving information that will lead to his recovery will be adequately rewarded, as it is feared some accident has befallen him; but should any one encourage him or secrete him they will be rigidly prosecuted”.

There is no clear evidence as to where Wills went during his absence, but it is likely that he went to his sister Sarah Redfern at Minto, or his sister Eliza at Picton. None of Edward Wills' children had any time at all for the Howe family and engaged in a successful law suit against Robert Howe to protect the interests of the younger children.

In 1827 Robert Howe again advertised in the *Gazette* “whereas H. S. Wills, an apprentice in my employ, is continually neglecting his work and otherwise conducting himself in an unbecoming and disrespectful manner: This is to caution all persons at their peril from harbouring, encouraging, employing or secreting the said, or any other of my apprentices, on pain of rigid prosecution”. Horatio's time as an apprentice was clearly an extremely unhappy one. At the age of 16 Wills took action in the courts against Robert Howe for ill treatment, and in 1827 the *Gazette* printed the full account of this case which was heard before a magistrate, who at the conclusion of the case stated that Horatio had failed to prove ill treatment and had received what the Bench considered to be “a moderate punishment for his own conduct”. Further, a warrant was issued against Horatio demanding that he return to service under Robert Howe, and as Horatio had failed to comply he was sentenced to 28 days gaol. This warrant however, the magistrate said, would be allowed to lapse provided that Horatio would return to his

master and behave as an apprentice should. In the 1828 census Horatio, then 17, was shown as lodging in Princes Street with a Mrs. McLeod.

Robert Howe was drowned in Sydney harbour in January 1829, and the *Gazette* carried a long, sonorous account of his funeral. Horatio Wills took over the running of the *Gazette* in the same month. He continued to do so for some time as this legal document shows:

December 18 1832
Gazette Office Sydney

We do hereby authorise and appoint Mr. Horatio Wills of Sydney, Printer, to act in behalf of the estate of the late Mr. Robert Howe and become surety to the part of the said estate for the due performance of the government printing for the year 1833 and in the event of that contract not being duly performed by the estate we shall hold Mr. Wills harmless and we do hereby bind ourselves to pay the forfeit money if any shall be required.

S. Howe, Executrix

Richard Jones Esq.

#8321218 T.S W C Collection

Horatio started a rival newspaper to the *Gazette* called *The Currency Lad*. The first issue appeared on Saturday 25 August 1832 and was always in the same four-page format.

The paper began with abstracts from the *Gazette* or the trade lists followed by advertisements, editorial opinion, market reports, shipping reports, sport, court reports, police rounds, poets' corner, a short story and finally correspondence. The paper was edited and published by Horatio Wills as joint proprietor with the executors and executrix of Robert Howe.

It had a pictorial masthead featuring a ship, fruit, flowers, grain, implements, sheep and cattle with a banner motto "Rise Australia". On each side of the masthead was a short poem.

See! Australasia floats with flag unfurl'd
A new Britannia in another world
While every surge that doth her bosom lave
Salutes her "Emperor of the Southern Wave!"

The newspaper was sold at 5/- per quarter or 7 pence per copy. In the fashion of the time Wills as editor was a "thunderer", and in the seven copies of the paper which I have his editorials concern a variety of issues such as free trade and the sheep act (both against), in favour of expanding the legislature and republicanism for Australia in the long term, in strong opposition to the commonly used differentiation between emancipists and emigrants, and holding forth on corruption among public office holders and the evils of inadequate punishment of offenders.

The court reports were often amusing. One which took my eye was an account of the trial of William Simmons who was brought forward charged with being drunk.

Magistrate - "Were you drunk?"

Prisoner - "They ses so, your Worship, and of course they know better than me".

Magistrate - "You are ordered to pay 5/- to the poor or to go into the stocks for two hours."

The prisoner gave a wistful look at his pocket and with a significant wave of his hand exclaimed "Lead on".

The newspaper makes interesting reading but for reasons of which I am not aware, probably because the newspaper was not making money, it ceased after the 39th issue on May 18 1833.

This venture was financed by the executors of the Howe Estate as this letter shows:

31st May 1833
Gazette Office

*Horatio Wills Esq.
at Thos Wills Esq JP.
Varro-Ville
Campbelltown*

The executors and executrix beg to apprise Mr. Horatio Wills that when the accounts of the "Currency Lad" newspaper are properly adjusted they will furnish him with an accurate statement of the same to enable them to do which a notice will be inserted in the Gazette desiring all debts to be paid to the executors (who have advanced the capital employed) to which Mr. Wills, it is presumed will at once accede, since if a surplus of cash is derived over and above what has been bona fide disbursed they will pay Mr. Wills his share or arrange as to the deficiency if any.

#8330531 T W C Collection

There has been a long standing myth in the family concerning a supposed "two years amongst the savages" which tells of Horatio running away to sea, being shipwrecked, living with the natives on a south sea island and being rescued through a hail of spears. But this is clearly not true as there is no period of time anything like that in which Horatio's presence is not accounted for. This myth probably arose from an article which Horatio wrote in *The Currency Lad* and is nothing but a romantic notion.

Alice Moggridge (born 1824 died 1920) who was the daughter of Horatio's sister Eliza, later Mrs. Antill, wrote an article which carries this supposed history. I have a copy of this but have decided not to include it in this book as it has no foundation in fact.

On 2 December 1833 Horatio married Elizabeth at Scots Church in Sydney. Elizabeth was a spinster and was at the time a pupil at Mrs Macgillivray's School at Parramatta. This school was quite famous and as we know from his diary that Horatio was courting Elizabeth for eighteen months before their marriage in December 1833 and that she was a pupil at the school for eleven months before the wedding. Given her circumstances we can only assume that her fees were paid by Horatio. It was interesting to see an advertisement in *The Currency Lad* of 17 November 1832 as follows:

FEMALE EDUCATION AT PARRAMATTA

Mrs. McGillivray, formerly Governess of an extensive Seminary in Sydney, announces to her Friends and to the Public that she has opened a Boarding School at her residence, East end of Palmer street Parramatta, for a select and limited number of young ladies whose morals, comforts and education shall be attended to with fidelity and unremitting assiduity.

The situation is retired and salubrious, possessing the advantages of a spacious garden and pleasant walks, quite secluded from the noise and bustle of the town.

MRS. MCGILLIVRAY'S system of Education (beside the usual Elementary Courses) embraces Needlework, both plain and ornamental; Writing on a superior principle; Arithmetic, Elocution, English Grammar reduced to practise by writing Exercises, Themes and Letters; History, Geography including the use of Maps and Globes; the rudiments of the French Language, Music and Dancing.

Terms - per annum for young Ladies under ten years of age £20 from ten to twelve £22 from twelve to fourteen £25 washing included.

*Extra charges for French, Music and Dancing £2 per annum each
No Pupil will be admitted for a shorter period than one year unless under peculiar circumstances and three months notice in writing will be required previous to the removal of a Pupil*

#8321117 The Currency Lad

The marriage certificate shows:

December 2nd 1833

Parramatta

I certify that Elizabeth McGuire spinster, was lawfully married by me, by banns, with consent of all parties concerned to Horatio Spencer Howe Wills bachelor of Varro-ville on this Monday the second day of December in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty three which marriage is entered in the register of the Scots Church Elizabeth Street Sydney as witness my hand this day and date aforesaid.

<i>Horatio Wills</i>)	<i>John McGarvie (Minister)</i>
<i>Elizabeth Wills McGuire</i>)	<i>Participants.</i>
<i>J. Macgillivray</i>)	
<i>Catherine McGuire²⁷</i>)	<i>Witnesses.</i>
<i>Sarah Ellison</i>)	

#8331202 Public Records

Horatio began one of his fragmentary diaries after his marriage and this appears below:

H. Wills, born Oct. 5, age 22 - 1833

Saturday 6th December 1833

It is ended! On Monday last between the hours of 2 and 3 in the afternoon Elizabeth McGuire, after a courtship of 18 months (11 of which Elizabeth spent at the school of Mrs. Jane McGillivray) became my wife. Mr.

McGarvie, Presbyterian minister, performed the ceremony of marriage at the house of Mrs. McGillivray. Present Mr. and Mrs. McGillivray, Catherine McGuire (E's sister) and Miss Ellison after which all present sat down to dinner.

Elizabeth and I then started, it being dusk, for Liverpool in a gig. We remained that evening at the Ship Inn kept by one Mr. Wood. On the following morning at about half past ten o'clock we started for Varroville, the estate of my brother Thomas. Thomas welcomed us on our arrival but it was not for an hour or two afterwards that he enquired if we were married; for all, though living under the same roof with him, I had not informed him of my intention not from any ill feeling I wish it to be understood, but merely because I did not wish to pester him with my private affairs.

When Thomas made the enquiry Elizabeth was adjusting her dress in a private room and my brother and myself being the only individuals in the parlour at the time "are you married" said Thomas with a confusedly delicate accent - "I am" I replied in a faltering tone.

He immediately rose from his chair and seating himself by my side on the sofa "well, old fellow" said he affectionately (the tears gushing from the eyes of both) "I hope it may be a source of great joy to you" he then retired to another part of the room as if he did not wish his warmth of affection to be noticed by others.

Poor Thomas! How unfortunate - how trying has the marriage life been to him!²⁸ Well might the tears bedew his cheeks when he wished me joy in that life which has been to him a state of so much sorrow.

May the Almighty God the father of goodness and of mercy avert the like fate from me but His will be done! Endow me oh Almighty Father with the holiness of heart that be they ever so hard I may bow to thy decrees but Thou Oh God art good Thou Oh God art merciful Father of the Universe if it please Thee continue Thy loving kindness to Thy creature who with Thy blessing has become my wife. Oh God implant in her heart a sacred love for Thee and for Thy precepts instruct her oh God in Thy ways be unto her Father of mercies a spill in the day of trouble and if it please Thee at any time to inflict her with sorrow if it please Thee to deprive her of him whom Thou hast placed by her side do Thou oh heavenly Father vouchsafe unto her Thy tender mercies, be to her Oh God a friend in trouble and to Thy name be the glory.²⁹

We remained at Varroville one night only and started on the following morning (the fourth day of the month) for Jarvisfield, the estate of Henry Colden Antill Esquire, my brother in law.³⁰

Now as what follows may serve to show how kind the almighty is to His creatures, with what a watchful eye He watches over their ways, lest "at any time they dash their foot against a stone". I have thought fit to relate, for the benefit of my children, if the Almighty bless me with any, the following instance of the inter position of Divine Providence.

The weather for some days prior to our departure from Varroville had been, for the season of the year, in some part of the country unusually wet. Leaving Varroville in a gig about the hour of ten in the forenoon, Elizabeth and I proceeded at an easy pace on our journey, the weather to all

appearance clearing up. We had not however advanced three miles before it commenced raining most heavily.

Of course as our way lay through Campbelltown at that time about one mile distance we hurried forward to the Forbe's Inn kept by one Mr. Tait, the weather still continuing unpropitious, we dined at the inn and did not start till four o'clock in the afternoon at which time the weather again wore a pleasing countenance.

We had at this time about twenty miles to go and as our horse was reckoned a good gig horse, I anticipated a pleasing meeting with my sister's family at about seven o'clock. We proceeded at a good pace for the first ten miles of our journey when we found the road so bad that I was compelled the horse to walk over the ground, much as my reader will suppose against my inclination.

By the time we arrived at the foot of Razorback it was dark, and all nature wore a gloomy and dismal appearance. The rain again commenced falling and we looked forward with no very pleasant feelings expecting not to reach Jarvisfield till we had been favoured with a few heavy showers of rain. However to be as brief as possible Razorback is a steep and high mountain. The roads ascending and descending are cut round the sides in a winding direction which causes them to be more formidable for their length than for their steepness. A short time previous to the journey which I am now relating I paid a visit to Jarvisfield and found the road descending the mountain on Major Antill's side to be a very dangerous situation, it being sufficiently wide for one carriage: on its left side a frightful gully presenting itself to the view of the traveller immediately on its side which was unprotected.

At that time it was difficult to journey over the mountain without great danger. Shortly after I paid the visit to Jarvisfield which I have alluded to the Government commenced a new road at the same side of the mountain as that on which the old road had been laid down. It was of course necessary for the surveyors in forming the new road to cut away much of the old in order to have as broad a level for the new as possible.

This was done and the new road in many places is there by level but deeper than the old whose side stands then presented the appearance of two steps both which both perpendicular from it.

As I before stated the alteration in the road was made without my knowledge, and the night being exceedingly dark and rainy when I had arrived at the top of Razorback, I naturally enough took the direction of the old road.

We proceeded in this manner about fifty yards when to my surprise I beheld a huge log lying across the road about three paces distant from the horse's head. It struck me immediately that there had been some material alteration in the road and telling Elizabeth that I would alight and lead the horse down the mountain I proceeded to put my purpose in execution. Taking the horse by the head I led him forward as far as the log before noticed when in an instant I lost my footing and thumped and bumped into the road. The new road beneath us on our left side! Guess my apprehensions! The gig stood on the edge of the rock! One foot further and Elizabeth was perhaps lost to me forever!. No one can tell my agony!

I begged her not to be alarmed - to be still. She never uttered a sound, fear had almost deprived her of the use of speech! She heard me falling she knew not wither for although the new road was directly under us the night was so dark that we knew it not. I scrambled up the rock took the reins near the jaw of the horse told Elizabeth to alight and then thanked God for sparing her life. What was I to do? The wheel of the gig was within one foot of the edge of the rock. As I was not even then aware of the narrowness of the path I endeavoured to turn the head of the horse and get him to ascend the hill, but as if aware of the situation the sagacious animal refused to move! Had he attempted to turn - had he moved one yard forward he must have been precipitated to the road on our side beneath! I then unharnessed him as well as I was able. The horse finally helped himself free from the gig, stepped from it alertly enough!

I had resolved to walk to Major Antill's leaving the gig with our wearing apparel and taking the horse with us. Elizabeth continued firm to the last, never uttering the least sound of fear. The Major's was distant about two and a half miles. We reached his farm at about 10 of the clock at night after wading through mud knee deep. The family had retired to rest but so soon as my sister heard my voice she came out in her bed gown and anxiously enquired "Is Elizabeth there?"

Poor Elizabeth was welcomed most warmly the whole family were up in a few minutes, Elizabeth after having supper retired to rest with my dear little niece Margaret Antill,³¹ and I being supplied with a small portion of spirits started off for Razorback where I remained till morning protecting the articles in the gig.

Never was I so grateful never did I before observe so strikingly displayed the hand of the Almighty praised be His holy name.

PS.

It may be well to mention that the log which had arrested our progress had fallen from the hill but two or three days before. Had it not been there we were lost as the road beyond it immediately closed in an angle when I think of the danger of my poor Elizabeth I feel horrified.

Sunday December 8 1833

Yesterday morning I left my dear wife with Mrs. Antill for three weeks or a month to be better informed on housekeeping as Mrs. Antill is famous for the care of her children, for the economy of her table and her knowledge of the domestic duties of a female. I intend now to apply myself to my studies for I am unhappily far behind in my literary account. Children, if I should ever have any, bear in mind that the pen with which I am now writing is one of 25 which your mother obtained eleven months ago on going to school. Do you strive to be as careful. Four pens yet remain in the case! Be as gentle and as virtuous as your mother and with her you will find that virtue is its own reward.

#8331206 T H S W Collection

We do not know exactly what Horatio did in 1834 and 1835 but it is believed that he spent the time on the property of his brother Thomas so as to learn about farming as it was now that Horatio decided, as he was past 21 and able to claim his inheritance, to become a squatter.

The first child of Sarah and Horatio was born in Sydney on 19 December 1836 and was christened Thomas Wentworth. He was to be the only one of their children who was not given the name "Spencer" as one of his Christian names. The name Wentworth was in honour of the lawyer William Charles Wentworth, a close friend of the family, who had acted for the Wills children in all their lawsuits against their *bête noir*, Robert Howe.

In late 1835 or early 1836 he purchased his first property, Burra (or Burra Burra). An old map in the possession of the National Trust in Canberra shows the position of the property, it was 10 miles due west of Queanbeyan on the Burra Creek which in turn ran into the Queanbeyan River, then the Molonglo and finally into the Murrumbidgee, the nearest point to the latter was 8 miles due north. The property was often described as being on the Molonglo but the explanation for this, according to Father M. O'Riardon a historian of Captains Flat, is that the early settlers didn't know the difference between the Molonglo and the Queanbeyan rivers and constantly mixed them up. The *Sydney Gazette* shows that he purchased a total of 1480 acres and was licensed to graze his stock on crown land beyond his boundaries.

Wills set out to purchase suitable animals with which to stock his new selection, two letters survive from a Mr. C. W. Spencer who sold Horatio 600 ewes, some with lambs.

Sydney
8th February 1836

Horatio Wills, Esq.

c/- Major Antill

Stonequarry

Dear Sir,

I have just received your favour of the 3rd Feb. and I am obliged to you for finding out the shortest route for conveying my sheep from Bathurst to your station.

I was of course sorry to learn the small number of lambs. However I suppose you intend putting the rams with them immediately unless you think that they are in lamb already.

I shall thank you to let me know what you have done in that respect also where you intend to keep them, if on the Molonglo or not and also of what age the ewes are.

I shall make enquiries about more sheep but excuse me are you sure you have land enough to feed them?

If you are satisfied on that point I shall be able to act with more confidence. I think you said that you had no land of your own just yet, but that you intend putting some up.

It would be very inconvenient if ever you should be distressed for land. This is my principal objection for the present but shall be glad to hear what you have to say on the subject.

I wrote you several letters which I hope you will excuse but I was prompted to do so in consequence of Capt Piper's opinion that the ewes had very bad feed in Bathurst therefore I was anxious they should be removed.

Yours truly,

C. W. Spencer

#8360208 T H S W Collection

There are, at least to my knowledge, no surviving letters, documents or diaries which tell us anything at all about Horatio's time at Burra Burra. All we know is that he decided to follow his brother Thomas to the newly opened up Port Phillip settlement and decided to take up land in the rich pastoral area at the foot of the Grampians Range.

CHAPTER 5

HORATIO S. H. WILLS
THE LEXINGTON PERIOD
21 AUGUST 1841 TO 23 NOVEMBER 1852

Wills left Burra-Burra on the Queanbeyan on 29 April 1840 [a date derived by working back from an entry in the Lexington diary.] and settled first on "Barton" where he arrived on 21 August 1841. This station he sold in 1842 to Captain Bunbury and purchased three properties, "Lexington", "La-rose" and "Mokepilly" from Mr. C.B. Hall. These he amalgamated into one property which he called "Lexington". These properties were at the foot of Mount William which gave its name to the district which is now called after the town of Moyston near the rural city of Ararat. This city takes its name from Mt. Ararat named by Horatio because "like the Ark we rested here".

Wills was, for his time, an enlightened land owner, trying to deal with the Aboriginal people without violence even though the Aborigines in the area were, understandably, resisting the ingress of white settlers.

Much of his thoughts may be gleaned from a letter he wrote to the Governor in March 1842.

March 1842
Mount William

Sir,

I take the liberty of addressing you from the conviction that it is the best plan I can pursue in the present alarming state of this district from the intrusions of the wild tribes of aborigines, situate as this neighbourhood is at a remote distance from magisterial authority we are subjected to loss of life and property without redress unless we infringe the laws.

We submit in many instances to loss of property without responding, but when life is at stake, unless some means of lawful resistance be applied we shall be compelled in self defence to measures that may involve us in unpleasant consequences. Just lately the natives of this neighbourhood are quiet and have for the last twelve months, from the result of conciliatory measures used by the proprietors of stock, been pacific. Occasionally however for the last twelve months our stations have been plundered, our stock driven off and our men attacked by them.

In my own case, I took no steps to prevent the loss of property, still from property life was threatened, my shepherds rushed by the natives and threats of bloodshed held out by them.

I then thought it high time to interfere, strong parties from the distant tribes have made their appearances and the lives of my people have been openly threatened and attempted. Now, as I have frequently at the hazard of my own life, used means to effect a good understanding with the natives in my immediate vicinity, I do not feel myself called upon to venture it again unless with arms in my hands, to restrain the lawless and sanguinary incursions of distant predatory tribes.

I am willing to concede the right of their hunting grounds to the original possessors and at my place for some considerable time back has been a general rendezvous for them, but I consider our late visitors as men whose destructive incursions place them beyond the state of the law.

The cattle herd of my immediate neighbour from 1,200 head are now supposed not to exceed 600 on the run or in the vicinity - they have been driven through the country and within the last seven days he has had two of his best horses killed in endeavouring to collect them - this is too serious a loss to be submitted to with patience.

The Blacks on my neighbourhood assure me that the wild blacks have destroyed a considerable number and have frequently urged me to go out with them and drive their enemies away from the cattle of my neighbour.

They attacked my stock, attacked my shepherds and threatened the lives of those at my head station. This was more than I could submit to and a few evenings ago one of our lubras, having informed us that a certain black at the camp the previous night had expressed his determination to take the life of one of my shepherds, I thought I would endeavour to take him into custody in order to avoid bloodshed. I took but one man with me and a native to pilot us. It was dark, about 9 o'clock when I came up to the fire, and being on foot we approached the camp without being perceived. A feeble light was emitted by the dying fires and I could distinguish nothing but a mass of blacks with a great quantity of weapons around them.

One glance at the numerous warlike implements convinced me that they were strangers.

Without the slightest intention of hurting them I stood on a log at about the distance of a yard from some of the sleepers, and desired them in their own language to remain quiet.

The man nearest sprang at me. I stepped back off the log and fell over a stump into a large hole. At this critical moment the Black stumbled across the log on which I stood, but not having so heavy a fall as I had was on his legs before me and was making a second charge when the man I had with me fired at and wounded him, not to hurt him much however I am happy to state, but sufficient to cause him to fall back on the main body.

Hearing the rustle of spears but not wishing to injure the natives I fired over their heads and they retreated. It is utterly impossible to deal with such characters as you would with whites. To suppress the incursion of distant tribes forcible means must be resorted to and we require a person in this vicinity with authority, with resolution to act promptly and sufficient to guard against any unnecessary exercise of force.

It would take the whole time of a regularly constituted police force and therefore the settlers here expect no such measure. An unpaid magistrate with special constables would do much better being always on the ground, acquainted with the country and with the natives in their own vicinity. Such a force could always act promptly.

Before I conclude this abrupt address I beg to point out to your honour the injury inflicted on the grazing interests of the colony by the present method of granting Black reserves. The finest stations are usually selected and from the manner in which the selection is made and its extent it destroys all confidence of the sheep farmer.

I am told that the principal solicitor Mr. Robinson has pitched upon the head station of Mr. Kirk as a black reserve, and as such a reserve embraces the land for 6 miles on every side and will render useless the runs of Kirk, Thompson, Bunbury and myself and I have no doubt if such large limits are assigned that it will cause, and it has caused, immense loss to individuals and will be very detrimental to the best interests of the Colony.

Let the Blacks have the country unmolested to range upon but I trust that such a hurtful system of extensive reserve will not be persisted in.

From a severe fall which I met with a few days ago, your Honour, I hope you will pardon the manner in which this letter is written and I trust you will receive my observations in the same spirit in which they are tendered.

I beg to submit myself,

Your Honour's most obedient servant,

Horatio Wills

#8420301 Public Records

It is amazing in view of the High Court decision of 1996 regarding Native Title that Wills was, 140 years earlier, advocating exactly what the Wik decision held - that the Aboriginal population should have the right of "free range" on pastoral leases.

Wills kept a fitful diary from April 1843 until August 1847 which is here reproduced in full. It is an extremely frustrating document with huge gaps of time and much reflection on religious matters. In view of his earlier life one must imagine that his interest in religion was kindled by his wife who remained excessively religious throughout her life.

DIARY OF HORATIO SPENCER HOWE WILLS

from April 1843 to August 1851
at Lexington, Ararat

April 1843

It has often struck me that a journal of passing events, embracing matters of public as well as of a private nature, might not only in after times become a valuable page for reference and amusement to myself, but also contain interest and instruction for my children. In fact I lament deeply having allowed so many years since my marriage to escape without a memorandum of this sort.

On the 2nd or 3rd of December [the 2nd is correct] of this year we shall have been married 10 years, and in these 10 years the privations and difficulties of our situation have been greater than our children could possibly suspect. However, at this time, we have apparently overcome the first difficulties of life. Whilst the country resounds with the complaints of timid capitalists, we enjoy a comparative independence.

In possession of eight thousand sheep we look forward to ease and contentment congratulating ourselves on the probability of providing a good education to our children and leaving to them the fruits of our frugality and industry. It has been the object of my earnest endeavours for some time past so to arrange my affairs that in the event of my death my family may reap the benefit of my exertions.

Here I must bear testimony to the unrepining devotion and uninterrupted affection of my dear Partner. Without her mild Christian virtues I should have been a barque tempest tossed on a sea of passions. She has been the star of my destiny. From a wild youth, she has centred my affections on our domestic hearth, and may they continue to blossom there! Should the Almighty spare the life of my son [Thomas Wentworth, then aged 7] he will doubtless remember the circumstances connected with the first page of this journal.

When his parents repose in the silent tomb it will call them more vividly to his recollection. He will remember the table from town with its shiny oil cloth, the chairs with the damask coverings and other comforts which we had previously denied ourselves. He will remember his little sister [Emily Spencer b. 25 December] (four months old) in his mother's arms and his thoughts will dwell on the pure love of that mother; and whatever may be his course through life, he will, from his early recollections, coincide with his father when he assures him that the chief study of man should be the cultivation of the domestic affections.

I trust that he will have such an acquaintance with history that ambition will never be excited in his mind for the mere gratification of vanity. In history he will find volumes filled with the follies and ultimate disappointments of ambitious men.

She will unfold to his inquiring eye the profound volumes of experience. Every page is replete with instruction; each succeeding leaf will tend further to convince him that domestic happiness is in this world the highest gratification bestowed by Divinity.

To preserve the will pure he will learn to bridle his passions and to do so effectually he must conform as closely as possible to the divine precepts of his Redeemer; remembering above all things "to do unto his neighbour as he would wish to be done by".

A Christian cannot be a bad husband. A kind and attentive husband will seldom fail to rivet the sublime affections of a virtuous wife. With such a partner earth is Heaven! True, a young man should not marry hastily - he should first of all know something of the world. But let the aim of his ambition be a mild and virtuous partner.

It will be necessary perhaps before I proceed further to notice the relative situations of other members of my family, in order that a future reference to them may be understood.

My brother Thomas with his wife and child Kate Spencer reside at Lucerne near Melbourne.

My half sister, Jane, with her husband Captain Harrison and family some twenty three miles from Melbourne.

My eldest sister, Sarah, now Mrs. Alexander lately left Sydney with her husband James for Europe, where she has her son William Redfern (by her first marriage) who was lately married to Miss Walker, Glasgow.

My sister Eliza, Mrs. Antill, who with her husband and fine family reside on their estate, Jarvis Field, Cow Pastures, Sydney.

My wife's sister Kate, Mrs. Roope, who with her husband reside on the estate, Mount Pleasant, the property of John Hoskings Esquire Sydney.

I shall also furnish a statement of my own establishment, and then anything remarkable occurring will be duly noticed.

Now to bed!

Saturday 29th April 1843

Employed personally during the day in mixing the mortar and plastering our bedroom fireplace - read in the evening portion of "Les Cases Napoleon" afterwards amused myself with my sweet little Emily. She has been playful; exposing her to the fire and rubbing her with the hand appears very gratifying to her, bless her! - Team ploughing today.

This day, three years we left our station "Burra Burra" on the Murrumbidgee³³ for Port Philip; and this day two years precisely our first slab hut was built all finished and occupied by our men.

During the last three years what an entire revolution has taken place in the affairs of the colony! At the commencement of this period speculation was a mania and indulged in to unprecedented extent.

The Crown Lands of Port Philip realised enormous and, in our infantile state, most preposterous prices. That such a state of things could not last any man with common sense could foresee. In Port Philip sheep, with their lambs, sold in some instances at two pounds per head and cattle above six months at eight! Inveterate madness!

Melbourne arose as if by magic and labour was enhanced in consequence of the improvements carrying on in all parts. To shepherds I have paid no less than one pound per week! When I left the Murrumbidgee I was so well convinced of the turn that matters would soon take, that before I reached Mount William my stock was advertised in the Melbourne papers - forty pounds per pair were offered for my working bullocks and twenty five shillings for my sheep all round!

As we were journeying, however in search of runs, the party who made the offer could gain no intelligence of our movements and the opportunity was lost. But a short time afterwards I sold my cattle including all ages and sexes above six months with the station consisting of three hundred and eleven head to Captain Bunbury for six guineas per head! Immediately thereafter cattle were down to two pounds and sheep to ten shillings - a few days ago two thousand good sheep were disposed of by public auction at two shillings and sixpence per head! A mixed herd of cattle are not and never were in reality for some years past worth more than two pounds per head - on the other hand, sheep have fallen below their real value on good runs. I estimate clean sheep to be worth ten shillings per head, with labour at twenty and twenty five pounds per annum and if matters mend in Europe I have no doubt that they will shortly realise that sum.

Just prior to the last clip I sold four hundred and fifty good wethers averaging sixty five lbs. at ten shillings at the same time I disposed of five hundred others at the same price to the same party to be delivered after the clip. They left the station on Wednesday last; but wethers have been selling at four shillings! Had I not disposed of my cattle when I did, my prospects at that time would have been ruined. It was about the last good sale effected! Thank God for all mercies! I see His hand in all things.

Sunday evening 30th April 1843

Alas, poor Tall Boy - my noble dog - the best in the district! This afternoon he expired before my eyes in our little sitting room after performing prodigies for the blacks in procuring game he returned home exhausted - starving! A noble creature - thus, one by one, my associations disappear. On my way down I purchased him. Noble dog! - and thus it is in this world we must all follow. Farewell Tall Boy - farewell my noble dog! - In my garden his remains shall repose.

Within the last six weeks I have lost my two blackboys Devil and Johnny, my pet kangaroo, my old bullock Traveller and my poor dog! What next? "Coming events cast their shadows before"! God's will be done. It makes one melancholy, superstitious and fearful.

Allan and Hall [neighbours] spent the afternoon with us. With nothing exciting to occupy the mind we feed upon ourselves. We want society - we want difficulties, to animate and sustain us. Continued the perusal of "Les Cases Napoleon" on his rock! The "Lion of the Desert" in his chains! Like hateful medicine the name of Low creates nausea and disgust but his downfall was the will of Providence. Napoleon a scourge in the hands of God had executed his mission - his end a lesson for after times. Hail, Saint Helena.

Monday May 1st

Rode over the greater part of my runs today. The pasture in a miserable condition.

Tuesday

Nothing today of consequence - continued drought - glossed over some parts of Don Juan - commenced Bentham on special Janis, rode over part of run.

I now deeply vainly deplore my want of mathematical and classical education - vain regret! At thirty the reasoning powers assume the ascendancy. To an independent mind education is the lever, honesty the fulcrum of lasting usefulness. Vain is the wish without the means. When a youth, anxious for information - like the mariner without his compass - I wandered here and there and the only knowledge at which I have arrived is that I have made no headway - my youth has faded and I know nothing.

But my son! May he prove worthy of my experience! May I be spared for him that he may be useful to his country - I never knew a father's care.

Wednesday and Thursday

Nothing has happened in the last forty eight hours worthy of notice continued my readings of Bentham and skimmed Don Juan. It contains sublime passages no doubt and much to smile at but the latter part is too excursive to give satisfaction. If phrenology be a true science I have hopes of my son.

When you read this hereafter, Master Tom, it will recall to your memory the fright you occasioned your mother by your roars for assistance when in broad day with your sister in your arms, you fancied being left in the house, that a whole host of "Bullabaas"³⁴ were ready to fly away with you these were imaginary terrors my dear boy, but not the less troublesome. You will know better by and by, when your Dad's "A-cold".

Emily took her first dose of medicine today in the shape of nine drops of Dalby's and Carminative in her food. You are a good tempered child Miss Emily.

Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday
On Saturday last was apprised by Richard Sewell that a few of the fat wethers sent to Austin had escaped the shepherd. In consequence of which information I started with Sewell on Sunday and got the sheep (twenty eight) at Thompson and Cooper's station twenty seven miles from home. Proceeded with them on Monday to Wright and Montgomerys. Started them on Tuesday with Sewell to Corio and returned home same day. Shifted Luke Baker and Byrne's (shepherds) flocks from the "Cabbage garden" to the plain adjoining for the lambing of Luke's flock, eleven hundred maiden ewes. He has now fourteen lambs.

As I returned home from Wright and Montgomerys I observed that three sparrow hawks attended my motions pouncing upon the poor larks that I disturbed. I shot one of them, but I had no right to do so - I inflicted torture on the poor bird and wounded my own feelings. God knows there is enough bloodshed in the world without contributing incessantly towards it. Poor bird, in depriving you of existence I have disgusted myself and sinned before God.

Little Joe, our pet parrot, has not been seen since Sunday. Hear that fat wethers are up to eighteen shillings at Van Diemens Land. Hear also that Urquhart has failed. Wrote to Captain Fyans commissioner of crown lands for permission to vacate Green Hills station.

My wife has just recalled to memory, whilst taking ale, that my son Tom when about three years old was in the habit of keeping in his possession a vial which he occasionally took to his mother observing "a drop of beer - long day!" - the little guzzler! - mother's prototype!!!

May 15th Monday

This afternoon the men I despatched with fat wethers returned from Corio with a receipt from Austin for four hundred and eighty three so that the twenty eight that were picked up were the only sheep lost by the shepherd. Austin expresses satisfaction with the bargain and asks when I shall have another lot for sale. Was at Allan's yesterday found him recovering from severe cold, a complaint which appears general - received newspapers from Corio tell of the peace with China, and the evacuation of Afghanistan. Spent the day in mending hurdles. The drought still continues cannot proceed with my ploughing in consequence.

The Melbourne papers contain the copy of a letter in answer to one from Mr. Latrobe from Sir George Gipps commenting in severe terms on the conduct of Mr. Justice Willis our resident judge. I was the first person in this part of the colony that wrote against him (in the Patriot under the signature William Tell) since then my opinion of his character has not altered but for the worse inasmuch as I think him a greater piece of absurdity than at that time. Read last night at Allans the life of "Ali Pasha" another lesson for ambitious men read it Tom (August 1851 read it Tom memo)

My children continue well thank God may He keep His mercies towards us.

Saturday night May 20th

In the fore part of the week nothing occurred of any consequence on Wednesday whilst riding under the mountains to the right of Mount William I saw three native dogs, two emu and many kangaroos.

Yesterday Ned Kenny³⁵ with a ewe flock just commenced lambing, had his flock rushed by the blacks dogs, one ewe killed and two young lambs, one ewe's leg broken and many bit. I followed them to Coles station determined to shoot some of the dogs but the blacks had taken another direction.

Sowed two acres of wheat yesterday without steeping in brine I have now about two bushels in pickle experimentalising for smut. The lands now run about three yards. The soil is indifferent and shallow. In order to remedy which I shall next year raise the soil by limiting the lands to one yard and a half owing to the immense quantity of rye grass seed in the wheat we are compelled to have it hand picked by the black lubras.

My dear little Emily has been three days confined in the bowels but has now overcome the dangerous evil having taken castor oil and rhubarb and magnesia. Urquhart's failure confirmed. I have been for some time back been much troubled with a irritating short cough and find relief from aperients.

Thursday May 25th

Since the above has been written my teams have been employed ploughing for and sowing wheat. In consequence of the great loss of time in hand picking our seed I contrived remaining up most of the night at it by cutting out some of the wires of a ryeing sieve which left the sieve chequered to clear as much in one day as all the hands we employed could hand pick in three and much cleaner leaving the grain in fact perfectly free from all other seed.

We have hitherto after steeping the wheat in strong pickle dissevered the grain for sowing by dusting it with ashes. Tomorrow we shall lime it. Smut is one of the greatest nuisances to our crops I shall try the experiment on half an acre of steeping the seed in a solution of sublimate.

On Sunday morning last we caught a native dog in our box trap the third taken in it today I gave a black's dog a dose of poison. Their dogs destroyed four of Kenny's ewes besides worrying many others. This day my little Emily is five months old she was very merry tonight. Bunbury's³⁶ stockman came over today for instructions. I ordered the collection of the cattle. I am employed during the whole day cleaning wheat for seed - never leave such things to others, Master Tom, when you can do them yourself. The weather continues dry flocks lambing fast.

Sunday evening 4th June

Since my last our sowing was interrupted by heavy falls of rain. The weather still cloudy. The lambing proceeds rapidly. Two men whom I hired as shepherds having deserted their station on Wednesday morning last having taken with them a pea coat and one pound of tobacco which they drew the night before, four hours after their departure I followed their tracks with two blacks "Tom and Terry" and Jack and succeeded in overtaking them at Mount Cole. They surrendered the property.

Teams employed during the week in drawing stuff for barn. Went to the splitters today under the mountain saw two emu. Killed a wild dog in the fore part of the week with the dogs.

Thursday June 22nd

Since my last nothing particular has occurred the weather has continued so wet that we have not been able to thrash. Captain Fyans called here Saturday last; left on Sunday. My little chickens continue well. Miss Emily very saucy. Captain Fyans remarked she had a roguish eye! Trim your lamps, Miss Em.

Saturday night July 1st

Since my last note we have had heavy rains. Employed during the week in shifting sheep and hut building. I start off after breakfast and remain at work until sundown when I start for home with a good appetite.

On Monday last Tom commenced the multiplication table³⁷ He is now pretty correct in his recollection of the numbers from twice one to twice twenty four. I shall allow him a week to each number from the first to twelve times twelve, in all three months he has also written the figures from one to ten after my pencilling. When he can write them correctly without assistance I think of putting him to addition. He asked his mother if it was the money table he was learning - "no" - "I ought to learn that first!"

My little Emmy has cut one tooth, and continues well thank God.

During the evenings of the past week I have re-read "Addison's evidences of Christianity" and I with pleasure affirm that from conviction I am a Christian "I know that my Redeemer liveth" for which conviction may the Almighty make me thankful. Doctor Power has arrived to practise in the neighbourhood. Thank God for all mercies! His name endureth for ever.

Saturday evening July 22nd

Absolutely three weeks since my last memorandum! Time has flown so fast! Constantly employed in improvements I have been out lately getting stuff for barn (which is nearly finished) and stuff for paling yards, slabs etcetera. Yesterday week my two outstations towards Mount Ararat were robbed of three double guns and other property. Pursued as far as Kirk's on the track where our horses having lost their fastenings returned home. One of the guns which was left at Kirk's we recovered. When I speak of Kirk's station I mean the station originally settled by Mr. W. Kirk now Atkinsons under the charge of Glendinning now Magills. Have a man breaking in two three year old fillies Flirt and Bessie Bedlam.

Mrs. Allen confined two or three days ago with a young son. My dear little Emily has now two front teeth. She calls Dad Dad and Mam Mam. Tom has advanced as far as six times one and is also scribbling pot hooks and hangers. Mama is employed in making his first pair of button trousers from Nankeen. The weather has been fine the last day or two, the roads I hear are very rotten. My pet parrot Joe demands a word or two and when the poor little fellow is no more this will recall him to our recollection. Doctor Power's son called today with pony and cart for barley and sugar for Mr. Allen.

Monday evening 31st July

Last night snow today squally with heavy showers. Mount William covered with snow. On Saturday and the two preceding days backed the young

mare Betsy Bedlam trots quietly. Today cavessonned "Lady Bird" on my new principle and lunged her. Teams drawing in stuff. Peter commenced cutting Blair's lambs but had to desist from rain. Laid the first of barn floor. Allen off to Melbourne on Saturday I am informed

November 5th 1843

Three months and no memorandum! Thus futile our determinations. However the old adage better late than never. I have seen the truth frequently verified and a glance of the occurrences of the last three months will be useful at all events as a connecting link between the past and future reminiscences of my pen.

In pecuniary matters I have met with two or three difficulties of rather an alarming nature.

It appears that unknown to me Messrs. Walkers and Co merchants of Sydney held my acceptance in favour of Mr. Lee and to then when called by him paid one hundred and fifty pounds for or about three years without appraising me of the circumstance. Now as there is nothing in Mr. Lee's accounts to warrant the existence of such a document I am at a loss to conceive in what way or for what purpose he obtained it. It unfortunately happens that some time after the date of that acceptance I settle with Mr. Lee in full of all demands.

He then left the country with his family for Europe where he died and it was not until after his death was publicly announced in the colony that I received an indication from Messrs. Walkers, through my brother, of their claim upon me for the full amount of principal and interest of acceptance. I have received an intimation since from Messrs. Gilchrist and Alexander my agents in Sydney that it is probable that the matter will be settled by Messrs. Walker taking a mortgage on a small property belonging to Mrs. Wills and her sister Mrs. Roope, which of course will be of considerable moment to me.³⁸

Again I was led to expect that the clip of 1842 sent home through the house of Craig and Broadfoot, Melbourne, would not only have cleared the advances which I received of a shilling but would have cleared up any small claims that those merchants might have against me. But my surprise may be judged when they presented their private claim for about two hundred and fifty pounds and assured me that there would be a further demand for somewhat about two hundred and fifty pounds on account of over drawn wool advance! I gave my acceptance for the first two hundred and fifty and the wool account remains unsettled as Craig and Broadfoot could not produce the genuine account sales.

I have now shorn about four thousand sheep. On Saturday (yesterday) we washed fourteen hundred ewes and lambs. Early in October I suffered very much from inflammation of the palm of the left hand and since by a torn nail on the third finger of the right hand. The consequence was increased irritation of the stomach and cough. I have been impelled to have earnest recourse to aperients and feel myself today better than I have for the last two months.

When last in Melbourne I wrote two or three letters for the Patriot newspaper which I shall attach to the memos and. Heard a few days ago

of my brother's appointment to the directorship of the Union Bank Melbourne.

Wednesday November 8th

At the close of this day I walked through the wheat paddock and found the crops looking well and if the frost has not affected the young wheat I have every hope of a good crop, but it is all in the hands of Providence.

We commenced shearing near four thousand sheep lately washed this morning. No one of common reflection whose dependence is in the wisdom of the Deity can help pondering on the wonderful and silent evolution hourly working in the prospects of those who but a short time ago fancied themselves out of the reach of penury and whose sole study was to lay themselves up riches on earth. How quietly are the greatest changes affected by the intelligence and omnipotence of the Almighty.

I have reflected upon the circumstance of those who beyond doubt were formerly beyond their fellow colonists considered men of immense wealth and who, I fear, in many instances forgot the great first cause in the exultation of riches.

Behold now in the space of a moment they are bankrupts! - it reminds one of the "handwriting on the wall" "their act weighed in the balance and found wanting" "with God all things are possible" therefore should it be necessary also for me in the course of events to lose all my worldly riches may the Almighty so dispose my heart and enlighten my understanding that I may submit to His divine will with the meekness and thankfulness of a Christian.

My little Emily thrives well, and she daily becomes more dear to us. Tom whose little "cobra" rests on my shoulder grows apace and can read pretty well for a child of his years.

I was under the necessity yesterday morning of inflicting correction with a stick upon one of my shepherds for determined perverseness. I also had some angry words with the shearers whilst washing sheep. It is usual with such men I am sorry to say on these occasions to run riot, if not kept under strict government.

My words stayed their ill conduct and since then they appear satisfied that it is useless to resist my lawful authority. Opposition to order and sobriety of demeanour appears natural to the heart of man.

March 19 1845

Strange that what is above written should have closed my observations for many months for when I have resumed the pen to perpetuate the memory of our dear friend and departed sister Eliza Allan³⁹ who departed this life on the afternoon of the fifteenth of March aged twenty six years shortly after having given birth to an infant daughter.

August 31st

The child was interred in the same grave one month thereafter in order that some idea of the things which have occurred since the last memo I enclose several letters.

November 22 1846

Shore 20400 sheep including lambs

Lexington April 26 1847

Or rather two o'clock in the morning of the 27th. After a day's severe fatigue shifting a hut for the purpose of lambing down a flock at the Sugarloaf hill I retired to bed about seven o'clock and having slept about three hours sleep refused a further solace.

I arose at two o'clock made up the fire in the sitting room and to amuse myself have recourse to the expedience of recording trifles for the amusement hereafter of my self and children. My children! Where are they?

Tom at Brickwoods Seminary in Melbourne⁴⁰, Emily with Miss Fanny Harrison in the nursery, at the moment Cedric [Spencer, now almost two years old] calls "Mama! Mama!! Mama!!! want some tea! poor little fellow he drinks and is asleep again hereafter this entry may amuse him may the Almighty spare him to comfort his parents and do credit to his country.

January 6 1851

Measurements H C A Harrison and brother George being here took measurements

<i>Colden</i>	<i>5'2"</i>
<i>George</i>	<i>4'9"</i>
<i>Cedric Spencer</i>	<i>3'10"</i>
<i>Horace Spencer</i>	<i>3'1"</i>
<i>Emily Spencer</i>	<i>4'0"</i>
<i>Elizabeth Wills</i>	<i>5'5"</i>
<i>H S Wills senior</i>	<i>5'7"</i>
	<hr/>
	<i>31'11"</i>
<i>Adelaide Louisa Lees</i>	<i>5'1"</i>

August 22 1851

Yesterday left our old house, the roof which has covered our heads for years, the birthplace of Emily, Cedric (now in town), Horace and Egbert these are the first lines I have written in my own house in my own private room or library I write at a table facing the front window or verandah. Before me (left) for reference is an atlas, classical dictionary, French dictionary, Cobbetts French and English grammars, an old general gazetteer which belonged to my father, geography for children Keith on the globes and Buchan's Domestic Medicine a present from an old departed friend, Edward Leigh, a case of mathematic instruments etc, etc.;

On my right between the fireplace and front wall a terrestrial and celestial globe with maps on the mantle for my "quarter", implements of native warfare intended for Tom. Behind me arranged on shelves an excellent collection of books including an Encyclopaedia Britannica, on my left a box of loose books, my old double barrel, my pistol carbine (old friends from Sydney) and Tom's fouling piece.

August 30th

Since the above was written our dear little Egbert has had two attacks of croup fortunately prepared as I am always for this generally fatal disease in less than five minutes on the first symptoms appearing emetics were administered and a warm bath resorted to.

This treatment was, with the blessing of the Almighty, effective and our little darling preserved to us. As it is likely that at some future day when the

hand that guides this pen shall be at rest that my children may and I trust will ponder over these lines, I will for the sake of their young ones. As croup generally first attacks at night, be always ready to meet it. When my children have homes of their own they must never allow their kitchen to be without the means of furnishing a hot bath instantler. Whilst that is preparing for the croup give one or two teaspoons full of antimonial wine so as to cause an immediate discharge of the mucous from the child's stomach. If you have no antimonial wine which I trust as parents you will never be without, mix some sugar with two or three tablepoons full of castor oil and try that; not having that, try butter or sweet oil; or anything which will cause immediate sickness. Having cleared the child's stomach immerse him to the neck in very warm water for ten or twenty minutes according to the symptoms - dry well the little body and clothe him warmly and mind keep him warm in a warm room. After taking these precautions (which of themselves are generally sufficient if taken in time) give the child a little warm tea. Give then one grain of calomel (or half a grain if the child is very young) every half hour for two or three hours until all danger is passed. This will save the child if you act as I have directed on the first symptoms such remedies have saved Cedric and Egbert. Remember this my children I beg of you!!! Remember an instant emetic and a warm bath then if necessary a grain or half grain of calomel every half hour for two or three hours when the disease still advances after all this apply a mustard poultice around the throat from ear to ear - a small dose of mercury with chalk will clear the child's stomach if given about thirty six or forty eight hours after the danger is passed - I trust that all my children who marry will take a copy of these instructions and keep them in their toilet drawer.

#8430500 LWC Collection

His time at Mount William was an extremely productive one. He arrived there in 1841 with 5000 sheep and 500 cattle which, by the time he sold the property in 1852, just twelve years later, had grown to 29,000 sheep and 3,000 cattle. During these years five of his children were born at the Station - Emily Spencer in 1842, Cedric Spencer in 1844, Horace Spencer in 1847, Egbert Spencer in 1849 and Elizabeth Spencer in 1852.

The family began living in a slab and bark hut from the time of their arrival, and Wills decided to build his "mansion" which stands to this day. The photograph of the house, taken in 1852, shows a substantial building on top of a rise surrounded by a palisade fence.

This building was commenced some time in 1845 and he finally occupied it on August 21st 1851.

The family had great wealth by the standards of the time, partly arising from the estate of Edward Wills through their mother, and partly from their own entrepreneurial flair (Thomas and Horatio) and partly from their marriages (Sarah and Eliza). Only Jane did not fare so well, her husband was somewhat of a disaster.

The homestead at Lexington was built from timber cut in his own mill and bricks made on the property. It is clear from his continuing success and his diary, together with other contemporary evidence, that he was an innovative and extremely successful grazier.

He was widely read and of an inquisitive mind. The books which he refers to in his diaries indicate his interest in a range of topics.

It is also apparent that Wills was a courageous man. The anecdotes of his response to a raid on Lexington by bushrangers, and the mutiny by his Chinese shepherds published in *Like the Ark*⁴¹ are interesting and reproduced here.

Regarding the bushrangers:-

"The cool self-possession which Horatio Wills had shown in his dealings with South Sea Islanders and Australian aborigines enabled him to call the bluff of a band of bushrangers, who galloped up to the Lexington homestead early one morning calling out, "Shoot him, burn him out". They had been 'sticking-up' people in the neighbourhood and knew, of course, that Wills had joined with the other squatters in trying to hunt them down. When they began knocking loudly at the door, Wills threw it open and appeared before them unarmed. Addressing one man, who looked superior to the others, and pointing to another man who was particularly noisy and objectionable, he said, 'Keep that fellow quiet, will you?'

'Well, boys, the squatter added, 'I suppose you are pretty hungry after your long ride and would like some breakfast?' He ordered breakfast, and after a good meal they went off quietly. They told him that they really had meant to shoot him but could not do it when he came out and faced them so courageously."

Regarding the Chinese shepherds:-

"Chinese shepherds were employed for a time, but they proved unsatisfactory. One day they threatened to run amok. A new overseer had offended them in some way, and nine infuriated Chinamen approached the house, armed with shear blades fixed to poles, and calling out in a threatening manner.

Some force had to be used to bring them to reason, but ultimately the trouble was smoothed over and bloodshed averted. Eventually the Chinese shepherds were discharged in a body.

When the old Chinese cook at the homestead saw all his compatriots going off he burst into tears and ran after them, just as he was, leaving all his belongings behind him."

A letter [unfortunately undated but believed to be 1845] to his sister Jane gives a plan of the house he was building at Lexington.

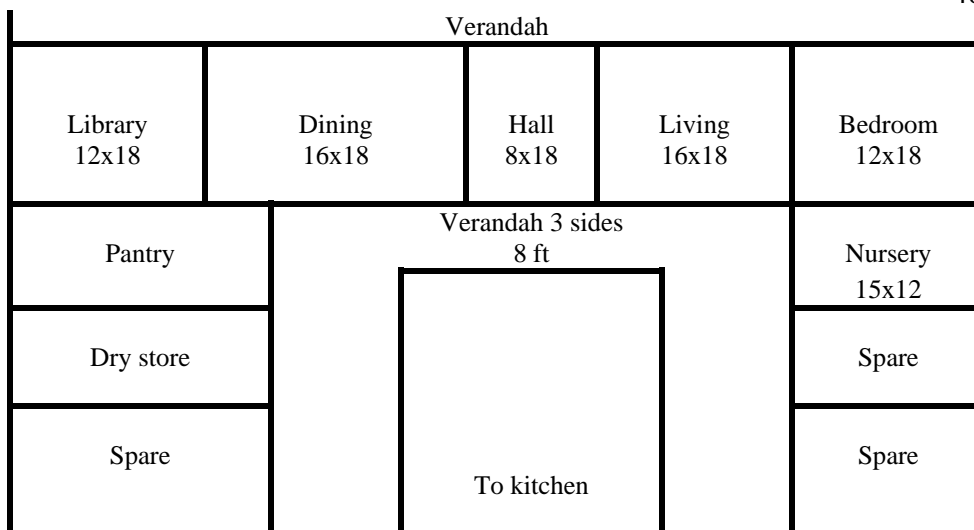
*Sunday morning
Mount William*

My dear Jeannie,

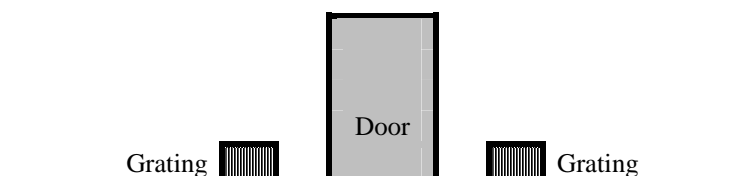
Mr. Hairfield just arrived. I am very glad to hear from you. I have today also received letters from Eliza and Thomas.

I was not aware that Mr. Harrison was so ill.⁴² I saw him in town but of course did not speak. He did not appear very sick.

[A plan of the house is drawn in here⁴³]



You see it will be of fair proportions. The cellar is about 7 feet deep or 7 feet 6 inches by 18 by 10, light and air from two gratings one on each side of the front door



Stephen Burgess an old servant of mine, a first rate man, is about to leave my neighbour Blandin next month, and he would be the fellow to manage for you.

We have had, and have, some peaches, plums, melons & c. My mansion is progressing and my mill is at work.

Received letter from Lee today. He will carry on about the farms if we engage a third share to him, ie. he will find the funds and for these and the trouble he expects a third and not a fourth share of the proceeds - Thomas agrees and so do I and I write to him today.

Thomas' trip has been of service to his health. I send you some seeds and I hope you will find them of service.

My young ones are all well, Tom is at Brighton. I have two patients under my care here a child and its mother. Both were dangerously ill, but now are doing well. They will try "dietetic". Isn't that it?

I have a good many letters to write by the present chance so excuse the abruptness of this - there has been a rumour afloat that Fan⁴⁴ is dropsical remember me to her. Lots of newspapers before me.

You are under a mistake the name is Polly not Paul - the name Horace has been so often adjuncted by Walpole that I dislike it much.

Farewell

Yours

H. S. Wills

#8510000 L W C Collection

This letter can probably be dated to March 1845 as the mother and daughter referred to are likely to be Eliza Allen and child who are referred to in the diary. He always refers to his brother as Thomas and his son as Tom - we know that Tom left Australia early in 1850 to attend Rugby.

The letter from Lee refers to the farms in his mother's estate referred to in the letter from Captain Harrison to Mr. Roope in chapter 9.

Wills was extremely keen that his sons should receive an excellent education, and his prosperity allowed him to take the very unusual step of sending them to Europe for that purpose, as it was his opinion that there were no schools of a sufficient standard in Australia.

In February or March 1850 Tom left Australia to attend Rugby. He arrived there in August 1850 [see letter in chapter 10].

Great things began to happen with the discovery of gold in Victoria at Clunes, near Ballarat, in June 1851 followed by other major finds near Ballarat, Bendigo and Ararat and the great gold rush began.

In February 1852 his nephew and his brother-in-law were conducting a trading house in London called "Redfern and Alexander" and they wrote to Wills on the subject of gold.

*13th February 1852
33 Great Winchester St.,
London.*

Dear Sir,

Tom returned to Rugby today in good health and spirits and quite ready for hard study.

We hope to get the engine, pumps and threshing machine all ready to go in the "Sir Robert Sale" next month. Copies of the plans we shall send you in our next.

Our object in writing at present is the Port Phillip gold. We saw a parcel two days ago and it turned out the richest gold in the world. We enclose the result in which you will see it sells for £4/3/3 in the gross shipping weight and after paying all expenses it nets £4/0/4 per ounce. It had Geelong in a reel on the boxes. Its appearance is different from the Sydney gold which is a mixture of dust, scales and lumps of the size of a pins head up to the size of a pea, and nearly all sound. We enclose for your inspection the result of five boxes consigned to us from Sydney from which you will see it nets £3/14/4 up to £3/14/10 per ounce which shows the Port Phillip is nearly 6/- per ounce more valuable.

Now we think it is worth your while to make a little money for yourself, Mr. Roope [Horatio's brother-in-law - see chapter 10], and for us out of this gold by buying it on joint account. We will take half risk on all that is bought and no commissions charged on either side but look only to the profit to be divided. We have not written to Mr. Roope but leave it to you to arrange with him.

Should he buy it he will require your assistance in negotiating the bills as the banks only advance a small sum per ounce and he would require to make money arrangements for the difference of the purchase money by your taking the bills on us and negotiating them. If this is done request him to insure at the Banks as much as their rules require as we have always a large open policy to cover any difference we can insure at 20/-, the banks charge 25/-.

We value the gold in our policy at £4 per ounce.

We have written to Mr. Timms to buy so request Mr. Roope not to interfere so as to bid against him. We think a great deal of money may be made of it.

We write very hurriedly and hope you may be induced to enter into it if you do not arrange for Mr. Roope to embark in it. A profit of 5% on gold is well worth attention as there is no risk of loss on the price here. Anyone who is accustomed can assay it.

Do give this your early attention.

We are

Yours very truly

Redfern and Alexander

If this vessel gets off immediately she may be out before any other and as she is in Scotland we write by her with this information. The writer has been obliged to write very hurriedly being on a jury.

#8520213 T W C Collection

It became impossible to get enough servants and farm hands as people headed for the diggings, and in October 1852, just over a year after moving into his "mansion", he was forced to sell Lexington to William Francis Splatt and Charles Pitt Pynsent on the basis of "walk in - walk out" for the huge sum of £35,000 on mutually agreeable terms.

The property was 120,000 acres or 187 square miles.

28th October 1852

Melbourne

To H. S. Wills Esq Lexington

Dear Sir,

I agree to purchase your stock and stations at the price and terms described in your offer of the 23rd October inst (copy of which is annexed hereto) and I hereby authorise my partner, Mr. Charles P. Pynsent, to draw on me on sight payable to your order for the sum of £2000 being the deposit money mentioned in your offer.

Mr Pynsent is also authorised to take delivery of the stock and stations at your convenience and on your handing me his receipt for the same and your making the usual transfer, I will grant you my acceptances for £4000 and £2000 as stipulated and also a mortgage over the entire property to secure the one payment of the said acceptances and also the residue of the purchase money with the interest thereon in conformity with your offer.

I have only to add that if Mr. Pynsent should make any further purchases of you either of live or dead stock the same will be binding on, Dear Sir,

Yours very truly

Wm F Splatt

PS. As Mr. Pynsent takes an equal interest with me in this purchase and will take the active management I shall of course readily acquiesce in all his arrangements. WFS

Copy

Lexington 28 or 29,000 sheep more or less including pure sheep.

*Mokepilly 3,000 cattle more or less
 8 saddle horses
 2 draft horses
 2 bullock drays
 24 working bullocks
 2 carts
 1 mansion &c &c &c
 1 Boiling place
 1 Woolshed with its adjuncts
 30 tons Rock Salt more or less
 For £35,000 £2,000 - cash
 £4,000 - 6 Mos.
 £2,000 - 12 Mos at Bank interest
 The residue at 8 & 10 years at £2,000
 Interest paid annually*

Stores and furniture required for the station at cost price including carriage, loss of weight etc.

The wool of present clip now nearly completed included.

Open to W. F. Splatt Esq. for 14 days

Signed H. S. Wills Oct 23 1852

Delivery to be made within a month

#8521023 L W C Collection

So ended their time at "Lexington"

CHAPTER 6

HORATIO S. H. WILLS
THE BELLEVUE PERIOD
24 NOVEMBER 1852 TO 3 FEBRUARY 1861

On leaving Lexington, Horatio Wills decided to move to the Geelong area for reasons which we do not know. Some speculate that it had to do with educating his children, but this seems unlikely as he sent the three boys to England and Germany for their education and the girls were educated always by a governess. It is more likely that he moved there because it was the port through which he had shipped his wool from Lexington and his brother-in-law, William Roope, was a merchant in Little Malop Street.

He settled on a block of land of 304 acres which was Crown Grant Number 15 in the Moolap subdivision on a block originally taken up by Mr. J. Clarke. His brother Thomas had originally taken up Lots 14 and 22 in the same subdivision, and it is likely that this is the reason for choosing that particular land. Here Wills settled down to the life of gentleman farmer and it was his ambition to build this property (which he named Bellevue) into a model farm so that he could indulge his great interest in improved methods of farming. In this sense Wills was a great innovator as his letters to his wife from England show.

Wills settled on this land in April 1853, setting up a camp whilst his house was built. The following letter to his son Tom at Rugby describes this camp, and also gives some idea of the land boom taking place at the time, £50 an acre being a huge sum.

May 1st 1853
Point Henry

My dear Tom,

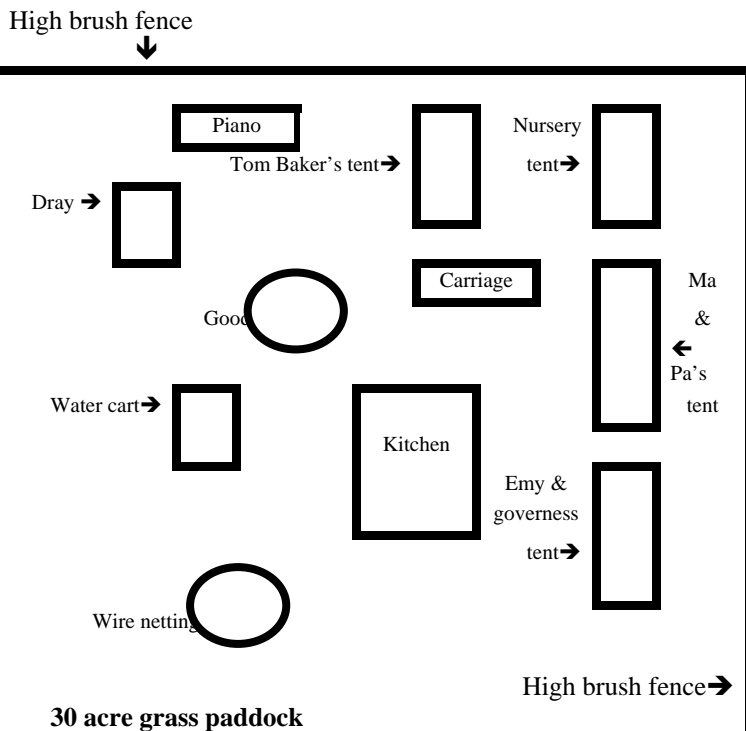
Your letter containing the account of the games at Rugby came to hand yesterday: and, as with all letters from you, gave me considerable satisfaction. You still however continue to write with a scrawl that would make a writing master eat his nails, and there are occasional errors in spelling and in the grammatical construction of your sentences at which I am much surprised.

If you cannot write correctly now I am afraid you never will and if you should after my trouble turn out a dunce! You should at 17, with all the means at your disposal, be able to write in English correctly and well - to write and talk French, and have a pretty fair knowledge of Latin - you must strive to accomplish this as soon as possible for you must shortly commence your studies for a profession. The law is the most honourable - the merchant also has a fair time of it. If you have brains take the law and come out here 5 or 6 years hence a barrister.

Remember that everything you do is for yourself, and if you do not succeed in life and obtain the reputation of a clever gentlemanly fellow, no one will be to blame but yourself.

We have four tents pitched and a large wooden kitchen covered with a tarpaulin (one of the large ones Mr. Alexander sent out) and sundry heaps and packages covered in like manner with tarpaulins.

I write this lying on my side in bed my day book for my desk. I hear Horace, Cedric, & Egbert hard at it behind me in their nursery tent. Emily and Miss Lee with governess occupy the tent in front of us. I send you the plan.



Tom Baker⁴⁵ is the only servant we have. We give out our washing, buy bread and meat, and wait (and work hard) while our house is finished. I will send you the plan and front when finished. It rains hard and we have very rough weather lately for tents, but we are comparatively sheltered by the fence and our position - Tom Baker I believe thinks and speaks more of you than anyone else. You should mention him in your letters.

Mr. Denys⁴⁶ who rents the premises lately occupied by Mr. Roope, erected very extensive sheds and stables on the allotment of land at the back. The night before last the whole of the stables were burnt to the ground and 9 horses perished in the flames - such a blaze! We saw the fire from our place. I drove into town yesterday on business with Ced and Horace and we passed Roope's old place - came out of town - and positively received my first information as to whose place was burned from my tenant when I returned home at night. Mr. Denys let the stables for £500 a year! My stores escaped! Mr. Roope says I always fall like a cat feet downwards.

I paid nothing for the erection of the stables. Denys held the ground for 5 years, it is a loss of £3500 to him - and tomorrow he has to dub up his rent. I am told he lets one room of the front house for £400 a year!

Tenting is better than town life. The Townies pity us - we pity them! When outside your tent you must work or perish - this gives you an appetite and our small party polished [off] a sheep of 60 pounds in 3 days.

Before pitching tents we, in common with the rest of the community, were suffering from severe colds - we have no colds now. The children are very hearty - next spring we shall have a boat and net - 2 men below us shot 170 ducks (tr.) on the bay in one night last week (observe tr. means transpose - read "shot 170 ducks below us" - don't forget that.)

We have 8 working bullocks 4 cart and plough horses - 2 carriage and one saddle horse - Emily leaves for Geelong today for a visit for a few days. Mrs. Roope made advances again⁴⁷ but I cut her dead short. She is such a dreadful mischief maker. Roope and I would never have quarrelled but for her.

I am putting up about 55 yards of Mr. Alexander's fence⁴⁸. Whether or not the net can be drawn tight remains to be seen. The top and bottom lines appear of different lengths. The net bags greatly but I shall clap a windlass on it this morning before breakfast. (I finished this at daylight - no by candle light - on the morning of the)

Mama fast asleep and baby, who is called Elizabeth - a fine child - Emily 11 next Christmas. "Pussy cat" (black boy) went off to Mt. William with teams a few days ago. The day before he left he said to your Mother "Where Tom? Tom no quambie here: when quambie Tom?" Evidently much surprised at not meeting you he continued "You show me Tom" meaning the daguerreotype likeness, he gazed upon it a long time. The old blacks, your friends, were fond of seeing it. They told me to send you up to them as soon as you came back.

I am writing also to Mrs. Alexander who wishes to convince me "that potatoes ought not to be planted in their jackets". I have some of the seed (cabbage) which she sent me under process for sowing. I have soaked it in vinegar and water - the common method failed to make it germinate.

£50 an acre has been offered for land beyond me. There will shortly be a war between Austria and France from what I gather in the papers.

H. S. Wills.

#8530501 T W C Collection

Not a great deal of correspondence survives this period; however we know much of his doings from references to be found in the *Geelong Advertiser* of the period which shows his taking a very active interest in the affairs of the district. He was one of the members of the Geelong and Portland Immigration Society's committee while still at Lexington, and carried this on when he moved to Geelong. In 1849 for example he had shipped 218 bales of Lexington wool through the Geelong port. In late 1854 Wills stood for election as a member of the Legislative Council defeating Henry Deering, an actor and theatrical promoter and the *Geelong Advertiser* reported

"At the hustings David Fisher nominated H. S. Wills, whom he described as a former squatter and now an agriculturist, the proprietor of "a show farm

at Point Henry which was a model for the colony.” Henry Deering, actor and theatrical promoter, was also nominated. Both candidates spoke, and both indulged in some light banter. Wills reminded the electors that they were asked to decide who had the better of agriculture, not who was the better actor on the stage. Mr. Deering, he said, might be a clever actor, but could he tell a mangelwurzel from a turnip? Deering replied that in all his characters as an actor he had never succeeded in making himself as ridiculous as Mr. Wills. The election was won by Wills - 202 votes to 113.”

The victory was duly reported in the Government Gazette:

*Colonial Secretary’s Office
Melbourne 17 January 1855*

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

The Lieutenant Governor directs it to be notified that a Return to the Writ issued by the Honourable the Speaker on the tenth day of December last for the election of a member to serve in the Legislative Council of Victoria, for the Electoral District of the County of South Grant, in the place of William G. Haines, Esquire, resigned, has been received, and that by such Return endorsed on the said Writ, it appears that

*HORATIO SPENCER WILLS, Esquire
has been elected Member for the said Electoral District.*

*By His Excellency’s Command
WILLIAM C. HAINES*

#8550117 Public Records

In 1856 at the next election he was re-elected for the Electorate of South Grant. At the following election in 1860 Wills decided not to stand again, although he was asked to do so, because he felt that he wanted to devote more time to his family and his farming, as he told his sons in his letter to them in March 1860.

Of all of his activities perhaps the most lasting was his interest in the Geelong and Western District Agricultural and Horticultural Society which was founded in February 1855 with H. S. Wills as its first president. The Society existed to promote the progress of agriculture and horticulture in the Colony, and the first Geelong Show was held at the Immigration Depot, East Geelong, in October 1855 and has been held every year since.

The Society held many ploughing matches and took great interest in displaying new equipment and new methods.

On 14 March 1855 the foundation stone was laid for the first orphanage in Geelong to be built at Herne Hill. H. S. Wills was a patron of this establishment and toward the end of 1855 the institution was opened with 20 children, and within a few years had expanded so as to cater for 100.

Tom Wills, meantime, was still at Rugby and H.S. received a letter from his sister, Sarah Alexander, from London in May 1854 giving some news of Tom’s progress.

*May 10th 1854
12 Porchester Terrace*

London

My Dear Brother,

I was much disturbed in learning from your letter which I received last Monday that you had all been suffering so much from Measles - my poor sister must have been in a state to be attacked by such a malady so soon after her confinement. I trust the dear little stranger [Eugenie Spencer (Duckey) Wills born 28 January] may be spared to you and that you may by this been restored to health and strength.

It is well now that it is over for the little ones - I regret you and Eliza had not gone through the ordeal in your younger days for it leaves frequently sad effects when it attacks persons at a mature age - I have never recovered from its effects being still so liable to colds which affect the bronchial tubes - I cannot face the East winds without danger and here, during spring, it sometimes can last many weeks.

Thomas [Wentworth Wills] was not more ill than is usual and recovered perfectly but he had it at a safe age. He is quite well and I trust pursuing his studies with great attention. It would not be advisable to take him from school for some time yet. You are aware that he was very backward when he arrived in England and he has much yet to learn which could not be acquired with much ease and advantage as at present when no other occupation interferes to distract his attention.

I am sorry that Mr. Alexander will not have room for him at his office till he gets larger accommodation himself, but I am sure he will do his best to get him into an advantageous office when his school studies are completed.

One most essential point is that he write a good hand for no one would take him unless he did. He would be nearly useless to any merchant without that necessary accomplishment.

Perhaps also you are not aware that a few years are necessary to get him commercial concerns with safety and advantage to himself, a great deal of observation and industry are necessary and so much will depend upon himself - every one here is so constantly engaged in his own department that he has no time to superintend others, so that if young men do not push their own way by acquiring all information possible with but little distance from others they may be years and knowing very little useful at the end of them.

Commercial matters are not managed like a school where the head of the establishment is bound to see that instruction is given, but every one observes for himself and gains all he can - time is too valuable to be devoted to instruction - you have no idea how hard all mercantile people work here, an hour is more valuable to them than many pounds for they can scarcely overtake the demands of their office, if their concerns are very extensive - and without extent there is little profit.

Thomas appears to like the notion of being a merchant and as I think he is naturally industrious, I have no doubt he will be a prosperous one. His general conduct is good, that I indulge the hope that he will be a blessing to you and his Mother.

My own dear daughter and her husband [Sarah Alexander Jnr born 9 February 1835 and her husband Dr Philip van der Byl born 28 April 1827]

left us only last week, they have lived with us till then, because they could not obtain a suitable house near us before. In consequence of their living with us I was impelled to obtain lodgings for Thomas with a married friend of my son to whom he had also sent his own son hither, who like Thomas had left school for the holidays. We have taken a house adjoining ours that we may build a little to it, and make it more comfortable than our present house - but as we will only have one spare room if Thomas remains in London we shall have to obtain board and lodgings for him with some married person.

Having only one spare room I must keep it to accommodate my son and family and any other relative so that I shall have no room for dear Thomas. My son-in-law has consented to take a relative's son from the Cape who wishes to study medicine and he says having one young man, he would be willing to have two that they might be companions to each other and study together in the evenings when he would direct their studies. I think we could not ask better for Thomas than place him with my son and daughter where his comfort and habits would be watched over. Phillip charges for the young man who has just arrived one hundred and fifty a year for his lodging, board and washing and if he takes Thomas he will of course expect the same for him. He has to pay himself two hundred a year with forty pounds yearly for taxes, and as anything of consumption is so dear in London he couldn't take him for less. We paid on your account three pounds a week to the gentleman who kept him during the last vacation.

I am much pleased that my dear brother Thomas is coming home - my dear child expects an increase to her family this month, you may be sure it is a most anxious time to us all yet I trust that our merciful Father will protect and spare both her and her offspring.

You must be satisfied with such scribbling as I can write, for I must write to the families of our united kind, love to yourself my very dear brother and to your dear wife and dear little ones.

Believe me I am most affectionately

Your sister

Sarah Alexander

We are all in good health at present and shall be anxious for your next letter.

I have detained this letter that I might convey to you the happy tidings of the safe delivery of my dear daughter of a fine boy and to tell you today the 25th that both are doing as well as we could wish. Pray tell me always how Jane and Adela⁴⁹ are getting on poor dears I feel sorry for them. I rejoice in your prosperity - may it be blessed to you.

#8540510 L W C Collection

In the middle of 1859 H. S. Wills set off for England for the dual purposes of pursuing his passionate interests in farming (in particular he went to look for new agricultural machines) and to take his three younger sons to school in England. The following two letters to his wife give news of his visit.

London

Sunday 25th (I think) September 1859

My dear wife,

I write you a few lines just to let you know the state of matters with me. I have been for the last ten days away to Norfolk about the borer.

My resting place was I may say the "Bell" at Thetford about 90 miles from London. I returned last night at 11 pm to my lodgings here. Well having set the machinists at work (Mr. Burrell's manufactory and engine works) I went to Norwich - saw the great cattle and sheep market, stayed there one day (Sunday) before this - returned to Thetford - next day started for Yarmouth through Norwich again stopped there a night and part of a day - saw a good deal, among other things life boats made on the model I sent (my own) to Mr. Alexander years ago and then we turned to Thetford.

Well on Friday last had one trial of the borer (a single one), Saturday tried it again - the result was this that the ground became ten times harder than before in this way as the cutting parts were not intended to raise the soil as loosened and did not of course. We found that the two inch iron spindle much compressed the earth so much more than it was naturally by the space the spindle occupied. It was just as if it had been rammed with a very heavy rammer. Now after all our bother here was a pretty state of things, the ground became so much compressed that in our last trial we had actually to dig our borer out. Well I went to lunch immediately, after which I ran to the works with another plan. In 20 minutes a borer was made and tried and that I think will do because as it works a hole it lifts the earth upward so that the compression is avoided.

As I was to leave at 5 pm (in the afternoon) for London I gave instructions to make a good borer after the pattern and try it, it will be tried on Wednesday next - Damn it - after all my bother!

We'll succeed yet, our first boring or rather the last succeeded very well but I must be sure. If so I shall order a traction engine to travel of itself, a borer, with it a threshing machine to clean as it goes, a famous portable mill they have of two four-feet stones on wheels, a pulper, perhaps a bone crusher etc etc. The whole, say, will cost about 800 pounds but that whole will be of great value because we can then bore, trash, pulp roots, grind corn, etc etc as we require. The mills turn out the flour perfect at one operation, at all events this machinery will be well worth our money. We can of course employ the thrasher and grinder for others for three months every year if we like.

At Thetford on Saturday (yesterday) before breakfast I stood on a conical mound wide at the base and about 60 feet in height raised by the Danes or Romans.

I must send your letter, or I'll take all of them, when I go to see the boys. They will be so delighted you have no idea, what a dear little fellow my darling Horace is so thoughtful - so kind - so loving - bless his dear little heart!

Old lady, how is it you never send me my papers, now your elections are near at hand your papers would give me pleasure - they haven't got me to bully - say now! But I should like to be with the government in a liberal land measure.

Tell Mr. McKerras⁵⁰ I was very sorry to hear of his sad mishap but always anticipated something from his rowdy galloping. Please to tell Mr. Roope that I will thank him to keep a look out to windward to see if O'Farrell⁵¹ is successful with his mangolds and carrots at the lake farm. Confess old lady that I was not wrong with reference to the value of pigs confess that, old lady, be generous for once! How pleasant it is to be able to correspond so often and so rapidly one almost feels at home. I am so glad to receive your letters so glad to receive Emily's letters so glad to see Tom's great improvement. He will yet be one of the first men in the colony if he tries.

Tell Tom that "the greatest unwarrantable liberty" is not correct "the most unwarrantable" would be proper. Tell my dear Emily and Pussey⁵² that I hope the music already lent by Captain Murray will please them. I do look with longing eyes on the nice bonnets I see in Oxford and Regent Streets as I pass along on the top of a bus. I am afraid I shall invest in some if I have money to spare before I return, I must get you such a nice one and Emily and some other folks.

I think there will be a breeze about the goat I can't understand how the black sheep was worried I trust not by our dogs and if by the dogs of anyone you know they ought to pay the piper or be made to do so Traveller might I suppose have been saved with a little care but I suppose the best was done. I am glad Mr. Ramsay the overseer has made such progress with the farm. I hope he will be successful and you can also inform Emily that I'll comb her coat when I go out.

Tell Tom Antill⁵³ his brother talks of sending him 500 pounds and I hope it will do him good and that you will always be glad to see him but mind Emily never stay away from home.

Well I have filled the paper and what more would you have me do. God bless you once more I left Thomas the day before yesterday praising Mr. Gibbs bravo Gibbs you shall have eagle soup when your friends at the gardens die.

#8590925 L W C Collection

And later he wrote again:

London
November 5th 1859

Bessie Wills my dear, my dear Bessie Wills,

I am off for Bonn this morning to take farewell of our dear boys, and I write these few lines long before day light to apprise you of my doings, fearful that I might not have another opportunity before the departure of the next mail. First then dear wife I shall leave if I can by the 5th December for Australia: home and beauty! And right glad shall I be when I put foot on Australia's shore. I think I hear my babies say - "I think I see the little ones running to tell Ma that Papa has come!" But to business for I shall get spoony. I wrote to you last from Londonderry. To tell you in a few words - then I went to Dublin; saw Taafe, Phoenix Park etc. Thence to Tipperary on invitation to Dr. Ryan⁵⁴, saw Mr. O'Shannassy's mother and grandmother - an old sweet heart of the great O'S by chance in a railway

carriage. Thence to Killarney and its lakes. Kate Karney, descendent of the original, the gap of Dunlow the mountain dew girls, the descent where Tom and his friends ran down to the dark valley - his guide being with me and telling me of his pranks.

Thence to Cork and rambled about, saw everything (I think I have written this to you before) Blarney Castle, the Gnomes of Blarney, the Blarney stone.

Left Cork Harbour and got clear by six o'clock at night and then my dear wife had the satisfaction of being in the Irish Channel in a paddle steamer during the whole of that dreadful night in which the Royal Charter and scores of other vessels were lost. It was indeed a fearful night. When the hurricane rose to the highest pitch of its fury then, Bessie dear, comfort came to me because my will was made and I had provided for you, thank God. However we reached the haven of Milford by eleven next morning instead of eight, only three hours after the vessel's usual time of arrival thence I went through Wales by train to Cardiff. Thence having stopped a night sick and sore, I viewed the great Bute docks on the following morning and afterwards proceeded by train to London.

Since then dear Bessie I have been cutting about county upon this blessed pulverising crusade. I have pretty well decided upon taking a twenty five horse traction engine, Boydell's patent description twenty five horse draws thirty tons on level ground or up one in eighteen. Coals per hour at full work - two cwt. Weight of engine ten tons. Port delivered in London with royalty eleven hundred pounds, cost of tender ninety pounds, cost extra of firebox adapted for wood ten pounds, in all dear Bessie twenty hundred pounds [actually £1200] for this great engine alone.

They have given me their agency for Port Phillip I saw one of the same power at work today. It turned with a whole string of wagons in a space round and round of about the size of the garden before our bedroom window. Then being relieved of the wagons went down a steep incline into a pond for a drink and backed up the ascent again without the slightest difficulty and then as it were gave a sort of a "what do you think of that, my cocks!". Many gentlemen from all countries were there, there is great demand for this engine now from the colonies and other foreign countries.

I am in correspondence with Ransome about the manufacture of my ploughs for deep work as I find the present English are too weak for my purpose.

Thomas and Mr. Alexander approve of my plans altogether.

Please to tell Middlemiss that with the power nominally of eight, but really sixteen horses, one of these engines has frequently with Coleman's scarifier, a scarifier made of that principle made purposely twelve feet wide worked twelve acres of land a day seven inches deep from which in oats a greater return was obtained by long odds than ever known before.

The servant has just put her head into my room to say it is past five o'clock but there is no appearance of dawn yet. Now dear Bessie to business, remember this is business and that you are my attorney. The engine will not be delivered for at least 4 months because I give myself time to meet its cost but I am to pay on delivery one half its cost and the other half at seven months. Then there will be other things with it, say ploughs fifty pounds, scarifier forty pounds, connecting gear forty pounds and other things to an

extent I should say altogether including the engine of fifteen or sixteen hundred pounds. Therefore my dear Bessie in January next send to Messrs. Redfern and Alexander of 5 Great Winchester Street London say eight hundred pounds or more to my credit, say one thousand pounds. This the bank will do for you but I think you will have more to your credit then otherwise I shall have to pay seven and a half per cent for the discount of an English draft on me or you in the colony. So my dear Bessie, without fail do this. I shall be with you in February to put all to rights.

The boys of course have to be paid for out of that and other payments made besides - fail not in this - (copy from where the termed commas are and show Mr. Roope or my banker).

As a commercial speculation I should make some five hundred pounds on the sale of the engine so my dear Bessie as this and all other things I shall order will be saleable if necessary at a profit don't be alarmed. We will put in such vineyards for our little ones Bessie dear! I send you the plate of the engine - won't the engine do well for the diggings! Don't tell anyone what I gave for it I wish no-one to know till you see me, I think dear Bessie I shall order a nice family vehicle called a "Sociable" with money I shall save by going by clipper instead of overland. It will only make a difference of time of two or three weeks and I shall save some ninety pounds at least. The Sociable will cost about seventy pounds. If I can't bring that I will [bring] a little pony carriage for you to drive about in your old days.

And now Bessie dear it is getting near starting time and I must bid you farewell but before I do so - will you believe it? I that had never been seasick in any weather or sea for twenty five years roared to the roaring ocean over the lee quarter of the steam ship Cumberland on the night of the dreadful gale. But the worst of it was, running from shelter to the lee side to perform that most pleasing operation the gale threw my cloak over my head and kept it there till my very eyes nearly burst out of their sockets through my superhuman efforts to hold in till I retrieved myself of its folds. Feeling that I was alone to suffer however if wrecked, that my will was made, my mind was quickly at peace and then amid the most fearful howling of the storm I was for nearly half an hour in convulsions by laughter - such ludicrous scenes do occur sometimes when people are in a funk, upon my word my health suffered from that laughter. "Who is that laughing" growled a voice from one of the cabins and then in more plaintive tone "Oh oh oh" etc. etc. The sea struck our vessel under the counter and jumped the great glass globe from the cabin lamp (swinging) onto the floor in pieces. Our binnacle lamp was extinguished. In fact, Bessie, it was a night to be remembered by all those who were in it and came out safely.

But thankful my dear wife for my escape, I wish you to request our clergyman to give thanks for me for escape from tempest in the church on Sunday - in this fail not - and now once more, dear wife, kiss my children for me.

Remember me to Mr. Roope and our other friends and for a time farewell! Tomorrow I shall see our boys.

God bless you.

H. S. Wills

I shall leave on the 5th or 15th December, hope by the 5th.
 # 8591105 L W C Collection

In December 1859 he left to return to Australia. On his arrival in March 1860 he wrote to his sons:

Belle Vue
March 1860

My dear boys,

After a somewhat easy passage of 87 or 88 days we arrived on the ship in Hobson's Bay - all well! We were unfortunately detained several days off the Otways by easterly winds. Those winds were very provoking, as could all but have rounded the long 1 mile reef off Cape Otway we should have had a wind into Port. But so it was that we were there detained some 6 or 7 days. Much to our disappointment. In the meantime, however, the passengers amused themselves catching barracouta.

Now I am speaking of Cape Otway, I may mention that a very conspicuous Lighthouse has been erected there - the light from which can be seen many miles off. Our little boat The Otway⁵⁵ you will be sorry to hear was wrecked at Port Arlington a short time before. She dragged her anchor and went on shore in a gale of wind.

The Melbourne 11 licked the Sydney 11 again. Tom the highest score and a silver cup £25. Tom was up at Geelong when I arrived for the Richmond Club. They beat the poor Corio all to pieces. The Richmond Club, having Tom and Elliott, beat all the others hollow. Tom is looking hearty, and is no doubt very proud of his luck. Colden Harrison won the 200 and steeplechase, the cousins took all the great prizes during the sports. An immense concourse of people were on the ground - some 15,000. The Governor had the grandstand lately erected, and all outside the fence was taken up tents and refreshment booths. The club after paying all expenses netted £3,000 by entrance fees! They talk now of getting over the English 11 to play against our men. If they come I think they will get licked!

During my absence Mama bought O'Farrell's farm near ours (adjoining) at the Lake for £9 an acre 115 acres all cleared, fenced and so now we have 300 acres at least at the Lake. We have 160 pigs and 70 head of cattle there now. I saw the little boat which will require painting etc. The weather is too hot for boating just now. By a late Act of Council no fishermen are allowed to use nets at Lake Connemare, so the fish will be all right.

Strange to say all the waterholes at our farm there are full of water although this is the driest season known for years. George and Charlie⁵⁶ came out to see me the night before last - both stout and strong - Mr. Grant last night favoured us with a visit.

Some of the people want me to go into parliament again but I want to put my affairs to rights and remain with my family so I have no wish to go in and will not if I can help it.

I'll look for boomerangs for you and Dr. Thomas and mark them for you.

Now my dear boys, I am pressed for time. And I have one particular word to say to you all. Get on with your education as fast as possible. Lose no time, because you must in a great measure depend on yourselves for getting on in the world. Cedric, German - French - Music but most of all Analytical Chemistry and a Knowledge of the vine. Cedric, remember the wine and its juices will be your profession. Excel my boy, which you will I know, if you only try.

Horace my boy, the law - you will strive there if you try - you will try won't you? You will make Papa proud of you I know. You will endeavour to overcome all sorts of laziness in order that you may be the pride of Australia. You will, won't you?

Egbert, my little one, you will be a clever man if you try. Mama and Papa will be proud of their youngest son.

Cedric, push on to the chemistry - lose no time.

Go ahead all of you, Hurrah for the Australians. Beat all others my boys! God bless you.

Unsigned

Poor Mr. Wace who owned Butterfly fell from his phaeton a short time back, and no one being with him he was dragged to death over the place and killed, poor fellow. He used to lodge at Mrs. Harrison's - and was with me in Parliament.

I sent a lecture of Mr. Michie's which Horace will find in a paper sent now. The Geelong Advertiser of March 8 1860.

#8600300 T H S W Collection

Later that month Horatio met John MacDonald who was farming land, the property of Mr. Curlewis, further east about three miles from Bellevue, and Wills suddenly became excited about the prospect of once again becoming a broad acres squatter. So he headed to Queensland with MacDonald to look at Cullinlaringo, and in a long letter to three boys of 12 July 1860 he gives an account of this visit:

July 12 1860

Belle Vue

Now, Papa, do tell us the news! Where have you been - what have you seen - what have you done?

Well, my dear boys, listen and I will tell you. I, with Emily and Pussy, have been away for 3 months - we returned about 10 days ago.

Shortly after my arrival from Europe, (about a fortnight I suppose), Mr. John MacDonald who farmed land of Mr. Curlewis', called and informed me that he would in a weeks time start for Port Curtis in Queensland, to the northward of Moreton Bay. That his brother Peter who had gone with the diggers during the great gold rush which took place before you left the colony had been exploring the country far back from Keppel Bay and had discovered some fine country referring particularly to one beautiful piece of country, as he stated, called "Cullinlaringo", a name given to it by his brother and which means "culling" - sought - "laringo" - and found.

Well Mr. John MacDonald gave such a flattering description of "Cullinlaringo" that the thought "I should like to see it" immediately

occurred to me.. I therefore asked Mr. Mac to defer his departure for a fortnight and I would go with him. Well to shorten the tale he deferred and we started - Mr. Mac taking his wife and men and I taking Emily and Pussy. He left his family at Campbelltown - I left E and P at Georges Hall with Mrs. Johnson.⁵⁷

Neither of my cousins remembered me as Horace. Emily thought me brother Thomas - then I was not tall enough - ergo I must be myself - Horace - and so I was!

Before I left there on one occasion young George Johnson⁵⁸ and I took a small pea rifle and crossed Georges River in his boat to have a go at some ducks. I forgot to mention that I had Tom's old single barrel gun with me. Well I had just exclaimed "look out for snakes, boys" when about 2 yards in advance of me when I observed a black snake of fully 6 feet pass rapidly to the right of the ground that George had passed but 2 steps. In a moment I made a jab at him with the butt of my gun but he was too smart for me and he got away. I smashed my gun stock however but then practised with the pea rifle at a small object across the river and made some very good shots and so did George - distance about 70 yards, but the best shot was made by me at a single duck which was at the water's edge. My ball cut it in two. That wasn't bad shooting, was it?

Well, to get on Mr. Mac bought one horse in Campbelltown and I bought 2 in Sydney - we also bought revolvers and other things necessary for a bush mission. My gun was restocked with a leather sling added for the shoulder and off we sailed in The Eagle auxiliary screw sloop forth with our supplies and etceteras for Rockhampton, a town springing up on the left bank of the Fitzroy River about 40 miles from its mouth at Keppel Bay. Our voyage lasted 9 days, 2 beyond the usual time. MacDonald and myself a good deal sick attending to the horses and making canvas bags for our journey.

Whenever the weather permitted the captain kept inshore and we caught some fine fish, some of them just as much as I could possibly haul in, King fish 4 feet long, so that we had lots of fresh fish all the way up. I had one heavy fellow on when for a little bit I walked from the taffrail forward about 6 or 8 yards dragging Mr. Kingfish on the line and called to Mr. MacDonald to haul him in. John who "rather thinks he is strong" at once took the line - but the next moment poor John was hopping over the deck and grinning over the taffrail. The fish, rather stronger than he first supposed, walked off with him. However we pulled Mr. Fish up and ate the rascal for his impudence, after all this the 9th day we entered Keppel Bay - then the mouth of the great Fitzroy River - and up 40 miles till after sticking on a sandbank till a return of tide we reached the wharf at Rockhampton far in the night.

Next morning landed horses and hobbled 2 of them to graze a bit when away bolted the said 2 as hard as they could skelter and away went poor John after them. I had the bridle on my saddle horse but could not get the saddle from the ship, so the horses gave John a breakfast he had not bargained for.

He returned in about an hour without them. We then went out together and got them. We put all 3 in hobbles and lost them at night (Saturday). Next

day on foot everywhere looking for them. We went together some 3 or 4 miles from the town into the country then parted.

I took the top of a range and ran along it for some distance. As I was descending a gap in the ridge I espied some distance below me a lot of blackfellows passing through the gap. There appears to be perpetual war between the whites and blacks in that district, so that as the blacks had not seen me I got back behind an old ironbark tree, as nimbly as you may suppose either of you wants to do under the circumstances for I had no weapon with me, not even my Bowie knife "here's a pretty go thought I" as I gave duck Number 2 "and here's off said I" gave back duck Number 3 "better sure than sorry said I" as I went down the hill like smoke. How stupid of me to forget my revolver but the blacks had not seen me and before returning to town I heard of the horses which were brought to us. And now boys the blackfellows were black policemen out on a ramble without their clothes! But I never went out alone without a revolver or gun after that, you may be sure.

Well, boys, now we've touched upon blacks I will tell you of a battle which took place between about 200 of the Torres Straits natives and 8 white gentlemen explorers a short time since on the Burdekin river so named by poor Leichardt somewhere near the coast to the northern end of Keppel Bay.

The 8 left Rockhampton with the idea of thoroughly exploring the fine country along that river (Burdekin). On one occasion shortly after 6 of them camped the night on a creek. They observed a host of natives on a hill which commanded a full view of their own position. At nightfall the native host split into 2 divisions which the whites observed took opposite directions. This induced the noble 8 to look well to their revolvers and keep their powder dry, 2 things of special moment in an enemy's country.

Had I been the leader of the noble 8 I would have quietly gone off after night to another position, but they remained as they were. They took the precaution however to light some substantial fires. Night wore on and 2 of the party getting sleepy turned in for the night.

The remaining 6 taking the enjoyment of their last smoke had cracked their last joke for the night and were about to turn in also when whang! bang! whack! crack! jumbling-tumbling! Helter skelter! Heels overhead! Came their horses down upon their fires in all the confusion of hurry terror and dismay that can be imagined. Up jumped our 6, revolvers at their sides, in two minutes each had his horse saddled and were in the stirrups and as the fires reflected on the varnished bodies of one division of the blacks breaking and bursting through the scrub on their prey (as they supposed the word was given in spurs! charge!). There they go - that gallant 6 - in a second before Echo had given back the first terrific yell of the blacks the horsemen were among them - the horses mad with excitement and the men were plunging upon and riding them down - whilst the rapid pop! pop! pop! pop! pop! of the revolvers rang out merrily the work went on!

In far less time than it takes to write this line the first division was routed overturned pellmell into the scrub and 15 dead bodies in the camp bore witness to that triumph of our noble 6. Then wheel about my hearts!

*There is the other division, another 100 savages at your very camp. Go it my lads. Go good horses into them again! Pop! Pop! Pop! Down go their "houses", they jump over the creek, heels overhead, anyhow what odds? They never knew "devil-devil" before. They have their knowledge from our noble 6. They left 10 dead bodies to mark the spot when in the ruthless Torres Straits savages had been so dreadfully bold. Bravo noble 6!!! Always remember, boys, in an enemy's country to keep rifles clear and powder dry!*⁵⁹

July 20th.

Well, dear boys, some days have elapsed since I wrote the foregoing. The day after writing so far I went to Melbourne on particular business and there I remained the whole week in my room suffering under a heavy attack of influenza. I have it on me still badly and poor Mama has been confined to bed also. She is now sitting well wrapped up at the parlour fire beside me.

To start from Rockhampton Mr. MacDonald and I left with 3 horses for Canoona, about 40 miles from Rockhampton by river, so on land we got out of our way and stopped at a station of Mr. Archer's that night.

This station is manned by German shepherds. Hard bed, that night, a board! Left the following morning accompanied by a German stock rider on horseback.

Was hailed by a gentleman on the road for assistance in the extraction of his friend's horse which had stumbled into an old perpendicular deep stump hole. I cut a large sapling with my tomahawk and using the sapling as a lever prised the horse out. Had they not come upon us they would have lost their horse. One of the gentleman was the son of Mr. Uther, an old settler in Sydney.

In crossing the Fitzroy or rather in trying to do it the German who couldn't swim against my advice forced his horse into a deep place and had a narrow escape. I shouted lustily "let go the bridle and seize the mane" After a time he did so and got out all right.

The fun of the thing was he went in smoking a huge pipe and went on smoking the whole time he was in. We afterwards went on my advice to the crossing place at Yamba and we were ferried over by the boatman there dragging our horses after us from Yamba to Canoona seven miles. (Vicary's station, Vicary an old Geelong man), in a few days 4 of us started off with 3 weeks rations and 3 horses each. I had 2 from Sydney and I bought one for £25 at Canoona - each of us had a saddle horse - a horse with a pack saddle - and a spare horse. We had 12 horses in all, and each pack horse carried 100 lbs. We all had revolvers whilst I in addition had my gun slung loosely on my shoulder - a powder flask and shot belt and further we each carried a Bowie knife. Mine was a ripper, I can tell you. 24 miles from Canoona we passed the Princhester station and 13 miles from that we reached the Marlborough station belonging to Messrs. Henning and Co. We remained there a day (Sunday) and started Monday morning - some of our pack horses started off bucking and galloping in a very ridiculous way, but we made 25 miles that day.

At night the horses were uneasy, I went to look for some of the horses and fell in with some very large kangaroos about half a mile from the camp. I

got 2 of the horses, one of my mates fell in with the others. To our surprise they had been joined during the night by the prettiest chestnut blood mare I ever saw. I suppose she must have been lost months before by some other explorers.

She it was, the Turk, that made the noise that disturbed us so after she had kicked and danced and capered herself wild she went in amongst the horses that we had just fastened and the stupid thing went off into a doze. We caught her so and used her all the time we were out. We were fortunate in getting her as a horse belonging to one of our party had fallen dead and was left at Marlborough station.

I forgot to mention that a young dog followed us from the station. Well Tuesday morning we passed through a gap in the great range and going over some rough country camped on a lagoon. Next morning crossed the Isaacs river without any misexperience.

Then we entered what is termed brigalow country which is simply tall scrub and in the sort of country we travelled some days at about 25 miles a day till we reached Cullinlaringo and there I saw the prettiest country I have ever seen in my life. On our way although we saw native tracks we only saw one or two natives and they cut away like kangaroo. I must tell you that the brigalow country consists of scrub and open land alternately. In the scrub are lots of wallaby and on the open lots of large kangaroos.

We saw some emu also and some ducks - pigeons called 'squatters' - small plump tender birds and great numbers of doves not larger than ground parrots. On the way up my 3 mates slept in a calico tent but they would not have a fire at night fearful that the blacks might surprise them. I camped away from them under a sort of skillion tent made of half a blanket. The nights were so very cold that you could not possibly do without a fire, but I went some distance from my mates as I did not wish to give any just cause of offence. They assured me that I should be killed, but I thought it would be better to die from the blow of a waddy than be shivered to death by the cold, consequently I persisted night after night in lying apart from them and having my fire.

One night the dog gave a growl and I heard a footstep behind my mia mia, but jumping up revolver in hand saw nothing. The grass was very high and thick and blackfellows can put themselves away very cleverly. When my friends at the end of a week observed with what impunity I made my fire they made one at their tent also.

Before our journey had ended they were not satisfied with one. At about midnight the cold was so severe - I had only a skin to lie upon - but towards the latter part of the journey I supplemented the skin by adding every night some dry grass, but notwithstanding all my care I suffered much for 3 weeks from severe pain in the right shoulder and neck. I am now free from that pain.

Mr. MacDonald was so excited by the tales he had heard of the blacks that one night having a dream that 2 raw head and bloody bones blackfellows were stripping him of his blankets he started to the door of the tent with his revolver cocked and presented. His mate who was awake quietly said "don't shoot anybody, John", "Confound it!" said John and went back to his bed. On our way up I caught about a dozen small perch at a

waterhole with a pin hook, but they were so bitter I could not eat them.

Well, as I before told you, we got to the station - mind you, there are or were not then any settlers or stock between that and the Marlborough station about 165 miles of wild country, nearly all comparatively level. After passing the Isaac we followed up the Mackenzie till we got to the Nogoia by which one side of my run is bounded so that we never lacked water whilst our horses had excellent pasture once we got to the station.

Peter MacDonald instructed his brother and the other gentlemen to follow the right bank of a creek leading from the Nagoia for about 8 miles and camp with all the spare horses while he and I went over the Nagoia to see some country. Having seen all that we desired at that time we re-crossed the river and struck the creek about 5 miles but the deuce of a track of our friends could we see. The rascals had crossed to the left bank to get a view of the country from a hill near to which we afterwards called "Mount Deception". The short and the long of it was that we were out all night without food or tea or blankets. I got a fire from my pistol. Had it not been for that we should have passed a miserable night indeed. As it was with our fire we were far from comfortable. In the morning we found the rascals, had breakfast and set off again. Our two friends were ordered to go 7 miles in a given direction towards Mount Wando, then camp on a creek they would come to the first one.

Well, I was for taking a blanket and grub but Peter M warned me against that assuring me that there could not be any mistake this time so I assented and after going over a good deal of Cullinlaringo night came - but no camp! Amongst savages nothing to eat or drink or cover one that night on high land too without a blanket. I grumbled a bit I can tell you at my own folly in allowing Peter to persuade me against it. My own better reason in the morning before starting. Well that was a better night, made fires and got through it the best way we could, of course our friends had no stores at the first creek they met according to Peter's instructions but he was not aware of the fact that that creek at the time was an intervening creek and so for a second time we were diddled "quite". Well, finding our friends camp we had breakfast and the whole of us started off again and going to the right camped on the Nagoia.

On going over some very stony ground my Bowie knife slipped from my belt and I lost it. Next morning Peter and I started off again leaving our friends at camp - on our journey I spied a native dog going it up a hill for bare life. I jumped off my horse and when he was full away and going quail fashion I blazed at him from my gun with a wire cartridge containing shot. The charge struck the dingo on the off hip and tumbled him over but he continued to slink into the scrub and got away. Just before this we were sitting quietly on the left bank of a creek when we spied an emu on the opposite bank coming rapidly towards us looking much better.

We pulled up and I quickly put my finger to the trigger. The emu coming right on and staring all around him, but he never noticed us although we were not further than a few yards from him. He had heard the noise of the horses and the poor fellow looked everywhere to see us, I suppose for trees, as he could never have seen a horse before.

Well, I thought of letting fly at him but Peter MacDonald spoke a word for him and I nothing loath allowed the poor fellow to trot off as he came. We did not get back to our camp until long after dark but I forgot to tell you that on our way up the country Peter MacDonald and one of the others rode off into the country after we came to camp on one occasion. On our way back to our camp after dark they came upon a lot of blacks who were squatted around their fires in the scrub.

They bolted at once at the noise of the horses but one man. He seized his waddy and stood menacing something. He did not know what poor fellow by his fire but the instant he could distinguish the horsemen he gave such a yell and off he went quicker than ever he went before. He had evidently never seen man and horse before then and they must have seemed large and devil devil like coming down upon his fire. By the by a short time ago comes a group of natives who stole a double-barrelled gun. They killed it as they supposed by knocking off the stock. Unfortunately for them both barrels were loaded with ball. Some police reported that one of them was using the barrel as a poker in the fire when off went both barrels and down tumbled the blackfellows - you may be sure those that were not wounded went off at a merry rate as they did not exactly know how many that rogue of a gun might take it into its head to shoot. The police reported that 2 of them were killed by the discharge. That gun must have been one rogue for the understanding of the poor darkies!

Well having seen all I wished to of Cullinlaringo, John MacDonald and I with all the packs and spare horses started off on the instance for Mount Deception across some miles of Cullinlaringo we were then. Had we followed our written instructions to have followed the Stony Creek to the Nagoa and there where our two friends Peter MacDonald and Riddell were to join us. They had crossed the Nagoa from our camp in the morning and gone to look at country which Peter wished to show to Riddell.

We got to Mount Deception but instead of following down the creek crossed it to the top of Mount Deception to have an extensive view of the country, then following the fall of the ground on the other side of the Mount where the river was, we were taken some miles below our proper camping ground and had to trudge back river to it. However we were at camp about an hour before sundown and pitched tents for the night.

Now when our two friends came that afternoon to the junction of Stony Creek with the Nagoa they did not of course find our tracks, and supposed we had not got so far. They pushed up Stony Creek and fell in with our tracks leading to Mount Deception. Dark came on and they were out all night without blankets or grub. That was an unintentional tit for tat on my part. They made our camp next day about 8 o'clock.

In running our tracks they observed the tracks of blackfellows following our tracks right up to within 50 yards of our camp! We had not seen or heard one but they must have found our camp all right. The next day we started for home but I forgot to tell you that Peter and Riddell the day they left us came on 3 blackwomen carrying water in coolamon. The poor women shouted and ran. Presently our friends who had not put their horses out of a walk and followed in the tracks of the women observed some men coming down with their waddies and making signs for them to be off, but

our friends still persisted in approaching them. They threw down their waddies and remained until they got up to them. They had not seen horsemen before and imagined man and horse were one animal. They betrayed no fear or distrust but felt the bits of the horses and ran their fingers right up the reins to the riders' hands before they could assure themselves that man and horses were distinct animals. One of the blackfellows was a fine tall powerful fellow, one of the women a light copper colour.

Well, boys, as I told you before we started for home and that day picked up 10 emu eggs in a brigalow scrub. We could not use them for want of salt. They were not hard at all. I had 2 for my share, and I have one here safe for you. Remember I took great care and carried the two hundreds of miles for you, but one was unfortunately broke.

But before I go further I must tell you another story or two. Peter MacDonald who is a tall powerful man and a native of Cape Town went to Port Curtis at the great gold rush which proved a failure, but Peter liking the country purchased the country or the right to the lease of it from another person who goes by the name of Hoppy MacDonald. Hoppy and a third person started off with 5 weeks rations to have a look at the country, the lease of which he had purchased.

Now Hoppy knew as much about the country as he did about the moon. He could never have known the country in question, but in the course of time following the MacKenzie River they came to the Nagoa and they hit upon the prettiest country in the world - Cullunglaringo - which means "sought and found". By this time they had only 3 or 4 days rations left. They had scarcely looked at the run when it came on to rain. It rained all night. Peter advised crossing the Nagoa the following morning before it rose.

He got the horses at daylight but his friends were too comfortable and would not show out in the rain. Well the day following after they had derided what they chose to term his "fear" and even noted it in their note books. When they came to the river it was bank full and only 2 days spare rations left. The flood was tremendous and his mates looked mighty funky but it was too late then. All they could do was to follow the river down. The rain continued and the country became softer and softer. They were met by legions of kangaroos and emus coming up from the low country. Their rations were exhausted and the rain still fell. What must have been their feelings - their food done and they 200 miles away from succour, and worse, Peter camped the party one night, fortunately on a little rising ground about an acre, and free from scrub. The next morning the floods hemmed them completely in. They mounted to push on but the instant they passed from the rising ground down went their horses to the bellies. Here boys they were stuck for 4 dreary days and nights. They subsisted on tadpoles, lizards and any little animals of that kind they could get. Peter sometimes shot a crow with his revolver pistol. Everything he took he shared with his starving mates who for the most part remained in their blankets groaning and grunting. Peter had the heads of what birds he shot as a perquisite but they were few indeed. He says the crows have much brain and are good.

In the meantime the horses lost all their flesh - they could get no food - the hair fell from their hides and nothing but black skin with the bones showing their way was left to them.

They looked so shocking that the starving men could not kill them for food. During the last few days no words had been spoken - death - and such a death appears inevitable. But God be praised. Peter MacDonald when the waters began to recede heard a pigeon coo in the brush one morning. He stole into the margin of the scrub revolver in hand to secure the bird. Suddenly he heard rustling to the left. He turned and behold 2 emus rushed within a few feet of him. Pop went the revolver and the emu at which he had shot staggered but gathering strength started after his mate. Peter went after them and about half a mile came up to him.

He rushed upon him and an amazing conflict in which poor Peter's shins were badly treated - he conquered his bird - and to make sure of him cut his head off! Then thanking God for His deliverance he picked him up and footed slowly back to camp, sucking and gnawing the bleeding neck. It was so sweet! Poor Peter when the rains commenced weighed 15 stone, he now was but 11. The emu was cut into pieces and dried in the sun, the offal supported them for some time, but the oil was their salvation. It was balm of Gilead to their weakened stomachs.

Peter is a philosopher. Hoppy MacDonald asserted that providence was with them - the emu coming as he did was clear proof - and therefore they should eat him right away and have hearty feeds while he lasted. Peter, whilst he admitted a Providence, said quietly that once Providence favoured them with another emu he would have no objection for Happy to go at the first with a will - but not till then.

On their way back the horses were only equal to 7 miles a day. Peter leading the party came suddenly on some blacks' fires. He rushed to them for food. The blacks bolted and Peter seeing some nuts on the ground seized them and selfishly began to devour them. Poor Peter. They were poisonous and nearly killed him on the spot. This nut was soaked in water weeks before using and thus extract a poisonous sap or juice from them. Peter poor fellow did not know that - he knows it now.

As he and his friends drew near the white settlement they met a well-equipped party to look out for them. They were out 13 weeks with 5 weeks rations. On their way back Peter as usual being in advance of his mates and carrying his rifle looking for a crow or any mortal thing having life.

He had gone down a steep bank and having reached the opposite bank he sat down to rest his shaky limbs. Suddenly he observed an old blackfellow standing on the bank he had just come down on his tracks. The darkee was so intent on tracking he never once raised his head till he had approached within a few yards of Peter. The latter cocked his rifle, the noise caused the blackfellow to raise his head and you may fancy his astonishment. He looked, Peter smiled, darkie made a horrid noise, chuck chuck chuck chuck, but he backed away and although he never went out of a walk he never stopped until he got to the river hard by and had swum to the opposite bank. There he quietly sat down and took another look at Peter, the devil they saw can't cross a running stream so the darkee thought he was right

when he had placed the river between him and his satanic majesty Peter MacDonald.

Well boys our dog knocked up on the road down and we took turn about carrying him before us till we got within 40 miles of the station. Then giving all the food we could we were compelled to leave him. Having got back to Canoona I bought Cullinlaringo from Peter for £2100.0.0. Mr. Vicary and family I met a day or two after at Rockhampton with many others from that side - Jack McKerras being one - I left my 3 horses at Canoona and left in the "Eagle" steamer on Saturday evening. Stuck on a sand spit in the Fitzroy all Sunday, on Monday waiting for the tide 4 of us went down the river a short distance and shot an alligator who was basking in the sun on the right bank (going down). I wished to pull in and secure him but the Captain who was in the boat and pulled one of the oars kept saying "mind his tail, mind his tail", and in spite of all I could say would not pull in, so after 10 minutes Master Alligator managed to shuffle down the bank into the water and then sank really down in deep water so we lost him. He was about 15 feet long, some said 18 feet. We were caught in a heavy gale on the way to Sydney and were 11 days on the passage. We saw a great number of coasters that had been blown off in the gale, some of them were badly off for provisions. We caught a salmon when off the heads. I escaped influenza there, but have been on my beam ends for the past three weeks.

Your Mama and I keep each other company, I think we shall recover rapidly.

I have some business to do here yet and then shall be off for Moreton Bay (Darling Downs) to secure stock as from the summer rains in that quarter I shall not be able to make a final start with it till the autumn. I do not expect to reach Cullinlaringo till August next or at least July. Tom will go with us. I think I shall be from Melbourne 12 long months until I see it again. Now my dear boys, your father takes all this trouble for you. He trusts therefore that you will exert yourselves to please him, let him not hear any more discontent - attend to your masters, and be obedient to them. Cedric, be good. Your temper stands in your way. You must govern that or there will be no chance for you.

Horace, my piccaninny, hold up your head and don't be idle. Remember your friends think highly of you, don't disappoint them. Egbert, my little one, I have heard just better accounts of you. Bravo my little fellow, go ahead! I shall write your Aunt to allow you £1 apiece for Christmas extra in your own hands. Now, cheer up my boys, your father is at work for you - work for yourselves - work to give your father pleasure - God bless you - afterwards send this letter to your Aunt Alexander.

H. S. Wills

PS: Make sure you send this letter to your Aunt - you will allow Uncle Thomas to read it.⁶⁰

#8600712 T H S W Collection

Having purchased the lease from Peter McDonald Horatio began his plans to move up there and he told the boys of this in his letter of 23 August. At the same time

he decided to send Tom, who had failed to pursue his career in the law, to a friend of his to take lessons in farming, particularly shearing, so that he would be useful in the new venture.

August 23 1860
Bellevue

My dear boys,

After the very long letter with which I furnished you by last mail you will not expect anything lengthy from me this time. I hope you have, according to my instructions, sent that long letter to your Aunt Alexander for her perusal and that of our dear friends in England.

I am sorry to learn that Master Egbert so far forgot himself as to steal cherries. He must keep his hands from picking and stealing or he will not be respected and he will never grow fat. Horace dear Horace how sorry we all are to hear that he is so indolent. I hope he will correct that habit or he will not be his Pa's man. Now I should be glad to learn what advance you have respectively made in German and French and you must inform me in your next what advance you have made in chemistry. Cedric remember that is part of your profession - you must remain in Europe until you are master of chemistry, the cultivation of the vine, and the manufacture of wine.

Go at it old man, with German and French and the other (chemistry) you will make your father's heart glad.

I am glad to observe that you no longer dispute with your master, Mr. Cedric. Be obedient to him or you will not please me. You must put up with trifling inconveniences. Those are incidents you will meet with everywhere. So be a man and set your brothers a good example. Now in your next tell me all about your studies - what you know and what you can do: and you Horace and you too Egbert, my cherry picker. Egbert I am pleased with you generally. By and by perhaps you will be sent to live on some great German sheep establishment to learn to class wool and the proper way to breed the best kind of sheep. Cheer up my little man, but don't go wool gathering in your next letter. Leave that part of the business for the wool shed.

I shall start next week for Moreton Bay by steamer to Sydney thence by another to Moreton Bay. I go to purchase 6000 sheep, 5000 ewes and 1000 3-year old wethers for the station. Having done so I shall return, get our traps and people and start from Darling Downs (I suppose) about the middle of January next for Cullinlaringo. Baker talks of going with us and his 3 sons also I think of taking horse wagons instead of bullock teams because you know horses are easily kept near camp, will go longer journeys and if mares will give us foals. Before I start I will probably send you an inventory of all the goods and chattels we take with us.

Tom works at a blacksmith's every day on the Queenscliff Road near the White Horse Hotel because it will be useful for him to know how to shoe a horse and to do many other things on a station. The last week of September he will go to Mr. Alec Anderson's⁶¹ station "Emu Creek" to learn to shear. He will remain there during the season. His hands are

covered with blisters but they will soon harden no doubt, they will be hard enough by shearing time I dare say.

Tell Mr. Thomas that from 7 acres of mangolds last year we obtained 840 tons or 120 tons per acre. I attribute our success to the large quantity of black sea sand we put upon the land. This year we are preparing Mackie's paddock for mangolds, it has already 66 loads of the same sort of sand per acre and will be finished off, after sub-soiling with 300 lbs. of colonial and 2 cwt. of Peruvian guano per acre!

We have a mangold drill by the use of which one man can do as much work as eight under the old system.

The large paddock this end of Mackie's we have sewed with lucerne in drills so that we shall have plenty of green stuff. I shall put in 27 acres more next year, lucerne will last about 8 years. Today I plough between the trees in the orchard with a light pony plough and my old black horse. I am about to build Emily a brick dairy where the old store stands. Today the bricks from the waterhole in the paddock were moved up for the purpose. Now boys tell me all that I wish to know and you may depend that your father often thinks of you. Work for Pa boys, work for poor old Pa. Remember me to Mr. and Mrs. Thomas.

Bye bye,

H. S. Wills

PS

Now boys I wish Madame Volkmuth 10 Queens Road Queens Terrace London to read the last long letter I sent you won't you write and tell her and send it too? I know you will.

Appended to this letter on the same date Tom wrote:

My dear brothers,

This is a regular trinity letter so you will have learned that I have left the law and am about to take to the bush.

I believe we shall start from Darling Downs early in January next and Pa calculates that we shall be on the road upwards of 5 months.

I am going to start at the latter end of next month for Mr. Alec Anderson's station near Pa's old station to take a lesson in shearing. I have but little doubt but that you would all like to be out here now.

I will send you a number of stamps by this mail but I should fancy that you have enough by this time to cover the whole continent considering the number that has been sent to you.

Your affectionate brother

T. W. Wills

(40 or 50 stamps)

#8600823 T H S W Collection

In September of that year Horatio went again to Queensland, this time to look for suitable stock for his venture at Cullinlaringo, and to reconnoitre a route from Brisbane to Rockhampton. Of this he advised the boys in his letter of 23rd October:

October 23 1860

Belle Vue

My dear boys,

I have not much to inform you of this time with regard to my late proceedings, but I wish to keep you well posted up in all matters affecting your family, and consequently have to apprise you of my return from the Darling Downs country which is part of Queensland and has a Government of its own. It formerly was a part of New South Wales and of course under the government of that country and now happily is free to do what it likes with its own.

I went from our place to Sydney by steamer in about three days arriving there at 8 am and started for Moreton Bay in the afternoon in another steamer for Moreton Bay arriving there four days after departure from Sydney, so all in all I was but 7 days from home. I arrived in Brisbane, the Capital. Brisbane is on the Brisbane River about 40 miles from the sea. The town is not far advanced although the country has been occupied many years. The Governor of Queensland, Sir George Bowen lives there. Queensland has its Lower and Upper Houses of Legislature. While I was there the houses passed a land bill almost identical in principle with the resolutions I tried to carry years ago in our Council here.

Well, I remained in Brisbane about a week, going in the meantime to Ipswich, another small town at the head of the navigation of the Brisbane I may say - but properly on the Bremner a creek tributary to that river. On leaving Brisbane with a party of four gentlemen from Geelong I went to Ipswich again by steamer - a distance of 50 miles, by land 25 miles. Coal is being obtained on both sides of the River right up to Ipswich.

One of the pits is worked by a gentleman who is the original of Haliburton's "Sam Slick" the Yankee Clockmaker. In turn the coal is retailed at the pits, close to the river's edge at 12 or 15/- per cwt.

There are many old boiling places also on the Brisbane from the City of Brisbane upwards to Ipswich. The scenery is tropical in its character and in many places strikingly pretty. On the left as we steamed up to the jetty of Ipswich I observed one fine country residence, and on enquiry found it was the residence and abode of an old school fellow of mine, Mr John Panton, whom I had not seen for 35 years. You may be sure I called on my old school fellow.⁶² On leaving Ipswich after my return from the Downs, Mr Panton kindly offered me the use of an extensive paddock for my horse till my return from Victoria, of which kindness I gladly availed myself.

I left Ipswich with three of the Geelong gentlemen the fourth not being in health sufficiently robust to meet the incidents of "camping out". About 70 miles from Ipswich having camped out two nights on the route we ascended the great range on a road winding up the mountain. Now the top of the mountain is 1800 feet above the sea level so that when we got there we had a splendid view of the low country extending eastwards. On the top of the mountain we were pulled up by a turnpike and paying twopence each we passed through. As we ascended the mountain, I may say we passed several flocks of sheep on their way down country to be shorn at the shed of their

owner, a Mr Laidley, a relation by marriage of our own cousins, the Johnstons of Georges Hall near Liverpool.

Well on arriving at the top of the mountain we found no fall to speak of the other way, as one on such occasions naturally expects, we were now in fact on a high tableland 1800 feet above the level of the sea with a climate different altogether from the country we had just left with a climate on shortness much like that of Victoria. At four miles from the toll gate we passed through the township of Toowoomba and as we passed through supplied ourselves with a few necessaries from a general store. Ten or twelve miles further on we entered on the Downs - a magnificent country and saw some four miles ahead of us the station "Gowrie" where within two miles of the station we turned off the road to a creek about half a mile on our left, the country around for miles being clear and beautiful. At the creek we camped, hobbled our horse and cooked our steaks on the coals of our fire.

Now before we go further, I may as well tell you once for all that all persons I have met camping out none appeared to have forgotten the use of their teeth. The ashes picked up by the steak from the coals must be the cause of this eh? Whatever the cause however the fact is not the less interesting. Generally as soon as the party comes to a halt on go the hobbles, off go the saddles and bridles, flair goes a lucifer, up goes the fire, on goes the quarts, on goes the patter and before one can say "Jack Robinson" the beef from the coals red hot and covered with ashes (sometimes to its own evident astonishment) goes helter skelter - holus bolus - down the throats of the slaving savages around the fire.

Well, you know we boys from Victoria were not going to be beaten even at that sort of work and if you had seen the scooping and cramming you wont have said "Bravo our side! - Go it Victoria!"

Having satisfied our delicate appetites and saved the character of Victoria's we proceeded on our journey leaving Gowrie Station behind us 12 or 14 miles before we drew up at a waterhole for the night. Next day "Gojellabreklus" and off to Rosalie Plains the station of Messrs Kent and Weinholt. There we found a nice lady, nice children, nice cottage and garden, nice arrangements and a hearty hospitality. There I made a tent out of Calico for my 3 friends who had started out green from Victoria. There we remained altogether two days. There my friends parted from me for the overland route to Rockhampton about 360 miles further. There I purchased 6000 sheep, 5000 of which were young maiden ewes, 1000 were to be delivered next March, at 16/- per head for the ewes 12/- for the wethers.

Bidding goodbye on the third afternoon to our hospitable entertainers, I went back to Gowrie. There the manager declared himself a Rugby schoolfellow of Tom's. Stopping the night there I proceeded next morning on my return to the township of Drayton, four miles to the sight of Toowoomba. There wishing to obtain boots I found I could not cross the road from the inn to the store opposite without being swallowed up. Cautious like in the intervening mud left the inn with my old boots, proceeded to an excellent station to breakfast, found an amicable family, was well entertained.

I then proceeded on to Clifton Station belonging to one of the Tooth family of Sydney and under the management of a Mr Cobham, an old Victorian colonist, although a young man. This gentleman's Mother-in-law is a Mrs Cobham (the sister of Dr McRae) with whom Mrs Wills and Mrs Conran⁶³ lived a short time some years ago in Sydney. Mrs Wills will perhaps be glad to hear that Mrs Cobham enjoys excellent health and that she was most particular in her enquiries as to her health and that of our talented relative Kitty Conran.

From Clifton in the afternoon of the next day I went to Denchars Station, the country all through being still magnificent. At Denchars I was, as usual, hospitably entertained. Mr Denchar has lately returned from a visit to Europe, he brought with him a few of the most magnificent rams I ever saw by long odds, he got them from a Baron Somebody in Germany and paid 50 pounds per piece for them - I wish I had 4 or 5 such rams as those. Next day I went 15 or 16 miles to a station of another Mr Weinholt, the brother of the Weinholt the partner of Mr Kent.

At the station I saw the best draught horse in the colonies, one of the best in the world, a great English prize horse "The Iron Duke" with the bone of an Arab he has the action of a Blood Horse. Next morning got to the Dividing Range again along a beastly road leading to Cunningham's Gap, the descent of which was about the most frightful affair in the shape of a road that I have ever seen. For the life of me I could not imagine how it was that loaded teams ever ascended the Gap under such circumstances, but next day I observed 24 bullocks on one dray and thus it is that carriers are able to ascend the mountain. Sometimes I am told it is necessary to attach 40 to 60 bullocks to one dray! From the summit of the mountain's gap to the level of the country below 3 miles are reckoned. Well, the carriers wait there until a sufficient number of them are assembled, each having 10 bullocks to his particular team. Suppose 6 drays meet.

First day three got half way up the mountain, the other three the day following. On the third day they reach the summit averaging you will observe one mile a day. The road is very bad indeed on the Darling Downs side of the range near the head of this gap but then it is down hill and the teams get over that somehow.

Our party, when we start for Rockhampton, will go by the Toowoomba route so that we shan't have much to surmount as the road is pretty good there. We shall top the mountain I dare say in one day. The flora of the Great Range is wild and magnificent as you descend the mountain road on either side you observe monsters of the forest, pines and natives, towering to the clouds. Wild monsters of vines descending from their summits and sending their roots deep into the soil as they descend winding and lacing, winding and lacing till the tree is completely enveloped and eventually strangled in the embrace of these vegetable constrictors. I have seen many great trees with a complete network without a single break of enveloping vine a most curious sight no break at all but just networks from top to bottom burrowing into the bark of the unfortunate host holder till death results entirely surrounding and encasing it. Ticks abound in the scrub of the mountain. The overseer of the road party there had, just as I passed, extruded such a one from his wrist, the consequence was swelling and

inflammation. He had Rowes embrocation at hand which at my suggestion he applied and soon got alright again.

Next day an inn on the road the day after Ipswich, on the following morning I purchased 4,000 ewes more, 3,000 young and 1,000 of ages but none broken mouthed so that I have purchased 9,000 ewes and 1,000 wethers. The last 4,000 are on our route to Rockhampton. These are breeders enough in all conscience, eh boys? First year 6 or 7 or 8,000 lambs! Phew! Well to finish my journey I left my horse at Mr. Panton's and went to Brisbane by steamer.

Had to wait there one day only for Sydney steamer before I was once more on the water and then hurrah for home! Brave boys! Had to wait 3 days in Sydney for a Victoria steamer, gave an order for 4 strong bullock drays, bought tarpaulins and 11 tents, visited the Johnsons at Georges Hall, saw the Pockleys⁶⁴, and then off again, brave boys! Got home weary sick of rambling and am now gardening, farming, taking it easy in short for a month or two. The latter end of this week I shall be off up country on the look out for 100 young rams which we will take with us by steamer to Moreton Bay.

I can't close these notes without telling you of a funny thing that occurred to one of the Geelong friends I have referred to before in Brisbane.

With another of the lot he strolled into the public gardens on the bank of the river. In the centre of the gardens he observed, to use his own language at the time, a quiet cool retreat. This was apparently a circular piece of clear ground having a vase or something on a mound in its centre and surrounded by the dense foliage of those clumps of bamboo a pathway here and there through the bamboo affords to the spectator a sight of the enclosed circular space with its central mound and vase clearing the bamboo our friends perceived what appeared to them a cool shady walk nicely covered with a reddish gravel surrounding the vase well of course they wished to inspect the vase more closely one then observing "how delightfully cool" stepped onto the walk.

Walk, eh? Perdition! Into a deep reservoir of water the surface of which covered with a reddish marine plant had all the appearance of a nice cool place as my poor friend really observed as he, poor devil, stepped into it. For a second or two, going in with such a plop, he floundered about under water and then emerged with a roar his head and shoulders covered with streaming weeds to the intense amusement of some ladies who were promenading around the clumps of bamboo. Now my friend is a "nice young man". To drop into such a predicament and to be laughed at so unmercifully by young ladies was more than he could bear. He fairly bolted through the gardens and never cried halt till he found himself at home.

"Tom can shoe a horse!" well by letter received from Mr. Alec Anderson a few days ago we were again surprised to learn that the renowned captain [Tom Wills] had shorn 30 sheep on the very first occasion he had ever taken a shear in hand. This I consider speaks highly for Tom's pluck and heart. 30 sheep the first day - bravo Tom! I shall see him in the shed next week.

Now my boys, listen to your father! Cedric attention! Go into your German and French with a will but remember, now remember I say, your chemistry before everything else. Night and day go at that when you can. Tell Mr. Thomas it is my earnest wish that you devote your days and nights to that. I am very sorry to hear that you make such small progress in your German so old Cedric go ahead my boy you will be wanted out here once a scholar and gentleman. Horace my boy Horace won't you work for your Papa? Will you be idle when he works so hard for you? Horace my boy Horace you can make your father's heart glad if you like. Won't you, my child, my boy Horace? Egbert you stealer of grapes and cherries - Egbert you cherry picker I hear a good account of you bravo my own dear boy I looked at your likeness yesterday you and Horace together I kissed you in thought my children and tears fell from your father's eyes on that picture. Cedric send me yours. God bless you my dear boys God help you to do good to love and fear him and to make your father and mother proud of their children

Yours

H. S. Wills

#8601023 T H S W Collection

From now Wills was making preparations for his great move. He was to go to Cullinlaringo, settle it and build a suitable house following which his wife and daughters would join him. His Bellevue days were finished when in early January 1861 he left Point Henry to go to Sydney and then to Moreton Bay, spending some time with his cousins the Antills and leaving Emily there for a holiday.

His last letter written at Bellevue on 8th January 1861 gives the boys the final news before he left home.

January 8th, 1861

Belle Vue

My dear Boys,

We are making preparations to leave this for Sydney and Moreton Bay on Monday next. Therefore, my dear children, I give you what may be my last words to you for a long time - perhaps for ever. It will please you all I am sure to learn that I repose confidence in your good sense and in your desire to get on in the world.

And now I am going I must say that I should have been much pleased were Cedric's education finished, to have him with me. I am always thinking of you, my dear boys - always speaking of you.

Cedric I hope will bridle his temper, be obedient to his teachers and strive to come out to us an educated man, a good chemist and a first rate vigneron, having also a practical knowledge of wine making. Then he will get on in the world.

We always show our friends your drawings. Some say that the master must have touched them up. Now to set aside all doubt, each of you will send a drawing altogether your own - and that you can say is your own. Don't neglect this.

I trust you will continue to write from the best English works when you have finished those I left with you to copy. I will thus improve more than by any

other means in your English education, which is of the greatest importance. I think it would be better for Horace and Egbert to remain where they are for another 12 months at least. Cedric, if his aunt on enquiry finds it advisable, may go to the school he speaks of but perhaps Bonn is better after all.

At any rate, I am sure you will all exert yourselves and let me be pleased with you all before I die, should it please God.

Tom has now retired from cricket. On my return from Sydney last week I saw him play in Melbourne. Nothing can touch his slows. It was pretty to see how they walked into the wickets. One man on his (Tom's) side, Jack Huddlestone, got 145 runs - thus beating the other eleven off his own bat with 20 runs to spare. But Tom, Mace and Elliott did not give the other eleven a chance to score at all. They just went in - then just went out. I think our men will beat the English eleven. They would surely do so if Tom played. The Sydney people are delighted that Tom is not to play against their eleven this year - but he will be "bowling over the green" in Queensland.

Emily goes with us to Sydney and she will remain there two or three months at Mr. Johnston's and at Jarvis Field (the Antill's).

We take all the guns with us, even the little one. Mr. Macdonald (Peter) tells me that the Blacks he saw on a late excursion beyond our run were a fine lot of fellows and very kind to him and his party. We'll try to keep friends with them.

This has been the wettest season I have ever known - grass everywhere and cattle very cheap. I bought 110 rams in Sydney at £2 per head. We take them in the steamer from Sydney - 4 drays - 2 horses - and all our supplies. The journey will last 5 or 6 months! How would you like that, Eggy my boy - wouldn't your hair curl?

Mr. Roope is going on the look out to Queensland. Mrs. Roope is at Belle Vue. I went up with Mr. Sinclair (of Geelong) to the Antill's and then afterwards by myself to Penrith on the Nepean.

A gentleman boarded in the same place with me in Sydney who was attacked by a tiny shark in one of the baths. The little rascal caught him out in a terrible hurry-scurry to get ashore. When he seized the gentleman by the wrist the latter flung up his hand and threw the little wretch clean out of the water. It is supposed that having got into the bath through a small hole, the shark could not get out again and was "big one" hungry. He frightened the gentleman a little, I can tell you.

Mama and your sisters are in excellent health. They have had lots of cherries - and there is a good show of plums, apricots, pears and peaches in the orchard. I planted potatoes in the orchard years ago. Well we have never been able to get them out since. This year the orchard is full of them - beauties - the best we can get.

We have 2 young native companions - so tame and gentle - Tom caught them when up country at the shearing. By the by, I may tell you that Josephson's father was an old schoolfellow of mine in Sydney.

Did you send my long letter of travels to your Aunt? I hope you sent it also to Madame Volkmuth. Write to her as soon as you can - to Madame - tell her I was so glad to hear from her. So sorry to hear of Monsieur's illness

- that I long to see her and others - and shall write to her fully before long. I have written to your aunt to invite you to London for a week, when you could stay with Madame Volkmuth.

Wednesday 16 Jany.

Received yours by last mail. Have written your aunt to allow you to remain where you are if you like. We are off for Sydney tomorrow. Tom, Baker, - two of his sons and his wife - Pat Mannion⁶⁵ & wife & two children - 3 other bullock drivers - 4 bull keepers - 1 boy - and I think 6 shepherds. Emily goes on with us to Sydney.

Now Farewell dear boys, I am working for you here, work you there.

All send warmest love. Remember me to Mr. and Mrs. Thomas and the Revd. Mr. Anderson and to Madame and Monsieur Volkmuth.

H. S. Wills

The steamer did not sail on Monday as I thought she would.

#8610108 L W C Collection

So ended the Bellevue period of Horatio's life.

CHAPTER SEVEN

HORATIO S. H. WILLS THE GREAT TREK, THE MASSACRE AND ITS AFTERMATH 4 FEBRUARY 1861 TO 6 NOVEMBER 1861

Horatio Wills set out from South Brisbane on the 4th or 5th February 1861 with his party and bullock drays, supplies and riding horses heading toward the Darling Downs where he planned to pick up sheep.

The distance from the present site of Brisbane to Cullinlaringo by the route which Wills chose is about 1050 kilometres, or 630 miles, and was some times along dirt tracks, some times across settled areas, and often through virgin bush.

The route followed was Brisbane to Ipswich, Toowoomba, Dalby, Bundamba and then up to Rockhampton which town was reached after four months. Wills had intended, having rested and picked up stores, to travel out to Emerald via the McKenzie River and across the Dawson Range north of where the town of Blackwater now stands and then to the north end of Cullinlaringo; however bad weather and heavy rains determined that he follow a more southerly route across the Dawson and Comet rivers to Albinia Downs and thence to Separation Creek at the south end of Cullinlaringo.

This epic journey took eight months in total and must have presented enormous difficulties when crossing rivers and fighting their way through dense brigalow scrub.

Life's twists and turns are fateful - one wonders what would have happened had he taken the northerly route.

All that we know, now, of this journey is encapsulated in the following five letters which I will allow to speak for themselves:

*February 8th 1861
Ipswich*

My dear wife,

The teams (all well) passed through this place this morning and would be at camp by 10 o'clock. There is no doing anything with bullocks after that hour but for my own part I do not now suffer from the heat. I have worn the blue coat for the first time today - it is quite cool.

Tom and I camp out under tarpaulin tent both ends open at night with a small cow dung fire to keep off moschitoes [sic] which it does effectively..

We have made stages from South Brisbane of 10, 3 and 5 miles - some bogging on the hills which retarded us. But it is not my contention to go beyond 6 or 7 miles a day. The bullocks (strange to us and to each other) are improving - we have 32 bullocks, 3 horses and as I use one of the latter (a fine fellow) for the cart, I intent to buy a cob for Baker or Tom. The road for some distance ahead is, I am informed, very bad - so that I give myself 21 days to make Kent and Womholts at Rosalie Plains where our first sheep are. The rams are improving fast. Grass very good.

Now if you write quickly, your letter will catch us at Rosalie Plains - or if I should have got further Mr. Kent will send the letter on to the next post town where I shall get it -

*direct therefore to H.S. Wills Esquire,
care of*

Messrs. Kent and Womholts

Rosalie Plains

Darling Downs

Moreton Bay

Queensland

I am anxious about the station - Mr. Turner manager of the Union Bank Brisbane will do what is necessary in money matters. Macdonald (as I have told you before) must write the Chief Commissioner here transferring Cullinlaringo (four blocks) Peringawa (one block) and Coorabelle (one block) to me as early as possible in March or this present month and then Mr. Turner (if you inform him) will see after it

When you secure information of the Commissioner's favourable report you pay £1000 to Macdonald at the rate of six blocks and then 16/100 £166/15/0 per block. Consult Mr. Roope or Mr. Turner

God bless you my dear wife and our little ones and remember me to Miss Castieau - write Mrs. Harrison

God bless you again, I am off to the drays,

Yours

H. S. Wills

#8610208 L W C Collection

February 28 1861

Rosalie Plains

My dear Bess,

I write from Rosalie - we left Brisbane on the 5th and have had to overcome some difficulties since then I assure you. From Brisbane to 30 miles back from this place we were in the low country - and such roads are to be remembered during one's whole existence. The night we ascended the great mountain range we did not arrive at our camp (at the township of Toowoomba) till 10 o'clock at night - we had great work in ascending the 2 miles of that range.

Since then are made good stages and so far as our teams are concerned have been rather jolly.

We were delayed at Brisbane 1 week to dip our rams according to law. On our way up one of our bloodhound pups died from distemper. Curiously a ram died from the effects of the passage well after the dog - Ned Kenny lost a ram which having a pitched battle with one of his brethren got groggy and Mr. Ned lost the run of him, then a bullock dropped dead in the team from excessive heat I suppose, then (worst of all) Johnny Moore's mate - poor Henry Reid - was drowned whilst bathing in Gatton Creek. I had to

send witnesses back twice to the Coroner. Reid was the best man we had. His death gave me much concern.

With regard to the dogs the 2 pups I got from Mr. Gunn have got over the distemper and are first rate and, as for little Bully (Pussy's present), he has also fought through the distemper, is still full of pluck and will I think do well now. We lost the second of the bloodhound pups yesterday from distemper, we have therefore but 3 of them left and 1 of them is in a very delicate state, but I trust will survive -

Tom and I last Sunday (as a work of necessity) penetrated a dense scrub at Gowrie and shot 2 good sized wallabies for them. Before reaching Rosalie we were (all hands) 3 days without meat. On the third day Tom and I rode considerably in advance of the teams with our guns looking for "Sum'at to eat".

Arriving of what we intended for our camp we went off to shoot a pigeon or anything else for batten but the devil of a bird could we see.

Well I was faint from starvation, so was Tom, when up sprang up a paddy melon (a very little kangaroo - not so large as a kangaroo rat). I let fly and shot him dead. In 2 seconds off went his jacket - up went a fire - and the poor little paddy melon in less than 20 minutes was without salt or bread down the throats of the Captain and your humble servant! I have not felt "the thing" after so long an abstinence till tonight.

My last 2 days we have been taking delivery of the sheep - they are all in the yards to be now branded. - Ned Kenny is also up with the teams so that should the weather, which has been very tempestuous all day, change tomorrow we shall "go ahead" once more. We shall have in the first place to go on to Dalby and thence forward. Tom and I still stick to the tarpaulin tent with the 2 ends open night and day.

This town's climate is as cool as a cucumber, rather cold at night though. The scrubs are full of wallaby which is first rate for our dogs.

We have just heard of the victory of the Victorian eleven in Sydney.

Now then my dear wife you know that Macdonald had to write the Chief Commissioner at Brisbane making over the runs applied for under the names respectively of Cullinlaringo (4 blocks), Peringawa (1 block) and Coorabelle (1 block) to me. Then my agent Mr. Turner manager of the Union Bank Brisbane could meet the government demand which must be paid by the end of this month (I think).

As I gave you in several letters full information on this point I hope all will be well. The sheep we have obtained here are generally good - and young without exception. Your old man however has felt the 3 days abstinence from meat. The old rascal must take better care of himself.

I have paid Mr. Kent tonight for the stock. Tom and I have fed like fighting cocks whilst here - lots of good living - beer for Tom and wine for me.

Please to cull what you can from this for the boys at home and for Emily as we have really no time to write further at present because I am always up at 4 and after the bullocks - now we shall have the sheep to attend to as well.

We have never lost the bullocks since we first obtained them - we do look after them, no hobbles, bells and late and early allowance.

Farewell dear wife - farewell Lizzy - and Eugenie - and Minnie - farewell my wife and my babies.

Remember us both to Mrs. Harrison (I wonder if Thomas is with you)

Miss Castieau - Mrs. and Dr. Gunn - Colden - & c & c

God bless you all

Yours

H. S. Wills

#8610228 L W C Collection

March 30, 1861

Bundooma

Burnett District

My Dear Emily,

Here we all are, alive and kicking, this is our second point of departure having yesterday received and branded the 4,000 sheep purchased from Mr. Nelson making our total 10,250. We suppose that Rockhampton will admire us in 7 weeks from this, perhaps a day or two less.

Mrs. Baker was safely delivered of a little girl⁶⁶ some days back at Timbour station, the first out of four alive. I, of course, being physician. Bulley, the two collies and 3 of the Johnsonian pups are alive and thriving - we have only lost on the road 1 bullock, 2 dogs, and one man, the latter poor fellow drowned while bathing in Gatton Creek among the men who came from Mr. Alec Anderson.

This is a splendid season for feed and water and we find this climate more pleasant than Victoria, that is the climate this side of the Great Range.

Please to let Capn. Pockley know our position, write to him also that "my Pa" wishes you to obtain from Holdsworths mountings for 10 bullock yokes, two of them for pole yokes and dispatch by first steamer for Rockhampton also. If no shot has been sent 50 lbs. of quail and 50 lbs. heavy duck shot.

Give my love to all friends at the River which I suppose you will shortly be leaving for home so all about.

I have written your Mama,

God Bless you my dear child

H. S. Wills

#8610330 T S W C Collection

July 18th 1861 Thursday morning as I am informed by Mrs. Baker 23 miles from the Dawson having passed safely through the 16 miles scrub spelling cattle and men this day

My dear wife Elizabeth,

Your letter of the 17th June with Dr. van der Byl's was received by me 5 days ago just as we made our entrance into the great "bullaba" of travellers the 16 miles scrub.

Your letter was a great consolation and received when it was prophetic of good. Thank Dr. van der Byl and my kind friends Mr. and Mrs. Alexander for their kind offices to my sons. I would write to them but have not time. But thank them and inform them that I approved highly of what they have. Thank Mr. Roope warmly, thank him for his kindness assure him of our kindest regard.

Fortunate it is for you dear Betsy to have so prudent and so kind a friend at your elbow in your need. Also thank Mr. Tolmie, remember us to Mr. and Mrs. Bankers of the Australasia, to Mr. and Mrs. Macdonald, Mr. and Mrs. Middleton, Mrs. Harrison & c & c & c - God bless you all

We have had some hard work the last four days during our passage through the scrub. To afford you of an idea of our labour, on the morning of the day before yesterday Tom and I were up and breakfasted two hours before daylight the bullocks were yarded the night before in a hastily built but substantial stock yard.

Tom went off with two shepherds with the first flock - we have 3 - whilst I tailed the bullocks till 9 o'clock and a pretty job I had. We with the teams started about 10 and didn't reach our camp till 10 at night (the moon favouring us) and then only completed our 4 miles locking wheels and 30 bullocks on in places - when within half a mile of the camp where the sheep were we were detained 2 hours in the extrication of one dray from a "fix" ascending a steep bank from the same place the second dray with 18 bullocks on and 3 drivers broke from her moorings (a chain snapping just at the summit) dragging the 4 after bullocks at a pretty good pace as you may suppose but was providentially saved by a tree against which one of the great uprights of the wool press struck fairly.

We saved the whole affair otherwise over the bank would hence gone dray - load - bullocks and all! Thank God we reached our camp in safety tired weak and hungry! That night obliged to keep the bullocks on the chain till daylight when I've unyoked and tailed them again till past 10 o'clock.

When we started and after some difficulties reached our present camp (5 miles) about half an hour before sundown now I am informed we have a fair road before us.

I take care of your son, dear wife, for I am always up very early generally an hour before day, make up the fire boil a pot of tea which we bolt between us go after our horses and then the bullocks after which breakfast and off!

I was obliged to hold on for a moment whilst I put on a great coat and as we have a sharp wind blowing this morning cold enough!

Mrs. Baker and child well, Mrs. Manion lambed⁶⁷ whilst we were detained by rain for 3 days 8 miles this side of Presto (a stout ewe lamb!)

Poor Paddy Manion so attentive to us had a bad cough. We are putting our artillery in order today I have had to leave 4 tons of goods for carriers at Rockhampton for I thought 2 tons enough for each of our drays. I just observed Tom showing Jemmy Baker the way to point a revolver. Tom is getting stout.

We expect to reach the Dawson 4 days after this then 80 miles to the Comet 25 to Albinia Downs where we shall lamb and shear if necessary. We commence lambing in September.

With regard to Cedric I think now he has lost so much time that it would be better after he has been say 12 months with Dr. Pilgrim for him to enter some wool staplers establishment in England or a Negritta ram breeding establishment in Germany for 12 months to acquire a knowledge of wool, its classification & c, then out to the station to assist his brother. Give Egbert the wine and Horace what shall we do with Horace? Consult Mr.

Roope and he will pen you a letter to Mrs. Alexander. Cedric will not be sorry. Cedric must come.

With regard to money matters I find by your letter that I shall have overdrawn to a large amount because you will have the draft for £1600 to meet and you say I am now only in credit £500.

I can hardly understand this. Your only remedy will be the £1000 from the trustees of the Kirk, the sale of Synott's property, the 12 acres at Footscray, sale of Davis' house if you can effect the sale & c, and when necessary we must sell the property near Breakwater. We have several allotments there of course.

I am pretty well in funds here I left £1000 in the bank to pay Macdonalds last instalment and you have received £750 now on the machinery. I can't understand therefore in what way I can be so far behind in money matters. Show Mr. Roope your bank book and he will write me a business letter direct.

#8610718 T S W C Collection

As a result of these financial discussions Horatio effected a power of attorney so that Elizabeth could sell what might be necessary to resolve the cash flow problem:

Know all men by these presents that I Horatio Spencer Howe Wills known as Horatio Spencer Wills and usually signing H. S. Wills late of Belle Vue Point Henry in the colony of Victoria at present travelling with live stock to my station of Cullinlaringo in the colony of Queensland do in addition to the powers already invested in her by a former power of attorney authorise and appoint my good wife Elizabeth Wills of Belle Vue Point Henry in the colony of Victoria my attorney to dispose of by sale or mortgage or otherwise as to her may seem best certain properties in the said Colony of Victoria namely of twelve acres of land more or less bought by me from Charles Synnott of the farm at Fishermans Point Lake Connemara the major portion of which was purchased by me on allotment from the Government of Victoria and the minor part of fifteen acres more or less from Garrard having a cottage thereon and kitchen in all one hundred and forty five acres more or less of the farm adjoining of one hundred and twelve acres more or less late O'Farrells having a cottage and shed thereon of the thirty acres more or less near to the one hundred and twelve acres aforesaid originally purchased from the Government of Victoria by Garrard and all of land on both sides of the Barwon River being in the neighbourhood of the late boiling establishment of Mr. Charles Dennys at the Breakwater Geelong.

*In witness whereof I hereunto attach my usual signature and seal this twentyfirst day of August in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty one (1861) at the station known as H. S. Wills
"Glenns" Minerva Creek Queensland in the presence of
John Glenn*

Edwd J. Booth

Thomas Wentworth Wills

LWC Collection

After eight arduous months the party came to Cullinlaringo.

October 6th 1861

Cullinlaringo

My dear Wife,

Thank heaven! Cullinlaringo at last! The teams and 7600 sheep all here and the 4 teams. Baker and three men about 4 or so miles back with ewes and lambs. Luckily we arrived when we did for the weather is hot! Tomorrow we unload two drays and start them back to Albinia Downs for the two loads left there to my order by carriers.

Tom will go with the drays to see all right and look after the bullocks, our sheep crossed the boundary of the run (the Southern boundary) Separation Creek the 3rd day of October my birthday!⁶⁸ Spelled the day following allowing the sheep to barge about the place in one flock - next day I went exploring with Jeremy Baker and was rather surprised at the size of this magnificent station. On one creek, I think called Spring Creek, alone 25 to thirty thousand sheep in fair seasons could be well kept. I have no doubt that by building a hut on a stony rise about two miles from this could run 6000 sheep on beautiful open country most of the years and so my arrangement is to shear here at the Swallow Nest Creek (Springs), and have all the people till, perhaps, I return here again within hail of the head place.

We have commenced a garden fence - near the Springs on a fine piece of land for melons and pumpkins. Then we are to put up yards for the sheep - put up a hasty shearing place and shear in the grease - because we find the water in "these parts" too hard for sheep washing (perhaps the Nogoa waters may be better as the sheep require the wool off as speedily as possible - we decide on shearing in the grease for with the best water we would be 25 days or 30 in preparing our sheep wash and passing the sheep through - we should have been here two months before we were and then perhaps we might have done something better - Peter Macdonald and Riddle shore their sheep early at Yaamba and lost 1300 ewes in a storm of rain. Today Mr. Patrick, Lieut. of black police and troopers gave us a call - Mr. Patrick bringing some newspapers - in one of which he told me was announced the birth at Belle Vue of "a little girl - all right - the Mother well!"

Oh Bessie, Bessie, what a rogue you must be to keep me in the dark. But I tell you - I thought such a thing probable long before! God help you both! You complained in your last that you had no intelligence from me since we left Rockhampton - many and many a time have I written you since then I assure you - principally on business and I have no doubt that you have those letters before this and that you know what to do.

Upon my word, the weather or rather the sun, is hot! Would to goodness our yards were up - our shed - and Baker and Tom back again!

Ask Mr. Roope to copy the following for the Geelong Advertiser. "A letter of October 8th from Mr. H. S. Wills of Point Henry announces the safe

arrival of his party and stock at 'Cullinlaringo' his station on the Nogoa River about 200 miles west of Rockhampton Queensland.

Four months after leaving Brisbane, Rockhampton was reached as anticipated, Mr. Wills intending to proceed by the Mackenzie but heavy rains stopped all further progress in that direction. Consequently the Dawson could now be decided upon but the heavy rains of July and August - months usually dry in that quarter - so delayed operations that the Station was not reached until the 3rd of October 'My birthday' as Mr. Wills observes.

The journey occupied exactly eight months but notwithstanding rains, roads, rivers and scrub not one of the party suffered from sickness.

The country for a long distance around him Mr. Wills describes as open and magnificent but labour scarce and at high rates - Shepherds thirty shillings per week - Bullock drivers from thirty shillings to two pounds!" (Perhaps Mr. Roope will reshape the paragraph etc.)

I have received your letter about the 220 tons of mangolds and about the pigs - but farming won't pay my wife - discharge all but Mr. Kavanagh⁶⁹ with Mr. Roope's advice - down with expenses at once!

Cedric comes out when he has been 12 months with his new school at Frankfurt - a private mail now comes once a fortnight within a reasonable distance, that is, we shall have to ride for our letters to a new settler about 20 miles back who kindly undertakes to bring ours with his own.

For goodness sake write me once a fortnight at least. I have written so frequently to you of late on business that I shall not trouble you thereon just now. Capt. Pockley informs me that Emily has gone home. I have to write to Capt. Pockley so farewell my dear, dear wife, kiss baby and all the others for

Yours faithfully,

H. S. Wills

Tom sends love and kisses - Trouble Mr. Roope to write to V.D. land to ascertain the price of hurdle stuff - say from five to 700 hurdles - to be carefully packed and shipped to Sydney. I think we might say for 4500 bars, 2100 braces, 14000 heads with the average weight per hundred hurdles of such stuff.

Here we are all downs and no timber for splitting, unfortunately. Should the heads be too heavy we may get them here I dare say.

#8611006 L W C Collection

The Oh Bessie, Bessie comment refers to the birth of their last child Hortense who was born on 16 August. Horatio did not know that she was expected, Elizabeth evidently having decided to shield him from any concern in the matter!

On Sunday 13 October 1861 Horatio sent Tom back to Albinia Downs to bring up the last of the drays together with James Baker, Mahoney and Albery.

At about lunch time on Thursday the 17 October the massacre took place. After all the effort, all the hopes and dreams, Horatio was killed before he had the chance to settle and to bring his wife to what he thought was a promised land.

A number of accounts have been given of this massacre of which the most reliable are to be found firstly in an article for the magazine of the Try Boys Society in

the 1890s by “Wallaroo” who, judging from the date of the article and the intimate knowledge displayed of the events, was probably Horace Wills, and secondly in the letter from Tom Wills to his cousin, H. C. A. Harrison written on 24 October 1861.

When Ned Kenny carried the news of the massacre to Rainworth Station on Friday the 18th the manager, Mr. Gregson, together with a number of men started for the scene and, on arrival, camped until the next morning when they looked around and found the murdered people and at once set about the burial.

Tom Wills returned to the scene on Sunday the 20 October after being away for a week, and on Thursday the 24th wrote the following letter to Colden Harrison:

24th October 1861

My dear Coley,

I have not had time to go into particulars, I can only say that all our party except I have been slaughtered by the blacks on the 17th Inst.

I am in a great fix, no men. If we had used common precaution all would have been well, my poor Father and Baker were most brutally murdered.

I want a good man up here that thoroughly understands sheep, please to let Mr. Roope know it, I have given him particulars but urge him to send me a good overseer.

Do all that can possibly be done as soon as possible in the shape of shepherds, good resolution men that will shoot every black they see. Cullinlaringo is a fine station, the best in the land.

17th Oct. just 9 months from the time we left Melbourne, 19 killed, I can scarce even now believe it. Tell Elliott⁷⁰ that poor George was killed close to the tents and had a small switch in his hands that he used to drive the sheep with, I have his pouch now. All clothes of all sorts gone - Flour sugar and tea not touched, with blankets Zigari shirts and beds all gone.

What a dreadful end after such trouble as we have had, the climate is splendid but without men I can do nothing. So get us help I have nearly all the sheep all right thank God.

If Amsinck wants particulars he can get them from Mr. Roope (read my letter to him and condense same for report, I do not know what to write I am in such a state of bewilderment).

Names of killed - H.S. Wills, D. Baker, Mr. D. Baker Jnr, Mrs. Baker, Elizabeth Baker, Iden Baker (a boy) and an infant, 8 months old, G. Elliott, P. Mannion, Mrs. Mannion and 3 children, E McCormac, C. Weeden, Jas. Scott, Henry Pickering, George Ling and a man called “Tom” engaged at Rockhampton. Alive T.W. Wills, Jas Baker, E Kenny, P. Mahoney, John Moore and Wm. Albery. One dog killed belonging to Baker 2 bullocks broke their necks in yoke having been at work at the time of the attack. Horses all right.

It will be a dreadful blow to my mother but I cannot leave this till I hear from Mr. Roope and get men. I have huts on the station and yards for the sheep. Write and give us all the news. We are stripped to whatever we have on. I shall [not] spare a lot of them when I see the black devils again anywhere. Write to Uncle Thomas about it and let him know our fix.

Unsigned

PS Tell Mr. Roope to bring Ced out as my father said he would have him out in October next anyway. Horace and Eg they can arrange about after.

#8611024 T H S W Collection

It was, of course, a very considerable distance from the scene of the massacre to the nearest telegraph station at Rockhampton, and the following telegrams were sent.

The first is to Mr. Menzies of Menzies Hotel and is addressed there because the unknown sender, Mr. Aldis of Sydney did not know the Victorian address of the Wills family. It asks for a message to be sent to "Friend". A large and prestigious hotel such as Menzies was often, in those days, a clearing house for information; remember that the population was very small then.

CONTENT OF TELEGRAM 1 Dated Sydney November 1st 1861

HORATIO WILLS, MOMAS AND EIGHT OTHERS MURDERED BY BLACKS AT ROCKHAMPTON. SEND WORD TO FRIEND IMMEDIATELY STEAMER LEAVES FOR ROCKHAMPTON NEXT WEEK

W. H. ALDIS

NB: WORD 'MOMAS' MAY BE 'THOMAS'

The next is from Captain R. F. Pockley of Sydney who was a relative of H.S. Wills - married to his niece, Selina, the daughter of his sister Eliza and is addressed to his brother-in-law Mr. Thomas Wills Antill, the son of Eliza. Mr Antill was one of the executors named in H S W's will It contains better information although it is dated a fortnight after the murder which it incorrectly shows as October 20th

CONTENT OF TELEGRAM 2 Dated Sydney November 1st 1861

HORACE WILLS, MRS. BAKER, DAUGHTER AND TWO CHILDREN, MRS. MANION AND THREE CHILDREN AND SCOTT MURDERED ON 20TH INSTANT BY BLACKS. TOM WILLS SAFE, EDWARD ANTILL RETURNED

MR. POCKLEY

Edward Antill (b1832) was Horatio's nephew who had taken up land at the mouth of the Burdekin River. I am not sure what this reference to him is about.

The third is again from Capt. Pockley to Mr Roope and he now urges Mr Roope to come up to help, which in fact he did, he went to Rockhampton and took over the running of the station with Tom. They did not get on at all, as can be seen in the chapter on Cullinlaringo.

CONTENT - TELEGRAM 3 Dated Sydney November 2nd 1861

CAN DO NOTHING UNTIL LETTER FROM TOM EXPECTED WEDNESDAY - YOU SHOULD COME

R. F. POCKLEY

The fourth is from Mr. Roope. It is now one month from the massacre and is to Antill from Roope.

CONTENT OF TELEGRAM 4 Dated Sydney November 16th 1861

**MAIL EXPECTED FROM ROCKHAMPTON TONIGHT FURTHER
NEWS ON MONDAY
WM. ROOPE**

However the mail must have arrived immediately because on the same day, at last, Roope is able to confirm T.W. Wills' survival following a letter from him.

CONTENT OF TELEGRAM 5 Dated Sydney November 16th 1861

**TOM AND TWO MEN LEFT ALIVE FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS
MUST BE IMMEDIATE ANOTHER TELEGRAM MAY FOLLOW
WM. ROOPE**

#8611101 T S W C and L W C Collections

In fact the murder took place around the middle of the day of Thursday 17 October 1861 and the death toll was 10 men, 2 women and 7 children. They were buried in three separate graves, H.S. Wills in one, 3 men about half a mile away, the rest in one large common grave

What follows is the full text of the article printed in the Try Boys magazine in the early 1890s:

THE CULLIN-LA-RINGO MASSACRE

Early in the year 1861, Mr. H.S. Wills, accompanied by his eldest son, Mr. T.W. Wills (the well-known cricketer) and a camp of twenty others, including men, women and children, left the Darling Downs, Queensland, with about 8000 sheep, bullock drays, carts, horses, and the usual turnout for travelling stock, their destination being some new country which Mr. Wills had seen and acquired the year before, and which was situated in the Leichhardt district on the Nogoa River, one of the heads of the Fitzroy River, on which the town of Rockhampton stands. This country had been taken up for the purpose of sheep-farming and was called Cullinlaringo. After a long and tedious journey of many month's duration, the party reached the then furthest-out station, called Rainworth, which had just previously been taken up by Mr. J. Gregson. Here they camped for a few weeks, and then travelled on for anther twenty miles, and crossed over Separation Creek, which was the boundary between Rainworth and Cullinlaringo runs. By a strange coincidence, Mr. Wills crossed the boundary on to his own country on his forth-ninth birthday, 3rd October⁷¹ then pushing forward about three miles, they reached a small but pretty creek running in a westerly direction; here they formed their camp, on a high piece of rocky ground close to the water.

The camp thus formed was on a beautiful spot. On the south, within a mile and a half, a beautiful range rose out of the plain and stretched away to the west. Far as the eye could reach down the valley ran the creek, the banks of which were thickly studded with ti-tree. On the east, the ranges came around it in a horse-shoe like bend, and on the north the high basaltic plains stretched away in the distance as far as the eye could see, with here and there a few stunted bloodwood and ironbark trees.

The grass was in abundance, and to one unaccustomed to the rich growth of Queensland the pastures resembled vast fields of waving corn. As soon as the camp was settled the party at once began building brush yards in which to fold the sheep, and to do away with the necessity of watching at night. A few days after their arrival, Mr. Wills rode out to look for timber for building purposes, and on the edge of the main scrub which skirts the Nogoa river he met a black "gin" carrying her baby astride on her shoulders, with his tiny fingers firmly holding on to his mother's hair. (This is the usual way their children are carried after they are a few months old.)

The women was very much alarmed at first, Mr. Wills being most likely the first white man she had seen. He, however, wishing to be on friendly terms with the natives, got off his horse and bound a silk handkerchief round the baby's head. This act seemed to please the mother greatly, and they shortly afterwards parted the best of friends, although neither could understand a word the other said. Matters went on quietly for a few days; then some blacks made their appearance at the camp. They were treated kindly, and had a few presents given to them.

The next day they returned bringing others with them, so that in a few days there were a great many of them about, and they eventually formed their camp in a patch of "dead finish" scrub at the foot of the nearest mountain, about a mile from the tents. The whites were now becoming so used to the blacks that any feeling of fear they might formerly have had gradually wore off, especially as the blackfellows always came into their camp unarmed.

Mr. Wills had an excellent supply of firearms, and he frequently offered them to the men, telling them at the same time that, if they felt at all anxious about their safety, they could go to the tent where the guns and pistols were kept, all ready loaded, and take what they required for their protection; but the way the blacks behaved left the men no cause for fear, and they went about their daily work unarmed.

One of the drays had been left behind on the road up, so Mr. Wills decided to send Mr. T. W. Wills, James Baker (a son of the overseer's), and William Albery⁷² back with a team of bullocks for it. In mustering up his bullocks next morning, Albery, who was on foot, was surrounded by about fifty blackfellows and, to his great alarm, they closed in upon him, took off his hat and felt his body all over; but, as they used no violence and let him go after his bullocks immediately their inspecting was over, he soon recovered from his fright and, on returning to camp, told his companions and Mr. Wills what had happened to him. Everyone was of opinion that the blacks were influenced through curiosity only, so that the occurrence caused no uneasiness amongst the party.

Before leaving the camp, Mr. T. W. Wills went to each of the men, and asked them to carry firearms about with them and not to trust the blacks too much. They one and all said they did not anticipate any danger, and some of them said they could get arms out of the tents at any time should they require them. He also spoke to his father on the subject, and said he had a sort of presentiment that all was not right, but Mr. Wills laughed his son's fears away by saying, "It was only his boyish fears and fancy". However, to please his son, he agreed to accept the loan of his revolver during his absence, as his own was out of order.

Mr T. Wills, J. Baker and Albery then started on their journey for the dray, which was about seventy miles off. On reaching Bimberdang Creek, on Rainworth, they met Baker (the overseer), David Baker (the overseer's son), and one of the shepherds, travelling slowly with a flock of ewes with young lambs. Mr. T. Wills told the overseer and his son that the blacks were about the camp and cautioned them to be careful. David Baker said then he would fire off his rifle and reload, so as to be sure it would not miss fire. He thereupon took a tomahawk, and going over to a tree, cut off a small piece of bark, took up his rifle and fired, the result proving him to be a good marksman. He remarked as they examined the target, "That's good enough for them". Here James Baker parted from his father and brother for the last time, for when he returned to the camp a few days after it was only to look upon their graves.

On several occasions when the blacks were loitering about the camp, Mr. Wills amused himself by shooting a few of the numerous hawks, or rather kites, that are always to be found hovering around any settlement in Queensland. His object in killing the birds was not exactly to satisfy his sporting proclivities, but rather to show the blacks the use of the gun, and its effect upon the birds thus shot. The natives were delighted when they first saw the birds brought down so easily, and at once secured them and plucked off their feathers and down, which they used to decorate their hair with.

On the morning of the 18th October, about one o'clock, a man (John Moore) arrived at Rainworth Station and reported to Mr. Gregson that he had just come from Mr. Wills' camp, where he had been employed, that the blacks had attacked the camp on the afternoon of the 17th, and as far as he knew, had killed all the party, with the exception of another man and himself. The informant stated the blacks had been about the camp on the morning of the 17th and then left, and feeling tired and exhausted with the heat, he had lain down in the shade of a bush to have a rest, but fell asleep. He was awakened by hearing loud voices, and on looking out from his resting place, he saw several of the blacks attacking a white woman, who soon fell from their blows. Then screams, shouts, and the sound of dull blows followed, clearly convincing him that all of his companions were being murdered.

In the midst of all the noise the report of a pistol was heard, but the informant could not see who fired the shot, as to obtain a better view of the camp he would have had to expose himself. After keeping quiet for some considerable time, a flock of sheep passed by, drawing towards the camp,

and shortly afterwards the shepherd followed, quite unconscious of what had happened.

As all now seemed quiet, both men walked up towards the tents, when they saw the bodies of several of the victims. About twenty yards in front of Mr. Wills' tent, his horse "Simon" was standing, tied up to a dray, saddled, and ready for use. The horse was secured by the informant, who at once started to report the occurrence, and reached Rainworth Station the same night at half past one o'clock, as I have already told you.

The man left behind was named Ned Kenny. It would be difficult to imagine his feelings - alone with the ghastly dead around him. His first thoughts were, naturally, self preservation. He had been in Mr. Wills' employment in the early forties in Victoria, and, as his word was to be relied upon, I will give you his own version.

The old man said: "The flock of sheep I was shepherding were feeding all day to the north of the camp. About sundown my sheep drew in towards the camp and, when close to the creek on which the tents are pitched, another man met me, and we walked up to the camp together. I remarked to my mate, "The camp seems very quiet; I shall go to the master's tent and see if there is anything wrong". On reaching the tent I was horrified to see the master lying dead close to the tent door. About twenty yards from the tent a horse was saddled and tied up ready for use. We both made for the horse, but my mate reached him first and at once got into the saddle. I implored him to let me get up behind him, as the horse was a fine, strong animal and very quiet, but he refused to let me ride.

He then said he would go to Rainworth station and report the murder, and started off at once.

I followed on foot, but after I had run for about two miles I became exhausted and fell down in the long grass, where I laid until I was found next day by three horsemen Mr. Gregson had sent over, well armed, to see if there were any survivors.

Mr. Gregson immediately sent word to his nearest neighbours, and the news was forwarded as rapidly as possible throughout the district. The native police were then about 200 miles away, and a letter was sent to the officer in charge, requesting his presence as soon as possible. Only fifty hours elapsed after the massacre had been reported until the news had reached the native police, who at once started for the scene of the murder.

On Friday at sundown, Messrs. Gregson, McIntosh, and several other gentlemen, some of their men, and two black boys, started for the scene of the massacre, where they arrived about midnight, and camped until daylight. In the morning thirteen of the victims, including Mr. Wills, were found at the head station (or main camp). Three others, Baker (the overseer), David Baker (his son), and a shepherd were found about a mile and a half down the creek, where they were forming a camp for a flock of ewes and lambs. These three men had evidently been erecting a tent at the time they were attacked, and seemed to have taken up a position against a bloodwood tree, close to which their bodies were found; they had tent poles near them, and appeared to have made a fight for their lives. The blacks had evidently struck one of the men with one of their own axes, as his leg was nearly severed by a blow. The tree against which they had

stood bore the marks of blows from nullah nullahs, which the blacks had evidently thrown at the three men, and had missed their mark and struck the tree instead.

Mr Wills was found lying on his back about two yards from his tent door. There was a deep tomahawk wound on his right cheek, the neck being nearly severed a few inches below the same spot by a larger wound, probably an axe cut. The head, besides, had been beaten with nullah nullahs, and close beside him his revolver lay on the ground with one chamber empty. A few yards from Mr Wills, Margaret Manyon, a girl about ten years of age, killed by nullah nullah blows upon her head. She had been sitting in the shade of her father's tent nursing her little sister and reading a prayer book (Catholic) - the baby, a few months old, was killed. A few yards away their mother, Mrs Manyon, her daughter, about six years of age, all killed in the same manner.

James Scott, cook, was found dead, lying nearly on his face, with a spear still in him; it had penetrated his abdomen. He also bore several wounds on the head. Mrs Baker, the overseers wife, was found lying, partly undressed, at the side of her tent, killed by blows on the head; her daughter, twenty years of age, found lying at the door of the tent, partly undressed; a boy, six years of age, and an infant seven months old, both Mrs Baker's children, were found in the same tent, and were all killed in a similar manner.

Near a brush yard, about fifty yards from the tents, Patrick Manyon was found lying on his back. He had evidently had a struggle for life, as he was stripped to his waist. His head had a deep tomahawk wound upon it, and bore traces of nullah nullah marks. Another man who was found dead inside the yard had nothing on except a flannel shirt. Near the same fence was found George, the bullock driver, with his whip still grasped in his hands. Henry Watt, an old shepherd, was found about a mile out on the plain, all killed in the same manner.

These were all the bodies discovered, but two men were still missing. The party decided to bury the bodies at once, so they dug a large grave, into which the body of Mr. Wills was placed. This last tribute of respect to Mr. Wills was performed by his nearest neighbours. After the burial service was read over the bodies the graves were filled in, and the party then set about collecting the goods that had been scattered about by the blacks. Some were told off to search for the sheep, which were all subsequently recovered but a few hundreds.

The whole camp was a wreck. The blacks had taken nearly all the goods they could find in the tents; but they had left the sugar, tea, tobacco and flour untouched. They had broken open all the boxes and cases, taking away the contents with them, consisting of books, papers, crockery, tools, blankets, axes, tomahawks, knives, etc. and clothing of every description.

As soon as the blacks had accomplished their deadly work they at once made off in the direction of the timbered country to the west where, under cover of the dense brigalow scrub, they thought themselves secure.

On Sunday eight of the party went out to run the blacks' tracks, so as to ascertain the direction they had taken which, as I have already stated, was westerly.

Altogether the tracks were only run about five miles, until they reached where the blacks had camped for the first night after the murder. During the day the party came across the remains of sheep the blacks had driven away and killed and, on reaching the deserted camp in the scrub, they found an immense variety of articles the blacks had abandoned after their first day's march. They then returned to the scene of the murder, and told their companions the direction the blacks had gone.

Mr. T. W. Wills returned to the scene of the massacre on Sunday afternoon (20th), having only received news of the occurrence the previous night.

About sundown the bodies of the two missing men were found about half a mile from the camp, where they had been murdered close to the road to Rainworth Station. Their names were George Elliot (a Victorian cricketer) and a man named Tom. They were buried where they were found, on Monday morning, 21st October.

It was now decided that the drays should be loaded up and the sheep taken back to a spot about six miles from Rainworth Station.

A party of eleven then started in pursuit of the blacks. The tracks were easily followed except occasionally when they crossed over patches of rocky ground. When the party reached the Nogoa River, still following the tracks of the blacks, they came upon a heap of articles which the blacks had left behind, but evidently with the intention of calling for them at some future time, as they were carefully covered up with sheets of bark which had been stripped for that purpose. The party knew now that they were on the right track, and about two hours before sundown they were able to locate the blacks' camp in a patch of brigalow scrub near a mountain now called Snake Range, about twenty miles from the scene of the murder.

Early on Wednesday morning the party quietly surrounded the camp and awaited daylight. One of the party had been left behind a short distance in charge of the horses. It was agreed that the gentleman who was appointed leader was to fire the first shot; so they anxiously awaited daylight. As soon as day began to break the blacks began to sit up and stir their fires.

One big blackfellow stood up with a paper in his hand, and pretended to read to the others. This little incident seemed to cause some merriment to those who were awake; however, he knew little that vengeance was so near.

At the very moment he was acting the white-fellow, the leader of the whites, was taking deadly aim, and in a second the stillness of the morning was broken by the loud report of a rifle, and the blackfellow, with the paper still in his hand, fell dead. All was now confusion. The affray lasted only a few minutes, but several blacks lay dead where they had been peacefully sleeping only a short time before. This was the first lesson given to the blacks, for the murder of white men was only the forerunner of many.

The party now returned to Rainworth station, where they found a detachment of native police, under the command of Lieutenant Cave, who started in pursuit of the blacks on Thursday, 24th October. The punishment meted out to the murderers was very severe, and of the many who took an active part in the massacre very few lived to tell the tale.⁷³

Time passed, but nearly every year single murders were committed in the district, nearly in every instance isolated shepherds being the victims.

These murders were always followed by the native police reporting having dispersed a camp of blacks.

About the year 1870 the blacks were again let into Cullinlaringo, and sometimes there were two hundred collected at the camp. Whenever the native police were patrolling the district and passing in the vicinity, the blacks would collect on the head station as if seeking protection. When some of the "boys" began to speak our language, we found out from them the cause of the murder.

They say that a short time previous to Mr. Wills and party's arrival on the station some of their tribe had found a small mob of sheep straying in the bush - a mob some shepherd had lost. Those sheep were driven up on to a small ridge, and a good many of them were slaughtered by the blacks and eaten.

Whilst still in possession of the sheep, they were surprised by the native police and a couple of white men, and two of them were shot. The remainder escaped, and told the rest of the blacks what had happened.

They then resolved to muster up all the blacks in the district belonging to their tribe and kill the people who had shot their mates.

Their law is if a man kills another, the relatives of the deceased man will always kill the murderer if possible; but if they cannot get hold of the murderer, they will kill some of his relatives, the father or brother preferred; relatives failing, some of his tribe (if he happens to be a stranger).

In the meantime, Mr. Wills' party happened to arrive at Cullinlaringo, and pitched their tents close to where the blacks were mustering, so they at once made up their minds to kill them to avenge the death of the two blacks shot for sheep-stealing.

I have been told this by two blacks who were present at the murder, and also had the statement corroborated by two gins who were spectators. The pistol-shot heard during the massacre was fired by Mr. Wills at a blackfellow who was in front of his tent. The bullet grazed the inside of his right arm, but before Mr. Wills had time to shoot again he was seized from behind by two powerful blacks, and held fast while others finished the work. The blacks also say that even had a few of their number been shot at the time of the murder, they would not have been deterred from carrying out their purposes, as they were not then afraid of the whitefellows, or their guns. Neither the young women nor the young blackfellows wanted the whites killed, but the young men were ultimately persuaded to join in the massacre. The account they give of the plan of attack was as follows:

About two o'clock all the blacks went to the camp of the white men. They did not carry their weapons in their hands, in case the whites would take alarm, but stuck them under their opossum hair belts, behind their backs, where they could not be easily detected. Then they quietly selected their intended victims and, at a given signal, began their attack simultaneously. Thus were the lives of nineteen innocent people taken by the blacks to avenge the death of their companions, who were shot for sheep stealing.

Not far from the late Mr. Wills' residence, Belle Vue, Point Henry, near Geelong, in the church at Kensington, a tablet is erected to his memory:-

Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord
THIS TABLET
is erected by his children, in affectionate memory
of their beloved Father
HORATIO SPENCER WILLS
whose life was sustained by truth and adorned
by charity, and who (with eighteen others) was
KILLED BY THE BLACKS, 17TH OCT. 1861
AT CULLINLARINGO, QUEENSLAND
AGED 49

*“Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when
the time is.” Mark xiii.33*

*“Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto
eternal life.” Jude 21*

“Wallaroo”

*(The above story is quite true. I have been at the place where the people
were killed, and saw some of the tent-pegs still in the ground, and have also
seen the graves. We hope “Wallaroo” will give some of the “squatting”
experience he has since had in the locality referred to. - C.D.B.)*

#8611117 Try Boys Society Newsletter

There is one error of fact in this account which concerns just who it was that rode for help and who was left behind. It was not John Moore who went to Rainworth but Ned Kenny who made the following sworn declaration.

I the undersigned am a shepherd in the employment of the late Mr. Wills. We arrived on Mr Wills station Cullinlaringo about a fortnight ago. The Blacks came up to the station two or three times but as they appeared quiet no notice of them was taken. Mr Wills used to carry a revolver but although he had plenty of firearms none were served out to any of the men. The party at this time consisted of 22 persons viz:- Mr Wills, Baker the overseer his wife grown daughter and two children, Pat Manyon his wife and three children, George King, Jemmy Scott, Paddy, George Elliott. Harry, Tom, Davy Baker, Charles, Ned John Moore and myself. Mr Thomas Wills and two more men left the station last Sunday morning with the dray on their way to Albinia Downs for loading. On the evening of Thursday the 17th of October I came home with my sheep and saw Paddy who had been shepherding the Rams. Paddy said to me that there has been slaughter here today. I saw (10) ten dead bodies My master and the overseers wife, daughter and two children, Mrs Manyon and three children and Jemmy Scott having evidently killed by the Blacks. I then went and got a horse which I found tied to a dray and rode over to Rainworth Mr Gregsons station where I arrived about one O'clock on Friday morning. I do not know what became of Paddy after he had spoken to me. I do not know anything of any of the other men

whether they are alive or dead. I did not see any Blacks about the station when I came away.

His mark

Edward X Kenny

Witness

James Gregson

Rainworth

18 Oct. 1861

#8611118 Public records

Thus ended the life of Horatio Spencer Wills, born 5 October 1811 and died on 17 October 1861, aged 50 years and 14 days. He had a quite incredible life in such a very short time - printer's apprentice, newspaper proprietor, grazier, gentleman farmer, member of parliament and finally an early pioneer of central Queensland.

Tom Wills wrote to the Colonial Secretary nine days after the massacre to try to get a troop of police sent up to protect the station and the men who were working there:

26 October 1861

Albinia Downs

*The Colonial Secretary
Brisbane*

Honoured Sir,

You have, I doubt not ere this, hear[d] of the fearful tragedy that has happen on the run known as Cullinlaringo.

I have not time to write in detail but you will have full information through the press of the murders committed at the above place.

I therefore merely pray that you will be pleased to allow a police (native) force to be quartered there as otherwise it would be impossible after the above events to get men to stop unless so protected.

The widow and orphans of the late H.S. Wills join me in my prayer.

Your most obedient servant.

T. W. Wills

8611026 Queensland Public Records

In January 1862 Tom was still understandably still extremely nervous of the possibility of another attack by the aboriginals and also very angry at the fact that a neighbour was protecting those who he saw as murderers and wrote again to the Colonial Secretary:

6th January 1862

The Honourable the Colonial Secretary

Sir,

I know for a fact that several of the late murderers of my father and party are at this moment in at Mr. Dutton's station and he told Mr. Morehead of the native police that as his own quiet blacks had been driven away he should protect all strangers that came to him, they are coming in every day from the westward in twos and threes. If murderers are thus to be protected I cannot see how a man is to be sure of his life for a minute in a country like [this] - for these men come in for protection and then in a little while sally out and commit some foul deed and then return to where they are safe.

While such is the case life and property are by no means safe. Our run is some 80 miles from Camerons and the Nagoa is a fine shelter for the blacks the opposite side being all broken country and consequently we are open to inroads at all times, it is certainly a good station for a police force and if stationed there the blacks would move out further than they are at present and their proximity is by no means pleasant after what has happened.

You may depend I shall be as cautious as it is possible to be but still there is a danger and no other run offers such a snug corner for the wretches to hide in.

I remain your humble servant

Thomas W Wills

#8620106 Queensland Public Records

The last word on this belongs to Elizabeth Wills, who was not convinced for a long time of the truth of these ghastly events and not until the 20 November, more than a month after the massacre, did she have sufficient information and belief to write to Cedric, Horace and Egbert, still at school in Germany, to tell them of their father's death.

November 20 1861

Belle Vue

My dear Boys,

You as well as myself have met with so severe a loss that we will not cease to feel it during our whole life.

You cannot, my dear children, make yourselves believe that you have indeed lost your dear father for the last three weeks. I have not been able to persuade myself of the terrible loss we have sustained, but this day we have had a full account of the whole affair - how it happened and I have forwarded a printed account from the newspapers to Mr. Alexander that you and your Aunt and Uncle Thomas may see how it happened.

I received a letter from your Papa (the last we shall ever have) to say they had all arrived in safety on the station and had not had any sickness in the party the whole eight months they were travelling.

Mrs. Mannion and Mrs. Baker had both young babies on the road. He crossed the boundary of his run on the 3rd of October, his 49th Birthday. [he was 50] He was so thankful having arrived at his journey's end for he commenced his letter by saying "Thank God! Cullinlaringo at last". It was on a Thursday they arrived, two drays were unloaded on Saturday and

Tom and the two drays, one of the Baker's sons and another lad was sent back 60 or 70 miles for some stores that had been left by carriers. Tom was sent to look after the bullocks - Tom got back on the following Sunday for he had left the Sunday before and in Tom's letter received yesterday he said the morning he left the place he shook hands with his father, a thing said not usual with him - and said - now old man, don't lose a moment on the road because I am always uneasy when you are away from me. Poor Papa, how little he thought he would be the first to be taken. It appears the blacks had been on the station in the morning then left but returned about the middle of the day, and having been so friendly in the morning were off their guard, not knowing the treachery of the bloodthirsty wretches were not prepared to defend themselves.

Everyone was at their work.

Your father, hearing a loud noise among the blacks, came out to see having his revolver in his belt. The blacks had struck down one of the women, he had only time to fire one out of four barrels when the poor fellow was struck on the dear cheek (you have all often kissed) with a tomahawk - then dreadfully wounded about the neck. I suppose he tried to defend himself and that is the reason the unfeeling brutes so used him - he had his horse tied to a dray a few paces only from the tent door. They got between him and the horse for he fell only two paces from the tent door.

The poor women were found in their tent with their sewing in their hands, the man cook in the act of taking the cover off the oven - so that everyone was taken by surprise. Your poor father was always looking to the return of his dear boys (as he used to call you all) and went out on this perilous journey to make you all independent. You must for ever love the memory of the dear father who has suffered so much for you. He would often say before leaving here, see what I am doing for your boys.

Tom and the settlers around have well revenged his death before now. The newspapers are full of sympathy for his loss - he is regretted by every one - the settlers have called on the Government to send a strong police force to guard them, or they cannot remain.

Pray to God, my dear fatherless children, to be a father and guide to you through life and that he may guide you through all harm and send you safe to me again.

Trust in the Lord and he will strengthen you. Strive to do whatever was your father's wish. Consult your Aunt in all things,

may God bless and keep you safe,

your affectionate Mother,

E. Wills

I do not think it is much use in Horace learning Greek - ask Aunt. I will send you the book about the explorers, Burke and Wills, if I can - the poor fellows died of starvation. Wills is the son of Dr. Wills at Ballarat. He came here to see Papa once.⁷⁴

#8611120 T H S W Collection

CHAPTER 8

ELIZABETH WILLS (Neé Wyre)
1817? to 28 December 1907

Tracing Elizabeth and her sisters Catherine and Anne turned out to be the most difficult and time consuming task in the writing of this book. The problem was that the spelling of surnames was a very cavalier business at this time, as was evidenced by the spellings of Edward Wills' name shown in Chapter 1. With the help of Jan Worthington, a specialist researcher, I eventually solved the matter.

Michael Wyre of Meath, Ireland was convicted at Dublin in January 1813 and sentenced to transportation for seven years. He was shown as "a leather dyer, aged 22 years, height five feet eight inches, ruddy complexion, black hair and hazel eyes" and there were no details shown of his crime. He left Ireland on *The Three Bees* (where his name was recorded as Weir) and arrived in Sydney on 6 May 1814.

Jane Wallace who was convicted in Dublin in June 1813 and also sentenced to seven years was a servant aged 24 years and arrived on the *Catherine* on 3 May 1814 just three days before the *Three Bees*. She was shown in the 1814 muster as being assigned to Mr Cullen and was married to Michael Wyre at St. John's Church in Parramatta on 11 April 1815. Both the *Catherine* and the *Three Bees* sailed from Falmouth on 8 December 1813

He is shown, with three daughters, Catherine, Elizabeth and Ann in the 1822 census records in which his occupation is given as "ropemaker" but no wife is shown.

On 17 March 1823 Michael Wyre and two others were drowned after the upset of their boat in Cockle Bay [now called Darling Harbour]. At the inquest it was recorded that there were three men (all drowned) and a little girl (who survived) in the boat which was accidentally upset but there is no record of the name of the child.

On 14 August 1823 Jane Dwyer [sic] applied to have her three daughters, Catherine aged eight, Elizabeth aged five and Ann aged four, admitted to the Female Orphan School "her husband being recently drowned and herself close to confinement".

The admission records of the Female Orphan School show Catherine McGuire [sic] aged 8 years and Elizabeth McGuire [sic] aged 6 years being admitted on 14 August 1823. One fascinating coincidence is that one of the Governors of the School present at the meeting to allow their admission was H. C. Antill, later to become Elizabeth's brother-in-law.

They both discharged as pupils on 23 June 1828 after almost five years and were then apprenticed to the school. This simply meant that they went from being pupils to being domestic servants working for their living at the Orphan School.

From this data it is possible to deduce that Elizabeth was born in 1817 and Catherine in 1815 so both were born in the Colony.

I can find no further record of Jane after she had the two girls admitted, no child is registered as having been born to her in 1823 and she simply disappears from the story. As to the youngest daughter, Ann, she is shown in the 1828 census as an "orphan and servant of Thomas Wilson of Parramatta". What a barbarous era this was.

We cannot be sure of the whereabouts of Elizabeth in the years 1828 to 1832 but it is likely that she spent some further time as an apprentice and was then employed as a servant. She met Horatio eighteen months before their marriage and the last eleven of

these was spent as a pupil at Mrs McGillivrays School. (Mrs. McGillivray was a witness at the wedding) before their marriage in December 1833.

She signed her marriage certificate as Elizabeth McGuire (which she misspelt McGiure) and her sister Catherine also signed as McGuire. In her death certificate her maiden name is given as Wyre, her father being listed as "Michael Wyre, Military Officer" and her birthplace as Dublin, Ireland, which is wrong both as to her birthplace and her father's occupation. With such a mix-up of surnames (Wyre/Wyer/Weir/Dwyer/McGuire) it is not surprising that this took so much sorting out! Throughout this book I have adopted the spelling of Wyre.

From 1833 to 1861 her history is identical to that of Horatio. They were a devoted couple as witness Horatio's diary entries and letters to Elizabeth.

She bore him nine children in twenty six years. The first Thomas Wentworth was born in Sydney while they were living at Burra Burra station, Emily, Cedric, Horace, Egbert and Elizabeth were all born at Lexington and Eugenie, Minna and Hortense (just a short time before her father's death) were born at Bellevue. One great frustration that has beset me in attempting to trace Elizabeth's past is that only one of her children's births (Thomas Wentworth) was registered in the normal way although the marriages and deaths of all of the children are registered.

Their birth registrations would have shown the date and place of birth of both parents. It is a small mystery as to why their parents did not have them registered. Did they not believe in it or were they covering up her antecedents?

She found herself totally bewildered by her husband's murder and for some considerable time refused to believe that it had happened. She was widowed and, by the standards of the time, should have been extremely well off, but the ownership of Cullinlaringo for her turned into a nightmare, and it largely drained the family wealth.

She was left at Bellevue with her five daughters to raise by herself and by 1863 Horace and Egbert had returned from Germany and had also moved in with their mother. Thus she was caring for seven children with the assistance of a governess and the normal number of servants for the time.

She was, according to my grandmother, a very narrow woman with an extremely strong religious belief and was "constantly surrounded by curates", and this narrowness to some degree interfered with her relationships with her children although as the following letter shows she could be quite tender and try to keep her sons fully informed. It was a Christmas letter in 1861.

December 20 1861

My dear boys,

I cannot wish you a merry Christmas, for to us it will be saddest we have ever experienced, but I am pleased the sad news would not reach you until after that time.

Papa would often write in his letters "Tell my dear boys to work hard, for I have not time to write myself" so I hope, my dear boys, you will still think you are pleasing Papa by striving to improve yourselves. You cannot think with what pleasure he looked forward to the time when you would return home to him again, but his dear face you will never see on earth again. I trust he is at rest in Heaven.

I had a letter from Papa that was written on the 8th, and this murderous attack took place on the 17th of October, the very day on which you wrote your last letter. Papa gave a full account of all he was to do, how he had

crossed the boundary of his run on the 3rd of October, his birthday 49 [his birthday was the 5th and he was 50] with all the dry sheep and Baker⁹⁴ and 3 men were 40 miles behind with the ewes and young lambs.

After Baker arrived Tom was sent away with the drays and Papa was busy putting up a garden fence which I fancy was finished as the account said the men were busy putting up sheep yards when the blacks came upon them.

The horrible wretches have paid dearly for it, for the settlers that went after them said they had shot 300 and some 70 more⁹⁵ that was killed by the black police which the Sydney newspapers choose to make a noise about, for they said the innocent should not have suffered with the guilty.

It is my belief that they were all guilty, for one called out (as you will see by the paper I post with this) "Me no killed whitefellow" and was shot. It is rather strange but Papa said in his last letter "the head of police and 7 troopers gave us a call and left some newspapers" in which he saw the birth of the little girl [Hortense Sarah Spencer] and when these same black troopers were at a great distance from the station, they saw the great signal smoke and told the Officer they knew all the white fellows were killed so he started off for the station immediately and found it too true, they got there the evening after the murder.

Tom is busy shearing, Mr. Roope left here a month ago to assist. After shearing Tom will move back to where Papa began to form the head station. Your Aunt Alexander knows your Papa's wishes with regard to Cedric. I hope in the short time Ced has he will make himself master of book keeping and figures. I expect it will be with the executors if they employ you on the station or not. You may expect things very different to what they would have been had your poor father been spared to us all. We must learn to look upon it as intended, for some wise purpose. Let us pray that some good may come out of it.

Tom says he will leave his father where he is until Cedric can assist him to bury the bones properly.⁹⁶ If your father is permitted to look down upon us it will be pleasing to him.

I will enclose a few lines to Dr. Pilgrim to ask him to let Horace and Egbert to take turns week about to go with you to the farm for the milk. Tell Cedric to be more careful when he is at the gymnastics or he may hurt himself very seriously tell Horace to rub a little sweet oil I sent on his corns night and morning and they will soon disappear.

A wool ship burned at Queenscliff two days since on her way out, totally destroyed (Empress of the Seas). Captain Dickinson out again in another vessel The Alfred, he has written to say he will come to see us before leaving. I hope he will be in England when you are to leave that you might come with him and let him see you can get up early in the morning.

Our children were at a picnic given to the children of the two schools, Point Henry and Kensington, they came home very much sunburnt. Very few cherries this year but a good show of apples. I forgot to tell you the poor old cat ate a poisoned rat and was found dead under the house we were quite sorry for losing her, fortunately she left a young kitten and Lizzy has a beautiful white Persian tom cat, pure white.

We are busy with the harvest, all cut but the wheat which is hardly ripe. Horace Harrison⁹⁷ just came today for the holidays he is nearly as tall as

Emmy - how tall is our Horace? Do point out to him the necessity for his persevering in his studies, Horace has just been reciting a piece - "Sam Weller" - for the amusement of the children. I wish Cedric was here to assist Mr. Ramsay - get as much knowledge of everything as you possibly can before coming home.

All send their kindest love and kisses, may the Almighty in his merciful providence protect and guide you through all the danger and direct you for your good,

Is the sincere wish of

Your affectionate and lone Mother

E. Wills

PS Baby was Christened by Mr. Crawford, she is called Hortense Sarah Spencer, it is the nearest to Papa's own name (4 months)

#8611127 T H S W Collection

For the next year she stayed at Bellevue accompanied by her sister Catherine and trying to deal with an extremely difficult teenaged Emily. Cedric returned in the first week of July 1862 in the *Willesby* and went straight to Cullinlaringo where she wrote to him on Christmas Day 1862 letting him know of the return of Horace and Egbert on 18th December.

Sunday

25 December 1862

My dear boy Ced,

Everyone is so busy with Christmas that I find no one has written to let you know that your two Brothers arrived quite safe after a voyage of 106 days, they are about a week out.

I will endeavour to get one of them to enclose a note with mine to let you know how they employed themselves on board.

I think only one lady and her family came out with them (three) all grown up. The lady, Mrs. Moody, is a sister of Mr. Strachan of "Lunan". Poor Mr. Strachan lost one of his daughters (Mrs. Bird) a few days after his sister's arrival.

Horace and Egbert seem to have lost all their hats and caps overboard. They are both looking well and in high spirits. I think it is likely they will be sent to the Scotch College after the holidays.⁹⁸ Two of your letters and some of ours came back since the boys arrived so you are not likely to get the watch and other things I see you wrote to Horace for - a rather good thing as it would be teaching the boys to run into debt.

My dear boy you will grow wiser where you are and I trust it will be for your good. I really do not see how you are to get on in Tom's absence⁹⁹ without an overseer for you never can be able to count the sheep for the shepherds and there will be far more to do on the station than you can manage, but I trust to hear of you doing your best.

I see by the papers that two steamers arrived in Sydney from Rockhampton, so that I am in hopes of seeing Tom by the boat that is in on Tuesday. We were all expecting him for Christmas, but we saw there was no boat on the Tuesday. Egbert is in today to see if Tom is come and will wait for the late

half past six train. Charley and Horace have gone to Fenwick's shooting. Jemmy Baker is here today hoping to see Tom. I have been speaking to Mr. Morris of the necessity of having one able to count sheep.

I was in to see the exhibition with the three children yesterday, also Horace and Egbert - Charley drove us in.

Egbert has taken Baby's cough, I hope he may be rid of it before going to school.

(Later)

Egbert's back and no Tom, Miss Castieau is very ill indeed, she has been in bed for the last fortnight, I trust she will soon be better.

We have not a great show of fruit this year, scarcely any rain. I will send you some papers with this - I hoped Mr. Johnson was able to get down before this.

How is your new house built? We had our dining room papered yesterday, it will make it look more cosy. I was glad to hear by Tom's last letter that he had a married couple on the station, you will have the comfort of having your clothes washed.

Dr. Gunn is thinking of leaving Geelong, he thinks there is a good opening for him at Brisbane. Mrs. Roope left us early in November. At the Parade they had all the back buildings burnt down, I understand it was done by young Amos.¹⁰⁰

Baby sends a kiss and love from all - I see by your letter to George that you send love to all at his house - that is rather strange.

Hoping you will have your eyes opened to the follies of the world will be the desire of

Your affectionate mother

E. Wills

#8621225 T H S W Collection

For the next year or so she went through enormous difficulties with Tom who did not have his heart in the station and who was constantly leaving Cedric and a manager to run the place while he came south to play cricket, culminating in his dismissal early in 1864.

The trustees had a number of managers through Cullinlaringo, none of whom stayed for long periods, partly because there was a continuing lack of understanding between the trustees and those on the station about what needed to be done, and Cedric was not an easy person to get on with, quite often given to outbreaks of violent temper.

I came across the following letter which seems to me to encapsulate all the things that my grandmother ever said about Elizabeth, a powerful sense of duty, a narrowness of view, a religious fervour and an extraordinary toughness when dealing with her children. It was written to Sarah Eliza Wills the wife of Horace after the death of her first baby, Ethel Mary

January 2 1874

My dear Sarah,

May health and happiness attend thy path and that of my dear Son on this new year. I am very glad to receive your welcome Christmas letter and to hear everyone was well.

It is a great pleasure always to hear that you are both blessed with good health. I am glad to hear you enjoyed your stay with Mrs. Greene and hope you learned a lesson of contentment from her, for I do not suppose you heard her complain of the dullness of bush life. She is content to live wherever her husband is, in riches or in poverty.

I am afraid, my dear Sarah, there is a faint tone of discontent in the style of your letter and thought as if you would like to be Sarah Beswicke once again, to ride and be free as of yore.

Do you not think there is a small mixture of truth in all this although you would not like to acknowledge it yourself. You will be a wise woman to make yourself content with the life you have chosen and take everything that happens in the most cheerful way.

I am sure that we all feel the loss Horace has sustained in his fine mare but hope he will not think of it too much as I suppose he knows it did not happen from carelessness. I lost a fine brood mare some three years ago, but it was no good grieving over the loss as it could not be recovered.

As for the poor Baby it is best not to sorrow for it, it is better in its heavenly home and if you will only take more care for the future you will only have cause for joy and not murmur against your heavenly Father for what was perhaps a blessing, for who is to know what injury that poor child might have received. We all blame Horace and yourself for riding at such a time, it might have cost you your own life. Are these things to murmur at? No.

But you promised your Mama you would not ride, you see you are to blame.

Do not take this lesson as being unkind, it is only to show you you were both to blame for the accident. I trust this lesson will be well remembered. I hope you are feeling more free and comfortable in the new house as you will have more room to move about.

I do not think you have been troubled with many snakes since you went up. As Berry is the only one that has mentioned seeing one.

Lizzie made a long stay in Melbourne but she at last became tired of too much pleasure. Her Aunt Harrison¹⁰¹ was very good to keep her so long. Miss Fraser was married some short time ago as her Mama wrote to ask her if she would like to return home as Ella Fraser again to which she strongly objected. I hope Horace will get the two papers I sent with the cricket match in it. Lizzie is always promising to write you a long letter but as I tell her it is a long time she is thinking of it. They are all too lazy to write. Mary, Eugenie and Minnie and Egbert are going to the Mechanics to hear the actors from Melbourne.

Are you afraid of the thunder in Queensland? It must be heavier than here. Mr. Lemon and his daughter called here the evening of Christmas Day and brought me some strawberries. They had been for a drive to the Wellingtons, they appear to go there very often of a Sunday.

I sent Lizzy there one morning before breakfast and she brought home 15 pounds and made jam.

I am so glad always when the holidays are over and things get settled quietly again.

As Horace takes the Australasian we will see all about the match in it.

Your Mama¹⁰² has very kindly come over twice to see me. We had a good thunderstorm on Sunday night but it did not last long enough to do good, everything is very much dried up.

I had twelve leeches put on me after my accident, I have only three now alive, have you any in water now?

Your Horace has not mentioned anything of late about his foot so I take it as a good sign. I shall be glad it is as he will require his best legs under him at shearing.

We had only a Midshipman here at Christmas, Lizzy had to make the plum pudding for the first time, also one for the picnic the next day. I was better pleased to have the day a little quiet as I could not go out of my room. The Doctor has been out to see me four times. I expect he is kept rather busy holding inquests over those that were drowned as he said he would come again soon.

The mulberries are just coming in. I do not think the fruit will be any size this year for want of rain.

Hortense went to Ballarat to stay two or three weeks, I think she will go to Mrs. Fisher's school after the holidays

Minnie and five of her schoolmates have been taken in a group a notion of their own before parting for years perhaps.

I suppose you cannot manage to keep fresh meat long in Queensland, and now my dear Sarah I must conclude with much fond love to Horace and self in which all join and with the compliments of the season.

Ever your loving Mother,

E. Wills

#8740102 T S W C Collection

The family continued to live at Bellevue for some considerable time with the children growing up there. Emily married in 1864, Lizzie [Elizabeth] in 1877, Duckey [Eugenie] in 1877, Hortense married at only 17 in 1879 and finally Minna in 1883.

Bellevue was sold in 1876 to Mr. Rutherford and the family lived for a short time in the town of Geelong, but following Minna's marriage in 1883 Elizabeth moved to live with Emily and Coley Harrison in Melbourne.

Two years before her death she wrote to Horace, the eldest of her sons living in Melbourne, concerning her funeral.

*The Grove
September 9 1905*

My dear Horace,

Mr. R. H. Vivian being my trustee my wish is that you both act together as regards my funeral. I have the land in the Kew Cemetery. I sincerely trust that all my family may survive me and the means I at present receive may go to enable them to live in greater comfort as at present they have a very hard living discomfort from severe losses. May you have an easier life in the time to come.

The sincere wish of your affectionate mother,

E. Wills

#9050909 L W C Collection

She died at Minna's home in Retreat Road, Newtown, Geelong on 28 December 1907 in her 91st year and was buried in the Booroondara Cemetery at Kew near Melbourne. Her children erected a plaque next to that of Horatio in St. Mark's Anglican Church at Leopold, which is there to this day.

CHAPTER 9

H. S. WILLS' SISTER IN LAW AND BROTHER IN LAW CATHERINE ROOPE (née Wyre) AND HER HUSBAND WILLIAM

We have no actual date of her birth, but Elizabeth Wills' sister Catherine was probably born in 1815. She was supposed to have been 80 at her death in 1893 but it is more likely that she was only 77 or 78. She was named after the ship on which her mother had arrived in Australia as a convict on 3 May 1814 just three days before the arrival of Michael Wyre.

Her early history is explained in the chapter on Elizabeth and we know little of her between 1828 and the time of her marriage in 1837 but in view of their place of marriage it is likely that she was living with Horatio and Elizabeth at Burra Burra.

Her marriage to William Roope took place at Molonglo on 20 July 1837 when she was about 22 and Horatio Wills was one of the witnesses. The officiating clergyman was a Roman Catholic priest who presumably travelled around performing baptisms, weddings and funerals. The marriage was recorded in the Registry of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church in Sydney. At the ceremony she gave the name of Dwyer and both she and her husband are shown as residing at Molonglo, which was in the same district as Burra Burra.

William Roope (8 June 1801 to 20 August 1881) was born in Scotland and was an administrator. He must have had some business association with Horatio as he was the recipient of the following letter dated 13 September 1843 (when he was managing a property, Mount Pleasant at Penrith) from Captain John Harrison, the husband of Horatio's half sister Jane, concerning their mother's [Sarah Wills/Howe] estate.

*September 13th 1843
River Plenty*

*Wm. Roope Esq.
Mount Pleasant, Penrith, N.S. Wales
Dear Sir,*

In accordance with my promise to Horace Wills I transmit you a list of documents relating to the Estate of the late Mr. and Mrs. Howe which were in Norton's office and subsequently delivered into charge of G.K. Nicholls.

Should Mr. Norton have retained any of the papers he will no doubt give them up to you as Mr. Thomas Wills removed any lien there might have been on them by executing a release to Mrs. Underwood observed when the farms were advertised for sale. One was omitted viz Cole farm 90 acres situated at the Gerrugong.

Horace has instructed you what to do in these matters and to correspond with Thos Wills who has an opportunity of receiving his letters in due course of post.

*Kind regards to Mrs. Roope.
Yours truly,*

John Harrison

Number of acres	Name of farm	District	From whom purchased	Remarks
--------------------	--------------	----------	------------------------	---------

5 26	<i>Mathews farm</i>	<i>Hawkesbury</i>	<i>Owen Tierney</i>	<i>Conveyance to G. Howe - Formerly let to Mortimer and Howell the miller, who paid rent to C. H. Chambers when receiver appointed to Court of Chancery and to Howell the miller</i>
90	<i>Cole farm</i>	<i>Richmond Hill</i>	<i>James Connelly</i>	<i>Conveyance to G.Howe and original deed of grant from Gov.Macquarie to Connelly - claimed by Mr S. Kenthorpe who has no legal title</i>
37½	<i>Watsons farm</i>	<i>Mulgrave place River Hawkesbury</i>	<i>Newlands</i>	<i>Original deed of grant to Watson 75 acres - Conveyance of half farm from Burgess to Newlands - from Newlands to Mrs Sarah Wills - Also lease of same and ferry from Howe to Reynolds for 2 years. This farm also paid rent to C. H. Chambers</i>
130	<i>Everinghams</i>	<i>Richmond Hill</i>	<i>Matthew Everingham</i>	<i>Conveyance and bond from Everingham- uncultivated</i>
85	<i>Gordons farm</i>	<i>Avids - Near Campbel -town</i>	<i>Sherriff</i>	<i>Sherriff's conveyance - I believe Gordons widow or woman occupied this farm - I am not aware whether rent was paid.</i>
50	<i>Arkells farm</i>	<i>Mulgrave place Hawkesbury</i>	<i>Phillip Tully Mary Dignam</i>	<i>Writings relative thereto - Farm in possession of Mr Hales of Windsor who purchased from Sir J. Jamieson - ? Query his right to sell the same - The whole grant was 100 acres and writings are only for two fourths - it is therefor probable Sir J J may have had a claim to the other 50 only and no person claiming on our behalf Mr H took the whole 100.</i>

N. B. Amongst the papers is a bond for £777.16.4.½ You may possibly ascertain whether it be worth anything now, there are several other papers relating to disputed property.

#8430913 L W C Collection

This letter shows that the continuing saga of the family's problems with their mother's estate and litigation surrounding it was continuing. It also shows the extent of the property which Edward Wills had built up.

I am not certain of anything much of the earlier association with Roope other than that Horatio clearly both trusted him and respected his business acumen, for he often in letters to his wife asks her to "consult Mr. Roope".

Mr. Roope became a merchant in Little Malop Street Geelong and in April 1849 he is shown in the *Geelong Advertiser* as having shipped 66 bales of wool to England through the port of Geelong. In August 1851 he is listed as a licensed goldbuyer.

He formed a partnership as Roope and McKerras in the early 1850s and his partner later swindled him, leaving him so much in trouble that he wished to sell out and go to Queensland. He was also a patron of the Geelong orphan asylum when it was opened on 14 March 1855.

In the elections of 1856 William Roope was a successful candidate for the South Western Province in the Legislative Council elections, the same year as Horatio was elected for the Province of South Grant.

In mid to late 1859 while Horatio was in England Roope sent him a long letter about business affairs. Regrettably only two pages survived, and they are reproduced here:

*Mid to late 1859
Geelong*

*These are 2 surviving pages only of a letter
from William Roope to H.S.H. Wills during the time
Wills was in England in 1859 informing him of some
financial matters and matters relating to the premises
in Geelong that Wills rented out.*

.....one party but, they would not take any of the other machines so that other than have these things left on your hands, I thought it would be for your interest to sell the whole at a trifling loss, rather than hold a portion at a greater sacrifice in the end. I enclose an account sale that you may see what the result has been on this speculation, more for the benefit of others than yourself: there are several machines at Bellevue that you do not appear to want even if you continue there (which I do not think will be for long) and which I have suggested to Mrs. Wills should be cleaned up and with which, with the aid of a little paint, might bring back some of the money expended on them, also I have suggested that all the cast iron lying about be collected together and sent in to the "Croll" in part payment for the wool press: this is rather an interference with your private affairs but as it is entirely with a view to your interest you will excuse it even if it do not meet your entire approbation.

With regards to other matters of your private affairs I called on "Friend" soon after you left and offered my services to carry out the alterations you agreed to relative to his office; he enquired if I was instructed to build for him a safe, I replied no: he said well without that the premises would not do for him and he should leave them.

I replied that it was an unreasonable request that, for a weekly or monthly tenant, you should go to such an expense that would not be required by the next tenant and that I would neither do it myself nor advise Mr. Wills to take on such an outlay. I heard nothing from "Friend" for some two or three weeks after this when meeting with him in the police office he said that he wished me to proceed with the alterations as agreed upon between you and him. They are now in a state of great forwardness.

I have been but a few times at Bellevue since you left and, as it is very seldom that Mrs. Wills comes to town, I cannot communicate much from that quarter but if there was anything much out of joint then no doubt it would have come to my knowledge.

On the 20th instant my store premises are to offered for sale by public auction: the prospect of affecting sale is very faint there seems to be no money here for investment, these premises cost me 6000 pounds. I am willing to take 2000 pounds in order that I may close up and get away from this place indeed I am hoping to reach Rockhampton before you get this letter but there are many contingencies about my business, that worthy (McKerras) will have to provide some 1600 pounds to settle accounts with me and I have many doubts about either his willingness or ability to meet this case.

I am afraid indeed that he will seek to get out of his liability through the medium of the Insolvent Court in about ten days or a fortnight I shall be better informed on this subject. I cannot leave this place until my affairs here are settled one way or another I am most anxious to be gone and enter upon whatever is to be my future course of business.

I got a letter from Emily last week she is well and happy long before you get this you will have performed, I hope, a prosperous journey with every prospect of continuing to the end my kind regards to "Tom" (a sly fellow) you will get a letter from A. Anderson the old game of making love¹⁰³ will get fixed some day

Yours very truly,

William Roope

#8590700 L W C Collection

Catherine Roope was very close to her sister Elizabeth, but was not much liked by Horatio who mentions her disparagingly in one of his letters, and cordially disliked by Horatio's children.

It is not clear why this is so, but often it is mentioned in letters that she was "a trouble maker" and "not truthful". She happens to have been staying with her sister at Bellevue at the time news of the massacre came through, and she left behind a quite fascinating diary giving news and views of the district, the weather and her domestic pursuits. This diary is reproduced in full as follows:

*Belle Vue, Point Henry
1861*

Wednesday 30th Oct.

Returned from Town this day after a visit of 6 or 8 weeks, Mrs. M's¹⁰⁴ health is much better, indeed with certain restrictions she would be quite well, told her Husband as much. The clergymen who were good enough to call to administer spiritual consolations while I was visiting her appear to be discouraged and have with one exception discontinued their visits. Received a letter from Mr. Campbell¹⁰⁵ enclosing subscription list for building the pulpit of the new Church, St. Georges. I am afraid I shall do very little in the way of collecting - being in the country where I shall not see many persons. Tuesday being my last evening in Town, I spent it at Mrs. Hinie's with the Misses Hinie.

31st Oct.

Rose at 6 o'clock this morning and began my favourite occupation of gardening. There is such a superabundance of weeds that they in some

instances choke the flowers, like sin in the Heart of Man when allowed to run riot, chokes that little good there is in it, and makes it unprofitable. I find I cannot do much (if any) needlework after gardening, my hands get rough and I feel very tired, but still it is very healthful. The bread here is not quite so good as Baker's bread, it gives me indigestion. Poor Baby [Hortense] is very cross - she is just 2 months old.

Nov. 1st

Morning very windy, rain fell nearly all night, the morning being cold I feel no encouragement to get up 'til about seven o'clock, only out of my room in time to hear the breakfast bell ring. Went gardening after breakfast, came in to dress myself at eleven o'clock, and about then "Duckey" [Eugenie] called out there's Uncle Willie [Catherine's husband William Roope] in the back verandah.

I thought it was a mistake as he was to come out the next day (Saturday). However I went to see and sure enough he was there. He said something to me which I could not understand, I brought him into my room where he explained to me that Mr. Wills and 10 persons of his party had been murdered by the Blacks in Queensland while journeying to his station with sheep.

The Murder is reported to have taken place on Sunday 20th October, poor Uncle Willie cried like a child, and was not able to break the news to my poor Sister. Tom Antill¹⁰⁶ and Rev. Mr. Campbell accompanied him here from Town. It seems that Captain Pockley¹⁰⁷ sent a telegram of the disaster to his relative Mr. Antill, he also being a nephew of poor Mr. Wills. Immediately upon receipt of the telegram he ran off to Mr. Roope to let him know and they together picked up Mr. Campbell and brought him out with them in a hired jingle, he read a portion of Scripture from the Bible and offered up prayers to the Almighty very suitable to the occasion. Showery all day - a fall of hail about 1/2 past three o'clock.

Saturday 2nd Nov.

Very wet morning - commenced the very desirable practice of Family Worship. Mr. Wills also expressed a resolve that when he returned from Queensland he would establish the Worship of God in his family and I remember his saying so only a few days before his leaving home. At once acted upon his expressed resolve, when news arrived of his melancholy death. I sincerely hope that God may bless our meeting together and that those children may through his infinite grace and mercy be brought to a saving knowledge of himself. Mrs. Wills scarcely gives credence to the report of her Husband's death, she hopes it is not true but is false rumour. Mr. McJennett¹⁰⁸ called today to offer spiritual consolation to Mrs. Wills. His sympathy was kindly offered and received, after that he should have taken his departure, instead of which he remained 'til between 8 and 9 o'clock - tiresome man. I wonder he cannot see that he is not wanted. Mr. Morris¹⁰⁹ called in the afternoon to talk upon business matters with my husband and Mrs. Wills, but Mr. McJennett continuing to be present they would not enter upon the business before him, so poor Mr. Morris has his ride for nothing and got quite wet in the bargain, for the rain came down in torrents after he left Belle Vue.

Sunday 3rd Nov.

Beautiful morning - another telegram from Captain Pockley today, 7 o'clock in the morning - he can give no further intelligence of the disastrous circumstance

of Mr. Wills' death, a steamer is expected from Brisbane on Wednesday when most likely there will be a letter from Tom, my nephew, giving a detailed account of the occurrence. I hope we shall not be long without some further intelligence as this state of uncertainty is very painful. Mrs. Wills received a letter from her husband today as we sat at dinner. Mr. Roope who brought it in to the room kept it in his pocket 'til after dinner then gave it to her. It was written on 6th Oct. just 14 days before the massacre of his party.

Poor fellow he mentioned having heard of the birth of his little daughter and prayed for God to bless her and her Mother. He had reached his station, the land of promise to him, and said "Thank Heaven!" reached 'Cullinlaringo' at last" - native name of the station. He describes the country as very beautiful, the water brackish, obliged to shear the sheep in the grease, the overseer with the ewes and lambs had not reached the station with him, but were obliged to travel slowly, therefore were 40 or 50 miles behind him on the road, 4 drays arrived on the station with him, 2 of which he would have to dispatch back again on the road for supplies which had been left by carrier at a certain distance from the station, the Albinia Downs. Tom was to travel with the drays on horseback. Dr. and Mrs. Gunn called to sympathise - it is a mistaken idea of people to call upon these occasions. I for myself like to be quiet. Mr. and Mrs. Morris too - he has business - she came from curiosity - My poor old man returned to town with them having business to attend to. One's time is very badly spent of a Sabbath when there are visitors. My beautiful cacti has 80 blossoms on it. The garden is looking beautiful.

Mr. Wills' death 17th Oct. 1861 confirmed with 18 of his people. He received a cut on his left cheek, and was chased by a blackfellow from his tent and received another blow on his neck and many blows afterwards on his head with the nulla nullas.

Monday 4th Nov.

Morning being very fine Mr. Campbell rode out to breakfast, as we had just sat down to the meal Worship having concluded when he arrived. We were very glad to see him, his conversation is very instructive, he addresses himself so nicely to children of whom he takes great notice.

His visit here was principally to Mrs. Wills with whom he conversed all morning - took his leave about 11 o'clock. Old McJennett called a few hours afterward, I always feel inclined to be rebellious when that man appears. He is such a stupid he never knows when to go and I get quite tired of him. If he would leave as other people do after he has addressed his word of exhortation I am sure I should respect him more than I do at present. Miss Talbot called today to help us through with our needlework.

Tuesday 6th

Guy Fawkes Day and lovely weather. Miss Talbot did not come up today 'til we had nearly finished dinner, the reason why she was so late was that her horse broke the tether and she had to catch him and tie him up again. Poor girl, she works hard and always appears in full dress. She was draped in a black velvet gown, low neck and short sleeves finished off with lace, her hair in ringlets. I wish she would marry Mr. McJennett then we should not be troubled with his presence so often. Mr. and Mrs. Goodman called this afternoon, and poor Mr. Wills' death was as usual the topic of conversation. Mrs. Wills will not credit the intelligence received of her husband's death until

more fully authenticated. Finished the greater part of my needlework today with the assistance of Emily and Miss Talbot.

Wednesday 6th Nov.

A telegram received from Sydney today announced that the Squatters and Police had taken charge of Mr. Wills' property. No news of Tom, it may be that he knows no more of the matter than we do ourselves. Tom Antill and his wife called, both of them were in mourning. Troubles never come alone. The Portarlington Mill Company have served Mr. Roope with notice of action, a very provoking thing, just as Mr. Roope was wanted to go to look after the property in Queensland.

Mr. Grant having been a defaulter to a large amount has thrown the company into difficulties and they wish to try and fall back on my husband, very unjust. We are anxiously expecting news from Queensland. Ended the day with prayer.

Thursday 7th Nov.

Commenced the morning with prayer, the day surely passes more serenely when we devote a part of time to prayer and reading the Bible. We are anxious to hear fresh tidings from Queensland.

News of the death of the two great explorers Burke and Wills, who died of starvation at Coopers Creek after having explored the country between Coopers Creek and Gulf of Carpentaria, only one of the party alive to tell the tale, "King" who was kept alive by the Blacks at Coopers Creek experiencing the greatest kindness from them. Mrs. A. L. McDonald called today to sympathise with us.. Mr. McJennett that most tiresome of men called today.

Friday 8th Nov.

Rose at 5 o'clock this morning and commenced gardening at half past 5 o'clock and continued at it 'til breakfast rang. At the ringing of the bell came to prayer and had a large bundle of thistles for the rabbits. Occupied with needlework for Baby with Emily's assistance.

Saturday 9th.

Gardening early this morning. Family Worship then breakfast. Mr. Roope came out today with the overseer bringing the Rockhampton Bulletin with particulars of poor Mr. Wills' death, quite confirming the first report. It happened on the 17th October 1861 by the Blacks of the district and 18 of his dependants are also report as having been killed, 2 women and 6 children. Poor Mr. Roope laments his friend's death quite as much if not more than my one, in the midst of our trouble and distress that tiresome and stupid man Mr. McJennett came in, and I felt obliged to tell him that we should be glad to be alone for that day at least. He only comes in to gossip.

Sunday 10th Nov.

In addition to our usual morning Worship we had midday Worship conducted by Mr. Roope. I was glad to have it established as the church here is shut up in consequence of the schoolmistress having died of scarlet fever in the building used as a church is also a schoolhouse, and it is not considered safe for people to visit the house for some time - scarlet fever being infectious. Mr. Roope left this afternoon to go by late train to Melbourne, and sails by the 2 o'clock steamer for Sydney.

Monday 11th Tuesday 12th Wednesday 13th.

I have been in town, Geelong, these three days purchasing mourning for the Family. Placed my money in the Savings Bank. While in town stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Hinie who had her Father visiting her, Mr. McKinnon from Launceston. They are very nice and homely people.

Called to see Mr. Hinie but he was too unwell to see me tho' he was anxious to see both myself and Mr. Roope, I wrote him a note before leaving Town.

Thursday 14th November

Too tired to rise earlier than breakfast this morning having had a great deal of walking about in Town the day before. Our morning and evening Worship is a very delightful exercise. A great deal of needlework to be got through and Pussy Smith¹¹⁰ has kindly come out to help us at her Mama's suggestion. She is quiet and even and is of great use. Commenced reading aloud "Our Antipodes" this evening (my eyes are not equal to black sewing).

The young people like it very much judging from the merriment it causes them. Mrs. Wills has decided on naming Baby Hortense Spencer.

Friday 15th.

Inclination prompted one to rise at 5 o'clock this morning and to amuse myself for 2 hours in the garden. Our morning Worship is a very delightful exercise to me. We have so much mourning to make that we cannot afford to be idle any part of the day, four little girls to sew for. Alice¹¹¹ and Emily have each their own mourning to make therefore can not help us. My sister is not at all demonstrative in her grief, too quiet to please me. Tom Antill rode out today to see if he could be of any use, he is very kind. I am greatly afraid that Bessie [Elizabeth Spencer, then aged 9] will give a great deal of trouble as she grows up, her temper shows so many indications of being naughty. I do hope and pray that these children may become more obedient and teachable.

16th.

Baby 3 months old today, poor dear, she was just 2 months old when her Papa was killed by the Blacks. A fresh telegram was received by Tom Antill from Mr. Roope to say that my nephew Tom Wills was on the Cullinlaringo Station with 2 other men, all well.

These must have been the two men his father sent away with teams to the Albinia Downs to bring up supplies, consequently they were not on the station when the massacre took place. Mr. and Mrs. A. McDonald called today accompanied by their friend Mrs. Tom Lascelles who is an exceeding nice person.

People are very kind in calling to sympathise with Mrs. Wills upon her most painful bereavement, but I think I should like to be left alone for a time, to brood over my sorrow but my sister's disposition is different to mine, perhaps hers is the best. I was delighted to cut a nosegay for each of these ladies of my beautiful flowers of which we have such quantities and the garden looks exceeding gay. Shopping in Bright's today. Tom Antill came in with more news of a private character from Mr. Roope to Mrs. Wills. I called at Mrs. Gunn's and lunched there. Both she and Dr. G. are very kind. A dreadful fire broke out on board a vessel newly arrived from England whilst discharging her cargo at the wharf, the "Prince of the Seas" a first class ship and was burnt to the water's edge. I wish Emily had not such a dislike to the word Aunt as she never addresses me properly. On our return from Town, the day being excessively hot, was no one to unharness poor old "Kit", the men all engaged

harvesting. I told the maid Norah to attend to the horse, she said she could not. I then told her to help me, she refused even to do that, and I with the assistance of the overseer's daughter took her out of the shaft and put her up in her stall while Isabelle brought her some mangolds 4 to a bundle of green stuff to eat. We made her very comfortable, I do not remember doing so much for a horse before. While I am writing there is a dear old magpie singing outside my window.

Sunday 17th Nov.

This day month poor Mr. Wills and his party of 18 men¹¹² were killed by the Blacks at Cullinlaringo station on the "Nagoa" river. We cannot imagine how the occurrence took place. Mr. Wills appears to have been armed but none of his men, they were completely thrown off their guard in having been on their journey 8 months without seeing any of the natives.

Sunday November 18th 1861

My manner of spending the Sabbath, we are apt to think we have done well if we go to Church, here we cannot go as the school house is shut up, but we have had midday Worship on each of the 2 last Sundays which is very much better than spending the day idly. It is more like trying to turn our talents to account. Took Baby for a walk in the cool of the evening. She was much better for her walk. Walked as far as the bull paddock, but Piper was throwing dust up in the air and looked so fierce that I dared not venture to open the gate.

Shortly after I left I saw the cook came through the field past the Bull and opening the gate without the slightest hindrance, perhaps I too might have ventured through if I had not Baby in my arms. We met the milking cows coming home. Poor Minnie¹¹³ has been in bed for 2 days with the measles, her face is one great blotch of red. Mrs. Wills received a very kind letter of sympathy from the Archdeacon and Mrs. Crawford of Castlemaine enclosing one from the Bishop and Mrs. Perry, the former has offered to stand sponsors for dear Baby when she is Christened. For that purpose they intend coming down on Friday. Had prayers very early this Evening 8 o'clock and feeling sleepy and tired I went to bed.

Monday 18th.

Shockingly drowsy this morning, managed to go into the orchard for quarter of an hour and tied up some of the young grape vines. I promised Mr. Roope that I would attend to them sooner but I have been so busy getting the mourning made, I will try to get them all tied up shortly.

Emily is exceeding disagreeable in her manner when she has any young friends staying with her. She says and does disagreeable things out of bravado. Miss Talbot has been assisting me to stitch away all the day at the children's frocks, so indeed has Pussy. The weather has been oppressively warm and every indication of a storm with plenty of lightning but very little thunder, the sky very black and the whole atmosphere in a dark haze. It however passed off to seaward, East, with only a shower.

Perhaps those who are harvesting were pleased at the wind up of the storm. Busy gathering rose leaves to make a sweet pot of pot pourri for Mrs. Wills. Minnie is much better of her measles today. Bessie is a naughty uncertain tempered girl, no person in the house can manage her but her governess, Miss Castieau.¹¹⁴ Baby improved.

Tuesday 19th November

Lovely morning, out into the orchard before breakfast attending to the vines. Carried my week's clothes to the washerwoman, Mary, she manages to spoil the colour of the clothes by steeping them all night, dirty and clean together. I found her wringing out clothes that had been so steeped and the water was very like saffron water. She shall not have mine until Tuesday morning when the steeping process is over. Minnie continues to improve.

Wednesday 20th.

Tom Antill rode out to Belle Vue before breakfast and before we were out of our rooms. Letters had arrived the day before from my nephew at Cullinlaringo for Mr. Roope and his agent handed them over to Tom and he brought them out here for us to read before forwarding them on to Mr. Roope at Sydney. These letters contained a detailed account of his Father's death, and begs of his Uncle to come to him with help. After breakfast drove to Town in the dairy cart with Mary Davey.

Our horse poor old Kit is a sorry beast and I could not possibly get her out of a walk, she is always so loaded with parcels from Town. Mrs Wills is busy writing letters to her sons in Germany as the mail sails on 25th. We are quite tired after being in Town all day walking about, went to bed early with a sore throat.

Thursday 21st.

Remained in my room 'til Prayer time arrived, read the 21st chapter of Job where he speaks of his former greatness. Walked out after breakfast to see a Mrs. Macerel who makes cheese to get a little information from her upon that subject. She very readily imparted all she knew to me, and her husband was equally obliging. On my return home found Mrs. Curlewis¹¹⁵ sitting with Mrs. Wills sympathising with her. Indeed every one is most kind in that respect. Saw Jeff Buckland yesterday when leaving Town and the poor fellow could hardly speak to me. I could see by his manner who his thoughts were upon. He could only say "How is Mrs. Wills". Oh poor Mr. Wills, I cannot realise the fact of his being dead, and yet is both dead and buried, poor fellow. How he must have struggled with the Blacks and the thoughts of his family would be maddening at the time as he found the wretches getting the better of him. Oh the horrible death - to be butchered with one of his own axes, cruel! cruel! in the extreme. I have known him since he was 21 years of age, he was killed 17th October. On the 3rd October he was 49.¹¹⁶ Sad! sad! news for his poor Boys to hear.

Spent the greater part of the evening in the dairy seeing the butter being made and making preparations for cheese making in the morning. We have a magnificent screw press - a curd breaker and everything complete for cheese making.

Came into the dining room at about quarter to nine o'clock and to my astonishment there sat Mr. McJennett just returned from some meeting at a neighbour's house, tiresome man.

He makes all sorts of excuses for coming here. Had Worship, it then being half past 10 o'clock, he took his departure.

November 22nd.

Poured rain this morning. I was routed early this morning by the dairy maid knocking at my window. Dressed and went to the dairy and waited 'til the

milk was brought in from the cowshed. After setting the milk came back and dressed for breakfast, then returned to the dairy and found the curd had not thickened. Mrs. McEral also came to show us how to manage it. She told us that we had not heated the milk sufficiently before mixing, and the consequence was that we had to heat a saucepan full of the milk. After a half hour another saucepan full had to be warmed, and that did not turn it enough. Then Mrs. Wills came to us and she desired a large boilerful of the half turned curd to be set on the fire. That was done, and after it was added to the bulk of the milk, the curd thickened very well and we made our first cheese. We made another in the evening. Having only 2 vats we could make no more for some days. Mr. McJennett drove Mrs. Crawford out from Town this evening, they arrived here just in time for tea. What a foolish looking man that McJennett is, he casts sheep's eyes about the room all the evening and looks silly.

Saturday 23rd.

Left my room about 6 o'clock this morning, weather fine, went to the dairy, turned the cheese in the press and went to the garden and gathered cherries for the children, whom I found neatly dressed. Mr. Ramsey drove to Town today and Miss Castieau, Mrs. Crawford, Alice Harrison accompanied him, they having some business to transact. Busied myself in various ways. Miss Talbot did not come up today to sew, I therefore made that an excuse for not sitting to sew all the morning. Our good friend Tom Antill called about dinner time, he brought his late Uncle's Will out with him to read to us. Poor fellow, he has provided well for his wife and, so far as we can see, for his children. Ten years is a long time in business events, the youngest named in the Will¹¹⁷ will then be 15 years of age. Poor Baby will be 10 years. We all may be in our graves. Oh may we all spend our time and our talents as becomes our Christian calling, looking unto Jesus. Weather showery after 10 o'clock and the party returning from Town were caught in it. Tom praised our cheese making very much after tasting the curd and grinding another cheese.

Sunday 24th November

Calm peaceful morning. In addition to our morning Worship we had midday Worship and was assisted in our readings by Mrs. Crawford. She also read a short discourse (by way of Sermon) on "The Family Discipline" out of a little book called "Nights of Weeping" by Rev. Horatio Bonar D.D. (Kelso).

Monday 25th.

Stormy morning, rose before six o'clock to make cheese. The day was so warm and the maid heated the milk to boiling heat, prevented the milk thickening in proper time. Mr. Chas. Johnson called today to look at the farm. He is leaving his own, the rent being too much and he offered 8/- an acre for it, the first rent being 25/-, more than he could make out of the farm. He is uncertain as to what he will turn his attention to. I do not feel quite comfortable. First of all I do not feel that I am at all good, or anything approaching good. I would like to have a closer walk with God, my mind more stayed upon Him, all my thoughts to centre in Him.

I do earnestly hope to be taught by his Holy spirit that I may amend my life. The servants here are a constant source of annoyance to me, they are mostly very low, vulgar, Roman-Catholic Irish, uneducated, deceitful people. The mail sailed today - the "Benares".

Tuesday 26th.

Morning windy, went to the dairy at 6 o'clock and put the curds into the vats, had a discussion with Mrs. Crawford upon Church Management but I find that there is no use discussing such matters with Episcopalians, they are so bigoted. Miss Talbot called - good natured creature. The children like her because she tells them stories, she sits by their bedside after they go to bed and tells them story after story. I find her so useful with her needle that I quite miss her when she does not come up. We have still so much to do, and Baby takes up a great deal of our time in nursing - we should not grudge it to poor Baby, she is such a darling. I do hope and pray that she may grow up to know her God and to rejoice in Him all the days of her life. Oh that she may walk in the paths of righteousness.

Wednesday 27th.

Morning very cold, indeed quite wintry and I have got a bad cold. After escaping it all the winter to think of my getting one now when it is supposed to be summer time, it is vexing.

Pussy went to Town today in the dairy cart and did not return again. Received a very kind sympathetic letter from Miss Johnson. She, as well as every one else, kindly sympathises with Mrs. Wills for the loss of her husband so cruelly murdered by the Queensland Blacks without any provocation. We saw in this day's Advertiser¹¹⁸ a piece of poetry by Mr. Kentich on the death of Horatio Spencer Wills, a kind tribute to his memory by our old friend, copied from the Sydney Morning Herald.

Mr. McJennett came in at dinner time, he also came in at tea time. We had just finished - he wanted to make believe that he did not want any tea, but when he had drank one cup he wanted more. Closed the evening by 10 o'clock with Prayer.

Thursday 28th November

Lovely morning, rose and amused myself tying up the grape vines 'til breakfast time. In the afternoon walked down to Mrs. Talbot's and saw the whole family. Miss Fanny who is demented was playing the piano in a furious manner. She seems to have no idea of time, she sat at the piano in full dress - a silk dress something after the style of Flora McDonald - very low neck, indeed half way down her back, short sleeves scalloped, the skirt scalloped in the same way and a sash crossing in front from shoulder to waist, and no crinoline. Her hair was beautifully brushed, altogether she looked remarkably well for a person out of her senses. My three nieces accompanied me in my walk today.

Friday 29th.

Rose at 6 and went to the dairy to prepare for cheese making. I do not understand why the curd is not quicker in coming. Almost each time we are obliged to rewarm the curd to make it sufficiently thick. Gathered cherries for the children, if I neglect doing so Minnie says, Aunt, why did you not get us some cherries this morning? Miss Talbot came up and helped us on with our frock, good natured creature. She shed tears today for "Burke" the explorer, a person whom she neither had seen or knew. She has a great deal of the milk of human kindness in her.

Saturday morning 30th.

Up very early this morning to attend to cheese making. Mr. McJennett came after breakfast with his apology for a carriage to drive Mrs. Crawford to

"Bellerine". They had proceeded about a mile from Belle Vue gate when they returned. The cause was when they came to a little ride the horse bucked and showed a decided determination not to proceed.

I had begged of Mr. McJennett to let his man come here that we might give him a load of water to carry down to Miss Talbot, but he forgot all about it. When I asked him if the water had been sent, in the after part of the day he looked foolish and set about it at once. Old Miss Newcomb¹¹⁹ was married on 27th November to young Mr. Dodgson, the Wesleyan clergyman. They may be happy - I doubt it.

Sunday 1st Dec

Reached the breakfast room this morning as prayers was nearly over, Mrs. Crawford officiating, morning very warm, Baby has a cold on her chest. Mrs. Crawford thinks she is kissed too much.

Monday 2nd Dec.

Raining very hard this morning when I awoke and a most agreeable change in the weather. Poor Miss Talbot came up to help us as usual. We have just about finished our frocks. I trimmed the children's hats in the afternoon, I never trimmed with crepe before. Mr. Crawford arrived without my knowing it. I was first made aware of the fact by seeing the hat peculiar to Archdeacons hanging on the peg in the hall. Pussy Smith drove out with him in McJennett's carriage. Wrote to Mr. Roope and also to Miss Willie. Mr. Ramsey goes to town tomorrow - he will post them.

Tuesday 3rd Dec.

Rain pouring down at 6 o'clock. Went to the dairy and made cheese curds and after breakfast had a long chat with Archdeacon Crawford upon the subject of Baptism. He says that Christian Baptism did not take place until our Saviour went up into Heaven, then he commanded his disciples, "go ye into all the world Baptising them in the name of the Father" so our darling Baby was Baptised today "Hortense Sarah Spencer".

Wednesday 4th.

Rose at 20 minutes to six, the morning being beautiful, busied myself in the dairy about the cheese. Mrs. Crawford went to Melbourne. I found out from a neighbour that we can make cheese first and butter afterwards from the same milk, a thing very few persons ever dream of, but after making cheese we draw off the whey and let it stand for 12 hours and then it can be skimmed like other milk set for cream. I seem to be nursing Baby more than ever, darling little thing. Mrs. Harrison came out yesterday to witness Baby's Baptism. Mr. Crawford styles adult baptism as an abominable heresy. I beg to differ.

Thursday 5th

Rose before six this morning and in the dairy. What beautiful cream we get off the whey. Mrs. Crawford returned from Melbourne, Archdeacon and Mrs. Stretch and daughter called today. Mrs. S is a very nice person.

Friday 6th.

Rose at half past 5 o'clock, busied myself at cheese making 'til breakfast time, made some very nice butter from cream taken off the whey from the cheese. Dairy maid as jealous as possible at my success. Read a letter that was written by Mr. Wills' mother to her mother "Mrs. Harding" in the year 1808 [see pages 11 and 12] in Sydney, in it she describes the arrest of Governor Bligh by Major Johnson. She also mentions 5 of her children, Sally, Thomas

and Eliza, Betsy who was Christened Elizabeth Selina, and Edward who is the 5th. She says Edward is a fine boy, full of tricks and ready to fight everybody. Judging from her letter she must have been a person of nice disposition, she writes so affectionately to her family.

Saturday 7th December

Lovely morning. Mrs. Crawford, Mrs. Harrison and her daughter Alice left Belle Vue at 7 o'clock for Town. Mrs. Crawford goes by the 8 o'clock train to Melbourne. Another of Mrs. Harrison's daughters came from Melbourne today on a visit. Mrs. Adela Norcott and her little boy "Amos". She is a very nice little woman and greatly to be pitied for having a very bad idle man for her husband who lives upon what little she earns, she lives with her father who is Station Master at North Williams Town. She told me that her parents have been married 31 years, consequently her mother is 45 years of age and her father was 28 when married. Mr. A. Anderson¹²⁰ and his nephew called yesterday.

Sunday 8th

The weather very fine, we observed our usual Family Worship at midday.

Monday 9th

The morning lovely. Mrs. Cutts very kindly offered to come up and shew us her mode of making cheese having lived in Gloucester and made cheese there. She is quite proficient, she does every thing in the dairy so well that it is quite a pleasure to see her go about her work, she made 2 cheese for us. She complains of our dairy being sour. Just one month since Mr. Roope left.

Tuesday 10th

Made cheese this morning with the refined rennet we got from Mrs. Cutts. It thickens the milk in five minutes. Dr. Gunn drove out Pussy Smith, I gathered a nice bunch of flowers for the Dr. who brought me a letter.

Wrote to Mr. Roope

Wed. 11th

Morning very warm, went to Town in the dairy cart with 5 others, Mrs. Norcott returning to Melbourne with her little boy. Saw Mr. Hannaford and Ducker about my piano, lunched with Mrs. Morris and had a long conversation with Mr. Morris in the board room on Mrs. Wills' business. Made a deposit of £10 as a commencement of a nest egg for Baby. Mrs. Harrison and Mrs. Morris seem to be pretty good company for each other. Mrs. H. suffers very great pain in her head, neuralgia, and she seems quite a wreck of a woman.

Thursday 12th.

Tried an experiment with our new preparation and found that it was not so speedy in its operation as the old mixture given to us by Mrs. Cutts. Left home at 20 minutes to 5 o'clock to see Mrs. Cutts cheese making. Her operations are both short and simple, she is particularly clean both in her person and her dairy. Called at Mrs. Talbots and got Miss Andrew to walk me home for company sake.

Friday 13th December

Continue cheese making, make one each morning and think I can manage to make them quite as well as Mrs. Cutts. The pupil is as clever as her teacher. I have often heard of sage cheese, as a curiosity, but I actually made one today. I hope it will turn out well. Mrs. Cutts is making 4 to send to the Exhibition and wishes me to compete with her. I do not at present intend doing so. Tom

A. called yesterday to read over Horace's Will to Mrs. Wills. Weather very warm and caterpillars innumerable. They are travelling in all directions and all parts of the house through the verandah.

Saturday 14th

Bathed at 6 o'clock, the morning lovely, went to the dairy and made curd for cheese. My sage cheese is now turning out very well, thanks to Mrs. Cutts' teaching.

Sunday 16th

Morning raining - our usual Sunday Worship very delightful.

Monday 16th

Our darling Baby Hortense Sarah is 4 months old today. She has a very severe cold on her chest, her Mama gives her an emetic 3 or 4 times a day to relieve her chest. She has had several mustard poultices on, as well as brown paper dipped in turpentine and laid on her chest. Made 2 sage cheeses this morning.

Tuesday 17th

Just 2 months today since our poor dear kinsmen H. S. Wills was killed by the blacks at Queensland. The weather is very showery and cold and windy. Mr. Ryland and Mr. Möller called to make arrangements about a treat for the Denominational School children. They cannot trust Mr. McJennett to make arrangements, he generally makes a mull of everything he undertakes. He is a real muff - so wanting in sense. Hope the weather will moderate as I wish to go to Town in the morning in the dairy cart.

Wednesday 18th

Morning very beautiful. Started for Town at 8 o'clock and arrived at Bank of Australia in time for breakfast. Mr. Elliott from Ballarat breakfasting with Mr. Morris and Annie, the latter left Town with Mr. Elliott for Ballarat by the 10 o'clock coach for the holidays. Mr Morris mentioned a gentleman to me who had returned from Queensland having visited the Station of Cullin-laringo. Indeed he was one of the party who went in pursuit of the Blacks who murdered Mr. Wills and his people. I should like to have seen him and should feel a melancholy pleasure in listening to him detailing all he saw on the Station.

Thursday 19th December

Weather very windy, made a cheese this morning. Miss Curlewis called this morning while we were at breakfast and remained till after dinner. Used the first cucumber of the season, flavour rather insipid. Sewing the greater part of the day. Making another frock for Bessie.

Friday 20th

Up at half past 5 o'clock, went to the dairy, attended to the cheese in the press and made a fresh one, had to do everything in a great hurry this morning as we are expecting Mr. McJennett with his carriage to take my three little nieces and myself to witness a children's feast to take place about 6 miles from Belle Vue, at Chevy, the residence of Captain Longdon.

Wonderful to tell Mr. McJennett was not much behind his time, and we drove first to the Kensington¹²¹ School House and saw the prizes distributed to the children, after which there was a general rush to the vehicles, the children scrambling up everywhere. There were wagons and carts of all description to convey the folks to Chevy, 13 vehicles in all. The children engaged themselves

amazingly, and there was an abundance of good things provided for them of which they partook freely. We returned home at 7 o'clock in the evening, and just as we came inside Mrs. Wills' gate, the shafts came off of the carriage, we thought ourselves fortunate that it did not happen before. Mrs. Longdon was exceedingly kind in making puddings for the children.

Saturday 21st

Lovely morning, down at the dairy at 6 o'clock for purpose of cheese making, Emily came down from the cow shed to make sure that she gets her milk, as we omitted the day before to leave her any. Mr. Ramsey drove Miss Castieau and Emily to Town. I received a letter from Mr. Roope dated 6th Dec. from Rockhampton, he was to start the following day with four men and a covered cart and 2 horses for Cullin-la-ringo, a distance of about 280 miles.

Sunday 22nd

Morning fine, but rain commenced about 11 o'clock and continued about all day and night with strong wind. Horace Harrison¹²² arrived yesterday - he read the first and second lessons of the day, 30th Chapter Isaiah and 22nd Acts for me at our Midday Worship. He reads very well.

Monday 23rd.

Rose at half past 5 o'clock and made a very large cheese and another in the evening. Dairy maid goes to Town early tomorrow morning and I should not be able to have her services having made the cheese this evening. I can do without her tomorrow. Mrs. Morris drove out today accompanied by Mrs. Harrison, a real wily old lady. Finished my letter to Mr. Roope to be posted by Mary tomorrow. Mr. McJennett honoured us with his company this evening.

Tuesday 24th December

Weather windy threatening rain, went to the dairy at 6 o'clock to turn the cheese in vats, amused myself till breakfast.

Alice went to Town this morning and returned in the evening with her brother Colden.¹²³ Reading an exposition on the Gospel by John by Alex Brith DD.

Wednesday 25th

Christmas Day and morning wet, heavy showers. My niece Emily is 19 years of age this day, Mr. Amsinck and Dr. Gunn have just arrived, the former has been in the habit of dining here for the last 3 or 4 Xmas, being an old friend of my nephew, Tom, we make him welcome.

Thursday 26th

Weather remarkably fine. The All England eleven arrived yesterday per steamer "Great Britain". All Melbourne was in a commotion at the intelligence. Every vehicle in the city was in requisition, as well the smaller steamers to go and meet the Eleven and bring them to shore. They received a very warm welcome from the citizens of Melbourne. Mr. Amsinck left us, carried a parcel of flower seed up to Mrs. A. Norcott for me.

Friday 27th

Lovely morning. Pussey and Charley [Glencross] Smith drove out today to take Alice back with them to Town. They are to have a picnic on Saturday. They came over to the dairy and caught me cheese making.

Saturday 28th

Morning windy and showery, went to Town with Mr. Ramsey. While visiting Mrs. Morris the rain came down in buckets full. Called upon Dr. Teague

homoeopathic Doctor to consult him about our Baby. He gave me some medicine and promised to call the following day. Got home in time for dinner, a thing very unusual with us when we go to Town.

Sunday 29th

Morning beautiful, poor Baby is very poorly today. Dr. Teague called and prescribed for her, her complaint is bronchitis. He says that if she be not well cared for she will slip through our fingers. He ordered a wet cloth to be laid on her chest at once and 6 folds of day linen over that. She's to have no more mustard poultices or emetics, both of which had been prescribed before by the homoeopathic Dr. but was doing her no good, was rather weakening the dear child.

Monday 30th December

Beautiful morning. Wrote to Mr. Roope and Emily who went to Town with Horace Harrison posted it for me.

Colden Harrison went home yesterday afternoon. Emily has gone to see Tom Antill's wife before she leaves. They sail on Thursday 2nd Jan, the sale of their furniture takes place today.

Tuesday 14th Jan 1862

One of the hottest days we have experienced this year, the thermometer stood as high as 95 in the dining room. Emily and Bessie went up to Melbourne for pleasure, hope they enjoyed the heat. Today is very much more agreeable, rain having fallen in the morning and continued up till 11 o'clock. Baby is five months old today.

Monday 20th Jan.

Mrs. Wills and I with Eugenie, Minnie and Baby drove to Town to meet Emily, Bessie and Miss Castieau at the Railway Station on their return from Melbourne. The All England eleven played in Geelong today and two following days. The carriage being quite full, I remained in Town for the night with Mrs. Morris and returned home the next day. Mr. and Mrs. Morris called on Saturday 18th Jan. He brought two letters with him that he had received from Mr. Roope written 130 miles from Rockhampton, these letters urged the payment of the licence fee to the Queensland Government at the proper time to prevent forfeiture of the Station.

Friday 24th

Mr. Alex Anderson and his two daughters spent this day with us. Soft voices, a thing so much admired in women, is eminently exemplified in these two young ladies, in quiet manner. They very much take after their father who is very amiable.

Saturday 26th 62

Wrote to my nephew Cedric by this mail.

Friday 31st

Wrote to Mr. Roope, Emily went to Castlemaine and I went to visit Mrs. Campbell at Lake Connemara and while there, she was (to my astonishment) delivered of a fine boy at a quarter to 9 o'clock in the evening. I have just been reading a passage which sums up this, "jars concealed are half reconciled which if generally known, 'tis a double task to stop the breach at home and men's mouths abroad. To this end a good husband never publicly reproves his wife, and open reproof puts her to do penance before all that are

*present, after which many study revenge rather than reformation.
(Fuller)"*

Feb 9th

Mr. Campbell's church opened, morning service by Dr. Cairns, collection for the day was £53 - an Opening Service was also held in the church on the following Sunday. I was not present as Mrs. Wills wants some one to help her mind Baby. I am the only person who can do it, now that Emily is from home.

Thursday 20th

Borrowed Miss Talbot's horse and dog cart and in company with Pussy Smith and Miss Amsinsck drove over to the Lake Connewarre and called upon Mrs. Campbell and found her at home and her mother with her. After calling there we then went to call upon Mrs. McCallum who had driven to Town, we only saw Mr. Sandy McCallum. Having plenty of time we called on Mrs. Allan and Mrs. Möller. This is the first time I had ever ventured to drive any distance and was very well satisfied with my days venture.

21st.

A sale by auction was held here today for the purpose of disposing of farming implements and stock.¹²⁴ The prices were very low. Mrs. Lester and the Misses Bowcroft dined with us. Revd. F. M. Fraser came in just in the middle of dinner, quite in time to get some.

22nd Sat

Miss Amsinck and Pussy went home today. A few drops of rain fell just before they started.

Sunday 23rd.

A most extraordinary day of heat, the atmosphere a dense mass of smoke. There must surely be a fire somewhere to the North as the smoke comes from that quarter. The sun has quite the appearance of a ball of fire, no church today, it seems as if we were living without God in the World. Reading a sermon in Mr Cheynes work, I find the following passage which suits myself exactly, and what I often feel, "that I should have sinned again, who have been washed in the blood of Jesus. It is little that other men should sin against him; they never knew him - never loved him as I have done - surely I am the chief of sinners and have sinned away my Saviour".

Saturday 1st March 1862

Minnie's birthday, she is 6 years old today, the children are very happy in consequence.

They are to have a feast on this occasion and all the children on the farm are invited to it, and Bessie has made a number of pretty things for a lucky bag and a grand drawing will take place in the after part of the day, every child being allowed to draw.

Mr. McJennett drove me and Miss Talbot to Queenscliff and to Mrs. Clow (Revd.) who lives within 4 miles of Queenscliff. She had promised 12 months ago to arrange some seaweed for my stall but she happened to lose her husband soon after she made the promise. The contribution will however be quite as acceptable this year as it would have been best year. The old lady was not at home, she had gone to Melbourne to be present at a Bazaar there, so I left a note of my card for her, I never saw seaweed more beautifully arranged by any one, it more resembles a painting than anything else, she has very great taste in arranging it, and I am told she is 70 years of age. We had a

very hot drive and a dusty road, but a delightful luncheon of fruit at Mrs. Clow's house, the servant very civil and attentive indeed.

On Sunday 9th March a fire broke out in Singapore Terrace, and the whole row of nine houses were burnt to the ground, every house was tenanted at the time and fortunately the fire broke out in the day (4 o'clock in the afternoon) instead of the night time, or perhaps many lives might have been lost. "The Lord preserveth those that fear him".

21st March

Received a letter from my dear Husband, he has been very ill but I am thankful to say that he is better again. He has had very sore eyes in addition to all his other annoyances, may God preserve him from all ill. Tom has behaved exceedingly ill to him.¹²⁵

Friday 5th April

Rain at last after months of dry heat, it is now nearly three months since we last had rain. The sun has not with the exception of a few hours been so covered with clouds as to be hid from sight. What remains of the earth be roasted and except where water abounds be converted into dust but the rain which has now fallen will set all to right again, the poor cattle will feel thankful to go and slake their thirst at pleasure. Colden Harrison walked out here on Sunday evening. Mrs. Wills, Emily, Pussy and Miss Castieau drove to the Kensington Church, the last Sunday and the previous one. I remained at home to mind Baby, she will not stay with anyone else.

Wednesday 9th April

A new housemaid arrived today, Mary Ross, and she comes from Ross Parish of Iain Highlands. I am please to hear her Scotch tongue, I am sick of the Irish servants we have had, they are so deceitful and dirty. I am a lover of a good Scotch servant.

Monday April 14th

A tea meeting took place in the school house at Kensington, and after the tea we all adjourned to the Church where we were addressed by several clergymen and Archdeacon Stretch. The choir of St. Paul's came out for the occasion and enlivened the meeting with several anthems, one of them playing the harmonium. It was decidedly the largest meeting ever held in the district, indeed the church couldn't hold all who came. The weather was very delightful and a moonlight night, the meeting broke up about 10 o'clock.

April 15th

Weather lowering.

April 16th

Rained all night and continued raining all day. Darling Baby 8 months old today and has 3 teeth and another just showing.

Wednesday 22nd

We drove over to Drysdale to see Mrs. Curlewis and family - found them at home and a nephew of theirs from Melbourne. He is a student at the University and has just taken his degree and in 12 months time he is to visit England for the purpose of finishing his studies. His name is Alfred Curlewis - ended our visit and drove on to call upon Mrs. Dodgson (late Miss Newcomb) saw both her and her husband - they were going away on business. When we arrived we saw their horses standing ready saddled, so after chatting a little while with Mrs. D she left us with the gardener and we enjoyed ourselves

looking over the garden. We then went up to the house where a friend of Mrs. D entertained us with cake and wine and fruit. It was quite dark when we reached home. The children asked their Mama to invite Maggy Curlewis to spend the Easter week with them, so we brought her home with us. While sitting in Mrs. Dodgson's parlour poor Baby began to cry while Emily was nursing her, and I thinking to relieve her, said shall I take her Emily, she said no, but Baby hearing my voice cried more and louder and Mrs. Wills said to Emily, give her Baby, as the child continued crying, and Mrs. Wills wished it. I made a second move to take her, Mrs. Wills still saying to her daughter, why don't you give her (she never calls me by my name) Baby and not keep her crying - and Emily said very angrily you only came to set her crying. I never saw a girl behave so viciously as she does towards me, and I think it the harder, as Mr. Roope has gone to Queensland purely to serve their interests and I really love them all. I cannot think how she can behave so to me after all the kindnesses I have shown to her and her family, and even now there is nothing that I would not do to serve them, but Emily strives each day to annoy me and succeeds too. She always says at the table pass that to Mrs. Roope, Auntie is too great a mouthful for her. Miss Phillips was present when the little scene took place with regard to Baby in the parlour.

Thursday 25th

Planted 2 prickly cactus trees this morning before breakfast, one on either side of the entrance to the orchard. What a nice agreeable girl Fanny Smith has grown, both she and her sister are very much nicer both in manner and disposition than Emily, their Mama is such a sensible prudent woman.

They certainly possess greater advantages with regard to their mother than Emily does with regard to hers. In educating girls, a great deal is done by conversation which cannot be done by book learning - how fond Mrs. Wills is of sitting up late, she did not get to bed till half past 11 o'clock last night, and now tonight when everyone else is dying with sleep she is sitting up poring over the newspapers with poor Baby on her lap. Baby would be better pleased to be in bed.

Friday 26th April

Went to Town this morning to make preparation for the forthcoming Bazaar. I have had a good deal of running about, received a letter from Miss Agnes Hill about the grounding or filling up with black wool a very pretty chair we have, she offers to finish working it if I provide the wool, I have consented to do so, and it is now in the hands of the cabinet maker to be made up. By having it made we get twice or three times as much money for it. The weather has been remarkably fine up to this time, hope it will continue so for some time longer at least till the Bazaar is over.

1st May Wednesday

Remained in Town with Mrs. Morris, Bank of Australia, who was good enough to invite me for the occasion.

She is a poor invalid and never rises from her bed till nearly one o'clock in the day. It is really sad to see so young a woman given up to a low craving for spiritous drinks, she neglects everything for the sake of it, and has now really become a very great invalid, it is sad too to see a person living for no object in life. She never reads, except the newspapers or a trashy novel. We intend to get several of the clergymen in the Town to come in to read and pray with her,

but she soon grew weary of it and we were obliged to discontinue it, as she began to say she would have no more psalm singing here. What a warning such a sight should be to those who witness her living without God in the world. She goes for a drink every day, weather permitting, her appetite seems almost gone, as half a teaspoon full of food is all she eats any day, her teeth are very troublesome to her. She is always complaining of pain in her feet, it seems to be an everlasting pain and prevents her walking much, except about the house. She is an awful tease to Annie, she is always driving her about, sending her off to her music the moment she comes in from school, the consequence is that the child dislikes music exceedingly, the poor child is driven to all sorts of shifts to deceive her aunt who is either scolding or slapping her, indeed she seems to hate the child as she herself emphatically declares something that she does so, and threatens to send her home to her father, a good thing for her if her father were to send and take her away, better for her to live in poverty than have her morals corrupted.

Mrs. Morris unfortunately tells untruths all day long, and invents such strange stories without any foundation whatever. She is very good natured, very impulsive, acts more from impulse than from principle, she will give away all she has to any one who will tell her a pitiful tale, tell anything in confidence and all the Town will know of it. In fact you cannot trust her, she has given all her silk and other dresses away to her two servants, while her sister is really in great poverty with her family. She has many opportunities of helping her sister if she only had the inclination, being surrounded with all the comforts and luxuries of life. According to arrangements previously made the Bazaar opened on Tuesday 13th May.

The ladies were all very busy in the morning arranging their stalls, mine was at the head of the room and a very much larger one than I bargained for.

However I had enough to fill it and at three o'clock visitors were admitted, the amount taken altogether was £422, the takings at my own stall was £58-8-0 and deductions of £4-14 paid to the cabinet maker for framing the seaweed and making the chair, leaves a balance of £53-14 which I paid into the Bank to the credit of the Ladies Benevolent Association. I remained in Town a week after the Bazaar to attend a meeting of ladies and settle up matters on connection with the Bazaar, and on the Saturday 24th May returned to Belle Vue amidst a very heavy fall of rain, but fortunately we had the carriage.

Emily and Miss Castieau had come to Town in the morning on their way to "Lunan" where they remained till Monday 26th. How strangely Emily behaves to me, she manifests a spirit of opposition to me because she is inclined to have her own way even when she is in the wrong, especially in going about. She is too independent for a young lady and would if she could visit every place without a chaperone which is not quite the thing for a young girl to do. For the first week after my return home she never, when going to bed, wished me good night, although she would kiss Miss Castieau who would be sitting by my side. She is certainly a very strange girl and Miss Castieau was certainly not very far wrong when she spoke of her as being a girl of a queer disposition. I, one day received a letter from Emily while she was in Sydney. Miss Castieau was present when I received it and wondered she had not received one too. I remarked that wonder at her expecting a letter from Emily, as when she was at home she never made a companion of her, she replied, well I do as much as it

is possible for me to do, with a girl of such queer disposition. Received letters from Mr Roope dated 29th March, Mr. Morris received ditto on 20th May and was quite in a fret at the contents. We have had no more than 4 dry days all this month, the ground is completely saturated.

May 30th

Began to cut the hedges

1st June

The overseer's wife brought forth a fine girl, the day being Sunday and very wet and cold. George Smith came out with newspapers.

2nd June

Did a little gardening although the ground is rather too wet.

3rd June

Mr. McJennett came and stayed the evening. Dr. Foster Shaw came in the morning and performed an operation on Bessy's great toe, cutting each corn completely out, poor child she screamed and cried dreadfully for some time after the operation was performed. She is now obliged to lie on the sofa and is doing very well, amusing herself reading and making patchwork.

4th June

Mr. McJennett called today and brought me some seaweed. The weather continues dry and I have been enabled to do a little gardening

Thursday 11th June

George Smith came out this evening and brought our letters and newspapers with intelligence of the English mail. Cedric had sailed by the "Wellesly" in April and may be expected in July. Mr. McJennett has come again and has been singing all the evening. I have had Tom Larkins working all day in the garden among the flowers.

It is pretty plain to see that Pussy would like to get up a flirtation with Colden, but he seems to have other fish to fry.¹²⁶ He looked as spoony as possible last Whit Monday he spent here, it being a holiday. Emily is beginning to starve herself. Pussy has put that notion into her head, a thing she never did before. Miss Puss is a regular sly boots and puts many things into Emily's head that she would never thought of if she had been by herself. One girl often spoils another. Mrs. Wills received a letter from Tom today.

12th June

The weather continues very fine although the state of the roads is such as not to make travelling pleasant. The farmers are all busy getting their crops in. I forgot to mention the failure of Longmore and McKerras,¹²⁷ the latter owing my husband a pretty good sum of money.

Longmore very wisely got out of the way by going to England before the failure took place. He left the Colony in January 1862 early in the month, the failure took place or was announced on the 24th April the day before the sailing of the mail, tho it was announced only then it was expected long before. McKerras is a thorough swindler.

Saturday 14th June

Mr and Mrs. Morris drove out today accompanied by Miss Ryland and Annie McKenzie, poor Mrs. Morris has quite an idiotic expression on her face, Mrs. M complained of the state of our roads. I said it was high time we mended our ways. Emily went to Town with Pussy and missed the Morris'.

Sunday 15th June

Beautiful morning, Colden Harrison came out to Belle Vue and after dinner accompanied the girls and Miss Castieau to the Kensington Church. Nuggett being sick they walked over.

Monday 16th

Colden started for Town early this morning taking a parcel of verbenas, 3 varieties, for Mrs. J. Guthrie. Our darling Baby is 10 months old today and is looking so fat and chubby. She has seven teeth.

Tuesday 17th

Poor dear Horace has been dead 8 months this day, I never can cease lamenting him, cut off in the prime of manhood, none of his children will ever be so agreeable as he was or so kind or good natured. Emily is particularly disagreeable in her manner to me because I disapprove of her conduct in some things.

Wednesday 18th

Anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo. Took darling Baby for a long walk, showed her the cows with which she was delighted and came home in high spirits, at tea time she would insist upon caressing Pussy's bright magenta coloured jacket causing every one at the table to laugh very heartily and quite shocking Miss Castieau by causing the children to laugh at table. The weather broke again today, it is now raining and I am suffering from tooth ache.

Thursday 19th

Weather threatening rain, poor Mrs. Foster Marshall died last week 11th of rupture of a blood vessel, her poor Father and Mother will feel the loss much, tho' it has been for a long time expected that she would die quite suddenly.

Friday June 20th

Morning beautifully bright, after 1 o'clock it rained again. Our darling Baby is one of the merriest little things I ever saw. I feel quite discontented living in the same house with Emily, she is so very disagreeable, ready to say any impudent thing to you if you only speak.

I find the best way is not to speak at all. I wish very much that Mr. Roope would come and take me away. I have been reading this week upon two different occasions the following quotation "Better to endure the ills we have than fly to others that we know not of" and they have as it were quietly fixed themselves in my mind.

It maybe that the Great Disposer of Events himself is speaking to me in this way, showing that I should be contented with my lot. I think I ought to take it in this way and pray for a more contented spirit, "Lord make me content with whatever thou in thine infinite mercy see'st fit for me." Mrs. Wills and I with Minnie drove over to the Lake Connewarre to visit a few friends, first of all Mrs. Archy Campbell, who was not at home but had gone to Town with her Mother.

I left a bundle of plants with the gardener for Mrs. Campbell. We next called at Constantia, the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Rutherford, it happened to be their dinner hour and they kindly invited us to stay to dinner. We found them to be very hospitable kind people. Mr. Rutherford knew Mr. Wills very well, while he was a member of the Legislative Assembly. His wife a God fearing person. At parting she said to Mrs. Wills, I hope Mistress Wills that you are or that we mean to be what is called in the Bible a widow indeed that you will take Christ for your husband for our husbands can do us very little

good, if we have not Christ for our husband too. I was so much pleased with Mrs. R that I could have hugged her at parting for her gracious words to my sister. Our next visit was to Mrs. McCallum whom we found at home with her baby - after half an hours chat we drove away forgetting our whip, which the man had foolishly removed out of the dogcart. We then drove to Mrs. Allan's (Allan Vale) which stands on the top of the hill. People will stick to old names. They are sometimes as in the present instance misplaced. We found old Mrs. Allan at home and very glad to see us, she is a very entertaining old lady, full of thoughts and ideas, and quite ready to give you the benefit of them all. We got a bundle of grape cuttings and some strawberry roots from her and took our leave of her about sun down, and as we arrived near the "White House" on the road we met Mr. Allan returning from Town in his gig. I informed him that Mrs. Allan was looking out for him, so after an exchange of civilities we parted and arrived home at dark.

Saturday 21st June

Mr. McJennett arrived at dark while we were at tea, it had been raining all night and continues the same this morning, so much that Mary (dairy maid) came to go to Town with the butter. George took some letters to post for us this morning.

1st July

Received a letter from Mr. Roope, Queensland, dated 26th May in which he tells me that he is leaving the Station in consequence of Tom's misconduct.

Monday 7th July

Went to Town on Saturday with Emily and Fanny Smith, left them at Mrs. Gunn's, and I went down to Mrs. Morris' whom I found very ill in bed. She was looking very ill indeed and was really excited, she was pleased to see me, poor thing, she is quite deranged. While sitting at lunch with Miss Ryland and Miss Johnson who are staying with Mrs. Morris during her illness, Miss Hinie called and mentioned to me that the next day was our Communion Sabbath in our church of which fact I was in ignorance till this moment.

I remained in Town for church, upon Mr. Morris' invitation. I was glad to join the Communion Service, first of all attending a preparatory Service in the church on Saturday evening 7 o'clock and obtaining a "token" from one of the elders. Mr. Balfour thinks it is indispensable to being admitted to the communion table. The weather today is almost perfection. Bessie and Eugenie went to Melbourne with Miss Castieau for the holidays on the 1st July. Miss Johnson is engaged with Mr. Morris to attend upon his wife and the house, housekeeper in fact.

Friday 11th July

The Wellesly arrived at the Port Phillip Heads and on the following day arrived in Hobsons Bay when Cedric came on shore, ran up to the "Parade" and found that his sisters Bessie and Eugenie were just preparing to leave for Geelong. He had the pleasure of escorting them home, and what joy we had at meeting him at home again after an absence of three years and a quarter.

Tuesday

Rain all day and for a week past poor Bessie is very much hurt at the remarks Cedric makes about her manners and person. She was ready to cry this evening because he teased her to dance and she has a sore toe.

He also remarks about her manner of speaking, and it vexes her the more that Emily laughs when he says unkind things of her.

Thursday 31st July

Cedric, Emily and Mr. Fuller went to the theatre last night and returned home about 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning. Mr. Fuller is a young midshipman on board the Wellesly, the vessel by which Cedric returned to the Colony, and was invited by him to visit him at his Mother's house, Belle Vue.

21st July

Emily received a letter before going to the theatre from her friends at Georges Hall, Mrs. David Johnson announcing the death of her son Charles aged 15 from an accidental gun shot.¹²⁸ The weather has improved yesterday and today. We have had some shiny days. Mr. Fuller is busy preserving bird skins, and I am arranging sea weed.

16th September

Mrs. Addy Norcott came out and spent the day with us and brought the boy "Amos" with her.

Friday 18th September

Mrs. Hornbuckle, late Fanny Harrison,¹²⁹ came out to see us, and brought her little girl with her. Her health is not very good and her disposition is of a melancholy cast, and rather fretful and refining. Her husband keeps a school at Buninyong. The weather is quite summer, and our flower garden has not been dug over, in consequence of the men being all engaged in farming.

Mr. Stephen Buckland has gone to Hamilton to attend the Government land sale, and Mr. Morris says that Cedric and Mr. Johnson cannot leave Geelong 'til a final interview takes place between Mr. B. and Mr. Johnson. I am most anxious that they should leave Geelong, as it will facilitate my own leaving, and I am most anxious to be gone from here.

Left Belle Vue on Friday 8th Nov. for good and remained in Town (Geelong) visiting Mrs. Poulton and Mrs. Morris until Wednesday 13th when I finally took my leave of Geelong by early 8 o'clock train for Melbourne and embarked on board the "Nosara" steamer for Sydney, at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, arriving in Sydney at 4 o'clock in the morning on Sunday 16th. Walked up to Captain Pockley's house to breakfast and attended church.

Left Sydney again on the Tuesday 18th at 5 o'clock by the "Boomerang" steamer for Rockhampton arriving at the latter place on Wednesday 26th November after an 8 days passage, having previously touched at Gladstone. Found Mr. Roope in very good health, but much older looking than when I parted from him at Belle Vue. Oh, he has suffered hardships in trying to serve the "Wills family". He was brought just to death's door, but no doubt in this case as in many others that through much tribulation he must follow our Lord, but let us see to it that we do follow him, and all things shall work together for the good of those who love God who by patient continuance if well doing, look for his coming.

Monday 29th Dec.

Mr. Roope purchased 2 lots of land on Gavial Creek, so he will be busy now in getting it fit for living on. I wish he could, or would, take things more easy than he does, he makes me feel quite uncomfortable by his fussiness, and I am quite sure he is wearing himself out.

I believe as I think all persons will believe and find who "take things" as the American proverb says "by the smooth handle" that this, our pilgrimage, has many sunny days in it, many sources of reasonable hope and innocent enjoyment, and many recollections which should inspire what is a never ending source of felicity - religious gratitude.

#8611031 T S W C Collection

William Roope's business was failing as early as 1859 as may be seen from his letter to Horatio. His problem basically was a fall in land values and the fraudulent default of James T. McKerras.

Roope went immediately to Queensland, something he had all along intended to do, on hearing of Horatio's death, and was manager of the station working with Tom for some time. The two did not get on and Tom makes many disparaging remarks to his mother when writing after the departure of Roope on 26 July 1862 in which he describes Roope as "a manager of old women, no more just as fit as any old doll to manage a station". Roope purchased land on Gavial Creek near Rockhampton where he set up as a wool scourer and also built a cottage in Stanley St Rockhampton in which he and Catherine lived until he died on 20 August 1881 aged 80.

Catherine Roope spent some time at Cullinlaringo acting as housekeeper, but she did not at all get on with Cedric and Horace and finally returned to Stanley St. where she lived until shortly before her death.

The last letter I have of Catherine Roope is dated 31 December 1883 and follows:

*Torr Cottage
Stanley Street
Rockhampton
Last day in the old year 1883*

My darling Horace and Sarah,

Many thanks for your nice Christmas card, the Vautins are moving up to live near me today they will live exactly opposite the old gaol where they will pay ten shillings per week instead of seventeen and six. She has lost her one pound per week which she received from her son Fred, he is ill having struck himself in the stomach with a heavy hammer poor Vautin is like a young fellow in his dress he says ah my hands are beginning to look something like now I got my proper work to do he was so excited when he got his situation he must work night and day and drink porter constantly and porter and oysters for supper they will not drink tea so Mr. Vautin from living such an irregular life got ill doctor said bilious fever then there was the doctor to pay. Doctor said he would allow him one glass brandy in twelve hours he was ill again after that now he is all right.

I spent a day with the Livermores two days before Christmas and I had such a nice Christmas day with Mrs. Proudfoot. While we were at dessert Mr. Roger Harrison came in with Mr. Gould and Mr. Leigh a brother of that at Springsure. Miss Williams called upon Mrs. Vautin I told her she was coming to see me but she was at Mrs. Proudfoot's the other day and never said a word about coming to me, the only reason I wish to see her was that I might send a pot caladium by her to Sarah. I think I will enquire of Nelly when she is

going and so try to get it up, it has a red leaf, perhaps Miss W will not take it for me.

Berry told me Miss W did not like Sarah, I one day heard her mutter something under her breath about Sarah though she never mentioned her name to me, she did to others.

There is nothing to prevent Miss W coming to see me because I parted good friends with her she has an unmarried sister here, not young, from 30 to 35. She has been engaged by Mrs. Proudfoot as a teacher in her school at one pound per week, is it not good pay.

Mrs. P has the best school in the town, 40 scholars when she broke up. The grammar school is dwindling away it is because Mr. Hay the chairman is too meddlesome in the affairs. Mr. Lindsay took away all his girls but one, whether she will go there after the new year I cannot say. You ought to read all the reports of the grammar school in the paper to understand it.

I do not know how many music pupils Mrs. Houseman has, only few I am told. She has moved into town.

Mrs. Proudfoot, in engaging Miss W's sister, told her she could board in her house - that would be akin to one hundred pounds a year, but if she preferred she could board with her sister, but she was not to take pupils of her own.

In speaking to Cedric of anything I tell you, do not mention my name in connection with anything, you can speak of anything you like but not my name let them forget me.

One of the prettiest cards I have seen after mine is one from Mrs. George Hope, Geelong, to Mrs. Proudfoot, it is an iris or fleur de lys blue or purple, lovely. I saw Edward Barnett passing the post office the other day, if any of them come down be sure to send them to me that I may send up something by them, plants. We have such unusual wind, wind, wind and on Christmas a great violent thunderstorm, the worst yet. The water that fell was great, you might float a boat anywhere, the shopkeepers were disgusted no one could go out.

I believe that Harry the Kanaka has just passed my fence with his long bent figure. I must tell you now what Mr. Livermore says, the last time I spent a day there last week he said "has Cedric written to you Mrs. Roope" I said "no but I am expecting to hear from Horace" - "because I think it is the height of unkindness to you not to write at this season, you should not be neglected. People in England are so careful to teach their young to care for aged relatives, you ought not to be alone Mrs. Roope, if you should be taken ill you are entirely with strangers."¹³⁰ I said I feel that but I could not live with Berry I told Mrs. Livermore she wanted me to work in her garden at a time when I could not both from bodily weakness and beside the ground was as dry as ashes.

I told Cedric that Berry was very disagreeable and he replied "she says you are." Cedric never asked me to work in the garden, I think it a feather in my cap that I would not quarrel with Berry though I was conscious that she used to talk of me to her lady help Mrs Walker until I disliked her. Both she and Mrs. W took to talk at me at the table when Cedric was not there, as a rule I never took notice of them. Mrs. W often used slang, I would then make some remark at which Miss W would burst out laughing, I never used slang. I think Miss W understood Mrs. W thoroughly and did not love her. As to Berry

she said openly at the table that she did not care for any of the Wills but Cedric, the most unhappy time of her life was when she was staying with his mother at the Hall.

I suppose you know that Mr. Livermore is managing for Mr. Brown, Mr. Ogg will go in for business on his own account.

There is to be a midnight service in the Church of England tonight beginning at eleven o'clock and continue till the new year comes in. I went to the Church last night for the first time.¹³¹ I liked the new curate, Reverend Mr. Yorke, as a reader he does it well and speaks out. He assists Mr. Diggins with the service.

Berry in her usual sly way has sent three cards from the three eldest girls with all their love to Mr. and Mrs. Vautin, and kind regards, and miss them so much. So Vautin got he tells me some nice cards in return. Two or three times she say the value of these sent to her sent, their likenesses as well. Berry will show you the cards but she will not tell you she sent any to the Vautins.

Miss Williams brought down a message to Mrs. Vautin that Mrs. Wills missed her so much. Vautin tells me he had an offer to go on a station, three pounds per week board and washing done. "Why did you not take it" I said "because they did not want the wife" Then Mrs. V said "I would rather live in the bush I do not care for towns" well I said "why did you not go up to Mrs. Horace" - "that would not be home, I could not live in a pigsty" - "oh no" says Vautin "no more Wills station for me, you could not go to a worse station to live." He is working at Mr. Henry Jones books, I thought he would not go on at Williams brothers. I am sure he is not getting four pounds per week, I will ask him.

So they have moved to a cheaper cottage, their door looks right at the gaol gate, four rooms no outbuildings except the sentry box.

She says "Dadda I can't live here, Dadda I can't live here" - "but you must" emphatically says Vautin. She had a large gin bottle half a gallon before her of colonial beer, she seems to be drinking this all day, never tea or coffee. She wished me to tell Vic not to send her letters to Mr. Hart as she does not speak to them. Hart does not like their goings on.

Instead of telling you about myself I am gossiping about the Vautins, they amuse me. Berry will tell them anything you say so mind my name does not come up, I will wait to hear from you then I will tell you all about myself. Vautin is going along before my cottage, helmet hat with silk scarf hanging behind, one end longer than the other, quite rakish looking. I can't tell you half they say they are really funny.

Your affectionate aunt

CR

#8831231 T S W C Collection

She died on 25 June 1893 at Fernlees and left her estate to Cedric. This consisted of shares in Mt Morgan and the Gas Company and some cash, Cedric's wife is recorded as having said that Cedric "deserved it after putting up with her for so many years".

Catherine Roope is one of my favourites because of her humanness. She was devious and a troublemaker, she had a drinking problem in later life, she was devout and at the same time a dreadful gossip but she clearly adored her husband. It seems sad that

they had no children as the way in which she writes of the baby Hortense in her diary shows a depth of feeling for small children. I feel great pity for her and the way her life turned out.

CHAPTER 10

CULLINLARINGO STATION 1861-1892

My cousin Tom Wills has all of the diaries and documents about the station which came down to him from his great grand-father Cedric who managed the station from 1864 to 1892. This chapter has been written to the best of my ability from the materials which are available.

Following the massacre in October 1861 Tom Wills stayed on the station and began to rebuild pending the arrival of his uncle, William Roope, who came up in November 1861. The first document which I have referring to the station is a letter from Cedric, still at school in Germany, written to Tom on 17 February 1862 in which he is already beginning to take his responsibility seriously and make some excellent suggestions about improving the family flock.

Cedric must have left Germany almost immediately thereafter because he arrived back in Australia on the *Willesby* in July 1862. He went up to Cullinlaringo almost immediately to join Tom.

Early in June Tom Wills wrote to his mother in a letter which begins to discuss the difficulties which he has in managing the station; he was never a good manager having failed even as the honorary secretary of the Melbourne Cricket Club in 1857/8.

The two trustees of Horatio's estate were Mr. Morris, the manager of the Bank of Australasia in Geelong, and Horatio's cousin Thomas Wills Antill who never really acted because he was transferred to New Zealand in February 1862. Mr. Morris thereafter bore the whole brunt of the estate. Mr. Gregson mentioned in this letter was the manager of Rainworth Station who was the leader of the party of white settlers who took their revenge on the local aboriginals after the massacre.

*8th June 1862
Cullinlaringo
Nogoa*

My dearest Mother,

Mr. Roope has left this day for Rockhampton - our carrier took yesterday 10 bales and a half of wool and Beattie the carrier takes down the remainder next week. We commence lambing on 16th August.

Little Hortenses's birth. My dear dear little sister, I hope I shall live to see her. We have a great deal to do and if Mr. R. had remained it would never have been accomplished by lambing time. I am glad Mr. R has gone, he is too slow for this work. I hope if they send another he will be an active man and not 61, today being Mr. R's 61st birthday, so he says.⁷⁵

I had the best dinner today since I left Geelong - roast mutton, preserved potatoes, rice, jam and pickles - a glorious dinner.

I hear the "Pearl" has arrived all safe and I dare say I shall get the things all right at shearing time. I hope I shall get down at Christmas to be with you all once more.

I thank God I am a little more comfortable since I received some clothing from Captain Pockley. I had the sandy blight for 3 weeks in the left eye and have totally lost the use of it, but I trust in God that in time I shall have the use of it again. I have now only one eye.

Mr. R says he has lost his right eye since he has been here but he has never had the blight. He got two casks of porter up and actually gave me a glass full and says he will sell the rest, they are both here and I think he might have given me a few bottles of it as it would do me a world of good at present.

It is fearful here having no one to mend one's clothes and I cannot do it even if I had time. If I had a wife here she would have lots to do or I would whack her.

Tell Bessie she must come up to take care of my things. Tell her I shall bring a wool bale to bring her up in when I go down. Mr. R discharged Billy Albrey today so he goes down to Geelong I suppose he also started this morning.

I am very lonely up here and shall be until I have a bonny little wiffee up here when I come home very very weary.

I shall send you a printed form for getting out German emigrants, fancy 50 pounds only for two years, what a saving that would be. Tell Mr. Morris by all means to authorise me or someone else to go in for it. A Mr. Feez a merchant in Rockhampton is the agent for bringing them out here. By all means let us have them up here - it would save hundreds of pounds. Ced I suppose will be out in October. We shall have lots of work but comparatively speaking by that time it will be very easy. We have more men on the road from Rockhampton and then we will get rid of all our 2 pounds a week men.

So we shall have none but 30 shillings men and if we get Germans it will not be above 10 shillings per week to pay them. So you see what can be saved by having them here as soon as possible.

I should have liked to get Old Annie and her husband up here but we had no huts up then but thank goodness we are a little more like Christians. Tell Minnie there is no one up here to love old Tom but the gum trees and the little lambs. The latter are doing first rate I am glad to say and will have a good fleece by shearing time.

I think Mr. R. is rather crabbed at something the trustees have said to him. He does not talk quite so grand as he used to. What is Mrs. R. doing now? Mr. R. intends to start business in Rockhampton if he can so I guess as he says he won't go down to Geelong unless the Trustees wish to see him particularly in person. I draw orders on him now in Rockhampton till other arrangements are made as he told me. So you see he has left me at the most critical time - lambing - so much for his experience gained 8 and 20 years ago.

Tell Emmy I cannot write now for I shall be too busy, for the Lord knows how long. But when I have finished this I must write to my little girl. Mr. Black the shepherd is well and is doing well considering his height 6 ft 4. The only objection his hut mate has is that Mr. B gets so hungry on rations that he eats the fat intended for the lamps instead of butter on his bread, but

since our drays have come up he has been drawing quantities of jam and preserved potatoes.

Jam is 2/6 per pot, potatoes 2d per lb, rice 8d, pickles 2/6, curry 1/6, lime juice 3d per quart, dried apples 2d per lb. These last have come up to me a private order and all will be gone at a great profit. There is a good deal of jam in the store yet but at shearing time it goes in great quantities and pays well, as men will buy whatever it costs them, they all like sweets in this place.

I think I told you in my last that a beastly native dog had taken my revolver and I have not found it yet and not very likely to do so in a hurry, so I must get one when I go down to Geelong. I must take my chance, till then. I have a big gun. I think I will bring Pa's little gun home with me. I should not like to see it damaged up here so I will take it home when I come.

No rain and grass very dry up here now but I hope we shall have some before lambing. If so I think we shall do well. I expect to have nearly 40,000 sheep on this run the 3rd lambing from this if we have anything like good luck. You may tell Mr. Morris so if you please. Also show him the circular about the German emigrants. I hope I shall be able to have a great quantity of Pumpkins and Melons down this season, the Pumpkins are much liked up here by the men, so if they can get them they don't eat half their rations - if we are lucky with them it will be a good job.

One of Mr. Gregson's men has got the scurvy very bad so I am told. I hope no one here will get it - you need not be frightened for me my dear Mother - I shall fear no one and do my best what is my duty but I will not do anything that I know to be anything but beneficial to all our interests. So do not be alarmed about that. My Father had trusted me and I only act now as if he were himself present and could approve of what I do. Not such an old fellow as Mr. R with his antiquated notions.

I hope Mrs. Harrison will never be at the Point when I am there for I never shall shake hands with her again, so you may tell her so that it may prevent any mistake if I should see her anywhere. I am determined on that at any rate.⁷⁶

Give me respects to Mr. Amsink⁷⁷ if you see him and tell him I am much obliged for his last letter and tell him I cannot write at present but hope to have a pipe with him at Xmas and a pot of shandy gaff.

I see I am drawing this pretty long but so much the better. I wish I was able to write oftener to you my dear Mother but you must take the will for the deed.

We have a cat now or rather a kitten, a great acquisition to the stores and kills rats like fun. Poor Jimmy, Lassie's brother, was poisoned the other day - a great nuisance. Quadroon's puppies are doing well, 6 of them kept - all fine fellows. We have 7 chickens, 1 hen and 4 cocks now. I gave one hen and one cock to the men that reared the chickens at Norwood. Also we got 7 goats and I expect them here on Wednesday from Norwood. Baker is bringing them over in our dray.

I wish Ced was here to attend the store. It is a perfect nuisance - I have been called away to attend it some 8 or 10 times since I have been writing this but so much less wages to pay.

Tell Guy to send my love to Bangal. I shall as I said write to the little girls if I can get time as it is getting late now and I may not get time, so if I cannot do so now I know not when I may be able and this will not leave here until this day fortnight (Sunday) Whitsunday.

When will Uncle Thomas be out do you think? I got the Boy's letters alright. Give my love to the little ones and may God bless them all and also my dear Mother and may God in his mercy spare us all to meet again once more in this world.

I wrote to Mr. Crawford⁷⁸ last mail. I expect to hear from him by the next. We had a clergyman up here, a Mr. Kelly of Scotch Church but I did not see him, Mr R did.

I remain

Your affectionate son

Thomas W. Wills

PS

We have 4 mountains near the old camp named Horatio Spencer Howe and Wills and one Mt. Elizabeth (a beauty) and our hut is toward Mt. Emily.

#8620608 T S W C Collection

In September 1863 the Governor of Queensland, for whatever reason, decided to prohibit the further introduction of sheep prompting the following letter from Thomas Wills, Horatio's brother, to W. F. Ducker.

*Brighton
3rd October 1863*

Dear Sir,

I observed that the Governor of Queensland has prohibited the introduction of sheep into that territory. This prohibition will increase the value of sheep in that colony for a time by at least 50 or perhaps 100 per cent. I would suggest to Mr. Morris that Mr. Thomas Wills should be advised without delay not to make any further sales just now, but about 200 of the oldest ewes should have their lambs taken from them early and when in fit condition offered for sale. In my own case I should have the rams put to the ewes on removing the lambs.

Yours truly,

Thomas Wills

#8631003 T H S W Collection

Mr. W. F. Ducker was an accountant, stock and station agent and real estate agent with a business in Little Malop Street Geelong. I am not certain whether he became a trustee in place of Thomas Wills Antill (I suspect this to be the case), or whether he simply acted as an administrator on behalf of Mr. Morris. Tom Wills was in no way dedicated to the management of the station. There are several letters written by Tom to Cedric showing clearly that Tom left the station in Cedric's hands for extended periods so that he could go south to play cricket.⁷⁹ By February 1864 Cedric began to give the first indications of his strong business sense in this letter which he wrote to his sister Emily.

February 10th 1864

Cullin-la-ringo

Dear Emily,

You say Noton and George were out at the Point. If I were to tell you Jonathan was here yesterday would you know who that gentleman was? Not unless I told you before hand. Well neither do I know who Noton is without you tell me.

So Mr. Tom has got himself into disgrace has he? I wonder what it was that Mr. Anderson heard about him. Mr. Ducker got that letter which I wrote a short time back concerning those orders he had given on HAH & Co Rockhampton and I hope Mr. Morris will make Tom look out more what he is about in future.

Two of Macdonald's black boys have gone and have taken 2 horses, saddles and bridles with them. They have gone after them but might as well try and find a needle in a haystack.

February 11 '64. Charley McDonald was here today. They gave up looking for the boys after they had been out 2 days, serves them right for they used to half starve them.

Charles McD will be like his brother Peter or even worse, the other day I made a bargain with him about a steer, for Baker and myself had brought 4 and have got 3 yoked up, the 4th was hurt so he is not fit to break in.

Well we gave four pounds ten shilling Stg a head for them. Well I told Charley if he took the pipped steer back we would give him five pounds ten for another, he said alright and today when he came here he said "Oh you must have misunderstood what I said the other day" and began making all kinds of excuses and drew back from his bargain.

But when the bullock gets fat I think Mr. Johnson will give us four pounds for it as it weighs about 10 cwt.

Try and get Mama to get Dan sent up for there is the woolshed wants enlarging and Dan would do it first rate. Do you think George [Glencross-Smith] would like to invest some of his money in a few sheep? If I can raise enough by Christmas next I will try and get about 500 ewes and if I can get someone to join me and buy 500 more or two to gain and but one thousand more it would just make a flock of 1500, a nice size for one man, and I could keep them here at the station and it would pay well I know. The shepherd's wages would amount to twenty five shillings a week besides rations. I will try next Christmas.

Tom is an ass for not buying sheep when he gets such a salary, for a person could buy 500 sheep at from £250 to £300 and Tom might easily have saved that much.

If this disease does not break out up here I think we will do well with our bullocks for we can buy them at £9 a couple and when they're broken in we can sell them for £20 or perhaps more.

I have written down to Mama to get 20 pairs of water tight lace up boots here for myself. I can sell them up here for 35 shillings a pair and that will pay.

You are most likely sick of this stuff but I have no news to tell you. Mr. and Mrs. Mayd stayed here one night (when I was away) on their road to town

and Mr. J gave up his bedroom to them. The house has only 4 rooms and anybody in any room speaking can be heard. Ah well, we have a good supply of livestock in the house in the shape of fleas. There was Mr. Clark staying here that night and he slept in my room. Well, he told me that Mrs. Mayd would not let any of them sleep the whole night for she kept calling to Mr. M "John John what time is it?" Well, John would strike a match and see. Mrs. M would begin, "Oh dear, oh dear, I must get up, I cannot stand it any longer, I am so tormented with these fleas." She went on all night long groaning away. Clark said he nearly stuffed a sheet down his throat trying to keep from laughing. She is such an affected thing, not fit for the bush at all.

It rained very heavily the night they were here so they turned back again next day. Norcott⁸⁰ has gone down to Rockhampton. He will most likely spend his money down there for Rockhampton is a fast hole.

When are you to be spliced? Soon, eh? I hope this season will not be a dry one, for if it is we will have to put up a fresh wash pool but if it is anything of a fair season the old pool will do us.

If this station can hold out another year or so longer it ought to begin to pay for hut and yards there will be plenty of after 4 or 5 months, but some of the old ones will want shifting somehow or other.

If Tom has a row with Mr. Morris I hardly expect to see him up again. I may be wrong but it has got into my head and I cannot get rid of it.

The flood washed some of our paddock away the other day when the creek was up. Old Ben was going across on a log. He slipped off the log into the creek and he pretended to us when he came up that he had almost been drowned. One day I was down in the stockyard with him milking the cows.

He had made one calf fast to the fence with a short rope (it was a wild brute of a calf). Ben was going around the yard to bring the cows up when he got within reach of the calf that was tied. When it saw Ben so near it tried to get away but could not, but all of a sudden it wheeled around and made a jump into the air and caught Ben right in the throat under the chin, took him completely off his feet and sent him sprawling head over heels. I turned my head away when I saw he was not much hurt and pretended not to see him. He lay on his back looking at his hand for about 5 minutes and then he got up and threw a big stone at the calf.

Well I could not keep a serious face any longer, and Ben looked as though he would have liked to knock me down too.

I always thought Egbert was a better hand at gymnastics than Horace.

Last mail I got a letter from Mama, none from you, George or Pussy. I think George must have something to think about that takes up a good deal of his time now, for lately I have had very few letters from him.

You people that have most time always write fewest letters. We have no time but night and some nights a person does not feel inclined to write after working all day.

Well, I think I have filled up enough paper. All kinds of bosh and it is only waste paper and ink for I know you do not care to hear such stuff.

Love to all and some for self.

I remain

Your affectionate brother,

Cedric S. Wills
 #8640210 L W C Collection

Later in that month Ducker wrote to Cedric seemingly to acquaint him with Tom's inability to manage the affairs of the station.

Geelong
February 20 1864

Mr. Cedric S. Wills
Cullinlaringo

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 16th January I have duly received same day I wrote to you as Mrs. Wills had shown me a letter of matters relative to your brother and finance matters.

By my letter you will see the trustees are taking every precaution to prevent any trifling with station funds and it is for this cause mostly they have an agent at the station.

I am glad to find HH & Company have not honoured any orders drawn without Mr. Johnson's⁸¹ signature.

You are right as to the trustees proposing following the terms of the Will to remove your brother from the station - the Will is at the lawyers and I cannot get it now to send you the extract that you wish,.

Your brother has been to New Zealand with the cricketers and I believe is daily expected back.

The trustees nor myself have not yet seen him since he left the station.

You may rest assured that the interest of the estate generally will be well watched over and no irregularities in finance matters in any way will be sanctioned.

I am very truly,
W. F. Ducker

#8640220 T H S W Collection

Two months later on 2 April the inevitable happened and Tom was fired as manager. In this letter he asked Cedric to send his letters back which fortunately Cedric did not do, otherwise these letters would have been lost to the family.

2nd April 1864
Bellevue

My dear Ced,

Mr. Morris, Mr. Ducker, my mother and self had a grand meeting the other night and it was ultimately decided that I should not return to the station, what the arrangements are to be I do not know at present.

It is more satisfactory for me to resign the management until the ten years are over. When on the Station I gave Mr. Ducker a list of orders and cheques that I had drawn he sends you a copy. Please examine them with the bank commencing with Allenby's name and see that things are correct and paid for wages and etcetera and after examining the same sign it at

bottom as correct and also get Mr. Johnson to do same. I will write longer next time.

On Saturday we play the eleven at Geelong and the final match is to be on 21, 22 and 23rd at Melbourne

Take care of old Jack the horse. Baker I suppose will still be on. Don't let Mr. J ill use the sheep. Horace and Egbert went back to school yesterday from Easter holidays and leave Morrisons in the winter for a Geelong school.⁸²

Your aff brother

Thomas W Wills

PS

Return letters to me if any at station - also pack my trunk and forward same by first opportunity to Capt Pockley Sydney. Be careful with all letters in desk as I particularly want some of them. TWW

#8640402 T H S W Collection

Matters proceeded on with Cedric at the station for some considerable time and the next document which I have relating to it is written in September 1866 by Elizabeth Wills to Cedric.

This letter shows that all is not well at Cullinlaringo. There was a constant battle between those on the station who always saw themselves as being kept short of money needed for essential purposes by those in Geelong who did not understand their problems, and the trustees who seemed often to despair at what they saw as the profligacy of those in Queensland. In the event the trustees were probably right because at the end of the day the station was unable to support the level of debt.

September 26 1866

Bellevue

My dear Cedric,

I am really surprised that you could not write in a proper and becoming style when you thought fit to write to Mr. Ducker on any subject knowing perfectly well your letters are intended for Mr. Morris through Mr. Ducker. I really thought you had taken leave of your senses when I read your letter handed to me by Mr. Morris. In the first place you know that all that is done by Mr. Morris is for our good, not his own, and we cannot feel too grateful all our lifetime for the trouble and anxiety he has been put to on our account and I may tell you, if not aware of it before, if it were not for Mr. Morris' name connected with the station it would have had to be sold off long since.

And then to have such an insulting letter sent him by one of the family that he is doing his very utmost for is unpardonable and I trust you may see it in that light that I do, and acknowledge that you acted very rashly in sending in your letter before coolly thinking over what you were about to do.

You know Cedric your temper has got you into many a scrape before today and I had hoped you had grown to be more sensible. I should advise you as early as possible to write an apology for sending such a letter with regard to your salary. You know it was increased for you before without

having to ask for it. Please to leave Horace to enquire for his own or leave it to the Trustee. Whatever you both are doing is for your benefit hereafter. I am also surprised to learn that notwithstanding the oft repeated caution about any unnecessary expenses that Mr. Johnson has commenced another large paddock this would show at once that Mr. J is unfit to be in charge of the station seeing he did not think fit to consult with those in charge of affairs of the station to know what funds were on hand But as I said before only for Mr. Morris' name the station could never be carried on as it is they have to borrow and borrow to be able to meet only a part of the expense. Tom tells me the paddock you had up was quite as large as the two in front of this house and I should think large enough for the horses required to be kept up, there is no necessity for keeping in bullocks when there are so many on the place to see. I know the many years we were farming we never had a bullock paddock, the men were obliged to find them the first thing in the morning and get them. If Mr. Johnson was for putting it up it should have been agreed. I would truly have advised him against it having heard Mr. Morris speak of being short of funds.

We all find it hard enough to obtain money here but if it cannot be had then we endeavour to do without it as long as we can, and blame no one as you do. Besides you should look upon remaining on the station as part of your duty, and unless you wish to see the station robbed on all sides, for who would be there to counter sign the cheques with the manager?

Let me advise you to show a little more commonsense in what you do for the future or you will never benefit to take the full management of the station. You may depend upon it Mr. Morris does not take on any one as manager without good recommendation and although Mr. Morrison⁸³ may have been attending a saw mill, it will make him nonetheless a good man.

I hope you will see the necessity of keeping on good terms together so that the station may not suffer from it and you will find it to your own advantage to do so, and I feel confident you will gain more knowledge of sheep from him than you could from Mr. J. If you have any notion of marrying I should strongly advise you to postpone it until you are your own master or it may cause more unpleasantness.

Hoping you take all I have said with the best possible feeling and apologising for the past.

If you have any geese let them sit on their own eggs, they can cover them best. Hill and his wife are staying here, Hill thinks of starting back to Queensland and leaving the old woman here. Tom and Hill commenced shearing today, the moon was eclipsed last night.

You astonish me by saying no one thought it worth their while to let you know that Mr. J was to be removed. I have written at least three times and if letters did not reach you there must certainly be a good many get astray. I trust I shall never again hear of you allowing your temper to get you into a scrape.

May God guide you and give you a proper spirit to submit to His will in all things.

All at home join me with best love to yourself and brother Horace.

Ever your loving Mother

E Wills

P.S

Your Aunt Alexander sent you and Horace 3 pounds each.

#8660926 T H S W Collection

Cedric was notorious for his violent temper and his father mentioned it in several letters; in later years Cedric was estranged, at least in part, from some of his children because of this. In 1867 the station got into financial difficulty and cheques were being dishonoured as this letter from Horace to Cedric shows.

*Eagle Street
Brisbane
January 13 1867*

Dear Cedy,

Mrs. Ellaway came here yesterday and I went down to the steamer to see her off and I was sorry to hear from her that her cheque has been dishonoured at the Bank at Rockhampton with several others. One man who had one of the cheques says he is going to put it into the hands of a lawyer and she also says that Bird⁸⁴ does not intend to deliver the wool until he finds how it is to be settled. I hope he will be able to get it settled without any bother.

You did not say in your last letter if Rea had sent an offer for wethers or not, I hope he has, for if not I suppose sheep will have to be sold no matter what they bring.

Mrs. McDonald told me that all down the road she hears all sorts of reports about Morrison and Mrs. Liddle but I hope they are not true.

Mrs. E also says that Mr. M gives her jam or anything she wants out of the store when you are out, and that Mr. M tried to cheat her out of money for the tents and made a mistake of 19/- in her favour in her account which she intends showing to Mr. Morris as soon as she gets down, but as she hates him I know she is trying to spread all sorts of reports to injure the station and him. I have just written to Ma to tell her not to believe half she hears about the station. I suppose Mr. Morris will be in a devil of a way about the cheques being dishonoured, but there has been such a lot of big cheques lately for the paddock shearing etc. that there has been a tremendous draw on the bank.

I am glad to hear that Nancy has got pups, Mrs. McD told me that you drowned two of them and that she thought Nancy had eight so that if they get over distemper they will be a good litter. I hope Fairy's have got on well and have not died. I saw in the paper that Mr. Child had gone cranky and had committed suicide, he did not look mad last time I saw him. I saw Saul Robinson and Correll the other day. They are going home in the Queen of the Colonies a vessel that is laying out in the bay and is to sail some time this month.

A telegram reached Brisbane this morning to say that the steamer "Telegraph" was lost with 70 people (passengers) on board, she was bound for Brisbane.

I heard the other day that Tom was going to England with the black cricketers, but I don't know if the report is true or not. No more at present, hoping that you are quite well.

I remain,

Your aff brother

Horace S. Wills

PS Remember me to Mr. Morrison

#8670113 T H S W Collection

And thus it was in April of that year Cedric and Horace set off on an epic journey of seven months covering 1,100 miles of very inhospitable country, droving a mob of 10,000 sheep.

I have a diary (probably written by the overseer as both Cedric and Horace appeared to leave and rejoin the party from time to time during the trip) of this journey which is fascinating for the sheer hard work and hardship faced by all concerned.

I have made some extracts from the diary's more interesting or informative entries, (much of it is mundane) to give some indication of what they went through.

Monday April 15

Counted out the wethers today and started the dray

Sheep counted out 10362

Tuesday April 16

Started with the sheep this morning, got as far as Yindie Creek. Had a visit in the evening from Mr. Morrison who had received a letter from Horace saying he would start on the 6th. One sheep died in the yard and another was killed before starting and left at the station.

Saturday April 20

Made about 5 miles today. Reached Springsure Creek. Made a break and counted the sheep. 4 flocks

2868

2746

2431

2293

10338

7 dead and killed

10345

17 short of count but being the first time they did not come very steady through the break.

Monday April 22

Only got to Gregsons with the sheep, grass too long. The dray went on to Buchanans. Made up my mind to turn back and go the new Barcoo road. Got permission from Gregson to spell today opposite the Head Station and also to be allowed to go out by the Norwood road. 1 sheep died on camp.

Saturday April 27

Settled with Williamson this morning for one weeks work. By cheque on the AJS Bank Rockhampton for one pound five shilling Stg. Hired another man in his place. Made about 3 miles to Van Dyk creek. Road

swampy in parts, crossed the dray after a little trouble but had not to unload. Crossed the sheep on a bridge made by those with the sheep ahead of us. Rained a little during the night 1 sheep died today.

Saturday May 4

Camped 2 miles from water. Made 7 miles today - very bad country. Camped within half a mile of the shanty. Sold 25 wethers at 9 shillings per head to the publican. Bought a cask for keeping the meat for one pound and paid for drinks 9 shillings. One sheep died last night.

Friday May 10

Made 9 miles through the first part of the gap. Camped without water for the horses and bullocks, had a light shower in the afternoon. Crombie, of Alice Downs - Alice River, camped the night with us. 4 native dogs came to the last flock today.

Wednesday May 15

Made 7 miles today to the turn off road at a long water hole. It is called 130 miles from Springsure to this camp so we have made 152 miles in one month (30 days) a little over 5 miles a day. And out of that time we were one day camped and lost part of another day through the bullocks. Killed a sheep.

Thursday May 16

Made 7 miles the last part of the road scrubby. A sheep died not long after starting this morning, it seemed to be in great pain in its bowels so we put it down at once that it had eaten poison grass, it was only bad for about half an hour before it died. On examining it after death Horace found out that it had been bitten by a snake, one fang was still in the wound about a quarter of an inch in length.

159 miles

Wednesday May 22

Steady rain during last night, remained in camp, rained nearly all day. We cannot travel as our road is through heavy plains. "Leopard" of the bullocks missing.

Killed a sheep.

Tuesday May 28

Made 6 miles along the Nieve, 4 miles rather scrubby and little grass, and last 2 miles open and pretty good kangaroo grass. An open plain on the west tonight, a turn off track on our east today to Mrs. Dolmans on the Warrego. Sheep are very frisky and jump about like young lambs on the camp. Weather cool and still looks like rain. 214 miles.

Thursday June 6

Made 10 miles today, 7 miles to Charleville township and 3 miles past on to a camp on the Warrego river. The country still quite bare of grass but plenty of water in the river. We hear a very different account of the country on ahead and are uncertain what course to pursue. We are at present on the road to Mangalor station 30 miles from town. 280 miles. Wrote to S.B. Morris, Power & Rutherford and others.

Wednesday June 19

Remained in camp today as the ground was unfit for travelling. Received 2 summonses, one from Bignell and the other from Fisher from Walter's station, both for not giving sufficient notice. To come off on the 22nd

next at Charleville. Got remainder of the sheep across the gully where left last evening. The squatters here are a nasty lot and try all they can to prevent us from travelling on this side of the river. 1 sheep left behind this morning.

Monday 24th June

Made 6 miles along the Warrego on good feed rather heavy for the team, birds nests round along the bank of river the plain still very soft Cedric returned yesterday being unable to get to Charleville as the Ward was so high. Had to leave "Constable" behind as he would not swim back again having missed a branch of the Ward the previous night and the water rising very much during the night. Bignell and Fisher were also unable to cross and they say they will not go any further Got a summons yesterday from Bigge and Co for camping during the wet which they say is in defiance of all law but accompanied by a letter which says if we go off at once they will not put in an appearance against us.

342 miles

Saturday 6th July

Made 6 and a half miles along the Warrego on Payne's cattle station very good feed, counted sheep this morning, our count should be 10268 made 12 short of that number but as sheep did not run steady there is likely an error in the count. Got two letters one from Horace and one from Mr. Morrison but not even mentioning a word about the sheep. We think of altering our route instead of going on to the Paroo going down to the company's station on the Warrego where we will not likely have to brand

Wednesday 17th July

Made 2 miles and struck the Paroo river which we found was running. Had to unload the dray and crossed the empty dray with some difficulty the banks being so boggy. "Jolly" one of the bullocks nearly got his neck broken, made a bridge to cross the sheep tomorrow and carried across the loading. The banks of this river all extremely boggy some of the sheep are getting swelled heads there being so much water everywhere that we cannot keep them away from it, one of the ewes dropped last night on camp but unfortunately the lamb was left behind and on returning for it found the eagle hawks had killed it. 450 miles Full moon

Thursday 18th July

This morning crossed remainder of the loading and loaded the dray which we started on having sent the flocks out for an hour or two feed before crossing then brought Ah Chu's⁸⁵ flock and succeeded in getting over about 1500 when the ground got so cut up that it was not advisable to cross the remainder in that spot, resolved to make another bridge and sent on for the dray to return - borrowed a cross cut saw and sharpened the axes at Sullivan's, cut a few spars for the bridge this afternoon there are a great many native dogs about.

Saturday 20th July

This morning logged some more of the race and repaired the break having logged upwards of 60 feet and having everything complete started the remainder of the sheep, the last of them crossing at dark and they went

over well. Brought our horses across the bridge and so we have everything over the Paroo

Killed a sheep

Thursday August 22nd

Made 5 miles over road which is the right hand track left the Paroo and camped on a waterhole on the Cuttaburra which comes into the Paroo near here, there are two branches this being the lower one. Put out sheep into a stock yard but kept watch on sent Kavanagh to Bourke to make enquiries about our permit not having as yet heard any thing of it. He returned back to the company station this afternoon from which place it is 150 miles into Bourke.

629 miles

Tuesday August 27th

Made 5 miles today following around the water which we are leaving on our right hand. The black boy who was sent to guide us today pointed out a course for tomorrow through swamps and creeks which it is impossible for us to pursue and we intend keeping outside all water. Any number of duck eggs to be found.

Tuesday September 10th

Made 6 miles today past some dry lakes this morning with grass growing in their beds. The country has changed very much in the last 50 miles being more open and a good deal of sheoak and box trees, we get some quandongs now and then. Sheep ran a good deal today, I think the feed must be sour. Weather very hot. Sheep died on camp last night.

Friday September 27th

Made 6 miles today past a small lake this morning and we are camped on Lake Poniamara this evening. Cedric returned from Menindee today but he has not settled about crossing the river yet. Got a letter from Mr. Ducker also one from Horace who states the horse "Constable" has been recovered.

Monday September 30th

Yesterday afternoon worked hard making a race and yard to cross the sheep and finished it about 10 o'clock this morning. Then started crossing the sheep and got about 1300 across, had very hard work getting them on board the steamer. Windy day. Made 11 trips. Sold to a butcher 102 sheep at 12/-. 2 sheep killed 1 died.

Tuesday October 1st

Commenced this morning first thing and kept at work until after sundown made 22 trips over the river taking about 120 sheep each trip and the sheep are full of burrs and all our hands have suffered severely, skinned and bruised. "Sailor" worked splendidly for us but was hurt a good deal but was of an immense assistance.

Wednesday October 2nd

Went on crossing sheep and made 23 trips, one taking 27 which was our greatest number, but an average of about 25 a trip all day. Telegraphed to W. F. Ducker that the trip is to be via Wentworth.

Thursday October 3rd

Continued crossing the sheep made 20 trips averaging over 30 a trip and finished about 3 o'clock, then crossed the dray and loading. Bullocks and horses are to swim over tomorrow morning. We find the burrs were very bad, our losses that we are aware of is 3 sheep.

Friday October 18th

Made 6 miles today over good feed, the country was more thickly timbered than that we have passed through lately - got a telegram from W. F. Ducker and Co who stated Egbert has started up for us. Killed a sheep. 901 miles.

Tuesday November 5th

Made 6 miles today, left the Darling river about a mile above Tapio and went on a cross track for the Murray. Good feed, went into Wentworth today and got a telegram from W. F. Ducker and Co which states that there are buying near Balranald for our sheep at 8/6 with wool on and advises us not to shear if possible. Hardly know what to do as the grass seed is bad and the wool pulling off, if the weather kept cool it would not matter so much. 1009 miles.

Thursday November 14th

Made 5 miles today on Mcfarlane's run, grass long and sheep travel very badly. Camped 1 mile from Macfarlane's head station. Egbert arrived today having come by the "Pride of the Murray" steamer as far as the Macfarlane's. Very warm day. 2 sheep died. 1048 miles.

Wednesday November 20th

Made 5 miles today the turn off road to Euston through the mallee being the one we travelled on the sheep would hardly move and only 3 flocks got to camp. Jack's flock camped about a mile back from the others in the scrub. Resolved to turn back and try another road by the river tomorrow. Very hot day. 1 sheep died 1 killed. 1080 miles.

Thursday November 21st

Made 4 miles today, we traced our road back to the Murray and then went 1 mile on the other road, camped about 3/4 of a mile below McKenzie's wool shed. The sheep camped by the water nearly all day. Cedric went into Euston today and has not returned this evening yet. 2 sheep died. 1084 miles.

Thursday November 28th

Commenced shearing this afternoon with five black and four white shearers. Killed a sheep.

Friday November 29th

Went on shearing, the sheep are very hard and the men soon knock up. Also our shears are bad but we expect some up by the mail on Saturday. Killed a sheep.

Saturday November 30th

Went on shearing, now have seven white and five black shearers on the board but get on very slowly.

Saturday December 7th

Went on shearing but only 191 of Jack's flock. Killed a sheep.

Sunday December 8th

Jack finished work.

#8670415 T S W C Collection

I am unaware of the outcome, and I wonder how they disposed of the sheep and of the wool. During this time Ducker was taking a lively interest and in October 1867 sent Cedric a long letter on the subject.

Duplicate sent to Menindee

October 5th 1867

Geelong

Cedric Wills Esq.

Wentworth

Dear Sir,

Your letter dated from Lake Kapaya of the 9th September is to hand, and we are quite at a loss to account for your not receiving a letter from us at Mount Murchison.

On the 2nd August we wrote to you to both Mount Murchison and Fort Burke with Copy of Letter received by us from Messrs Brewster and Trebeck of Sydney in which they advised a sale should be made of the sheep at the Liverpool plains on the ground that the prices there were better than at Deniliquin - and we recommended that you should delay a little in order to obtain some reliable information as to the best market for effecting a sale.

Messrs. Brewster and Trebeck inform us that they have also written to you and we are therefore much surprised at your not receiving the letters.

On the 16th September we again wrote to you (in reply to yours of the 13th August) addressing our letters to both Mount Murchison and Menindee sending you copies of the previous letters and we hope you will ere this have received one or more of the letters.

We now send you a copy of last letter received from Brewster and Trebeck by which it appears almost hopeless to expect a sale through them - we also send copy of Letter from Power and Rutherford stating their agents at Hay, Deniliquin and Wagga Wagga will render all the assistance they can and recommending you to keep the wool on.

Under the circumstances we are at a loss how to advise you to act - we see nothing for it, but to continue your course steadily towards Deniliquin - keeping yourself acquainted as far as practicable through Power's agents or otherwise with the state of the markets - and endeavouring to ascertain the probable buyers in the districts through which you progress and as there appears no chance of higher prices ruling but rather the reverse we do not think you should refuse to sell if anything like a reasonable price can be obtained.

With respect to Shearing - we have taken the best advice we can get, it is to keep the wool on if possible till sold but if you find the prospects of a sale being made are too distant - and you claim it advisable to shear you can do so - and if so, you will have to make the best possible arrangements for Shearing - securing woolpacks etc taking care as far as practicable to avoid much cartage of the wool which could be sent down the Murray to Echuca from whence it could come by rail to Geelong to our address.

We could then either sell or ship it as we found best and the expenses would be less than sending it to Power & Co - or other agents in Melbourne - You will doubtless be able to find out the name of some forwarding agents at

Echuca who will take charge of and send on the wool by rail - We believe McCulloch & Co have a branch of their business as forwarding agents at Echuca but of this we are not sure. If you cannot obtain information otherwise we think a line to Mr. Thomas Fowle, Draper there (an old Geelongite) will meet with a reply. You can mention my name or perhaps better Mr. Morris'.

An old squatter tells us if you have to shear, your sheep will with good feed and careful travelling within a month or six weeks get very fat after being shorn.

You must bear in mind that we have borrowed £3000 on these sheep - in order to pay off the Bank overdraft at the beginning of this year - we must therefore realise on them - and we want the sale so far as the Estate is concerned to be cash - If the sale is on terms Power & Co will have to draw and endorse the bills themselves and find the tin for so doing and selling - they charge five per cent. If they want you to sign the bills tell them you have no authority to do so and if you did it would be useless as you would have to add the words "without recourse" to your signature.

Mr. Egbert leaves here Tuesday next to join you and expects to get a letter from you at Wentworth.

Make yourself acquainted with the travelling regulations as to sheep and rates of postage etc.

We are glad you have now drawn on Power & Co as so doing would we imagine bind us to pay them their commission - even if they don't sell.

Mr. Morris wishes to be remembered. Bear me in mind to Mr. Smith, I am glad he is with you.

Yours truly,

W. J. Ducker & Co

Write as often as you have opportunity

#8671005 L W C Collection

In 1870, the time set by Horatio's will for the station to run to before it was sold, Ducker began to make preparations for the sale of the property, and on 1 August wrote to Tom as follows:

*Geelong Victoria
August 1 1870*

*T. W. Wills Esquire
South Yarra*

Dear Sir,

I have only on Friday last got any reply from Mr. Buckland with respect to the matter we spoke to him about.

He considers so far as the station is concerned as respect to yourself and Mr. Cedric that the matter should be settled before the 1st of January next.

Now if this is to be done some definite arrangement must at once be made which will be satisfactory to the executors and to all parties. The case appears to me to stand thus:-

When your father died there were upon the station some 6,000 or 8,000 sheep, there are now about 38,000, every effort has been made to increase the value of the station as the most profitable asset in the estate. No money

has been received by the estate from the station, but on the contrary large sums have been borrowed and interest has been accumulating to meet the requirements of the station, and with a view of enhancing this property invaluable, and if station property generally, and especially in Queensland, had not so depreciated in value it would now have been worth £50,000, whereas if now put in the market I question much if it would realise £20,000.

During the past nine years the estate ought to have been receiving annually an income from the station towards the annuities and interest on original capital, and if this money of the estate had been put out at interest instead of being given up for the station's benefit it would have been a source of income for the estate.

The executors are now in this position that on the 1st of January the half of the station will be yourself and Mr. Cedric, and unless some arrangement is meantime made which will meet the case they will without delay direct the abridgment of the station, ie. the selling as many of the sheep from the station as will pay the borrowed money to place the station in its proper position with relation to the estate, this is an absolute necessity on their part and would not be necessary except that your interest and that of Mr. Cedric in the station must be determined.

If the sheep be sold the station will be ruined and I do trust that something will be at once arranged to avoid this apparent necessity.

Mr. Cedric is willing, so I understand, to bind himself to repay the difference his share of the station may be worth in excess of the amount which may come to each brother and sister, are you prepared to do the same?

You have expressed your willingness to allow your interest to remain in abeyance for three years, but this, Mr. Buckland says, is impracticable in the present state of affairs as by the will the value of the station must be fixed on the 1st of January. Of course the value then will be very materially altered to what it now appears to be if the sheep are taken off, and for your own interest and that of the family it is important that the whole matter be at once decided.

It appears to me that Mr. Horace is agreeable to a station life. Could you arrange to sell your interest in the station to him? It could be mortgaged to you by him or to a trustee for you so as to keep it out of the hands of any creditors who might annoy you - and so long as you received a yearly interest you could give him a long time for payment or could you not arrange to lease your share to him for a term with right of purchase for an amount equivalent to what each member of the family will get, he paying the share of station debt etc.

At the present time there is a large amount due to Mrs. Wills on account of her annuity and provision has to be made for the payment of annuity for life.

This will affect greatly the amounts payable to others of the family and I think you cannot value your interest in the station at more than 1,500 pounds but if you sell to Mr. Horace I think under the circumstances and the probable improvement that may take in station property that you should get 2,000, and if you came to any terms about it I would urge upon you so

to have it secured through trustees or otherwise that you would have the benefit during your life time without touching the principle which you could will to whom you desired at death.

I have written this hurriedly but I hope sufficiently clearly to convince you of the necessity of an immediate arrangement so as to satisfy the executors who have to act so as to pay off the debt incurred at the station and who are anxious to do so without depreciating the property in value.

I shall be glad to hear from you without delay, and if on looking over this anything further occurs to me I will write again.

Yours very truly,

W F Ducker

#8700801 T H S W Collection

Some days later on 19 August Ducker wrote to Emily, now married to Colden Harrison, setting out how Tom Wills has sold out to Horace. Tom was obviously already having the difficulties caused by his excessive drinking, and had arguments with everyone to do with the station, his family and his cricket club. The letter is self explanatory and proposes a course of action for the disposal of Cullinlaringo.

*August 19th 1870
Geelong*

*Mrs. E. S. Harrison
Melbourne*

Dear Madam,

You are doubtless aware that by the will of the late Mr. Wills it was intended that the Station so far as the Estate is concerned should be closed on the 1st January next - the property be realised on - the whole of the assets be determined and division be made. It now becomes a question as to whether or not this course should be adopted - the reasons against its adoption are.

1st, that the Estate will suffer much if Station value now be fixed and a sale be made to your Brothers, as Station property in Queensland is now so much depressed.

2nd, a heavy debt has been incurred for the Station with a view to increasing it in value as the most profitable asset in the Estate, and moneys of the Estate have from time to time been used for the Station for which no return has been received by the Estate.

3rd, the number of sheep upon the Station which at the time of Mr. Wills' death was about 8000 has been increased to nearly 40,000. A large portion of the run has been fenced thereby reducing the expenses to a minimum - and there is every probability that by the Station being continued longer for the benefit of the Estate generally the present debt would be considerably reduced and the financial position of the Estate be much better than it is now.

Under these circumstances it is deemed best that the Station should be continued three years longer for the general good of the Estate.

The difficulties against this are, that it would be a departure from the exact terms of the Will although doubtless a justifiable one - and it is one that should have the consent of all concerned if acted on - and it would be necessary that Mr. Morris as Executor having no interest as a legatee in the Estate should be indemnified by those who have the interest for any consequences which might arise as against him for deviating from the Will.. Another difficulty in continuing the Station for the Estate was this, that Mr. T. W. Wills and Mr. Cedric are entitled to half the Station on the 1st January next (the former has sold his interest in the Station to Mr. Horace) and the Executors now require that they shall pay a share of the debt incurred for the Station - and not only so but considering that the general Estate has been impoverished to make the Station valuable the Executors also require that Mr. Cedric and Mr. Horace (as the purchaser from TWW) shall also make good to the Estate the differences between the value of their share of Station (after payments of debt) and the amount which will come to each brother and sister under the Will; to this they will, I believe, consent - and I think they will also agree to allow their interest in the Station to remain in abeyance for three years and to allow the Estate to have the full benefit of the Station for that time.

It is further proposed early in 1871 to sell such portion of the Geelong properties as will realise fair prices and with the money to reduce the present indebtedness.

My object now in writing to you and explaining these matters is to ask you your opinion as to whether or no the Station should be continued for three years longer for the good of the Estate if it can be so arranged - and whether you (and Mr. Harrison if necessary) will sign a consent thereto embodying an indemnity to Mr. Morris as before mentioned - of course the same document would be signed by Mrs. Wills - Mr. Cedric, Horace and others.

If you give the consent I think you should do so upon the understanding that you receive each of the three years interest at six per cent on your £1500 - and for this reason - that Mr. Horace will have to pay Mr. TWW interest on his purchase money and if Horace gives up his rights for 3 years he ought to be protected to the extent of the interest money which he will pay to Mr. TWW.

If he is protected that far I think you have a right to some interest also (of course I am not speaking of past - that I suppose will be a matter of adjustment at the winding up).

I am afraid I may not have explained matters sufficiently - but if so I shall be happy to go into further details and give you any information I can. I hope you will favour me with an early reply, as I want Mr. Buckland to get the whole matter put in proper shape so that the needful papers can be signed here and then Mr. Horace take them for Mr. Cedric to sign.

If before giving an answer you would prefer coming to Geelong and meeting Mrs. Wills, Mr. Morris and myself I will arrange an early day for a meeting, or perhaps if you see your way at once to consent, you will come down when Mr. Buckland has the necessary papers ready.

I am, Dear Madam,

Yours respectfully,

W. F. Ducker
#87008129 L W C Collection

In October 1870 Horace moved up to Cullinlaringo and began to work with Cedric in developing the station, and in November Ducker wrote to confirm that the station was to be carried on for three years longer and to give full details of the family's financial situation.

November 12 1870
Geelong

Cedric Wills Esquire
Horace Wills Esquire
Cullinlaringo Station

Dear Sirs,

In August last I wrote to Mr. Cedric that it was proposed to carry on the station for three years longer for the estate and when Mr. Horace left Geelong the whole matter was put into shape by Mr. Buckland but since then various delays have occurred owing to the necessity of obtaining Counsel's opinion and it was only yesterday that Mr. Buckland was able to get the papers signed in Melbourne.

As near as I can explain the matter in a few words the arrangement made is as follows.

Station to be continued for 3 years for the estate

Mrs. Wills gives up entirely for the benefit of the estate upwards of £3000 which she has not drawn although entitled to do so under the will as annuity and allowances for governess clothing and for Bellevue property etc

Mrs. Wills for the 3 years to receive £500 per annum to include all allowances and annuity amounting to nearly £800 per annum by the will

Mrs. Jane Harrison gives up £250 which she has been short paid and will receive her allowance of £100 per annum for the 3 years

Mrs. E. S. Harrison gives up six years interest in the £1500 to which she was entitled to upon marriage in 1864 except £147 which she has already received and £100 additional to be paid to her in 1874 and during the three years will receive interest at 6 per cent.

Mr. Cedric Wills to receive £250 per annum as station manager.

Mr. Horace Wills to receive £150 per annum as assistant manager and to be allowed from the estate the interest which he will have to pay to Mr. T. W. Wills during the three years.

Mr. Morris indemnified by legatees for departure from the provisions of the will.

By the above you will see that the estate will, by this arrangement, be in a much better position Mrs. Wills having given up so much it will be the better for yourselves as well as for the other members of the family.

Mr. Horace fully understood the arrangement before leaving Geelong and I have been expecting to hear from Mr. Cedric of his concurrence however of this Mrs. Wills, Mr. Morris and myself entertain no doubt and I now send

the papers for signature. Mr. Buckland has marked the places where you are to sign (one of the documents has to be signed on two pages) if Mr. Smith is with you get him to witness as marked or else get some other respectable witness who should give his address and occupation etc.

Send the papers back without delay sending me a telegram from Claremont that you have done so - do not let there be any delay about it - and now that the arrangement is so far completed do not let anything stop it on your side.

Mr. Harding to whom the estate is heavily indebted expresses his willingness to continue his assistance provided the matter be arranged as proposed and I think after the 3 years is up that I can get him to help you with the station when it is closed up for the estate we are now paying him 10% and I am sure the money could not be obtained for less elsewhere under present circumstances.

As soon as you return the papers I think it will be better to advertise the properties here and sell any which will bring good prices so as to reduce the present debt as much as possible which is now very heavy as the interest is continually increasing it as hitherto we have had no return from the station.

At the end of this year let me have your accounts and say what money will be due for wages etc. as I should like to get all the accounts to the 31st December and make up a general statement of which I shall send you a copy.

At the present time we are owing.

<i>Harding</i>	<i>£10000</i>	
<i>Redfern & Co</i>		<i>£1424</i>
<i>Rockhampton bank (30 Sept.)</i>	<i>£4270</i>	
<i>Geelong Bank</i>	<i>£500</i>	

The whole of this will not be against the station as some of it will be against the general estate but this the accounts to the end of the year which I will send you will show.

Let me have particulars of the wool as soon as you can I hope you will be able to get it forward quickly and bring down the bank debt.

Don't forget to send me the telegram.

I am, dear sirs, yours very truly

W. F. Ducker

#8701112 T H S W Collection

The next we hear of the affairs of the station is in 1872 when Ducker wrote to Cedric on 2 September complaining about the way the financial affairs of the station were being maintained, and appeared to show that Cedric was not a good administrator. This should really be no surprise as he was never trained for it, having been pulled out of school early to come home and help Tom run the station.

September 2 1872

Geelong

Cedric Wills Esquire

My dear Sir,

I have been trying to close the accounts of the station and account to the end of 1871 but cannot do so as I have no particulars of your expenditure and receipts from March 1871, please send them without delay, send them down for each quarter as you can get them made up. I hope you will send the 1871 accounts quickly and the ones for 1872 at your convenience.

Mr. Morris has several times asked me about the stock on the station, but I have not been able to give him any recent information.

In October 1869 I find I wrote to you asking full particulars of clip and of each parcel when despatched from station, I am sorry to say this year I have not had this information and it appears very unbusinesslike for me to send to Redfern and Co that wool is shipped but not to be able to send particulars of the wool or the weights I beg in future you will furnish me with all particulars as soon as possible.

Mr. Horace has given me particulars of 57 bales but I cannot find it corresponds as to the numbers with any lot shipped he has also given me the weights of some wool shorn at Rockhampton.

I am sorry to hear that you have had such a dry season I hope you have not sustained much loss in consequence.

With respect to your own account I have had no proper statement of it since 30th September 1866 at which time the account which is made out by Mr. Johnson shows you to then in debt £19/2/10 but this differs from my books £14/1/0 as there were two items omitted in Mr Johnson's account cash March 1865 HAH & Co account £7/0/0 cash and goods when at Rockhampton as per your own expenses account £7/1/0

Your salary

From September 1866 to 1867 should be £100

September 1867 to 1868 when Morrison left £150

September 1868 to 1869 £200 as manager

September 1869 to December 1870 1½ years £250

From January 1871 new arrangement £250 per annum

Mr. Horace's salary

To September 1867 £40

To September 1868 £75

To September 1869 £100

To December 1870 one years £125

From January 1871 £150 by new arrangement

Herewith I send you copies last wool sales and general balance sheets of estate 1867 and 1868. I have not time to send 1869 and 1870 now but will do so in a few days. I cannot close 1871 because of your quarterly accounts not being yet received.

I sent £1000 lately to the Rockhampton bank, the account there should stand well.

I hope you will do all you can to keep down the expenditure so as to reduce the estate debt and save interest.

I am dear sir,

Yours truly

W. F. Ducker

PS I also enclose statement re travelling sheep anything you don't understand or want informing about I shall be happy to give.

Horace and Cedric continued to run Cullinlaringo but there were difficulties between the two men and the following letter gives some indication of Horace's desire to set up house on his own. The trustees must have granted permission and the Coorabelle house was built shortly thereafter.

Cullinlaringo
August 14 1878

Messrs. Conran & Cock

Gentlemen,

I write to ask permission to allow me to build a small house for myself on station account as, owing to my brother's large and rapidly increasing family, matters do not get on as nicely as could be wished in private affairs. In fact the two families' tastes differ in domestic arrangements. I do not want an expensive house, anything will do me as long as it is ours to live in.

I have just received a copy of my account from Mr. Ducker and find I have not been allowed anything towards my expenses down to Victoria 3 years ago. Although at the time I went I did not expect any of my expenses to be paid, but as I believe Cedric has been allowed his expenses I think it is only reasonable that I should be allowed the same or part.

Everything on the station is going on well, all stock look better than they did this time last year and the grass is more plentiful.

We sold four draught colts 2 years old for £110 each the other day. We have still about 5 loads of wool in store carriers are scarce and roads very bad. We have still about 5 bales to press of dead wool mostly collected during the year so that our clip will be about 770 bales.

Hoping you will send me a favourable reply to my first request.

I remain,

Gentlemen,

Yours sincerely

H. S. Wills

#8780814 T S W C Collection

My father's cousin Brian Wills once told me that it was often the case that Horace and Cedric did not agree and that he had a number of letters which had been exchanged between the two men. In fact there were times when they communicated only by writing notes to one another. Here is an example:

Coorabelle
July 16 1880

Dear Cedy,

There are always two sides to a question and it strikes me very forcibly you in most instances get hold of the wrong side.

For example, in the matter of the bulls. Two men came out and the bulls were to have been mustered to send in but as Barker had to buy a lot and the bulls were not together I had no choice but wait until they were mustered. I then took my pick and any bulls that were too poor to travel to Consuelo I had

to take for ours. Then Somerset sold Barker the pick of ours at £5 per head, he took two and would not have the others at any price.

I left about 4.30 pm and as the bulls were very weak thought it better to have them turned into the paddock than be driven all night. I think so still whether you think it only done by halves or not.

If they had been driven in and any horses left behind you would have been the very one to have let me know about it.

In reference to the kanakas you told me it was no good me sending them in at present as there was no one to go with them. However they shall go in tomorrow.

As far as work is concerned I do not pretend to be killed by work but I can truly say I do as much if not more riding on the run knocking around than anyone else not excepting Kavanagh. I will forward copies of men's a/cs by the boys. You can send a man out on Monday to the springs and I will put our bulls together and send them in for branding. One of the best bulls is in my opinion too weak yet, but send out word whether you want them all in or not and I can try and get them in. Mr. Barker has twenty bulls in the lower springs and I will send for them in a week.

I send in voucher with footnote attached, also an explanation of previous voucher.

We can do with a few more men at fence if you will see any about. I sent in a memo for axe handles and black wire No. 8.

You can put the saddle down to my account and send me his which is in the store.

Your affectionate Brother

H. S. Wills

#8800716 T S W C Collection

In July 1881, under the terms of Horatio's will and the later arrangements, Cullinlaringo was put up for sale and was purchased by members of the family with the brothers Cedric, Horace and Egbert holding one quarter each and two of their sisters, Minna holding 3/16th and Lizzie 1/16th.

The sale notice for the property advertised by Messrs Powers, Rutherford was for leasehold and freehold land. The original area taken up by Horatio was 244 square miles (about 156,000 acres) but this was reduced by a government resumption in 1878 to provide camping and water for droving and at sale time the area was about 193 square miles or 123,000 acres.

The stock offered was 64,000 sheep, 4,000 cattle and 290 horses together with buildings and improvements but not the furniture and effects.

Following the sale Ducker wrote to Cedric with final details of the sale in the following letter:

*Geelong
August 2nd 1881*

Cedric Wills Esquire

Dear Sir,

Your brother informed you by telegram that the station has been bought at the auction for account of yourself, Horace and Egbert one quarter share each

and of the remaining quarter I understand Miss Minna has three parts and Mrs. Shaw one part.

The trustees wanted six per cent for the money if it stood over, and then it would have to be paid in five yearly instalments with interest. In accordance with your wishes Redfern and Co. were telegraphed to - they replied it could not be arranged for in England but might be done through the Bank of Australasia at six per cent. I am glad to say I was able to make arrangements with my own bankers on more favourable terms.

Out of the four shares there will be, at a low estimate, fifty thousand pounds from the estate. This of course will be like so much cash on account, the bank will find the rest about eighty thousand pounds. The interest was to be at five and a half percent but it was afterwards arranged by discounting a promissory note the discount should be charged at five per cent. The bank will undertake to continue the accommodation for two years and give six months notice to terminate but three months notice instead of six will be sufficient on your part. Five thousand pounds and the interest to be paid each year from wool shipment.

If you wish it the cattle may be sold and sheep three to one put on in place of cattle.

You will be at liberty to pay off as much more than five thousand pounds as you can.

Full security over station and stock will of course have to be given to the bank, but the bank will not interfere as to your ordinary sales provided accounts and returns as heretofore are sent to me, and the bank will let the shipments be made as hitherto to Redfern provided I put the wool drafts through the bank. I think the arrangement is an excellent one and doubt not but you will concur in it. Arrangements have been made with the bank and preliminary deposit of ten thousand pounds paid on your brother's guarantee. The station was put up with land at twenty shillings, cattle at four pounds, horses ten pounds each and the five entires at a lump sum of four hundred pounds, the only bidding being per head of sheep.

Mr. Wallace bid fourteen shillings, the reserve was fifteen shillings and he would have taken it at the price but let your brother have it without his having to go higher.

The price for the station as a whole is therefore a little under one hundred and thirty thousand pounds the plant is included but stores and unused netting etc. will have to be paid for at cost price. It is a pity the netting was not put up as then it would not have to be paid for but that cannot be helped.

The question of mustering has been raised and the trustees have offered to allow two and a half per cent off the number of the sheep if the cattle and the horses are taken at the numbers you stated less one hundred to be delivered to Savage. I think they ought to allow two and a half off the cattle also if you do not agree to the proposal one of the Mr. Conran's will most likely muster.

All expenses for the station to the 18th August are to be borne by the estate and you will have to pay up everything and everybody to that date from the old account, and all expenses from that date will have to be paid by the new firm of Wills Brothers or whatever else you designated. If you wish it I can arrange as to funds for the new account to meet working expenses but I think you had better start the new account with one thousand pounds of your money

which can be considered a loan and for which interest would be paid to you. It will be necessary now to be in a position to complete arrangements as to giving the bank mortgages etc and a power of attorney will have to be sent to you for signature giving power to your brother or to me to sign for you. It will also be well to have a short deed of partnership prepared - and I think so that there may be no difficulty in settling with the trustees that you should sign and send to your brother the deed of arrangement to be handed over on settlement.

As to Hunter's account I think now it should be paid. We want everything squared up and to refer to trustees and to have a lot of correspondence about it will cause delay.

I have written this very hurriedly and am afraid you will hardly make it out. I think there are several other things I wanted to mention but must write another time.

Send me a full statement of your own and brother's accounts for the past two years.

Excuse haste,

Your truly,

W. F. Ducker

#8810802 T H S W Collection

The amount which the family paid for the station was enormous for the time, and as a result there was far too much debt carried by the new owners and in the end this became unsustainable. The brothers increased the land holding over the period and in July 1892 there were no less than 457 square miles or 292,000 acres and the property appears to have been simply unable to generate sufficient profit to service the level of debt.

Finally, on 6 July 1892 the bank foreclosed and Mr Lord accompanied by Mr Bean arrived to take over the property from Cedric. Cedric then moved together with his furniture and his pigs, fowls and ducks to stay temporarily with Mr and Mrs Ryder, (Mrs Ryder being Cedric's wife's sister) at their property Fernlees. There they stayed while they were building Minerva Creek Station to which they moved, after a quarrel with Mrs Ryder over Cedric's pigs in her garden, in November 1893 after a temporary stay of 17 months!

There was some land in Elizabeth's name (Lexington - about 8,100 acres), and Cedric had purchased land at Minerva Creek of a total about a further 8000 acres. In recent years Antill Wills resided on the land which was Elizabeth's and Tom (T.H.S.) Wills still resides at Minerva Creek. Horace lost everything which he owned personally but he had provided very well for Sarah upon their marriage with a block of shares in the original Mt Morgan mining company and with some property in Wrixon St. Kew and he and Sarah returned to Victoria to live in a house built by Sarah's brother using Sarah's money on Sarah's land.

For many years afterwards Sarah Wills maintained correspondence with Berry Wills, the wife of Cedric, and shortly after returning to Victoria she received the following letter from Berry who was setting up a boarding house, "Brewarrina" in Rockhampton in order to supplement the family income after the fall in their fortunes caused by the 1890s depression.

*Brewarrina
William Street*

September 15 '02

My dear Sarah,

I think I owe you a letter and will try to write one this afternoon, hoping to find you all enjoying the best of health and poor Ethel⁸⁶ quite recovered from the fever, it leaves a person so weak for so long after. Does she still have her class? and I hope Rene⁸⁷ passed her lessons.

Tell me how you all are down there and regards to old Ma Wills, and tell her that Horace and Alice⁸⁸ have a son, such a lovely little baby it is very quiet and good. It was born on the 28th of July, she is going up to Minerva next Sunday. Horace wants to call it Egbert and Alice wants to call it Cedric, so between them they have not decided which name to have. Lizzie's baby boy, little Jim we call it, is a very nice baby too and very good, they have called it James Cedric. Poor Minnie⁸⁹ is expecting in June sometime. She will be in here in October, I hope she has a boy too, such lots of people have boys this year, it must be on account of the war and all the other dreadful accidents that has happened this year.

We had a letter from Cedric⁹⁰ and he said he was coming back from South Africa, but I have not heard whether he has started yet or not. I felt very anxious when that dreadful Wooton Grange came out with so many sick people on board, as that was the time we expected him. You may see him before we do. Colden⁹¹ is nearly as tall as Cedric and pretty stout, so Tom⁹² is the shortest one of the lot. They have all run away and left me.

You must excuse a short and hurried letter this time as I have been to Emily⁹³ preparing for boarders, and now have eight, 2 of them are children and the girls and I do the work between us. I have a lot of sewing to do now as my pillow cases are nearly worn out.

One of the young gentlemen is a Mr. Goode who knows Mr. Fotheringham, he is a clerk in Howard Smiths and may go down to Victoria in November, so if you have not already sent me the cotton he will bring it up as Mr. Saunderson has left the Coonawarra, and it will be a good chance of getting it up. I will give him some money - half a dozen will be ample to send.

Now I must close with heaps of love from all the girls and boys and Cedric and self to you and Horace and the girls and hoping to hear very good accounts of you all soon.

We are having a dreadful time up here now, Cullinlaringo have to get feed from town to feed the few sheep that are left, and they have no men, so now they will see how the station was managed long ago. Horace can talk to them how comfortable. Times were never so bad up here in white man's time and what the end is to be nobody can tell.

Love again from your affectionate sister

E. H. Wills

CHAPTER 11

THE CHILDREN OF HORATIO S. H. WILLS**THOMAS WENTWORTH WILLS****(19 December 1836 - 2 May 1880)****“The W.G. Grace of the Colony”
and the founder of Australian football**

Thomas Wentworth Wills, known in the family as Tom to differentiate him from his uncle, (always known as Thomas), was born in Sydney on 19 December 1836, his mother having come to Sydney from Burra Burra for the birth. In a number of books his name is given as “Thomas Wentworth Spencer” but in fact he was named after his father’s great friend and family lawyer W. C. Wentworth and was the only child of Horatio who did not carry the Spencer name. He was baptised at the Presbyterian Church in Sydney on 11 January 1837 by the Rev. McGarvie, who had previously performed the marriage of Horatio and Elizabeth. This information comes from the hand written entry in the original records, a copy of which I obtained. The later transcription by the registrar wrongly shows his birth year as 1835.

He was always a fit and athletic child and lived first at Burra Burra, then overlanded with his parents to Lexington and, because he was seven years older than his nearest sibling, Emily, and nine years older than his first brother Cedric, his play mates tended to be aboriginal children, resulting in a strong affinity with aborigines for the rest of his life, even despite the murder of his father. Partly because of this disparity in the children’s ages, and partly because Horatio was quite passionate about the education of his children, he was sent for a time to Brickwood’s Seminary in Melbourne which we know from Horatio’s Lexington diary.

In March 1850, before his fourteenth birthday, he left Australia to begin his formal education at Rugby, where he entered Evans’ House. He arrived in London on 7 August 1850 and sent his father the following letter:

*August 7th 1850
London*

My dear Father,

I am glad to inform you that we are all arrived in good health, after a very tedious passage of five months. We called at Simonstown at the Cape of Good Hope for some provisions and we took in another passenger for St. Helena. We have had four very stormy nights and during the last we carried away our flying jib boom. I saw more vessels in one day at the mouth of the Thames than I ever did at Port Phillip in twelve months.

Captain Dalgarno taught me the way to splice and also to make knots and to take the sun. We passed every vessel that we saw while the wind blew, for we very seldom had a breeze that lasted above twelve hours at one time we thought that we would never get home and we also feared lest the provisions

should run short. During the latter part of the voyage the tea that the men got was so bad that they were obliged to burn biscuit and make it into coffee.

I hope that you are all arrived safe at the station after I left you, and that you have got better of your cough.

I have only wrote these few lines to let you know that I am arrived safe as I know that you will be very anxious for me and I am glad to say that there is another ship going to Port Phillip in a few days and I shall give you a long description of the voyage.

I remain

Your son

T. W. Wills

#8500807 L W C Collection

He was not a brilliant scholar, being much more interested in sport and it was at Rugby that he developed his great interest in, and skills at, cricket. He wrote his father a letter in August 1851 which sets out his performances, and it was clear even then just by looking at the figures that he had ability well above the ordinary.

August 8, 1851
Bayswater

My dear Papa,

I am going back to school on the 20th of this month only a day after my birthday. I am going to copy one or two sermons which I wrote after church time and what I remembered of them as my Uncle desired me to do so. He said it would please you if I sent 2 or 3 of them to you.

[Here there was a long and boring description of two sermons - clearly written to please his father rather than from any conviction.]

I am going to give you my cricket score of runs and how many I have put out during the last six months, as I have a book with all my matches in. The first match is the first time I ever had a bat in my hand since I left Australia. I can play well now. I am only going to put my own name and by whom I was put out.

Wills 5 Bd Harris Wills 45 Bd Boyd To all those that I put Do [Ditto] it is intended for my name and Bd means bowled, Ct caught,

Wills 25 Bd Dangerfield (+ Do 54 not out) Do 4 Ct Hodge Do 30 Bd Loukine Wills 30 Ct Deslage Do 3 Bd Daniel Do 16 Ct Gregson Do 0 Hit wicket Do 5 Ct Gregson Do 5 Ct Le Grice Do 2 Bd Le Grice Do 57 Bd Underwood Do 0 Hit wicket Do 32 Bd Gregson Do 20 Not out for this 20 my side only wanted 19 to beat the other and I got 5 fours running 4 each hit Do 57 Bd Wrigley Do 14 Bd Loukine Do 13 Bd Lewes Do 24 Bd Wrigley Do 9 Bd Wrigley Do 93 Bd Lewes Do 23 Ct Harris Do 19 Bd Wrigley Do 130 not out

(the one with 93 was the last match)

<i>Senior</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>Bd Wills</i>
<i>Freeman</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>Ct Wills</i>
<i>Sying</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Bd Wills</i>

<i>Otter</i>	4	<i>Ct Lewes</i>
<i>Daniel</i>	21	<i>Ct Lewes</i>
<i>Worsley Min</i>	10	<i>Bd Wills</i>
<i>Worsley Maj</i>	2	<i>Bd Wills</i>
<i>Paulden</i>	0	<i>Ct Wills</i>
<i>Harrow</i>	0	<i>Bd Wills</i>
<i>Elliot</i>	0	<i>Not out</i>
<i>Hatchel</i>	2	<i>Bd Wills</i>

I was very lucky in this match and put nearly all of them out - This is another school we played and beat them by 2 runs only T. W.

I am going to put the cases of the eleven best men down - Ct for caught St for stumped and Bd for bowled.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Runs</i>	<i>Bd</i>	<i>Ct</i>	<i>Std</i>	<i>Matches</i>
<i>Wills</i>	839	104	29	11	14
<i>Boyd</i>	162	40	4	1	18
<i>Dyke</i>	136	12	2	0	16
<i>Gregson</i>	131	11	7	3	15
<i>Loukine</i>	87	18	1	1	10
<i>Lewes</i>	75	16	6	0	11
<i>Harris</i>	69	34	10	0	12
<i>Le Grice</i>	68	13	4	3	16
<i>Wrigley</i>	67	13	1	0	12
<i>Turner</i>	56	0	1	0	12
<i>Jones maj 19</i>	0	4	0	10	

The last row of figures shows how many matches each boy played in during the last 6 months. You may see although I played less matches than some of them you may see that I have got more runs than any of them. You may also see that I have put out a good number more than any of them all. These are the runs that each boy has got during the last half of school.

I would be very glad if you would show my score to Luke Wilmot. Have you ever taken him up to the station. Take him up if you have time some time. There was stopping with my uncle a Mr. McLaren and family who married my uncle's niece. He had one of his little daughters with him about 7 years of age, and she told my cousin before she went away that she intended to marry me, and I have been teased about her much to my annoyance. My uncle says first she will be very rich, if I was you I would keep up the idea that she has taken, and my aunt says, mind Tom you give a correct account of her to your Papa. It is very annoying!

I was much amused with my uncle the other day. He introduced me as his niece to another gentleman who was dining with us, but I did not tell him of his mistake. My aunt and cousin have just gone to the Great Exhibition and they asked me to go with them, but as I was writing this letter I declined going. I have been to it until I am quite tired of it.

I went to Windsor Castle on Thursday last, I was through the State apartments of the Queen and through her stables. I saw a little pony that would please Cedric. It belongs to young Prince Albert but he never rides it, it is kept for ornament, it is 14 years old and only 27 inches high. It came from Java as a

present to the Queen. I have seen her often. She is a very plain and little neat lady - as for beauty, you or anybody else would not look at her twice, that I am sure of.

My aunt, cousin and uncle all send their kind love to you all - it is very warm, I am perspiring like a pig. My aunt says to one, Tom, I hope you intend to work hard this half, as I have not been working hard enough to please a saint. One thing I know is that it does not please my health, I have been ill oftener the last 4 or 5 months than I have been for the last 6 or 7 years. I know that if I work too hard that I will become quite ill. We hardly get any play during school time.

T. W. Wills

#8510808 L W C Collection

During his time at Rugby he spent his holidays with his aunt Sarah Alexander, and there was clearly some thought that he would become a merchant studying with his uncle James Alexander and his cousin Mac Redfern. This is confirmed by the following letter to Horatio from his sister in London:

*May 10th 1854
12 Porchester Terrace
London*

My Dear Brother,

I was much disturbed in learning from your letter which I received last Monday that you had all been suffering so much from Measles - my poor sister must have been in a state to be attacked by such a malady so soon after her confinement.¹³² I trust the dear little stranger may be spared to you and that you may by this been restored to health and strength.

It is well now that it is over for the little ones - I regret you and Eliza had not gone through the ordeal in your younger days for it leaves frequently sad effects when it attacks persons at a mature age - I have never recovered from its effects being still so liable to colds which affect the bronchial tubes - I cannot face the East winds without danger and here, during spring, it sometimes can last many weeks.

Thomas¹³³ was not more ill than is usual and recovered perfectly but he had it at a safe age. He is quite well and I trust pursuing his studies with great attention. It would not be advisable to take him from school for some time yet. You are aware that he was very backward when he arrived in England and he has much yet to learn which could not be acquired with much ease and advantage as at present when no other occupation interferes to distract his attention.

I am sorry that Mr. Alexander will not have room for him at his office till he gets larger accommodation himself, but I am sure he will do his best to get him into an advantageous office when his school studies are completed.

One most essential point is that he write a good hand for no one would take him unless he did. He would be nearly useless to any merchant without that necessary accomplishment.

Perhaps also you are not aware that a few years are necessary to get him commercial concerns with safety and advantage to himself, a great deal of observation and industry are necessary and so much will depend upon himself

- every one here is so constantly engaged in his own department that he has no time to superintend others, so that if young men do not push their own way by acquiring all information possible with but little distance from others they may be years and knowing very little useful at the end of them.

Commercial matters are not managed like a school where the head of the establishment is bound to see that instruction is given, but every one observes for himself and gains all he can - time is too valuable to be devoted to instruction - you have no idea how hard all mercantile people work here, an hour is more valuable to them than many pounds for they can scarcely overtake the demands of their office, if their concerns are very extensive - and without extent there is little profit.

Thomas appears to like the notion of being a merchant and as I think he is naturally industrious, I have no doubt he will be a prosperous one. His general conduct is good, that I indulge the hope that he will be a blessing to you and his Mother.

My own dear daughter and her husband ¹³⁴ left us only last week, they have lived with us till then, because they could not obtain a suitable house near us before. In consequence of their living with us I was impelled to obtain lodgings for Thomas with a married friend of my son to whom he had also sent his own son hither, who like Thomas had left school for the holidays. We have taken a house adjoining ours that we may build a little to it, and make it more comfortable than our present house - but as we will only have one spare room if Thomas remains in London we shall have to obtain board and lodgings for him with some married person. Having only one spare room I must keep it to accommodate my son and family and any other relative so that I shall have no room for dear Thomas.

My son-in-law has consented to take a relative's son from the Cape who wishes to study medicine and he says having one young man, he would be willing to have two that they might be companions to each other and study together in the evenings when he would direct their studies. I think we could not ask better for Thomas than place him with my son and daughter where his comfort and habits would be watched over. Phillip charges for the young man who has just arrived one hundred and fifty a year for his lodging, board and washing and if he takes Thomas he will of course expect the same for him. He has to pay himself two hundred a year with forty pounds yearly for taxes, and as anything of consumption is so dear in London he couldn't take him for less. We paid on your account three pounds a week to the gentleman who kept him during the last vacation.

I am much pleased that my dear brother Thomas is coming home - my dear child expects an increase to her family this month, you may be sure it is a most anxious time to us all yet I trust that our merciful Father will protect and spare both her and her offspring.

You must be satisfied with such scribbling as I can write, for I must write to the families of our united Kind, love to yourself my very dear brother and to your dear wife and dear little ones.

Believe me I am most affectionately

Your sister

Sarah Alexander

We are all in good health at present and shall be anxious for your next letter.

I have detained this letter that I might convey to you the happy tidings of the safe delivery of my dear daughter of a fine boy¹³⁵ and to tell you today the 25th that both are doing as well as we could wish. Pray tell me always how Jane and Adela are getting on poor dears I feel sorry for them. I rejoice in your prosperity - may it be blessed to you.

#8540510 L W C Collection

After the completion of his education at Rugby at the end of the school year 1855, Tom spent a further year in England during which time he appeared playing cricket for Kent and for the Marylebone Cricket Club, spending a little time at Cambridge but clearly not being sufficient of a scholar to undertake university study.

In late 1856 he left England to return to Australia arriving on 23 December, where he was articled to a solicitor, as his father wished him to become a lawyer.

During this time he lived at the home of the Harrison family in Victoria Parade East Melbourne, and in 1857 wrote a letter to Emily, then aged 15, a little "brotherly duty" letter which follows:

*September 17th 1857
Victoria Parade
East Melbourne*

My dear Sister,

My dog's name is Nell. I slept one night last week at the Parade and I was told to take my uncle's bedroom and when I was just about to step into bed I heard a gentle tap at the door and I found that I had got another gentleman's room and I of course moved but I went into the next room where I was very amazed to see a person in a nightcap sitting up in bed and who also emitted several surprised cries of astonishment - as whose that?, what are you doing here? - and for the life of me I could not open the door having a candle in one hand and all of my clothes in the other - but at last I succeeded and whose room do you think I had got into? Miss Cavendish's!!! You say someone held Curls' whilst I cut his hair of - off I should say. I think, excuse me.

I was nearly stuck up again last night but I in a most valiant manner presented a pipe case at the ruffian and said I would shoot him if he did not keep off - at which he grumbled something and slunk off - and I was precious glad he did I can tell you -

I have felt beastly bad this last week I do not know what I am standing on - and when anyone speaks to me I cannot for the life of me make out what they are talking about - everything seems so curious -

I have had a row with some of the Members of the M.C.C. and have resigned my membership and shall join the Richmond Club instead -

The Detectives have been looking after Mr Muir all day to put him in prison for it is reported that he intended to go to England in the "Emu" which sails (or rather crews away) tomorrow the ship in which Uncle Thomas takes his departure in.

Will you be good enough to write or shall I stop which would suit you best? for I am heartily sick of writing and getting no reply - "There must be something essentially rotten in the state of Denmark" I fancy -

I have to attend at court tomorrow - not a courting case but rather an equitable one.

How does the white pony get on? My dog is such a nice one and as savage as a bear when on the chain and is a first rate watch dog. How is the Miss of the feline tribe? It has been very warm here today in fact excessively so and very dusty "My trousers and my coat"

How are all?

Love & c & c

and believe me

Your devoted brother

T. W. Wills

#8590917 L W C Collection

During this time he served as the Secretary of the Melbourne Cricket Club for the season 1857-8 at which task he was not at all successful. W. J. Hammersley in his article in the *Sydney Mail* in 1883 wrote

"....when he left office everything was in a muddle - club papers, books, cricket balls, cricket guides, Zingari flannels, cigars, spiked boots - everything one can conceive, stuffed together in a large tin box of the club. A most untidy mortal he was, and quite unfit for such work. The cricket field was his place, and I don't think Tommy ever gave a thought to anything but cricket in his life."

He continued his study at the law until 1860 when his father sent him to study farming at the property of Mr. Anderson in Skipton. In these years (1857-1860) Tom neglected his studies in favour of his cricket. He appeared in 1857 in the second inter-colonial cricket match in which he took 10 wickets. In 1858 he toured Tasmania, playing in Hobart and Launceston and his record in that period can be seen in the article published in *The Australasian* in 1867 (op.cit.p249) On 10 July 1858 he wrote his now famous letter to the sporting newspaper *Bell's Life in Victoria* which is the seminal point in the history of the now hugely successful game of Australian Rules football. It is this act which justifies his description as "Founder of the game".

Extract from Bells Life in Victoria dated 10 July 1858 of a letter:

Dear Sir,

Now that cricket has been put aside for some months to come, and cricketers have assumed somewhat of the chrysalis nature (for a time only 'tis sure), but at length will burst forth in all their varied hues, rather than allow this state of torpor to creep over them, and stifle their now supple limbs, why can they not, I say, form a foot-ball club, and form a committee of three or more to draw up a code of laws? If a club of this sort were got up, it would be of vast benefit to any cricket-ground to be trampled upon, and would make the turf quite firm and durable; besides which, it would keep those who are inclined to become stout from having joints encased in useless superabundant flesh.

If it is not possible to form a foot-ball club, why should not these young men who have adopted this new-born country for their mother land, why I say, do they not form themselves into a rifle club, so as at any-rate they may some day

be called upon to aid their adopted land against a tyrant's band, that may some day 'pop' upon us when we least expect a foe at our very doors. Surely, our young cricketers are not afraid of the crack of the rifle, when they face so courageously the leathern sphere, and it would disgrace no one to learn in time how to defend his country and his hearth. A firm hand, a steady heart, a quick eye, are all that are requisite, and, with practice, all these may be attained.

It is my hope that someone will form a foot-ball or rifle club or, failing that, organise an athletic games meeting.

I remain, yours truly,

Thomas W. Wills

#8570510 Cutting from Bell's Life

In that same year the first match between Melbourne and St. Kilda was played, these "clubs" were teams just using the name to play pick-up matches of a modified form of rugby. It was not until May 1859 that the Melbourne Football Club was formalised and the rules of the new Australian game were first laid down. South Yarra and St. Kilda clubs were formed in the same month and Geelong in July 1859. Captains in the early days were chosen for each match, Tom Wills was the first at Melbourne but his co-writers of the rules, Hammersley, Thompson and Smith all had turns in the role.

In 1859 when Tom's father was in London he received news of Tom playing both cricket and football and wrote to the younger three brothers, at that time at school in Germany:

*Undated 1859
London Tuesday*

My dear boys,

Tom desires me to say he played at Geelong with the Corio against the Richmond cricket eleven. Tom's side beat the other in one innings with 20 runs to spare.

I am going now to post this and to send two cricket bats. I am going to Paris on Thursday. Tom scored 46 runs in the one innings, I suppose his bowling floored the Richmond eleven although they have good players.

Yours affectionately,

H S Wills

PS I hear from Mrs. Harrison that Tom was very much hurt at football in Melbourne, but that he was recovering. HSW

#8590000 T H S W Collection

On his father's return to Australia in May 1860 Tom gives further news to his brothers of his doings and the first indication that he will give up the law with the probability of going with his Father to Queensland.

*15th May 1860
Melbourne*

My dear Ced,

Pa arrived out all safe but he was no sooner here than he went off to Port Curtis near Moreton Bay. He has gone up to get a station, and if he succeeds I

shall in all probability go up there also, the law work won't pay here now.

It is not worth while wasting so much time nearly 3 years longer. I received your last letter about old stamps and I will send you some. I have and will collect many more for future occasions.

I am not yet spliced to the young lady in Sydney nor yet likely to be as she has got married to someone else - so that's all off but I must look out for some one else.

We played the Sydney men down here this year and we took £1400 at the gates - we also licked them as you will have learnt by this time and I obtained the most runs - 4 and 20 - for which I was presented with a fine silver cup value £25. I also got most of the wickets 6 and 3 - Elliott 2 and 6. I beat him by one, rather a shame. Gilbert made the most on the other side 3 and 13 - all small scores, bad ground was the cause of it. I have made the highest scores this year - 77 - 59 twice, not out 58 3 times, 2 not out 56 - 7, 19 - 2 - 19 - 16 - 0 once 47 and the other scores - Gentlemen v. Players two matches 18 and 2 - 6 & 32.

Elliott is married, so is Bryant. We (Richmond) play football now - we played the Melbourne Football club on Saturday last and we each got a goal. I suppose if you get any long holidays you will go over to England. How did you like Dr. Vanderbyl? He is a little brute. Mr Amsinck has a sister out here now.¹³⁶

Mr. Thomas has written bad accounts out to Pa about you, he says that you strike your masters. If such a thing were done at a Public school in England you would be expelled and the disgrace would cling to you through life, not a very enviable thing to have said about one certainly, besides which it makes Pa angry and causes Ma great annoyance, so you should be more careful. You must know that Pa will not stand these accounts for long, and if you do so again from what I can learn he will send for you back again. Besides it is setting a bad example to your younger brothers, so I trust that in future you will be more on your guard.

Emily and Pussy are going up to Sydney and are staying with Mr. and Mrs. Johnston at Georges Hall¹³⁷ and will not return till Pa returns in about three months time. They are coming out at the Queens Birthday in Sydney, and are going with Mr. Alexander's brother. Captain Pockley has a younger brother out here now.¹³⁸

Charles is at the Farm but does not often go shooting now. George is still at his old office and looks much the same. Fanny looks charming and has grown wonderfully since you have left.

Colden has turned out the best runner in the colony. He is going to run Alex Allan the champion Professional for a Cup and the Championship of the Colonies in about 20 days time from this.

Mr. Roope and Mr. McKerras have partnership and Mr. McKerras and Mr. Longmore are keeping a grocers shop in Geelong, they call themselves merchants. Mr. Roope lives at Geelong altogether. Mr. Annsincott's father is a M.L.A. now. The Richmond football club play Scotch College a match on Saturday next.

Do you ever see any Australians where you are? Miss Castieau has been very ill but is all right again, the doctors had almost given her up. She is not married yet and I don't know when she will, all in good time I suppose.

I have entirely given up cricket so you do not hear of me playing again in the Grand matches. Does Uncle Thomas¹³⁹ ever go to see you during his wanderings? If you ever write to Aunt Alexander remember me kindly to her for she used to be very kind to me.

Pa bought Mr. McCullam's farm at the Lakes, but he intends to let all except the one Ma is on. There was a diamond found here last week and it created quite a commotion.

Love to Horace and Egbert, and believe me,

Your affectionate brother,

Thomas

I have plenty of stamps and will send them in time I am afraid of overweight.

#8600515 T H S W Collection

After his father's final decision to take up the Cullinlaringo run Tom was sent off to learn farming on Mr Alec Anderson's property "Barrigal" at Skipton. Mr Anderson was a friend of Horatio whom he had met while at Lexington. Tom wrote to his cousin Colden in 1860 telling him how he is learning shearing.

1st October 1860

Skipton

My dear Coley,

I have been up here ever since Saturday but we have not commenced to shear not having been able to wash on account of the rains - but we shall wash on Wednesday next if fine and shear the week after & I shall then be able to inform you how I handle the shears.

Are you going to run again at all or have you given up pedestrianism in toto? Mr Anderson has 11 in family rather extensive all natives [people born in the colony] - & all very jolly persons.

Has your Ma returned from her visit to George? and if so how does she like the Ancient Briton's wife - I suppose she is all that she should be and a good bit more Germanish. How does my lovely toddler kins get on - Eugene. And the lovely Dinah, Miss Annie - love to all.

How will the Richmond club get on this year? - I shall perhaps play a few matches in Nov & Dec if they still retain the cup.

How about the all England Eleven - 6 of one and half a dozen of the other I suppose - to their coming out I mean, being able to raise the necessary subsidies - eh? Who have the R.C.C. got this year? - & the M.C.C.? It has been very disagreeable weather since I arrived here Direct T.W.W. care of Alec Anderson Esq. Barrigal near Skipton. Any news will be refreshing as we only get the "Tiser" [Geelong Advertiser] once a week & that is very slow indeed & very dry.

Tell us if you are going to run again - Did our Richmond Nichols win the A.M. race at Prescots on the Yarra?

Remember me to all at home & believe me your aff. cousin

T. W. Wills

#8601001 L W C Collection

In January 1861 he left with his father and accompanied him on the trek from Brisbane to the station [detailed in Chapter 7]. He was indeed fortunate to have been

sent back by his father to collect drays containing supplies which had been left at Albinia Downs, and thus missed the massacre itself. He remained on the station to run it under the management of William Roope who had come to run the station on behalf of the trustees, but clearly the two did not get on and in June 1862 Mr. Roope left Cullinlaringo as a result, according to Mrs. Roope's diary, of Tom's misconduct. He gave news to his mother of Mr. Roope's departure and the doings at the station in the following letter:

26th July 1862
Cullinlaringo

My dear Mother,

By last mail I had no letter from you, or anyone at the Point. I have written Mr. Morris by this mail. I fear the necessary expenses are more than he seems to think them likely to be. I am obliged to put up a good shed, one to last four to five years, cost 200 pounds in all. Also lambing just coming on requires a great amount of labour which cannot be done without unless we wish to lose all the lambs, and if that's to be the case one had better give up at once.

A Mr. Dance a squatter from the Peak Downs was here the other night, he has 10,000 sheep and the largest run in Queensland, a good judge besides he values his run at 2 pounds a head all over, and he says this run if put onto the market would realise 2 pounds 10 shillings all around, and as we shall shear 11,700 this year if nothing occurs we should get 30,000 pounds for it even now. He says my yards are the best in Queensland, and he is going to erect yards after my plan. My father met him several times on the road. He says that the run in 10 years hence could not be purchased for a hundred thousand pounds, the best in Queensland. So if the trustees will let us have the money we will repay, even if they borrow it can be returned in a very few years. If they adopt half measures they had better sell at once although it would be a sin I know my poor father would not have sold for any sum even if he had to borrow for a good start. I told Mr. Morris this so he will know how to determine as to what he will do sell or let us have money.

We have full supplies for 12 months so that is good at any rate no more expense. He cannot surely fancy lambing can be carried on without men and careful men in the bargain men that one can trust. I know how to be careful. The lambs make the station nothing else I can assure him or anyone else so if we have luck the shearing after the next we may shear 18,200 or may be more. I keep under my calculations a good sum to allow for accidents so you see we would even return money lent to the estate.

I wish you would get him to decide, just borrow by all means, don't sell this great fortune or else I shall say my father's children are not worthy longer to bear his name.¹⁴⁰

There is no risk but the expenses are far under what Mr. Roope calculated as you will see by my most minute calculations. He was a manager - yes a manager of old women no more just as fit as any old doll to manage a station just fancy his ordering up from Sydney 3 gross of infant's lights for his own use I suppose but charged to the estate. That's what I call folly in the extreme.

I heard from Amsinck last mail, and he stated that he expected my brother out in 14 days or so, has he arrived yet? [Cedric had arrived 15 days earlier on July 11] I hope to see him at Christmas when all the work is done. He will be a lucky old cove coming up when nearly all is done.

I find a job next year to make a wash pen somewhere down on the river some distance from the head station at Mount Emily. Talking about Mount Emily I must say my sister is the very essence of I don't know what, but never mind, I'll never write her again as long as she remains Miss Emily or Mrs. anybody else - can't get time why it all is a pack of nonsense from beginning to end has she not got every evening of the week she can find it convenient to write to others as I hear no time complained of there oh no Miss Emily never mind I'll square accounts or else my name is not TWW.

Has Ced growed a big German with a big pipe and long stem? What scrape did he get into, you seem to have thought he would do so? He will find some rum chaps up here if he gives way to his temper I can tell him fellows that made Mr. Roope shake in his shoes up here are heard speak at a distance but men that are quite easy to manage when treated quietly. We are to have a court house about 20 miles from this soon at Springsure that's what frightens the men more than anything else we shall have no humbug now they will be more civil now a rare change for the better I can vouch for even now, for they know their day has come to an end and rather quicker than they anticipated into the bargain.

Give my kisses to the little Hortense and may God in His mercy keep her.

Love to all and may the Lord in his mercy guide us through all trouble and bless you all,

Your affectionate son,

Thomas Wills

PS Ice nearly an inch thick in the morning, but just as warm as ever in the day. Had a very narrow escape from a snake, trod on him and felt him winding around my leg.

#8620726 T H S W Collection

He continued at the station until early in 1864 although his time there was broken by trips south to play cricket and in February 1863, while playing in Sydney as captain of Victoria, he was struck in the face during an invasion of the ground by spectators in a nasty incident during a match between Victoria and New South Wales. He must also have spent considerable time in Victoria in these years as he is listed by Frank Tyson in his excellent history of the Richmond Cricket Club as having captained the Richmond Cricket Club in the seasons 1862-65.

It became absolutely clear to the trustees of the estate that he was not dedicated to the job and was incompetent in the task, and on 1 April 1864 it was decided that he should not return to the station.

In the following letter written to Cedric by his mother we find some allusion to the reasons which had to do with the fact that Tom already had some drinking problem and had somehow or other got himself into debt.

January 12 1864

My dear Cedric,

The boys are enjoying their holidays. I have but this moment received your two letters. Horace went into town this afternoon for George so the three have gone squatting for ducks. Horace and Egbert went last night and bought home 3 the former and 2 the latter one, they have been out several nights before, sometimes bringing back 7 and at other times none. They were both very good this morning scraping up the dirt in the back yard and burning it off. They had the day before finished making me a rabbit yard, such as you made before going to England, but as I tell Egbert if he does me one good turn he spoils it directly afterward breaking a window or something of the sort so I am sure to have to scold him. Today after helping to clean up the place he went to Town with Lizzy for a ride and after dinner with Emy who had to collect for the Church.

Half past nine o'clock - Horace just back from duck shooting - shot one Mosquitos among them dreadfully

I had forgotten to tell you in my former letter, if I did not in my last, that we had a Carte de Visite of your Aunt Alexander for you and I will soon get one of your Uncles and Dr. Vanderbyl and if you keep being a good boy I will get you an album to put them in as my New Year's gift. We have seen nothing of Tom yet, he was with the Twenty Two directly he arrived in Melbourne,

Mr. Morris was out here on Monday to tell me something important, Mr. Anderson had been down to see him and the consequence is Tom is not likely to be married for a very long time to come.¹⁴¹ Mr. A has heard something not at all in Tom's favour so Mr. Morris wished me to write and advise him to return to the Station without any loss of time. I do not expect he will even go to Skipton this visit. Tom would act for himself in all things so now he must now also bear the blame of all things himself.

As to the bricks there will be no need of them, but let this affair of Tom's be kept to yourself. Tom should have consulted Mr. Morris before commencing to make bricks - it is more than the Station can stand and he knows it.

I shall see Mr. Ducker about it tomorrow please God and to the money and cheques drawn by Tom, Mr. Morris spoke of them the other day and said he was determined not to let Tom leave Victoria until he had cleared it all up satisfactorily, for he had not yet given an account of how the money was spent he had given him when last down here. He is really like a child with money and is not to be trusted with it. Mr. Morris told me he had written and instructed Mr. Johnson to sell some sheep, for he is afraid of the Bank drawing upon us for the money that had been drawn there and then he should be in a pretty mess. Tom wrote to say some time ago if people knew the sheep were forced into the market they would not give the price for them, but I say people are not supposed to know we are obliged to sell.

I trust Mr. J¹⁴³ may find a good market for them.

Goodbye my dear Boy, God bless you and may he spare you to see many a happy new year. All send their love, Baby a kiss

Ever your affectionate Mother

E. Wills

#8640112 T H S W Collection

From the time when it was decided that Tom was not returning to the station, he turned to his interests in cricket and football and made his living as a professional coach.

He would play cricket anywhere that he could get somebody to accept his services and we know of him playing in Ballarat, Geelong, Ararat, Bendigo and in New Zealand at Otago and Canterbury over the next few years. He kept in touch with Cedric after he left Cullinlarino and this letter shows him as a good correspondent;

24th September 1864

Bellevue

My dear Ced,

I sent you last week a Bell's Life with the account of the Melbourne athletic sports. The following week the Geelong athletic sports came off on the cricket ground. Egbert won the 100 yards race for youths, two guineas, Horace was second for the half mile and got second prize 30 shillings.

He was beaten by a man named Stevens from Melbourne who has been training so long. I entered for the race but did not start as they only gave me 3 yards of Stevens and Horace only 5 yards, the handicappers were regular muffs.

I won the drop kick (two guineas) kicking 173 feet Osborne second 171 feet Colden won the high jump (30 shillings) 5 feet Timms second 4 feet 11 pretty near him. Mr. Ducker says that in about four years time we shall have to raise money to buy half the run. I resigned because Mr. Morris actually said that there were no more sheep on the run (or very few more) than those that were taken up and that he had been informed of it from good authority etc, but would not tell me who told him, so I told him that under the circumstances he had better get someone else till the time was up, for if he always believed what yarns he heard he would at length take my share away together. I expect Mr. Barnett was the man because he always said Mr. Corrigan's sheep always had splendid lambs. So I just told him what I knew of Barnett's sheep and then I don't believe that he thought I told him the truth so under the circumstances I thought it better to resign and with it my salary so now I get a fifth lot but I suppose it will all come right some day, at any rate it shall not be for the want of trying when I start again.

I was so thoroughly disgusted at being told after doing one's best to get a good increase, that one had done nothing at all. He will believe any mortal yarn he hears from Queensland and there seems to be plenty that keep him well supplied whoever they are. I dare say I shall find out some day and I shall then be able to pay them in their own coin. There will be a good time for us yet, Ced old chap, I am thinking of going up to Sydney to stay and I am expecting a job from there. Anything to pass the time away.

"Dread" was poisoned on the 8th August because he killed sheep we have another the same colour and a good watch dog although young and if he is kept on the chain he will be very savage, we call him Snap. How is old Snap? Take care of old Jack he was Pa's old horse and I should like to keep him as long as he lives.

Remember me to Mr. J and Jim Baker I suppose you will always be able to secure him for overseer and his experience will increase. Has old Ben left? Tell McSparrow if he comes back here there are at least half a dozen women that will be down upon him so he had better stay where he is. Gold found the

*other day at the Little River but whether it will be a great rush I can't tell
at present.*

I hope you forwarded my trunk to Captain Pockley.

I remain

Your affectionate brother

TWW

PS If the Geelong sports are in Bells I will forward it.

#8640924 T H S W Collection

In September 1866 while conducting a coaching clinic at Edenhope in far western Victoria, not far from the site of Lexington where he had grown up, he met a number of aboriginal cricketers who had been playing matches in the district and began to coach them with an eye to competing against city club teams. Just before Christmas 1866 with Tom Wills as captain the aboriginal team left Edenhope and played a match against a Melbourne team at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Boxing Day 1866 before 10,000 spectators. They lost this match but earned an excellent reputation amongst the sporting crowd. Two members of this team, Bullocky and Cuzens, became the first aboriginals ever to represent Victoria in a match against Tasmania.

Early in 1867 Tom Wills took this team on a tour in Victoria playing in Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo, and in February had a farewell appearance at the Melbourne Cricket Ground prior to proceeding to Sydney where they began a two-day match at Redfern on 21 February. This tour was a fiasco as the promoter, Captain Gurnett, was a confidence trickster and ran away with the money. The manager, an Edenhope identity Mr. Hayman, lost £400 and Tom Wills also lost money. On their return to Melbourne he severed his connection with the aboriginal team which in 1868 toured England.

According to the Australian Dictionary of Biography he married Sarah Theresa Barbor in Castlemaine in 1867 or 1868 but there is no record of such a marriage in the parish registers of any religious denomination in the area nor in the civil records. In fact she was described in Tom's will as his "housekeeper" and she eventually died in East Melbourne in 1906 at the age of 67 years. She was born in Dublin in about 1839 as Sarah Theresa Duff and spent her first twenty years there. She married at the age of 19 in Ireland to Samuel James Barbor and after their arrival in Australia he became a civil servant. In the legal documents surrounding her estate it says that Thomas Wentworth Wills was a bachelor and had never married. It is apparent that my grandmother's statement that she was a "common law wife" is the truth of the matter and that the fiction of this marriage was maintained for propriety's sake.

He had, as early as 1867 been the subject of gossip that his drinking was affecting both his playing and his temperament and in that year he announced his retirement from representative cricket and the following article appeared in *The Australasian* on 8 May 1869

MR. THOMAS W. WILLS - A Biographical Sketch

By Longstop¹⁴²

*"The man I speak of cannot in the world (colony) be single counterpoised;
He proved best man i' the field, and for his meed was brow-bound with the
oak"*

- Shakespeare

As the above-named celebrated cricketer has, in a characteristic letter addressed to a contemporary, signified his intention to give up the game, it is due to the readers of The Australasian that he should not be permitted to do so without a sketch or résumé of his career being presented to them. That task from recent circumstances rather a delicate and distasteful one, has been assigned to me. Certainly no one should be better qualified for it, as I have known Mr. Wills in the old country, and may say have watched him through his whole colonial career.

I will try, then, to do justice to one of whom, as a cricketer, it may with truth be asserted that it will be long ere we look upon his like again. Fortunately, I have by me some notes furnished by Mr. Wills himself, so my authority is undoubtedly first hand.

Before entering into particulars, I cannot refrain from here calling attention to the fickle nature of everything colonial. A few years ago the fact that the most noted cricketer in all the colonies intended to retire on his laurels, would have been the theme of general conversation, at least amongst cricketers.

He would have been fêted by our leading club, and other clubs would also have joined in a parting demonstration of esteem. Testimonials, so cheap and easily got up now-a-days, would have been presented by the dozen, and most probably some more valuable souvenir of public regard would have accompanied them. But how different is the reality. Before this article is read, I daresay Tommy Wills will be quite, or almost, forgotten. No doubt, recent circumstances, to which I need not more fully allude, have a good deal to do with this public apathy; still, I am sure that with the general public no one could have been a greater favourite than Mr. Wills, and on reviewing his career, it must be owned that to him in a very great measure is the colony indebted for that cricketing supremacy she has so long enjoyed.

Possibly the colony does not now value it as it once did, and at any rate it only bears out the old saying, that a man who studies the public good, or any one else's good, before himself is a fool for his pains. But there was a time when things were very different; and whoever remembers Melbourne eight or ten years ago, and, from a cricket point of view, contrasts it then with what it is now, may well be astonished at the change. I wish I could say of Mr. Wills' career that nothing became him so well as the close of it. In the position he filled, undoubtedly, he committed a very grave error in his refusal to play, except as captain, in the late Intercolonial Match. As a gentleman in England, a man can do this kind of thing; and he can, moreover, walk off the field if he likes, and no one can question his acts, although they may in good taste; but when a man accepts public pay, as all the eleven here did, to represent the colony, the case is different, and it is then incumbent on him to bow to the will of the eleven, and in any capacity to play and do his best.

It was Mr. Wills's misfortune, but still entirely one of his own making, that he was so circumstanced that he could not assume a right to which, as a gentleman cricketer of the colony and of England, he would have been fully entitled. I have never heard any one dispute that, as far as ability and fitness for the post of captain, he was facile princeps.[easily first]

Having thus got rid of this disagreeable subject, and for ever, I trust, let me state that my first remembrance of Tommy Wills was in a match at Kennington Oval, where we were on opposite sides. He was pointed out to

me as "that young fellow from Rugby, who plays with a 4 lb. bat, and hits terrific". I forgot which of the professionals it was who thus described Tommy Wills. He played for Kent, and I did not then know he was Victorian born,¹⁴⁴ and little I anticipated that he and I would play together in the Sydney Domain, or that I should be writing this résumé of his career. He was after my time at Cambridge, and I was just giving up cricket when he came on the scene; and, after the above-mentioned match I never met him again until we shook hands in the pavilion on the M.C.C. ground.

He had just arrived, in the same steamer with Sir Henry Barkly, in time to play in a trial match, and, of course, was selected to go to Sydney.

For in those days, hundreds, I might almost say thousands, congregated of an evening to watch the practice, and the new chum very soon passed favourably the critical ordeal and became a favourite - the observed of all observers, with his Zingari stripe and somewhat flash get up, fresh from Rugby and college, with the polish of the old country upon him. He was then a model of muscular Christianity, and although his style at the wicket was not the neatest to look at, he soon proved that it was a good one to go, as the saying is, to get runs. How that first match at Sydney was lost is still to me a mystery, unless it is to be accounted for by the Sydney grubbers, so fatal to men used to round-arm and taught to despise the underhand.

However, we need not speculate on this matter now. We have had our revenge, so I may as well here introduce some memoranda furnished me by Mr. Wills, which, no doubt, will in some future time, when we are all bowled out and cricket is being played in a more scientific style than now, be turned to by some future reader of *The Australasian*, inquisitive as to times by-gone - when all the cricket guides are out of print and a new race of batsmen and bowlers is flourishing, and Tommy, a great-grandfather, is referred to to settle some "question to correspondents" as to who did or did not take part in the first Intercolonial Match between the two colonies.

Mr. Thomas Wentworth Wills was born at Molonglo,¹⁴⁵ in the Queanbeyan district of New South Wales, on the 19th of August, 1835, and came overland to this colony in 1840. Five years later his young ideas were being taught to shoot at a school situated where *The Argus* office now is.¹⁴⁶ I should fancy that the young Tommy took very kindly to the classics, as, like a once famed Yankee orator, he is fond of a bit of Latin, and it can never be forgotten that his now famous - or foolish, rather - letter wound up with a mixture of Edgar Poe and Livy, "Nevermore; vae victis." He tells me that his first match was played where Batman's hill once stood, and that he got "a pair of spectacles" [two "ducks" or nil scores] and a pair of black eyes also - the latter catastrophe through missing a catch. Thus, like many another man afterwards famous, Tommy Wills was at first a failure. However, he soon quitted Victoria for England, and was entered at Rugby in 1852. The first week he was there he was chosen to play in his "house" eleven, and was put on to bowl.

He tried underhand, no doubt a veritable Sydney grubber, but was told that style would not do for Rugby, so at once assumed a roundhand delivery. He bowled his man down the first ball, and from that moment, writes Tommy Wills, "I felt I was a bowler". He was quickly chosen in the eleven, and in the first innings he got five wickets in five successive balls. His first match of

any note was at Vincent-square, Westminster, against that public school, and amongst his opponents was another boy, afterwards a renowned cricketer, and now a reverend divine not far from Toorak. I may quote Mr. Wills's words - "We got them out for nineteen and eleven; such a licking; I got ten wickets and twenty-two runs". He next played on that classic ground at St. John's Wood, called after Lord, against the M.C.C. and ground staff, and got five wickets in the first innings and seven in the second. He is very proud, evidently, of having bowled out old Jemmy Dean, "the dean of Duncton", as he was called, and undoubtedly it was something for a young bowler to achieve, as old Jemmy's was a very hard wicket to get in those days.

In May, 1853, our hero played for the first time against the All-England at Rugby, scored twenty-two and twenty-nine, and saw a great many wickets fall while in. He was spoken of in Bell's Life as one of the most promising rising gentlemen players of the day. In '54 he first played for Kent at Gravesend, in the match Gentlemen of Kent v Gentlemen of Sussex, got nine wickets in the first innings, and went as change (slows) when eighty were on. The great Alfred Mynn was bowling with him at the other end. Mr. Wills alludes to the good feeling and kind-heartedness of "the Lion of Kent" who appeared to take great pride in the young cricketer, called him his "lad" and gave him every encouragement. In 1855 the first match between Rugby and Marlborough was played, and T.W.W. was captain. Rugby won in one innings, and "got them all with slows" is the explanation given.

It was old Clarke who first advised him to try slow bowling, and the veteran asked Mr. Wills "to go round with him with his team in 1854", which, I presume, meant to form one of the A.E.E. of that year - a great compliment from such a judge of cricket to so young a player. But Mr. Wills had other engagements. During the Canterbury week of 1855, we find the young Rugbeian at work again in Gentlemen of Kent v. England.

During this match Mr. Wills says that "Old Lilly" had his printing-tent on the ground, and that during luncheon-time the old man specially requested him to take the bat and he would bowl him a few, which he did for some twenty minutes. The old man then said he felt unwell, and during the afternoon got worse, returned to London, and died on the Sunday morning of English cholera. If this is correct, Mr. Wills is the last man to whom "Old Lilly" bowled, but I have noticed a discussion on this subject in the Sporting Life.

However, if Mr. Wills's dates are right, and old Lilly was taken ill on the Friday at Canterbury, and died on the Sunday, he has good reason to believe he was the last man to whom the nonpareil ever bowled a ball. Lilly's opinion of Mr. Wills's play was as follows, and a very good one too: "You've got no style, but can keep the bat very straight, and give a bowler a d---d smack when he least expects it".

After the Canterbury week he went to the Emerald Isle, and had a busy time. He there, by permission of Laurence, played for the Liverpool Club against the Phoenix-park, and bowled them all out against the strong head-wind, and won the match, which was the first time the Phoenix were beaten by an English team. He was one of the first Ireland eleven got together by Laurence, and among the company were R. Hankey (Ox.), J. M'Cormick (Cam.). They played twenty-two of Mallow and district, and won in one

innings, T.W.W. getting the top score. He then returned to England, and sailed for Australia on the 20th October, and arrived at Melbourne on the 23rd of December 1856, just in time to play in the trial match on 1st January - P.O. Kington's eleven v. the eleven chosen to play against New South Wales, and got top score, thirteen and fifty-seven not out. "From this time", writes Mr. Wills, "you know pretty well". I should say I do, and few who take much interest in cricket but can only remember his colonial career.

Before briefly sketching it, I may here state that in January, 1861, Mr. Wills accompanied his father to Queensland, and was eight months on the road with stock, suffering considerable hardships. He returned 4th January 1864, in time to play against the second English team, and I well recollect the cheer that greeted his appearance on the field on that occasion.

When he left for Queensland it was generally supposed he had done with cricket, though he did not write a characteristic letter to the papers winding up with "Nevermore vae victis", but in the Guide of that date compiled by Mr. J.B. Thompson, his departure is thus gracefully alluded to:- "As we are losing Wills (I fear for ever), I take this opportunity of expressing my unqualified admiration of his almost universal ability as a cricketer and a captain. Bon voyage, Tom, to your new home, and may you live to lead to victory as many gallant little bands of Queenslanders as you have done of Victorians! Or if Bucolics delight, as they will doubtless profit thee more, may the increase of thy flocks and herds be as numerous as thy runs (cricket, not squatting), and tend as much to triumph in the battle of life as they have heretofore done in the mimic encounters of the bat and ball".

Everyone must endorse the above sentiments, but little did J.B.T. anticipate that the parting was but temporary. Space, or want of it, rather, will prevent my doing full justice to Mr. Wills's colonial career. I can but briefly glance at it.

In the following table I have given the Intercolonial matches between this colony and New South Wales in which he played. It will be seen he was captain in six of them, or which Victoria won five.

It was in 1863 that the memorable Jones dispute occurred, but for which, it is generally supposed, Victoria would have won that match also, and it was the only mistake Mr. Wills, as captain, made, as the Victorians were winning "hands down" when the game was stopped; still, no doubt on principle he was right, and in law. Greaves and Marshall returned next day to Melbourne, and the Intercolonial matches were broken off in consequence of the ill feeling which arose:-

At Sydney, January, 1857

b M'Kone	0
c T.Lewis, b Ward	1 - 1
	Ten wickets

At Melbourne, January, 1858

b O.Lewis	12
not out	49 - 61

Eight wickets

At Sydney, January, 1859
(Captain)

c Adams, b Kinloch 15
b Ward 8 - 23
Eleven wickets

At Melbourne, February, 1860
(Captain)

b Murray 4
c Dickson, b Richardson 20 - 24
Nine wickets

At Sydney, February, 1863

not out 25
not out 17 - 42
Seven wickets

At Melbourne, December 1865
(Captain)

1 b w, b Laurence 58
Six wickets

At Melbourne, January 1863
(Captain)

c E.Gregory, b Hewitt 23
Nine wickets

At Sydney, January, 1869

1 b w, b Hewitt 7
c Hewitt, b Gregory 1 - 8
Seven wickets,
Total wickets, sixty-seven

#8670105 Clipping from "The Australasian" 8 May 1869

So it would appear that Tom became a peripatetic cricketer, footballer and coach in the years 1868 to 1878. He wrote a coaching handbook in either 1871 or 1872 and in 1873 during the tour of Australia by a team led by Dr. W. G. Grace Tom played for "The 22 of Warrnambool" and, later in the tour, Grace found Tom coaching the Kadina team in South Australia and remarked that "Wills appears to see himself as representing the whole country".

The Melbourne Cricket Club advertised in 1877 for a Secretary and Tom decided to apply.

19th September 1877
Geelong

W. H. Handfield, Esq.
Acting Hon. Sec. M.C.C.

Dear Sir,

Seeing by advertisement that applications are to be sent in to you for the Office of Secretary to the MCC I herewith apply for same.

I am well up in the duties attached to the office and do not fear work, and I trust that the Committee will give my application a favourable consideration, owing to my many years devotion to Colonial Cricket.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

Thomas W. Wills

#8770919 L W C Collection

By 1878 he had completely fallen into alcoholism and in that year was confined for some time in the Kew Lunatic Asylum, just a short distance from his Uncle and namesake's home "Willsmere" and in the last two years of his life was thrown onto the charity of his family. He received an allowance and also sought money from his brothers as this letter to Horace, the last one which he is known to have written, shows;

15th March 1880

Heidelberg

My dear Horace,

Many thanks for your order on Ducker for £10 which I duly received from him.

I always thought you all lived at the old Head Station. I never by any chance hear about the station at all except a little from Ducker about the business part.

All the family seem to have scattered all over the colonies. I am glad to learn from your note that Sarah and Ethel are well. When do you intend to pay Victoria a visit? I receive from Ducker £3 weekly and £1 he retains till some old debts are paid off in Geelong.

Everything in Victoria is very stagnant at present and for some time back, but it is expected that when the exhibition is opened at the end of the year things will brighten.

The Prince and Princess are expected to be here at the opening so you may guess pretty well that there will be a grand gathering in Melbourne.

We have trains running to nearly all parts of the colony so people can easily take a trip to town.

I've only been in Melbourne twice since I've been here. I see by today's paper that wool has risen on the home market. The farmers here are shipping for England quantities of wheat and grain.

The frozen meat experiment has turned out a success and squatters will greatly benefit thereby.

I'm out of the world here and the only news I pick up is from the newspaper (Age) and that's been full of nothing lately but electioneering business. I don't think however that the present ministry will retain Office for any length of time.

I hope to get to Tasmania before the end of the year. However I should be glad to get news from you sometimes. Sally¹⁴⁷ joins me in love to all. I write Ced by this mail also, so if he sends £10 I shall be clear to move and very

glad of it. Have you any fruit on the station growing? We have had some good rains lately but still it continues very warm and sultry.

Your affectionate brother,

Thomas W. Wills

#8800315 T S W C Collection

Just six weeks after he wrote to Horace he was again drinking heavily. He was admitted to the Melbourne Hospital on 1 May and the hospital's minute book describes him as "in a semi delirium tremens state, tremulous movements of the hands, was rather obstinate, refused to remain in hospital, absconded at 5 pm" Finally it all became too much for Tom who killed himself, while in delirium tremens at a rented house in Heidelberg outside Melbourne. The news was received sadly by many who admired his enormous contribution to the sports of cricket and football. I have been asked what happened to all Tom's cups and memorabilia and I can only assume that he sold it all to pay for his drinking, certain it is that there is none in the hands of the family other than letters and photographs.

A couple of days after his funeral which took place at Heidelberg and which was attended by only a few family members, Mary Wills, wife of Egbert, wrote to her sister, Bella who was at Coorabelle staying with the third of the Beswicke sisters Sarah, wife of Horace, to give her some news on the subject,

On the back of her letter Egbert wrote a note to Horace. This is an extremely sad letter and is produced here in full (except for the little drawing showing a body with the stab wounds marked.)

Lexington

Sunday evening May 9th 1880

Dear Bella,

We are so pleased that the box has arrived safely after all and that your dress fits you all right - your riding gloves I sent you two and a half sizes larger than you wrote for as I knew they would not be large enough. I suppose you are staying in Springsure now, what a lot of babies there will be all about the same time, Sarah's, Mrs. Tom Conron's, Berry's, Lizzie's, Hortense's and Mrs. Ernest Harrison's, fancy what a number!

In my last letter I told you Charlie Parsons was so ill - well he got rapidly better - fancy last Sunday was the day that poor Tom Wills killed himself - it was dreadful. Egbert was there two days he felt it very much in such a case we are only going into complimentary mourning for a short time. I did not know what to do about it until I went to Mrs. Norcott's and Mrs. Harrison's and they told me what to do. Of course Emmy I do not have anything to do with¹⁴⁸ she and Addie met at Tom's death but did not speak to each other. Egbert will write on the other side so I will not turn over - Bertie¹⁴⁹ is the dearest little pet he can walk and talk and knows everything. Pa¹⁵⁰ has a very bad cold. Mrs. Rose has been working for Ina.

With love to all, hoping Sarah will be all right

Yours lovingly

Mary Wills

#8805009 L W C Collection

9 May 1880

Dear Horace,

I will just give you particulars of poor old Tom. He and Sarah had been drinking to such an extent that he got horrors very bad and as Sarah could not manage him on 1st of May Saturday she took him into the hospital in the morning. The authorities there promising there they would keep him under restraint until he recovered. Previous to this Sarah engaged a man to watch him at home.

Well on Saturday night Sarah was awakened at about 11 by some woman who told her Tom was on the verandah so she got up and let him in. Then all night he spoke in a very queer way he told S that they had to die soon it was no use they both had to go. He then asked S whether she would rather he killed her or for someone else to do so, he said (pointing to his left side) I am to be struck here you in the back - but she took no notice of all this. Then during his ravings in the night he began praying for himself and S to be forgiven for all their sins. In the morning he washed himself and put on all his best things and told S to put on her black dress to be ready for their maker. After he got up in the morning and while S was in a drunken sleep the little girl heard him saying to himself "Shall I murder her or not - no I won't". After breakfast he went and fed fowls, his birds and dogs and as he fed each he said "Now that is the last feed you will get from me" talking and acting to all appearance in a sensible way.

He then kept telling S to go and put on her black dress and be ready - while S was preparing the dinner he kept saying "It is no use doing it neither of us will be here for it". About 12 the old man who was watching him said "Mr. Wills, I am going to dinner" Tom said all right and went into the kitchen where S and the girl were.

Before this they had hidden every sharp instrument about the house when in the kitchen the girl saw him pick up and try two small knives but they bent too easily he then seemed to be looking for a short strong table knife but could not find it, he then went and stood by the mantelpiece for a few moments then went out of the side door passing S's back. When S looked up she saw him with his arm raised and a scissors in his hand he then struck himself in the chest, she ran and caught his arm then struck twice more falling at the last and onto his elbow. They laid him on his bed and he dead in two minutes he must have touched the heart he never spoke after he fell. Colie, Emmy and I went out on Monday to see him and arranged for his burial. He looked very calm but very much altered, decomposition set in on Tuesday morning.

Buried at Heidelberg cemetery Addie and Amos attended but as it was all done privately no one but Cameron was there. Tom told S to write and tell Ma and to go to Ducker to arrange her affairs. The proposal is to allow S one hundred pounds a year to keep her away. I send you a paper with remarks about Tom.

Three wounds through vest and shirt bled very little.

Your affectionate brother

E. S. Wills

#8800509 L W C Collection

I have been able to obtain from the Public Record a copy of the inquest which tells the whole sad story:

May 3rd 1880

Proceedings of Inquest

held upon the

Body of Thomas Wentworth Wills

at

Heidelberg

Received at the Crown Law Offices

May 10th 1880

There were twelve jurors who found

*“Thomas Wentworth Wills came by his death at Heidelberg
on the Second of May current
the deceased Thomas Wentworth Wills killed himself
when of unsound mind from excessive drinking”*

BOURKE POLICE DISTRICT

HEIDELBERG STATION

May 2nd 1880

*REPORT OF CONSTABLE HANLON RELATIVE TO THE DEATH OF
THOMAS WILLS*

I have to report that Thomas Wills 45 years of age died about 11.30 pm this day under the following circumstances.

He had been drinking heavily up to Wednesday 28th April and has since been suffering the effects. There was a man in charge of him who went to dinner about 1 pm after which deceased possessed himself of a scissors with which he stabbed himself, inflicting three wounds in the left hand over the heart. He died in a short time after, the wounds did not bleed much externally. There are no suspicious circumstances of foul play, as his wife was at the time trying to prevent his doing so and the occurrence was witnessed by a young woman named Jessie McKewin - Doctor Black is the nearest medical practitioner at Heidelberg and treated deceased on the 30th April. The remains is at the residence of the deceased at Heidelberg.

*Signed John Hanlon
Const. 2124*

*THIS DEPONENT SARAH THERESA WILLS WIDOW OF THE DECEASED
RESIDING AT HEIDELBERG*

The deceased was my husband his name was Thomas Wentworth Wills his age was 45 years. He was a gentleman, he has left his family. He has been drinking for years. I took him to the Melbourne hospital on Saturday, he was admitted and I left him there. I took him to the hospital because he could not sleep and I was afraid he would do harm to himself. At nine o'clock on Saturday night I was in bed. I was woken up by a woman who told me that my husband was on the verandah. I got up and found him there, he was standing there waving his hand to some imaginary person. I got him into the house. He went to bed after which he did not sleep. I was afraid he would do himself an injury and at three o'clock I called in Constable Hanlon.

Hanlon advised me to get some one to take care of my husband, he remained with him until I got a man named Dunwoody to take care of him.

He never slept and remained with him all yesterday. At about one o'clock my husband was walking in the garden. Dunwoody told me he was going to dinner. Soon after Dunwoody left my husband went into the kitchen. The first thing I saw him do was to open a pair of scissors I do not know where he got them. Before I could prevent him he stabbed himself three times in the breast the wounds did not bleed much, he died immediately and before any assistance could be got.

Sarah Theresa Wills

CORONER'S INQUEST

This deponent Ann Jane Heddle residing at Heidelberg

I was staying with Mrs. Wills for company whilst her husband was ill. On Saturday night Mrs. Wills was in bed at 7 o'clock. I do not sleep there, I went to see her about 9 o'clock. I found Wills standing on the verandah. I have ascertained that he came to Heidelberg by the coach which arrived at 7 o'clock. She had taken him that day to the Melbourne Hospital. I remained there all night. He was violent and tried to choke himself. I went for a constable at 3 o'clock and then I went to Dunwoody to take care of Wills.

Dunwoody went to dinner at 1 o'clock yesterday. Wills came into the kitchen, he looked for a knife but they were all put away. He then took a pair of scissors from the corner of the mantelpiece and stabbed himself. Both his wife and myself tried to prevent him but we were unable to do so - he died in a few minutes. His wife has not been drinking since Tuesday last.

Signed

Ann Jane Heddle

This Deponent Thomas Murphy Constable residing at Heidelberg

Constable Hanlon was sent for to the home of the deceased Wills at 3 o'clock.

He reported him as in a state of delirium tremens. He proposed to his wife to put him in the lock up but she refused and then Hanlon advised a man to be got to take care of him and remained until Dunwoody came for that purpose. Hanlon is a 2 class stationed in Melbourne.

Both Wills and his wife drank to excess. On yesterday at quarter past one o'clock I was sent for to the house. I found the deceased dying - he died soon after my arrival.

I found three penetrating wounds in the L. Breast over the heart. I got the scissors produced - they had blood upon them.

*Signed
Thomas Murphy*

CORONER'S INQUEST

This deponent DAVID DUNWOODY labourer residing at Heidelberg

I was sent for yesterday morning at about 3 o'clock to take care of the deceased Wills. He was quite out of his mind and suffering from delirium tremens.

He heard persons speaking to him and was practically totally under the bed. He tried several times to suffocate himself by holding his mouth and nose. At about one o'clock he seemed a great deal better he was talking about feeding the fowls. I went at one o'clock to get my dinner. Before I left I put away all weapons by which I thought he might injure himself. I left him in charge of his wife and servant girl.

David Dunwoody

X

His mark

Witnessed

#8800503 Public Records

So ended the fascinating and, in my view, wasted life of Thomas Wentworth Wills at the age of only 43 years and 6 months. What was extremely sad about the final outcome was that Elizabeth Wills, who was very religious, considered suicide to be a great sin and she disowned Tom as a result.

My grandmother, Rene Wills Cooke, twice told me a story which I will repeat here:

"After Tom's death a reporter from one of the Melbourne daily newspapers called on Grandma Wills and said "I would like to ask you about your son" - "Which son?" she replied - "Thomas, of course" responded the somewhat surprised reporter and the chilling reply was "I have no son called Thomas!"

This attitude was so strong that the family erected no memorial at Tom's grave and it was only after a call for public subscriptions, which was arranged by the Melbourne Cricket Club, that the wonderful headstone, which is still in situ, was erected over the grave in the Heidelberg Cemetery.

CHAPTER 12

THE CHILDREN OF HORATIO S. H. WILLS**EMILY SPENCER WILLS****(25 December 1842 to 6 December 1925)****and her husband****HENRY COLDEN ANTILL HARRISON****(16 October 1836 to 2 September 1929)****“The father of Australian Rules Football”**

The first letter which has survived of Emily's was written in May 1861 where she was staying at George's Hall, the home of her uncle David Johnson and his wife Selina neé Willie. The family frequently seemed to visit and she also stayed occasionally with the Antills at Picton. It is an interesting letter from a girl of 19.

May 17th 1861

Georges Hall

My dear Brothers,

Last time I wrote I was in Sydney. Pussy and I stayed two or three days with Selina Pockley¹⁵¹ then we went over to Sydney in a boat and went about shopping with Auntie. We met Mr. Laidley, Mr. Weston's son-in-law. He lent us his carriage to go about in. That evening Auntie and I went to his place at Darling Point. Mrs. Laidley is not very well so they have gone to England by the "Essex" or "Sussex". I sent a kiss to Aunt Alexander by Mrs. Laidley.

Next day we came up by the train to Fairfield and were driven home. While we were waiting for the train to start we met a Mr. Hassel who told me he had seen my Mama the other day. I said I think not, but he said he had only just come from Geelong where he had met Ma one day when he was walking with Tom Antill. Pussy has been staying in Sydney ever since. She is expected home next week.

Auntie Ruby¹⁵² and I went to Horsley a few days after where we stayed nearly a fortnight. We could not get home as there was a flood. Horsley is such a pretty place. They have three vine yards and make wine. There are such numbers of orange trees, shaddocks, olives, lemons and all sorts of fruits.

There are two native fig trees at the gates, such beauties. Etty¹⁵³ has three kangaroos in an enclosure among some orange trees. The old man is getting savage and won't let any person go in.

There was a show in Parramatta and Mr. Weston drove us in his brake and four horses. Two of his horses got the prizes. You never saw such a show. There was some maize, two pumpkins and some poultry in the tent. There was an animal like a calf with the eyes of a sheep and brown wool. Also some Brahman cattle. We all had dinner with the Williams's and then drove home. Tiger the native always when he sees a person with a large mouth says there is a mouth for a tart shop.

When we returned Mr. Weston persuaded Aunt Selina to allow Ettie to go back, so I went with her. We only stayed three days. Uncle David¹⁵⁴ and little G¹⁵⁵ are coming home next week. G is very downhearted because he has not been able to shoot a turkey, they are so shy. He has shot ducks and pigeon but not one turkey. Georgey will be 18 on the 24th of May - I suppose we will have fireworks as usual. I suppose you will have a holiday there? The poor old Duchess of Kent. Pussy says there is a whale in Lake Connemara and George and some more have gone down to try and harpoon him. Poor Mr. Evershed is dead and so is Captain Ormand's eldest daughter.

Miss Tair and Harriet Smith are married. The Reverend Huie has returned, he called at the Point. Ma, the three children, Aunt Roope went to Dr. Brough's church one Sunday, in the middle of service Duckey punched Pussy in the back and pointing to a chandelier asked if it were a Christmas tree. Pussy is staying with Alice. There was a great foot steeplechase - the water jump was 16 feet wide with a hurdle in the middle. Coley had to give some of them 35 yards start - in fact he was the only one at the starting post but still he came off victorious. Pussy, Coley, Alice and Mrs. Amsinck all went to see the Garribaldi sword. The ladies fashions are becoming quite manly - Souave jackets, Volunteer clocks and muffin or porkpie hats.

Uncle Willie [William Roope] came up to Sydney and came last Saturday but would only stop a few hours. He will try and come again before he returns to Geelong which is going to smash, as the inhabitants are all moving northward (Queensland).

Aunt reads to us after tea when Uncle is away - she just finished reading "The recollections of Geoffrey Hamlyn", it is all about this country about bushrangers. Such a nice book.

I hope none of you three will ever take to smoking as it is such a dirty habit. Uncle, I think, will not allow any of his boys to smoke.

Do you want any more post stamps except new ones? Because if you do not I will not send you any more. Jolly gave me a great bundle. It is much colder this year than last, the loquats here are nearly ripe last year and the trees are only in blossom now.

You say you have not received letters from me for three mails. I have only missed the one that was starting when we came up to Sydney. I always address them to Uncle Alexander now because I thought you were to be removed from his Highness Herr Thomases.

All send their love per same, and send me a piece of your heart.

I remain, my dear brothers,

Your affectionate sister,

Em. Spencer Wills

Uncle Willie came here yesterday and stayed last night. I think he is going to Hasty or Camden today and returns to Geelong next Tuesday by the "Wonga" He has already taken his passage. Tedo is dead from a bite and Uncle Willie's cattle died the next week from distemper - he is sad now about them.

While she was still staying at Georges Hall her mother wrote giving news of happenings at Bellevue and of her father's trip.

July 7 1861

My dear Emmy,

I had letters from Papa about two weeks since, he had just reached Rockhampton but was too busy to write.

He told me to excuse him to Uncle William. Your Aunt Harrison wrote to say Amsinck received a letter from Tom, he did not write to me. Mrs. Roope wished me to say she was waiting for a letter from you and was only now waiting for Uncle Willie to write to send you a long letter.

I have not told her that I am writing for you to come home, I have written to Miss Willie to say I wish you to come home by the end of the month. I will enquire the amount of the passage money and send you a pound over to pay your expenses from the steamer on to Geelong. I expect you will land too early from the steamer to ask Colie or anyone else to meet you if it does happen so you must only manage to reach the Parade yourself I do not want to send any more money than will just bring you home because Papa is rather short of it at the present time and he wished me not to spend any more than I could possible do without.

Only just fancy we had a quarter of beef hanging in the tree at the cow shed and last night some kind person came and walked off with it. Duckey wishes me to ask you to give her your old doll, I said I daresay you would as it was no good. Pussey only left the city about a week ago I expect her Mama had to send for her because Fan and Charley are both laid up measles and Charley rheumatism.

I had one letter from Addie they have purchased a cottage at Natal she wrote to four persons and they were all exactly alike. Mr. Beamish and Miss Castieau are carrying on a little flirtation together she will not acknowledge it but it is easily to be seen when they meet. Reverend Newton desired his compliments the first time I wrote. Miss Castieau starts tomorrow to Castlemaine on a visit to Mrs. Crawford, she had often been invited but could not go until now

We are getting rid of the washerwoman and her family the next week, Papa wished me to discharge all but Billy and Mr. Ramsay and to sell as many of the cows as we could, the second scotch cow only calved last Friday a little heifer calf.

Uncle Willy was out to prune our grapevines for us, he has not opened any business yet. Will not Cedric come out smooth with his watch that Aunt Alexander gave him? Lizzy's little white cat grows more beautiful each day. The children send their love and kisses, and with best love believe me my dear child

Your ever loving mother

E. Wills

#8610707 L W C Collection

And later in the year she wrote again to the boys in Germany giving news of the birth of the youngest of Horatio's children, Hortense, born just four days earlier.

Belle Vue
August 20 1861

My dear brothers,

You will be surprised to hear you have another sister. She was born on the 16th. Tom is 26 years her senior. Yesterday was his birthday, I wonder what he was doing. Ma is getting on beautifully. Dr. William Hair came out today to see her. I expect the baby will be called Cullinlaringo, or some such name.

I have been at home nearly a fortnight. I came down in the "Wonga" by myself and was terrible sick. When I left the River Fanny Johnson¹⁵⁶ was so ill with congestion of the brain. I have not heard how she is getting on since. I left the poor old things. Freddy had left Adalong for the River the same day I left the river for Melbourne.

Aunty came down to Captain Pockley's with me. She went home by the 10 o'clock train next morning and Uncle David came down to see me on board. She made me a present of such a beautiful box of paints. I was sick almost as soon as I got outside the heads and did not eat a thing from noon Saturday to Sunday night. As I did not know anyone on board I stayed in the ladies cabin all the time.

I met a Mr. Bennett on board who said that he had seen Tom a fortnight back and he was looking very well. Mrs. Manion has a baby (mais revenons a nos mutons). When we arrived in Hobsons Bay it was 10 o'clock at night so next morning I went up by train and then drove to the Parade. Mr. Amsinck came down with me to the steamer office and found my luggage. I bought a cask of oranges and lemons down with me in freight. They are not half eaten yet. They only allow one hundredweight luggage by train to Geelong, and as I had 3 cwt. I had to pay 8/-. Nobody knew I was coming home although Captain Pockley sent a telegram to Uncle Willy yet he did not receive it until the day I came so we found each other in the train at the Werribee. I stayed at Mrs. Morris' that night and went to a concert. The next Friday I went to a large party at Mrs. McDonalds.

I dare say George will give you a full account of Mr. Grant's doings. He has cheated in Geelong to the amount of thousands of pounds and bolted. He has not been caught yet. I hope he may get away safely, poor fellow. I can't help pitying him. Tom Mace shot the native companions. Tom fell dead on the spot but Bessie lingered for a fortnight. Mr. Anderson's son who married Miss Miller has turned out a dreadful fellow, his wife has left him.

Miss Castieau wishes to be remembered to you all. Charlie is still very ill. Pussy is going in tomorrow. Miss Castieau has been staying at Castlemaine. Harry Crawford is going to sea, the navy.

I am tired, I have been writing so much. Ina Garrard stayed here two nights last week. She is going to Skipton for the week and is going to call on Mr. Anderson for three Persian cats for Mrs. Roope. I shall give more news next time. All send their love and kisses. George has not given me your letter or hair yet.

I remain, dear boys,

Your loving sister,

Emily S. Wills

#8610820 T H S W Collection

Among news of the many inter-family visits we find in Mrs. Roope's diary that Coley Harrison was posted to the customs department in Geelong in 1862 for a year and spent a great deal of time at Bellevue. During this period he and Emily fell in love. Coley was a first cousin to Emily, being the son of Horatio's half sister Jane Howe. Apparently Elizabeth felt somewhat annoyed about this and particularly about the fact that he and Emily appeared not to have told her about their forthcoming engagement, and she wrote the following rather cross letter to him.

June 14th 1863

My dear Colden,

I did feel very much vexed indeed when asked by parties if you and Emy were not engaged. I always said no. You can contradict it for I know nothing of it until your uncle threw out some hint about it. And then it was clear to see how things had taken a turn. But I trust it will not be a turn for the worse - but for the better.

I certainly must acknowledge it was your note that smoothed and brought down my anger for I began to think everything that was evil against you for decoying away my child until you explained you feared to wound, or in any way hurt our feelings for which I thank you.

I could not answer you immediately - wishing to turn it over quietly in my own mind and at last came to the conclusion that Emy is now at an age when she ought to be able to make a choice for herself and, of course, whatever that is will have my sanction.

At the same time it is to be hoped you will have no more public exhibitions and try also to have more sense than when you were with Mr. Earle for I am sure you would have come to blows had you not been called away just at the right time to prevent bloodshed.

Now my dear Colden, I hope you will not trifle away your money for it is hard to get and you will find you will stand in need of it when you come to have a house of your own, for Emy nor anyone else can have the sum to take that was expected.

Her poor father thinking to leave a goodly portion to each of his children he loved so much but all things are in the hands of the Lord and His will be done.

Trusting soon to hear this will meet your views.

Believe me, most sincerely,

E. Wills

PS. Read the enclosed and return - I had it from Mrs. Roope.

#8630614 L W C Collection

The engagement took place late that month and on 10 November 1864 they were married at St. Mark's Anglican Church Leopold. This rather charming account of their wedding was published in the *Geelong Advertiser*.

POINT HENRY

(From a Correspondent)

The usually quiet and retired agricultural district of Point Henry assumed on Thursday a complete mutation. The whole of the scattered population donned their holiday habiliments, the plough, and all farming operations being

suspended for the day, and were to be seen at an early hour wending their way in the direction of the little church of St. John's.

At the hour of ten o'clock the children belonging to the school at Kensington [Leopold] having arrived in wagons provided for the purpose and numbering about 150 were received amidst loud and prolonged cheers by the children of the Point School whose ranks were immediately augmented by the new arrivals, and formed into columns between two elegantly constructed arches decorated with banners, crowns, bearing the following mottoes - "God bless the happy pair", "Union is strength", "Farewell Friends, H.W." and other elegant and floral devices.

At 10.45 am the amateur soldiers were drawn up in proper military style to receive Miss Wills, eldest daughter of the late H.S. Wills, Esq., Belle Vue, whose marriage was to take place in the schoolhouse church in which her father worshipped, and the family had done so much to sustain.

At 11 o'clock, the carriages containing the bride and a numerous party, arrived, when the marriage ceremony was immediately performed by the Rev Frederick Smith, minister of the district. After the ceremony the children were again drawn up into lines, through which the happy pair passed, the girls strewing the path with flowers and singing very sweetly "Farewell Friends" under the leadership of Messrs. A. & C. W. Hawthorn.

Before leaving the church the ladies of the district, represented by Mrs Cutts and Mrs Santley presented to the bride a most elegant bouquet and silver mounted holder. The scene throughout was affecting in the extreme, honourable alike to the family of the bride and the people, who appreciating many acts of kindness received from the family thus gracefully paid a token of respect.

The children of course kept holiday, indulging in numerous sports, after which they were regaled with buns, &c.

The decorations were of the most elaborate description, the choice flowers being arranged with the taste ladies alone possess.

A large party assembled at Belle Vue and paid full honour to a family greatly respected and to a bride so unusually esteemed.

Later in the week Tom wrote to Cedric giving an account of the wedding and some other news of family affairs and sport.

14th November 1864

Bellevue

My dear Ced,

On Thursday last the 10th Emmie and Colden were married there was a grand arch made at the last gate down the lane for them to pass under and the church was covered with sentiments made out of flowers. The ladies of the Point presented Emmie with her arrival at the church with a silver bouquet holder containing artificial flowers. George Smith ate so much at the lunch that he got tremendously sick. Uncle Thomas [Thomas Wills] was present and lots of others in whom you do not take much interest Mr. Rennie was to have been present but on Wednesday he played a match against the North Melbourne and he kept wicket. I hit him in the eye with a ball and he could not see, we gave them a good dressing. Richmond beat Melbourne with

Caffyn easily I bowled him for three first innings, second innings he got 40 not out but he was missed an easy catch when he got but 5

Last year's wool brought from 1/8 to 1/10 per lb - what awful bosh Mr. J¹⁵⁷ wanting to shear in grease and have it scoured after - it would never pay as we only got the same price for what we got scoured the first shearing as we have got for moderate washing this and no extra expense for scouring.

Colden has taken a house in Richmond near the old Cremorne Gardens "Barney Street". Horace and Egbert have been out here for the last 4 days but have gone back this morning. Wilsons played Mr. Morrisons (Geelong) and headed them by only one run on the first innings. It is to be played out next Saturday.

The intercolonial rifle match comes off today in Melbourne, Mr. Middlemiss and Colonel Rede of Geelong are in the Victorian 10.

I see by news from the last mail that the Russians intended, should England have joined Poland, to have sent them men of war to Melbourne and Sydney and other large colonial towns. Would that not have made the Volunteers look considerably blue, eh?

Just fancy Mrs. Vanderbyl had three girls at a birth all dead premature rather astonished Mr. Alexander I guess.

I suppose you will have finished shearing before you get this, how are you off for carriers this season? I expect there will be a great demand for them this season as there seems to be a great exodus of squatters for the new country and consequently a great demand for teams.

Goodbye old fellow love from all and believe me

Your affectionate brother,

Thomas W. Wills

Coley and Emily had ten children, but not one surviving grandchild. In fact their only grandchild Geoffrey Wills McKnight (born at the same time as my father) died of diphtheria at the age of 4. Four of the ten children died in infancy - Eva, Horace, Ida and Eric - and this rather extraordinary exchange of letters between Coley and his superior indicates an air of fatalism. It concerns the death of his child Horace, born Christmas Day 1866 and died 19th February 1867.

*Custom House,
Melbourne,
20th February 1867*

Memo

Mr. Harrison has been absent from duty three days, and is requested to furnish a explanation thereby; sufficient excuse does not appear to have been offered.

*J. Chatfield-Tyler.
Commissioner of Customs.*

*Willsmere,
Kew,
21st February 1867.*

Sir,

I regret that my excuse for remaining away from the office was considered unsatisfactory by you. I have no further explanation to offer but that my child died on Tuesday evening. Yesterday I had to make arrangements for the funeral and today it is to be buried.

*I have the honour,
and etc.*

H.C.A. Harrison

*To J. Chatfield-Tyler,
Commissioner of Customs.
#8670220 L W C Collection*

In 1870 during the time when Mr. Ducker was trying to reorganise the estate and carry on Cullinlaringo for a little longer Emily received a letter from Mr Ducker setting out all the matters relating to Cullinlaringo which is reprinted in Chapter 10 and to which she obviously gave her approval. This must have made a difference to her later financial status as she was paid out after the sale and did not reinvest in the station. Some of her siblings did so but there is no record in any of the correspondence of the beneficiaries chiding the brothers for what later happened

Thereafter Emily's life was one of domesticity and she lived until 1925 when she died at their house, Molonglo in Kew, at the age of 83.

Colden Harrison's life in sporting terms paralleled that of Tom Wills. They were very close friends and contemporaries in many ways, having been born only one year apart, but Coley Harrison's sporting interest was foot running as opposed to Tom's interest of cricket. They both, however, shared a passionate interest in Australian Rules football in which Coley first as a player and later as president of the Football Association had a lifelong interest.

He was born at Jarvisfield, the home of his aunt Eliza Wills Antill and her husband. His mother was Jane Howe and his father a sea captain. They moved to live on the Plenty River in 1837, later living near Avoca and Colden was educated in Melbourne at the Diocesan Grammar School, later to become Melbourne Grammar School.

Immediately after leaving school he spent some time in business with his father going on to the gold diggings, but his father was an extremely poor businessman and Coley returned for a short time to Melbourne Grammar following which he joined the Customs Department in 1853. Late in the 1850s he took up foot running in a serious way. He joined the Richmond Cricket Club in 1858 and through that association got deeply involved in athletics. Over the next few years Harrison competed in a number of high profile races, often against L.L. Mount, another famous athlete of the time. There was heavy betting on these races. As an example, in one race in 1861 more than £10,000 was wagered on the outcome.

In 1859 the first serious Australian Rules competition began and Coley played for the Richmond team, on a number of occasions as captain. He moved from there to the Melbourne club where he became captain in succession to Tom Wills who had moved to Geelong, and in 1862 Coley was moved to Geelong by the Customs Department where he became captain of the Geelong Club, succeeding W. Tait. In 1863 he returned in his employment to Melbourne and was re-elected to the captaincy of that club which he remained until his retirement in 1872.

In 1905 Coley was elected a life member of the Football Council for services to the game

Two years after his retirement from the public service he performed the astonishing feat in 1896 of riding his bicycle from Melbourne to Sydney on the appalling roads of the time at the age of 60, calling on his way at his birth place and the home of the Antills at Jarvisfield.

H. C. A. Harrison's book "The Story of an Athlete" is an autobiography and gives a full account of his life. Coley died at his home in Kew on 2 September 1929 at the age of 93.

CHAPTER 13

THE CHILDREN OF HORATIO. S. H. WILLS

CEDRIC SPENCER WILLS

(1 December 1844 to 23 January 1914)

and his wife

ELIZABETH HENRIETTA (née) McDONALD)

(26 December 1850 to 25 January 1944)

Cedric Spencer was born at Lexington and grew up with the other children until moving to Belle Vue at the age of 8. I am not at all sure where he had his early education but he is listed as having been at Geelong Grammar School prior to leaving in 1859 with his father and two younger brothers to be educated in Germany, so presumably he was at Geelong Grammar from around 1854 to 1859.

He was a serious person, in fact Brian Wills described him as taciturn, and he had a strong temper which often seemed to get him into trouble. He was just 17 when his father was killed and almost immediately he was asked to leave Germany to return to Australia to help Tom at Cullinlaringo.

His father's death must have come as a terrible shock when the news was conveyed to him by Dr. van der Byl, the husband of his cousin, Sarah Alexander's daughter. He eventually heard the details of the massacre in January 1862, three months after it took place. Three weeks later he wrote the following letter to Tom:

47 Mainzer Chaussee

February 17th 1862

My dear brother,

On the 24th of last month we received letters from home that let us know all that had happened but I hope by this time the blacks have got what they deserved; but I am almost certain that if you had been there it would not have happened, poor Papa trusted them too much. If I am not mistaken they did not put them in coffins when they buried them but if they did not I suppose you have seen to that. Poor Mama must have had a dreadful shock but I am glad she stood it so well.

The Bakers were nearly all killed, which one was it that was with his father? Davey or Harry? [It was Davey]

I would have liked to see Papa again for we have not seen him for nearly three years. At first I could not make myself believe it was true. Did you keep all the blacks' weapons that were found about the camp after the massacre? If you have not you ought to try and get them. Were you one of the eight who attacked the blacks' camp the Tuesday after it happened?

Emily told me you mean to try and make Cullinlaringo the pride of Queensland but you must have time to do it and I think one of the best things would be if when I go back to take some good rams back from Germany with me,¹⁵⁸ for I think we would not have much bother in getting them, for I know a gentleman who knows two persons who are sheep breeders and have some of

the best sheep in Germany and if we could only get a few rams it would improve the breed for I heard this person say they had some Australian sheep brought to Germany and the cross made splendid sheep and the best wool. If you want any to be brought over you ought to write to Mr. Alexander.

I am very glad I am to be with you again before next Christmas for I am sick of Germany. I think it would be better for Horace and Egbert to go back at the same time for I am sure they would get on a great deal better in an Australian school than here, and I would sooner have them in an Australian school than a English one for they are so infernally bullied and there is so much blackguarding going on in English schools.

You ought to take care and not shoot down the blacks whenever you see them as you will have them attacking you again. I heard that Uncle Roope went up to help you get the station in order. If you mean to get some of the rams brought out you must write as soon as possible, for if you do not I will have left before the letter arrives.

If you want me to bring any little thing from England you can say when you write and I will try and buy it. I received a letter from the Reverend Mr. Anderson (whose son is in Australia) yesterday. If you mean to let Horace and Egbert to stay here you must write to Dr. Pilgrim and tell him to give them more time to take exercise in for they only have an hour a day and sometimes not that, and I am sure that is the reason there are always so many of the boys ill. Uncle Thomas wrote Amsinck a letter of advice last mail so I heard.

We all send our love,

I remain your affectionate brother

C. S. Wills

#8621117 LWC Collection

He arrived at Cullinlaringo in August 1862 after his return to Australia in July and started to work with Tom. He was a very dependable man and took his responsibilities very seriously, it must have been difficult for him as Tom was not at all dependable and spent long periods away from the station playing cricket.

Like Horace he came to Victoria reasonably often for holidays during which he did his best to find a suitable wife. He was engaged at one time to Pussey Glencross-Smith and we know from one of Horace's letters that he also proposed to Mary Beswicke who rejected his suit and who later married his youngest brother Egbert.

At last he met Elizabeth McDonald (usually known as Berry) whose family were on the land near Geelong on a property called "Glandariwell" and this letter from Horace to his fiance Sarah tells the story of his "fall".

February 10, 1872

Yaamba

My dearest Sarah,

Last Wednesday I received a letter from you while you were at Keysborough.¹⁵⁹ And the next day one that had been sent up to the station and returned. I hope you enjoyed yourselves very much in Melbourne and I am very sorry I was not down to have been with you.

So your Cousin tried to cut me out, did he? What a foolish young man he must be for he surely would have had a bullet hole in his waistcoat if he had succeeded.

I made sure we should have done shearing long ago but we are always having rain so that the wool is not dry enough to shear more than three days in succession. I shall now have to wait in Rockhampton after the shearing is over and scour some of the wool that the rain has made dirty, so that I don't think I shall be down by even the next Blackbird but I shall start as soon as I am ready whatever steamer I go by.

Cedy is gone now. The young lady is a Miss McDonald, a niece of A. C. McDonald of Geelong. She is such a jolly girl so strong and healthy and such a good temper. I am very glad Cedy has managed to get hold of such a nice girl.

Cedy will go up to the station as soon as I start down and let Mrs. Roope come back to Rockhampton as we shall not require her any longer.

Today we swam a mob of cattle across the Fitzroy close to Yaamba. We had such work to make them face the water as the current runs very strong. We got one steer drowned but all the rest got over safely.

There has been a beastly murder committed within cooe of the shed we are shearing in. The Blacks must have murdered the man as he has holes in him as if spears had been stuck into him in two places. The Blacks on the coast here seem to be allowed to do just as they like, everyone of them down here are about half civilised and all the rascals of the other tribes seem to be collected around these townships. I hope that native police will dress them down well for it.

I will telegraph to you from Rockhampton when I am going to start down, so I will not take you by surprise.

Cedy and his lady love are spooning on the verandah which makes me long to be at the side of mine.

With best love,

I remain,

Your affectionate Lover,

Horace S. Wills

#8720210 T S W C Collection

Cedric and Berry were married shortly after on 20 March 1872 and had twelve children, Elizabeth 1873, Edith 1874, Emily 1875, Horatio 1876, Cedric 1877, George 1878, Minnie 1880, Egbert 1881, Rose 1882, Ruby 1883, Ivy 1885, Thomas 1886 and Colden 1888.

I have very few letters of Cedric's, none at all after about 1865, but he was a meticulous man who kept records and diaries of his time at Cullinlaringo which are now in the possession of my cousin Tom Wills.

Elizabeth was an extremely hard working person, as indeed she must have been with twelve children, and she became and remained a close friend of her sister-in-law, Horace's wife Sarah. I have a number of letters which she wrote of which the following is an example written to Sarah who was on holiday in Victoria:

*Cullinlaringo
October 28 1883*

My dear Sarah,

I received your very kind letter last mail. I thought you were not going to write and I have really been too busy for I was cook for five weeks - Mrs. Hanrahan was away for a month sick in Emerald and a week sick before she went. We got on very well but I used to get so tired for it was so very hot. It has been a most dreadful season for the squatters but I am happy to say we have had rain and the grass is beginning to look green but the sheep are bogging and dying more since the rain. The horses are all so poor and miserable we had not had a ride or a drive since Vic left and such a lot of the horses have died this year - sheep by the dozens every day.

Cedric has missed poor Mr. Kavanagh¹⁶⁰ very much as the only decent person or trustworthy person is Vigor and he has had plenty to do out there. George Barnett has been ill in Rockhampton all this time and he is afraid to come back so is going to take a contract for a while down there till he is sure he is all right. James and Edward are going down to Westwood to school.

We have a very nice young man for storekeeper, Walter Heagan. Cedric and all the men are camped out near the river, Horace and Michael Kavanagh too but may be home tonight. They very often have to camp out now, no one at home but Miss Williams and myself and the storekeeper. He does not come to the house though and we have had no meat for two days and it is not very good meat here when we do get it.

Mrs. Roope is living at Gracemere with some old servant of theirs, she is a wicked old thing, when going down in the train to Rockhampton she told one of the porters most dreadful yarns about you and I and our families and that Horace and Cedric had made great mistakes in their wives, the porter told all to some friend coming back to Emerald and also said that he was a good friend two or three times to tell her that she was no credit to the Willses if she was a specimen of them.

What she or any of her relations can say about me I don't care the flip of my fingers for one of them. They can't say I am a bad woman or a bad wife either of us. I know none of them like me, I don't care for that, it won't help me in any way or do me any good or any harm and I know why they don't like me.

They had a very heavy shower of rain at Coorabelle last week and Cedric was out there measuring some fences, the new chums have finished the one they were at. He says there is a good show of grapes and peaches and the garden looks well, he was only there for a short time, my garden is looking very well indeed. I had a good bit of work to keep some of the things alive I have done no sewing for two or three months. It has taken all my time to look after things and do my housework. I am going to sew now.

We will have such a lot of oranges this year and lemons, plenty for us both. The tree near the tank has a lovely show of oranges. I have made a wonderful discovery among the oranges. This year my trees look better than anyone else's in the district I will explain to you when you come up. All the big trees are loaded and some of the small ones that have only been planted three years and a lot of the grape vines that Mrs. Myer sent us grow and have large bunches of grapes on and only cuttings and the fig trees are loaded so they will repay me for my trouble.

I need not give you any Springsure news as I know several people there will keep you posted up. I was so surprised to hear by your letter that you have not been so well for I heard from several people who said they had heard from you and that you were very much better than you ever expected to be and there was no occasion to have an operation performed, everybody seems sick. It is a pity about Mr. Brown, you ought to tell him to try homeo-medicine, you know I had dysentery for three years on and off after I had measles and Mr. Stutz cured me with Naptha and Ver Alb. and I got two bottles for Mrs. Vautin and she said it did her more good than any medicine she had from her doctors.

You must excuse this letter and mistakes, I don't feel well and inclined to write but I thought I had better write today as I am expecting every day and each hour I may not be able to write for two or three weeks.¹⁶¹ I will get Lizzie to write you a few lines when it comes off if it is a boy and if it is a girl I won't send you word at all.¹⁶²

The children are all getting on so well with their lessons, Lizzie can play a waltz and schottische for Miss Williams to dance very nicely. I think they are all getting on very well, the Kavanaghs too. Mrs. K has not been very well lately, she has had some bother about the will and it is not settled yet.

I could fill another sheet of paper but I must soon close as you will be getting tired of reading it. Tell Ethel that Dapples has another little foal and Lizzie's piebald has a little piebald foal great excitement amongst the children for they have not seen them yet.

Egbert¹⁶³ is just as stout as ever and can talk pretty well, he has the loveliest hair I ever saw. Rose¹⁶⁴ can walk about everywhere and can say almost everything after you and it just as stout as Egbert she is not as pretty as the others. I hope Ida is better.¹⁶⁵ Egbert and Rose is just well from thrush they had it all last week. Maggie Kavanagh was very ill for three weeks but is better now. We had to get some goats in from the lagoon for milk for the children.

Now I will say goodbye with best love to all enquiring friends, the children join me in sending their love.

and believe me

to be your

affectionate sister

Elizabeth Wills

#8831028 T S W C Collection

The story of Cedric and Berry is largely the story of Cullinlaringo which is fully covered in Chapter 10. After Cullinlaringo was lost in 1892 Berry found it necessary to make ends meet to open a boarding house which she did at Rockhampton and which she conducted for some years to help support the family. This letter, written shortly before they moved to Minerva Creek after spending time with Berry's sister and brother-in-law, gives news of all the happenings and in particular expresses sorrow that her children would now have to go out to work and that Minnie Blomfield-Brown had lost money in the station.

*Cullinlaringo
July 3 1892*

My dear Sarah,

Many thanks for your nice kind letter and also for collecting the girls' things and sending them up they will be up tomorrow if they come by the "Peregrine". Thank Horace very much for the fowls, you did not say what sort they were, I feel very anxious 'til I see them and hope they will arrive safely.

I am truly sorry your cow is dead, were I nearer you I would willingly give you one of mine although it may not be so good. I wish my father would give you one.

I am glad your mother is better, what a shock you must have got when her leg burst. Captain Liley will call for the horses and will pay you the 1/6 and I will pay the 4/- as it was the girls' or poor Shields that lost the rings, some of those length men must have picked them up. Will you tell me how I can pay you? I told Emily¹⁶⁶ to give Miss Young the 4/- if she has not gone before Emily gets my letter she is a nice young lady and is going down south for a change. I or rather Lizzie is sending your children a sash each, she sent them down by Emily and I bought them back and now Lizzie will forward them by Miss Young and she asked me to give her an introduction to some of my friends down there.

I have no friends in Melbourne, only you, so if you care to ask her out you can do so for I think they are nice people what little I know of them.

I am truly sorry about the station and things looking so black for us, you say we have a comfortable home to go to where the comfort is I can't see, the house is only a hut with cracks you could put your legs through and rough slabs for a floor wide enough apart for your foot to go between and then only two rooms, so where is the comfort? A tent would be better, but I hope and pray every day things will turn out right for us. It was good of Horace to wire and write to Cedric, the latter is in Rockhampton just now he went down last Thursday to see P.H.¹⁶⁷

Stewart was over last Sunday and was talking to Cedric and advised him to go down and see his father as it was likely he would buy or do something for us, so Cedric went and Lizzie and Edith went over the same day as far as [Huckeralla?] as the fares were reduced. You can get a monthly ticket and stay anywhere you like and go up and down for a single fare. Emily is not home yet but she says her throat is nearly all right now, better than it has felt for a very long time. Mr. Hobler is not going to be married 'til November, then he is going to Tasmania for his honeymoon, Mary McDonald is to be married to Garner next week and is going to live at the Lagoon and take care of her father. Sarah is engaged to Charlie Martin who is now managing for Mr. Schoefield, they are not going to be married for some time. Sarah is going on a visit to Mrs. Kavanagh 'til Mary's honeymoon is over, rather a funny way to do business! Mary has made her own wedding dress. She is a smart little thing.

I am glad Rene¹⁶⁸ is contented and that you like her she must be a dear little thing, is Ida growing any stouter? Rose is a dreadfully fat girl, she has got very fat since she got her whooping cough, Ivy¹⁶⁹ is fatter than ever, I don't know why she should look thin in her likeness - I am glad they are good. I can hardly tell you why I would not have mine taken, some day I may.

Poor old Stevens died, he is a fortnight buried today, he was a walking skeleton poor man and was no trouble, he was going about and caring for

himself 'til about 10 days ago and he would not eat anything after he went to bed only dried rusk and milk. He died on a Saturday about 4 o'clock. I sent him down a drink by Thunderbolt as no one else was about and I did not want to go just then, and he raced up in a great fright and pulled me away from the machine and made me run down. I thought he may be dead and Horace¹⁷⁰ had just come home so I made him jump off his horse to come down with me and sure enough he was dead. He had been sitting up on the edge of his bed and had fallen back, he did look a ghastly sight for he was so thin, just like those horrid pictures you see, his poor head was stretched back under him as far as his neck could possibly stretch and the apple of his throat looked so terrible and his eyes so large. His right hand was clutched on his breast. The poor man seemed ready to die and he begged not to be sent away to hospital but to die here. Hickey was so good to him, he poor man looks very ill, he is shepherding the rams and ought to have an easier billet. There has been 4 poor old station hands died this year Mrs. Graham, Stevens, poor old Shields and Maizer.

Poor old Mrs. Roope, she does not seem any too well, she has a dreadful cough something like Shields and it is getting worse.¹⁷¹ Auntie Emily¹⁷² wrote to her last week and she gave me the letter to read to her, and Aunt Em said that she was to get my Lizzie to write for her as she was converted now and was reliable. Thank goodness she was always reliable, and I wonder some of the ministers or missionaries cannot convert Auntie Em her hard words do not take the least effect and I feel sorry for her. She must keep very bad company down there, something after Deeming's style, for she always has the hard word ready but it does not always take. When I was young I was taught to be kind to everybody and every thing and say a kind word when you can, and although I have been in the bush and far away from church, I don't forget the way I was brought up.

I am afraid Emily was dragged up. She also called Peter Tyson "devil Peter". She little knows she is called the devil up here, all in Rockhampton call her that. Ask her if she was very much disappointed in not getting her second trip to Queensland, it would have looked well! You can tell her what I say for all I care, and as regards Peter drinking and being dirty she can look a little nearer home for Mrs. Roope has just done the same she has three or four times drank so much and walked out in her short night gown, so one has not much room to talk, but at the same time I don't mind having her here for the children wait on her and she is not much trouble, only now and again when she breaks out.

Horace ran a dingo yesterday some distance and then fired and killed it, he was on an old horse called Comet, but fortunately he had the rifle and shot it through the loins. Grummett also ran a dog, they are very troublesome now in the paddock among the lambs, and there are such a lot of lambs and they look so nice.

We are having a nice mild winter, we only have had one severe frost as yet, and we have lots of oranges now they are ripe and very nice, I wish I could send you some. There are lovely sweet potatoes at Coorabelle, Ah Fatt brings us some every Sunday. Lizzie is going to Mrs. Heyder as governess after mid winter I feel very sorry to part with her for she is such a help to me she has been teaching our little ones and now Edith¹⁷³ will have to do it.

And now I must say a word about Edith, I fail to see where she is lucky, I do not like the idea at all - first because he is far too old for her and she is far too young to marry yet a while, and I don't think he can be very nice to propose to so young a girl, or child I may say, so soon after his wife dying. Had she been about 24 or 26 I would not have minded it so much, I would not have said anything about it for I was in hopes it would not come off, and I still hope they may both see the errors of their ways. I am sure there are plenty of girls down there that are more suited to him than Edith.

Now I think I must begin to close my letter and hope it won't tire you, I dare say Cedric has written to Horace and told him all the news and what steps he has taken and, when he comes back if he has not written I will. I feel very sorry for poor Minnie¹⁷⁴ because she has never said a word all through but trusted her brothers. I am sure Cedric frets a great deal about her, he is always talking about her and says how sorry he is for her.

I can assure you it is the bitterest pill I have ever swallowed to have to part with my poor Lizzie and see her have to go out as governess, not that I think it is degrading or anything of the sort, but words that I cannot express to you.

Now my dear I must close as I cannot write any more tonight hoping you are all well and will be happy and rich some day of course I don't mean to say you are not happy enough in one way but we can't be happy without money. The children all send their love to their cousins. I am glad Hosey is better, can she walk about and look after her home? Write when you can find the time. How is your brother John and you may remember us kindly to them and love to you all from all at Cullinlaringo

Yours affectionately

Elizabeth H. Wills

PS I hope Horace got me a Plymouth Rock rooster. I am sending you one of the boys' photos.

#8920703 T S W C Collection

The following rather charming letter was written by Cedric's third daughter Emily who was married to Angus McLean in 1898, and at the time of writing she was just 34. This letter is of interest because it gives much news of Cedric's family. The child she mentions is Alexander Robert McLean (b. 28.2.1908).

*Belford
Richmond
North Queensland
March 12 1909*

My dear Aunt,

I do hope you will forgive me for not writing you before this, I have been so busy without a cook and a cross baby (teething),¹⁷⁵ you will excuse me I know. The heat since Christmas has been cruel, something unbearable. Bessie wrote to thank you for the nice bangle you sent her I hope her letter reached you safely, she is delighted with it, and thank you also it was very good of you to send it to her. I also thank you for the pretty dress you sent me, I like it very much, the blouse fits me and the only alteration I shall have to make with the skirt is to make it a few inches shorter.

I am glad you liked the children's photos, I wish I had a photo of my boy now to send you, he is such a bonny boy and the pet of Belford, he is such a merry little fellow and always on the go.

He has fair hair which curls, large blue eyes and fair skin, very sturdy he can pull himself up and stand alone for a few minutes - he crawls on his hands and feet not on his knees and can go like a little steam engine. Alec¹⁷⁶ simply worships him and he loves his Daddy too, he is always calling for Dadda he can say Mumma Budda Bob and Nanna (the latter is for his bottle or anything to eat or drink.)

I thank you very much for your kind invitation to come down and stay with you, nothing would give me greater pleasure than to see you all again, I would dearly love to see you, I often think of the happy days we used to spend with you. I often speak of you all to Alec. I hope some day you will meet Alec, he is the very best of husbands he studies and considers me in every little way, he has never said an angry word to me all the years we have been married. I always thank God for giving me such a dear good husband.

When Baby was born I was away from home nine months I went away early as to be able to rest and save anything going wrong. I went to Dr. Voss' private hospital a month before Baby came then left when he was three weeks old. I had a better time than I expected but was torn a good bit and had to be stitched then both breasts got bad and I had to wean the baby which is a terrible nuisance when travelling or living in towns. Once we got home he was right as we always have plenty of milk and Baby has a cow to himself.

Ruby¹⁷⁷ had a baby girl just a week before my boy was born, Ruby has a boy and a girl she has a good husband too they have a lovely home. Ruby and Minnie¹⁷⁸ live near each other, both their husbands are very wealthy, Minnie has four girls. Both Minnie and Ruby have grown very stout.

I saw Rose and her family, Rose has got very stout too, she has a boy and a girl, two nice looking children - they do very well dairying. I was out staying with Lizzie¹⁷⁹ for a month, Lizzie was very good to me. Bessie got whooping cough and bronchitis when we got to Rockhampton and Lizzie came in from Yeppoon and took Bessie out and kept her with her and looked after her until I was strong again after Baby was born. Lizzie's husband Jack goes droving, he is very seldom at home Lizzie's four children are strong and healthy they live in the open and have their ponies.

Berry¹⁸⁰ lives with her Grandmother Collins and goes to a little school just a mile away from home. Edith is doing very well now and has an easy life of it to what she used to, poor girl, she looks well too and has lost that worried look. Donald I last heard was going out on some station and Jinnie is going to the convent in Rockhampton. Papa is paying for her schooling, she is a fine big girl and I think will be clever. Ivy¹⁸¹ of course is at Brewarrina and has to work a great deal too hard.

I do think Mama should give up her boarding house, there is no necessity to keep it on, they have no children to keep only themselves. Tom keeps himself and gives Mama one pound a week. Colden is with us and often sends money to Mama. Ivy could go any time to Dr. Voss' private hospital nursing again, the Matron told her she would have her any time as she says Ivy will make a splendid nurse and Ivy is fond of nursing. Besides Mama doesn't make money, she loses it fast- it does not pay and she has to work so hard.

Papa borrowed two hundred pounds from Alex last year, one hundred pounds was to pay Horace off and the other hundred pounds to pay debts from Brewarrina. Mama could easily go up and live at Minerva with Papa, it would be much better - Papa is very much against keeping boarders but Mama won't give it up.

I am sorry to hear my dear Aunt you are not keeping so well I hope you are better now and I am glad that you have a good maid that is a great comfort. Servants are a great trouble out here we were ten weeks without one and now have a young girl, I have to help her a good bit but perhaps later on she will manage better.

I have a governess for Bessie¹⁸² since we came home. Bessie is improving with her lessons she writes letters to the Australasian letter writing seems no trouble to Bessie.

How you must miss Ethel, Ida and Hebe you must be pleased to have them home, I am glad they are doing so well, nursing is a grand and good occupation. I should like to see Rene's boy¹⁸³ he must be a dear little fellow, you must be all very proud of him.

We are having a very dry time just now, every appearance of another drought but I hope we may get rain very soon, if we don't get rain before shearing Alec says they will have to look out for agistment country for the sheep. We have a lovely shed, machines and oil engine, ten stands and good shearers' accommodation. Shearing starts in four weeks time then Alec shears Dimora sheep (a place next to us).

Now my dear Aunt I must really stop as it is late, hoping to hear you are keeping better. I hope Uncle Horace keeps well, how I wish I could see you all again.

Goodbye my dear Aunt, with love to Uncle, Cousins and your own dear self from us all,

Believe me to be,

Your affect. niece

Emily Spencer McLean

#9090312 T S W C Collection

The last years of her life must have been extremely tough for Berry Wills, and when Cedric died in January 1914 she wrote this letter to Sarah Wills describing Cedric's death and the difficulties she was having with the children, particularly Cedric Junior, over the disposal of Cedric's property.

Minerva

March 4 1914

My dear Sarah,

Your very nice kind letter of sympathy I duly received but I could not reply to it sooner. I had to go to Rockhampton to get things settled up so that we could get the insurance and the AMP is going to pay theirs over as soon as we get the will proved £936 odd and £33 more in June and I do not know how much from the London and Liverpool yet and he left me everything to dispose as I liked. I told the boys Pa said he would like me to give Minerva to the three boys Cedric Tom and Colden, but I ought to form it into a company of six shares and me to hold three and give one each to the boys. Cedric came home with his wife for Xmas and poor Cedric died so he took advantage of

this and his wife made herself very disagreeable with everyone, and he said I had better buy his share. He and Horace valued the place at £15,000 and he wanted 1/6 that was if the 6 shares £2,500 so I paid him straight away as he could not agree with the other boys and especially Colden who is very fond and good with the sheep, and neither of the others like sheep. Cedric said Colden was to have full control over the sheep as it was he who worked the sheep up and not him. I think Tom and Cedric did not like it as they are both older than Colden, but I hope Tom and Colden will get on well together. Tom could look after the books and do the writing, he is not as strong as the other two. I would like Horace to write and give them a little advice about sheep as they know very well how clever Horace is with those.

It is a pity you are far away, Colden would love to go down and see the stud sheep sold but does not like going by himself.

The girls are going to get all the town property divided amongst them, they have plenty and need not crave for our little. I had nothing when I married poor Cedric but I helped him all I could and if it had not been for me he would have given up long ago for he was not very strong. He had been suffering very much for the last six months and all the time he was in hospital he suffered dreadfully and could not pass any water for about a week before he died. He came out all over his body and arms and legs with a thick pink rash and it seemed to hurt him very much. When they took the water away he did not know anyone and could not speak for about two days nearly before he died and his arms got very blue up to the elbows and he could not swallow anything. I just used to drop a drop of water or milk on his tongue at the time. He got so very thin and quite white, poor fellow. I shall never forget his sufferings and we brought him out and buried him in the garden.¹⁸⁴ We want to get a nice stone for him and fence, would Horace price them down there for me. Cedric would not go in to see his Father. At the last when I saw a change for the worst I sent out for the boys, Tom and Colden came in but not Cedric.

I hope Cedric will do well, he has gone North to start a motor lorry near Hughenden. Mr. and Mrs. Thompson had a row and Mr. T bought Cedric out.

I hope your girls are all well now, mine are all very well indeed, and will you thank Ethel for the nice Xmas card she sent me and I hope you don't suffer much now.

How are your grandchildren, I would like to see them. I do not know when I can get down, not this year as shearing will soon be here now and I must be here to help the boys. Was Cathleen Harding¹⁸⁵ his wife or daughter? How dreadful and it is a pity Lizzie Shaw's girls are so delicate. Is Katie Harrison married yet?¹⁸⁶ Ivy may go down to Melbourne for a holiday before living up here. We are going to rent Brewarrina. I wish you and Horace would come up here some day, I must close now as I wrote to Mary¹⁸⁷ today and I am just sick of letter writing, I had so many to write. Lots of love to you and Horace and all the girls, and write to me again.

I suppose you know Uncle P. F.,¹⁸⁸ he never wrote to me after Cedric's death, poor Cedric he did suffer.

I shall never forget and I miss him very much as he was always moving about when he could and I am here alone all day while the boys are away and no help yet.

Goodbye with love again,

Your affectionate sister

E. M. Wills

#9140304 T S W C Collection

Following Cedric's death Berry lived for another thirty years almost to the day, dying on 25 January 1944 aged 93 years.

CHAPTER 14

THE CHILDREN OF HORATIO S. H. WILLS**HORACE SPENCER WILLS****(16 June 1847 to 9 October 1928)****and his wife****SARAH ELIZA (née BESWICKE)****(4 May 1851 to 17 December 1916)**

My great grandfather, Horace Spencer, was born on 16 June 1847 at Lexington near Ararat six years after his father arrived and settled there and twelve years after the eldest child, Thomas Wentworth. He had a normal childhood at Lexington, growing up with one elder sister, Emily, who was five years older, his brother Cedric, two and a half years older, and his other brother Egbert, one and a half years younger. These were the siblings closest to him.

Horace and Cedric attended a preparatory school “McFarlands” [about which I have been unable to find anything] and in 1859 when he was just twelve years old his father took the three boys, Cedric 14, Horace 12 and Egbert 9, to Europe for their education. They began in England but were shortly transferred to Germany where they spent the next three years at the school of Dr Pilgrim at 47 Mainzer Chaussee Frankfurt am Maine in Germany.

Following the murder of their father in 1861, Cedric returned home by himself, arriving in Australia on 15 July 1862 and the two younger ones continued until they returned to Australia on 18 December 1862.

Horace and Egbert were sent by their mother to Dr. Morrison’s school, now called Scotch College, where they stayed just one year before being transferred to the Geelong Grammar School in 1864 so that they could be closer to their mother. Both boys were excellent athletes and I still have a lovely old leather bound and gold embossed book of the Works of William Cowper which Horace won for the first prize in gymnastics at Scotch College on 19 December 1863. Horace continued as a successful athlete, as indeed did Egbert, taking a great interest in foot running in which their older cousin, H.C.A. Harrison, was the champion of the Colony and in football.

Horace played football for Geelong Football Club and spent his school years and two more thereafter while living at Bellevue with his mother and younger sisters.

In 1866 he moved up to Cullinlarigo which was at that time managed by a professional manager appointed by the trustees of the estate and began to learn farming and grazing under his elder brother Cedric.

The majority of the correspondence which is in my possession came to me from my grandmother in a calico bag and consisted, in the main, of letters written by Horace before and during his marriage to Sarah Eliza Beswicke. Sarah was the daughter of Charles and Eliza Beswicke and she and Horace met socially as Charles Beswicke’s

property. "Greenfield" at Moolap, near Geelong, which was only about 2 miles from Bellevue.

Charles was a successful businessman and land owner and Eliza (née Keys) was the daughter of a significant land holder to the south east of Melbourne in a district named Keysborough after her family. There were four children in the Beswicke family three daughters, Sarah (who was the eldest daughter) married Horace in 1871, Mary (the second) married Horace's younger brother Egbert in 1875, and the third daughter Mayebella (always called Belle or Bella) died unmarried. There was also a son, John Beswicke, later to become a very successful architect who was responsible for the building of several of the "goldrush era" town halls in Melbourne, such as Hawthorn and Malvern and who built a number of houses of great distinction in Harcourt Street Auburn, one of which, "Rotha" remained in the family through until the 1960s.

The first letter which I have is dated 2 July 1870 written prior to their engagement and which follows:

July 2 1870

Belle Vue

Dear Miss Sarah,

I am so sorry the day turned out cold and wet as I was so disappointed in not having the drive and croquet I had set my mind on for so long.

Do try and persuade John to stay in Geelong until Monday and go up by the early train. I was to have driven Miss McK and my sister Lizzie into town this morning, but my mother will not let them go out as she says the roads are too dirty to take. They cannot go over to Greenfield tonight for which I am very sorry.

Try and get John to drive you over tonight in time for tea and we can have a pleasant evening together. He can have the four girls that are here all to his own cheek (to use a slang term).

Mind I shall expect you and if you do not come I shall know it is not your fault. It is hardly fair me expecting you to come over when our sugar girls are frightened of the wet, but I can only ask as a last resort.

With kind regards to all and self,

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

Horace S. Wills

P. S. Please excuse the liberty I have taken in writing to you. HSW

#8700702 T S W C Collection

Some time later in 1870 in an undated letter, probably in August or September, the following letter written after their engagement was written by Horace from Bellevue.

Bellevue

Wednesday

Late 1870

My own darling Sarah,

I have to drive Mrs. Smith, Ma and Duckey into town so I shall not be able to see your dear face much today, as soon as I return I shall ride over to have a kiss but I shan't stay long as I want to be home before night. Really I thought I should faint last night I never felt so weak as I did for a time before in my life. I am so thankful to you for complying with my wish and I hope that by a

life of devoted love I can show you how deeply I love you I am sure we shall be happy as we love each too dearly to ever fall out.

With my best love,

I am in hopes of seeing you soon

Ever yours in haste,

Horace S. Wills

#8700900 T S W C Collection

The courtship and engagement must have taken place during Horace's infrequent visits to Bellevue and indeed very shortly after their engagement he returned to Cullinlaringo where he stayed, with a few visits to and from Bellevue, until their marriage. Here he writes from the station

October 20 1870

Cullinlaringo

My dearly beloved and cherished Sarah,

We got a very heavy thunderstorm this day week (Sunday), the sheep were too wet to shear on Monday so we let them go in the paddock to dry, and on Monday afternoon we got two very heavy thunderstorms and very little lightning. The rain came down in torrents and I do believe it rained as much here in two hours as it does in Victoria for a whole week. We had rain again on Tuesday which continued all day and all night, and the sky cleared on Thursday morning and it stopped raining but as the sheep take two days drying before they can be shorn after rain, we could not have shorn any until Saturday. We did not think it worth our while to shear at all last week, but I hope we shall have a few weeks fine weather so that we can get shearing finished for I do hate it and no mistake.

Today being Sunday I thought I should have been able to write to you this afternoon, but it was not to be so as some unknown person was kind enough to get the grass on fire in one of our paddocks, so Cedy and I went out with five men and a blackboy to put the fire out. We started at about one o'clock and we were all hard at work until half an hour before sundown before we succeeded in getting the whole of the fire out. The heat was frightful as there was a strong wind blowing all the time which kept up a good blaze and the heat of the sun combined made it far worse - about one thousand acres of grass was burnt and being from twelve to eighteen inches long it made a fine blaze. None of the sheep but four happened to be near it so I am glad we had none burnt, one of the four had a young lamb and the poor little wretch was roasted alive but the old sheep got off with a good singeing.

The Nagoa [River] is running very high so that I don't think the mailman will be up tomorrow. If he does not come you will not get this for a week later. I expect a dear letter from you by the Springsure mail Tuesday as I did not get one last week.

When you write next tell me if you only get letters from me once a fortnight or if you get them every week. What does your Ma think of your being married next year?¹⁸⁹ I would far sooner it came off then as you would always be with me and I love you so dearly that I would be far happier if I could always see you and get a kiss whenever I liked.

But please yourself, my Darling, and I will be quite content to wait another 12 months or two years if you wish it for now I am not in the least afraid of your love being given to anyone else although I did not give your love you sent Cedy to him but like a greedy boy kept it all to myself so you must not blame me if I have done wrong. But if you want to send it to him you must write him a letter and send it yourself.

You can scarcely imagine the pleasure it gives me to read your darling letters, and the more I read them the more I wish the author of them was my own dear wife, when I should no longer want letters.

I have just had such a pretty filly broken in, she is as quiet as a lamb and will let a person use a stockwhip on her back without being the least frightened. I intend keeping her as she will make a very pretty lady's hack after she is broking into a riding habit. Who the lady is I am keeping her for I will leave to your own judgment. She is a bright chestnut with a small bit of white on her face and is just three years old.

The woman in the kitchen has got a bad breast, her husband went into Springsure yesterday and the Doctor gave him something for it. I hope to goodness she gets well soon as she goes about like a dying duck, but I think she is doing a lot of it for humbug. She wants me at it for about five minutes and I'd soon make it all right if she'd let me lance it, I'd cut it in a minute if she'd only let me.

Mrs. Kavanagh,¹⁹⁰ the women that had the dead baby, is progressing favourably and will soon be all right.

I went out kangarooing the other day and got two flyers, one of them had its hind leg broken from the fall the dog gave it when he first caught it.

When you write tell me when you want to get married, because Cedy wants to go down to Victoria after shearing and if we are to be married next year he cannot go but if otherwise he will go down and stay as long as I did.

Did you have another carte taken in Melbourne by your last letter, I should not think you had time as you were busy visiting after I left. But mind you don't forget to have a nice one taken. I have taken the big one out of my album altogether as I do not like it, as it does not do you justice.

I did not see a single girl all the way up that had such nice hair as you have although I do not take any interest in them (I belong to SEB) (not because I dislike the sex but because I don't belong to myself). I still look at a pretty face when I see one.

I am all alone tonight, Cedy has gone over to Fernlees so I have the place to myself.

I hope, my dear Sarah, that you are taking care of yourself for my sake and I shall strive to do the same for yours. We are having such nice cool nights that its a pleasure to go to roost. I have not had a word from anyone in Victoria since I left but you, so you can see who loves me most.

Love to Pa, Ma, Mary and Belle.

With my best love and kisses, I remain, dear Sarah,

Your affectionate lover,

Horace S. Wills.

#8701020 T S W C Collection

Things cannot have been all that easy for Sarah with Horace's family as the following very supercilious letter from her sister-in-law to be, Emily Harrison, would indicate:

October 27 1870

27 Gipps Street East Melbourne

Dear Miss Beswicke,

I received your letter some time ago and am much obliged for the Carte which is not a good likeness.

I have never been so hurt before as by your behaviour to me after Horace left. I really could not believe Charlotte Bernow when she told me that Miss Beswicke had been there and for some little time.

However after my feeling overflowed a little I excused you for my brother's sake, but the excuse was anything but flattering to you as I thought well it must be either one of two things - Miss Beswicke must be ignorant of the rules of society, or like a great many young people she would rather satisfy the best of her feelings than study a little politeness.

Of course I know if Horace had been here who you would have called on first and why you called on Miss Bernow first although you received more attention from our family than hers while in Melbourne, I can't imagine unless indeed your brother wished to pay his respects to anyone in that house.

I would not for 1,000 pounds it had happened as I wished to think better of Horace's choice than some do.

I hope that your foot is quite well and that your health in general is better than when I last saw you. I hope you will think less of my words but what they imply and hope you may never be in the position of

Yours affectionately

E. S. Harrison

#8701027 T S W C Collection

There were many letters in the series. Horace appeared to write at least once a week between his return to the station after his engagement and their eventual marriage. They are long, mostly love letters of little historical or social interest and some are too personal to include in this book. It must have been extremely primitive in Queensland during those years and Horace appeared not backward in sending letters of some interest (and some scandal) to his fiancée during the period as this letter shows:

November 13 1870

Cullinlaringo

Sunday evening

My dearly beloved Sarah,

Your kind and affectionate letter without date but bearing the Moolap post mark on October 19th came to hand last Tuesday. It was such a dear long letter, I got it when I was up in the woolshed and sat down and read it twice over before I could close it up, it made me feel quite jolly all the rest of the day.

The first letter I got from you bore the Toorak post mark so I suppose it is the letter you gave to the grocer there. I am sorry to hear of your poor foot being so bad but I trust that it is well again long before you get this letter. Thank

Bella for her loving epistle, tell her I will send her a few lines when I can get any news to tell her.

So Nelly Blackall has gone off the hooks, but I do not really think that she will be happy as Mr. Watson is old enough to be her father and I am sure his ideas cannot possibly be the same as Nelly's but I hope they will both manage to jog along (an old buffer like him could not canter, could he?) quietly together, but it must be miserable for a man and woman to marry and be tied together their whole existence though and not love one another.

Some of the shearers were having a race this morning, and as it was quite close to the station I went to see the fun. After the race a lot of them that were riding young horses thought they would have a race, and just as they had got into a good gallop one of the fillies put her head down and gave a few very heavy bucks and landed one of the men right on the crown of his head, but he got off with only a good shaking.

I went out for a ride this afternoon to bring in some mares and foals the latter of which we are going to brand and when I was out about six miles it came on to rain very heavy and I got such a ducking, but as the rain up here is very warm I rather enjoyed it than otherwise. We will not be able to shear tomorrow before dinner at any rate as the rain must have wet the sheep right through. I am not sorry, as wool sorting is about as wearying a job as I know and we were shearing very fast last week so I was kept very busy. The sheep this year are cutting very good fleeces, far better and cleaner than last year, and the lambs look ever so nice and plump.

We had a birth here last week (one of our men went down to Rockhampton with me last January when I was going south and got spliced to his dearly beloved), but the child, a little girl, was still-born. The mother is still very weak and sick, she always has been ill having been overworked as cook at an hotel in Rockhampton. I hope she gets right again soon as the husband is a very nice man, and they came out as shipmates about seven years ago and seem to love each other very much.

I have turned surgeon yesterday, an old black gin came into the woolshed helping to carry some wool and being an ugly old thing I was looking at her and examining her cuts and bruises and asking her about them when she showed me a lump near her left jugular vein and said "policeman" so I caught hold of it and it was a revolver bullet.

She had been asleep and was shot right on the top of her head, the person who shot her evidently thinking the bullet had gone into her brains so did not give her any more. But the old hag could only have been stunned as the great thickness of her skull turned the bullet which ran under the scalp and lodged more than half way down the neck directly.

I found out it was a bullet and at once made up my mind to have it so when I came down to dinner I made one of the boys tell her I would give her a pocket handkerchief for it, made a knife sharp and cut it out as well as Dr Reid or any other man and then poured some kerosene into the hole. She is now progressing favourably as the papers say. I have got the bullet, it is out of a Transter's revolver and is flattened a little where it struck the skull, and I dare say I will have the pleasure of showing it to you some day or other.

A neighbour of ours, a Mrs. Triffitt, went down to Rockhampton while I was in Victoria and told my aunt or some other female, that female whoever she was wrote down to my Ma and she got the letter just before I came away, and told such frightful yarns about me. I was told what the letter contained not exactly in the author's own words but I was allowed to guess at what was meant, but as I am quite innocent of the charge I wish them joy for their information, and if it does them any good they can write again, as I am quite sure that anybody who knows me well would not believe them.

I got a letter from George Smith. He is very angry with me for not going to see him when I came up and intends to give me a wooling when he sees me.

Cedy has just been talking to me about you, he wants me to go down in the beginning of the next year and get married. He does not like long engagements, he thinks if we are to get married we are better to get it settled as soon as we can. He also says that supposing anything unforeseen was to happen to me during the next two or three years thereby hindering our marriage, he says if I had not been engaged to you someone else in all likelihood would have married you by that time, therefore it would not be right to ask you to chance it.

Tell me as soon as possible what you think of it. You had better ask your Ma and do what she thinks best, as I think as we are to be married the sooner the better, for I long to call you my own.

Write by return of post and tell me for Cedy will not go down to Victoria next year if I get married as he will have to stay here. Both of us cannot be away at once.

Give my love to Ma, Pa, Mary and Bella and accept the same from your future loving and future husband,

Horace S. Wills

#8701113 T S W C Collection

There was further evidence of just how tough things were during that time and the following letter dated 6 August 1871 shows that Cedric, who had been paying suit to Mary, had been rejected and in fact almost four years later Mary was to marry Egbert.

August 6 1871

Cullinlaringo

My dear Sarah,

I received two letters from you by the last mail, as I expected one dated July 5th and the other about a week later, but the date of which I forget having torn them both up after I read them as you requested me.

I am very sorry for poor Cedy, but such things can't be helped and besides if Mary does not love him she has acted wisely. However I will either copy now a piece of Cedy's last letter or else send it up. By his letter he seems very down hearted.

I am very thankful I am not in his shoes, only fancy if I had got the same answer from you as Cedy got from Mary I think I should have gone mad altogether. I am so glad I fell in love with you at Friends party and I'm sure I will never be sorry for my choice. You were and are such a dear loving and kind girl to me that I am sure we shall live happy as long as we love each other dearly.

We have had a very busy week and to make matters worse we had a tremendous fire in one of the paddocks.

On Thursday I was busy at home until 11 o'clock when I started away to find some timber in a scrub that our men had split and the drays could not find. I had to ride twenty miles to the place over some very rough country and back again. It was dark or rather dusk when I got home. As I was coming along our paddock fence I saw the overseer galloping away from the Station, so I hurried on and found out there was a large fire in the paddock we have all the young sheep in, so I went out without stopping and three white men, our overseer and I were out until 1.30 am putting the fire out towards the finish. However, about ten Blacks who had walked out above six miles to help us arrived and gave us a great deal of help. After we had got it all out I started the Blacks home and took the whites round the fire again, and to my disgust it broke out afresh in one place, but after about an hour's hard work we got it all out and came home.

We were none of us the better of it for two days. It makes one feel very sore working at a fire as the heat from this long grass when on fire is something frightful.

The dry weather is beginning to make the squatters feel anxious for rain and I am afraid if it continues much longer some of the stations will lose a lot of sheep.

The weather is just like it was during the drought of '68, clouds rise during the day and then are blown away again without a drop of rain falling, and unless we get rain shortly there will be very bad lambings this Spring, most of our ewes do not begin lambing until 17th November so we may get a chance of having green grass by that time. We have some lambing now but I think they will leave their lambs, the grass being too dry to supply weak sheep with nourishment for their lambs.

Mrs. Roope wants to come up here and live with Cedy and she wants me to send down the waggonette for her, but I shall not unless I hear from Cedy first. Our drays will be up in about a week so I hope to get our fruit trees and that they will be all right before they die.

In reference to the presents you are going to get in the event of a Baby turning up. You must not be too sure about such an event, perhaps it might not happen. However I would sooner have none at all than one like Edgar's. Cedy tells me it is a miserable looking thing. But you say you have told Lizzy there are to be no children in our house. How will it be if you break the agreement you say you have made.

What sort of fellow is Allen Welsh? Cedy wants me to go down as soon after shearing as possible and get married, for he says he will remain single as long as ever Mary remains unmarried.

I am so glad you and Mary accepted the presents he made you as it will give him a little pleasure.

I will now copy you a piece of his letter just as he has written it. The letter is too long to send with this and I do not want to tear it up as I want to keep it. After saying he enjoyed himself very much at the Springs he says "I rode home with Sarah and Mary, and to cut a long story short I got Mary's consent to speak to Mr. B to allow of an engagement between us and I told her I would come down on Monday morning to see Mr. B. On Monday morning I went

and spoke to Mr. B telling him I had Mary's consent. He said it was strange she had not spoken to him about it and went to see her. When he left the room Mrs. B came in and I spoke to her about it also, she said she was willing to give her consent to our union if Mary was willing, but that Mary had told her what I had said the evening before and that she had been so confused that she did not know what she said. Sarah then gave me a letter from Mary saying she was sorry for what had happened and hoped I would be able to gain some one's love who would be more worthy than she. What it was that caused her to alter her mind I cannot find out although I have asked her. So, now Horace, you must not wait for me to set the example, you must marry with as little delay as possible for as long as Mary remains single I will hope that some day she may again give her consent. You must not say a word to anyone of what I have written unless it is to Sarah, and then not even to her unless she first mentions it to you, but wait and hope I will and God grant I may not hope in vain."

He then says he had made his will in my favour and half his life insurance and bonuses in case of his death "For if I cannot be happy myself I will do all I can to make you and Sarah so, for you could not have made a better choice if you had searched the whole country side, so I hope to see you both married as soon as I return and you can get away".

I am sure he will never marry while Mary remains single, and if he cannot gain her love I think not then. I felt awfully sorry for him when I read his letter. I hope to have everything ready to begin shearing on the 1st September. When am I to get your portrait, if you do not get it taken soon I might get the original first.

With love to all and fondest love to self,

I remain, your affectionate lover,

Horace S. Wills

#8710806 T S W C Collection

Horace and Sarah were married at Christ Church Geelong, the oldest extant Anglican Church in the State of Victoria, on 15 August 1872. Sarah was just 21 and Horace 25 at the time of their marriage.

Sarah moved to Cullinlaringo immediately after their marriage and in September 1873 gave birth to Ethel, who died shortly thereafter. Life continued in a normal fashion with both Cedric and Horace and their wives living at Cullinlaringo. In July 1875 Ethel Mary, their first living child, was born at the station. They had many visitors and I found the following letter dated 30 August 1876 from one of her guests.

Wealwandangi,
August 30th 1876.

My Dear Mrs. Wills,

I am very glad that you like the little tortoiseshell trifles, and the zamia nut. I am sorry that I am not a better artist so that I might have made you a better view of Cullin-la-ringo on the nut, as well as a sketch on paper. I am glad at any rate that you can discern some likeness in it. I have not seen Mr. Nicol for some time, when I do see him I will give him your address that he may send you a good view of the house.

I have made an improvement in the music of the "Forsaken" which I enclose. I would write you another copy but I have been so awfully busy lately. I

daresay that this letter will not find you at Cullin-la-ringo. I hope you have mastered the two songs so that you will be able to let the Melbourneites hear a little of Queensland composition.

As it is now nearly 11 o'clock and at the best of times my powers of letter writing are very small I have to finish up. As I know hardly anyone in Rockhampton I cannot ask you to do anything but I thank you at the same time for offering. I dare say that my brother would like his love to be given to a certain young Rockhampton lady of your acquaintance. He is always talking about her. He is writing to her brother for her likeness.

With kind regards to yourself and Mr. Horace from my brother and self (of course we don't forget Ethel) and inquiring friends, wishing you a pleasant visit and a speedy return.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

David Carr Boyd

8760830 T S W C Collection

I still have the zamia nut referred to in this letter. It is exquisitely carved on both sides and one needs a magnifying glass to read it and to see the very fine craftsmanship which is reminiscent of the scrimshaw work done by seamen in carvings on whales' teeth.

In 1878 it was clear that everything on the domestic front between the two brothers was not as good as might have been, and on 14 August Horace wrote to the trustees asking permission to build a separate house. This he did and the house was called "Coorabelle".

Ethel's first sibling, Ida, was born there in 1880 and the next three, Hebe Eugenie, in 1885, in 1886 a stillborn child, Maud, and the last of the family, my grandmother Eva Irene, was born in June 1888. As the railway from Emerald to Rockhampton was now open, Sarah was able to go to the hospital in Rockhampton for her confinements, in the last case she was now 37 years old and Rene's birth was very late in a mother's life for that period.

Despite the fact that the two brothers were often at loggerheads, Sarah and her sister-in-law, Elizabeth Wills (née McDonald) wife of Cedric, remained close friends for the rest of their lives and often corresponded.

It is also equally obvious that Horace and Cedric were extremely busy running the property and Sarah often visited her parents in Victoria, leaving Horace at home usually with the elder children while the younger ones went with their mother to visit their grandparents. They were clearly very fond of one another and this letter written twelve years after their marriage is poignant and shows how much he missed her as she had gone to Rockhampton for her confinement of Hebe who was born on 8 March.

Monday night

Coorabelle

February 16 1885

Darling Wife,

Here I am sitting at your dressing table to try and divert my thoughts. Well to begin with we called at Middleton's and got the two buggy horses, we caught up to McNamara the Springsure butcher who accompanied us as far as the turn off on his way to Cullinlaringo. The journey from there was traversed in

solemn silence. Well after some hours slow travelling we got home and I must say Ellen deserves great credit for the way she had the house for I can assure you everything is as clean as a new pin; the contrast to your present abode is truly surprising the floors are I believe whiter than ever I saw them before and the fowl house is so clean and tidy, and with pride she showed me the 5 turkeys and a chicken.

But what silence reigns here - What's home without a dear Wife and my two dear darling daughters. I have been prowling about looking at everything that you took an interest in and even to the hanging basket, the plants have increased as much as your own dear self and that's saying a lot. Tell Ettie and Ida that their kittens came and had tea with Pa.

The little tabby is still very thin but Ellen has been feeding it. I killed tonight so as to be able to send you some fat. Old Bucket has a calf but she has it hidden yet near the creek and we cannot find it. There is a big thunder storm coming on at least plenty of thunder and the rain is just dropping. Minerva Creek ran last night and was still running when I passed today. I found Mrs. Vigar all right but rather bow windowed yet. Bella looks better but is very thin and white.

I am going into Cullinlaringo tomorrow and will stay the night as Vigar tells me Cedy wants to get the Shearers to sign, so if you send for me I will be there on Tuesday night, remember I had better do this as I may not be done with the A/cs. until late so I will come back here on Wednesday. Now you would scarcely believe that I am love sick but such is the case I cannot bear you to be away from me now. I fancy I hear you. Oh, Yes!!! This is such a lonely place without you and I am not to feed their dear little lips either or hear their dear little voices say "good night Pa". Oh if I only had wings I would be off to you. Now everything is strangely quiet, only the rain. If you have the rain I do hope darling you will not be frightened. I am going to sleep on your bed sans mattress. I often find myself looking around to speak to some of you. I do so hope my darling you do not take ill while I am away and I do pray God will grant that I may be near you in your hour of trial; and if prayers are of avail both you and the dear little baby (or babies) will be all spared for me to tease and bully for I do dearly love to bully you. I hope Ettie and Ida are both good children and are trying to please you while I am away. Tell darling Ettie that I hope she will set Ida a good example and try to help you all she can. Middleton will send you up 56 lbs. potatoes and 28 lbs. onions and a load of wood. I told him to send small wood so that it can be easily cut. The pea weed is about seven feet high all along the creek, it looks so pretty.

The canaries are all right and they have a leatherhead in the cage. I will send Tiger in with vegetables not much beef as it will be too fresh, but will send suet. I hope poor little Bright Eyes is better. Berry drove down for Miss Williams while Cedy was in Springsure. I found a letter here from N. Hagan in which he tells me so.

Everard Willis wrote to me in pencil from Emerald, he is a commercial traveller for some Rockhampton firms, he says he will try and get out to see us. He expects to be in Springsure off and on so you may see him.

I must not forget to tell you everyone made kind enquiries after you. I have seen the Gazette tonight and there is a list of all the Doctors registered in Queensland. Our worthy Doctor is not registered as an M.D. but he has good

qualifications and amongst others there is a licence in midwifery. Really darling my pen could go on like the brook but I must come to a stop or you will be wiggling me for using all your paper.

Kind remembrances to Miss Lamont.

With love to your Mother and Bell, and the two dear little daughters. I hope the Almighty will spare you to me until we grow old together and that he will give you strength to bear your coming trial and let you return home once more a joyful mother. I will pray Him to spare us to each other and hope that with his help and through his great mercy you may get over your present confinement easier than the last.

Now my darling pet good bye for the present, I will be in as soon as possible, but should you want me send on Tuesday night to Cullinlaringo, after that here.

Good night darling. I hope you are not as miserable as I am. With best love and kisses to you and the dear little ones

Your loving Husband,

H. S. Wills

P. S. please pay 1/- for the telegram I sent Palmer

#8850216 T S W C Collection

Sarah was apparently a very good employer and I have a number of letters written by governesses and servants giving her news long after they left. This one dated 6 March 1887 was written by Miss Lamont who had been the governess to the girls for many years and may be seen with Ethel in the photograph of Coorabelle in this book. Miss Lamont later married but this letter is written shortly after she returned to Melbourne. The letter also refers to the birth and death of a daughter to Egbert and Mary Wills which is not mentioned in the family tree.

March 6th, 1887

Dear Mrs. Wills,

I have just received your letter saying my darling Ida is ill and it has made me very unhappy indeed and I think every cross word I ever spoke to her is reproaching me now, not every word though for they were too numerous to mention but so many of them that were undeserved; my poor little girl, if I could only show her how much I love her now to atone for it. It will be no use asking you to write soon again and let me know how she gets on for, please God, by the time this reaches you she will be quite well but I will be looking out anxiously for the best intentions on my part. I hope she will improve in conversational powers before long or it won't be a lively prospect for a year. If I get on and make my fortune novel writing in a few months I will spend it in going up to stay all the winter with you. Wouldn't that be lovely for me. And for you of course for am I not "some one nice"!

I see by the Australasian that Mrs. Egbert Wills has had a little daughter. I am sorry that it did not live as I am sure they will be so sorry.

Miss Smith, Mrs. Sproule's sister, is to be married to George Irvine on Wednesday so that will be a little excitement. She has a fair trousseau and very many and very nice presents, among them a fair-lamp. I got some good hints from her presents. Of course many were silver things such as cruet, cake basket, spoons, etc. and the usual array of alarum clocks, sachets and bracelets, etc. but some are very useful. She got one of those stocking bags

that I tried to describe to you. Such a very nice one and the prettiest antimacassar I ever saw. It is made of that crinkly white braid and is sown round and round each circle just covering the stitches of the former; each circle is about the size of a wine-glass top and the centre of each is finished with little French knots and simulates a flower. There are 36 of these circles and they are joined in four separate squares, 9 in each square and connected by two crossway pieces of ribbon and the antimacassar is put on diamond-ways. It looks lovely, the circles looking just like white flowers. There was also an egg-cosy, a very handy thing for keeping eggs warm. It was made in the same way as any other cosy only that it had three sides. I give a side view and a "ground-floor" view so to speak. If you can understand them. It formed a triangle at the bottom each side being equal.

I actually went out for a ride yesterday and calmly mounted a horse that had not been ridden by a lady before. So much for my nerves. However if I had not ridden it I could not have gone as Mr. Irvine had some trouble to get it. It was he who arranged and took me for the ride. I am sure my gratitude ought to have repaid him. Isn't it a specimen of forbidden fruits being sweet, you know, when I could go out at any time I was far more contented when I did not.

I am quite sure you have spoilt me for any settling down again for I don't think I will be any great length of time here, only that I don't want to be back in Gippsland while the weather is bad.

The people here are very nice in their way but that way is not mine. They are kind enough but I don't care for them. Mr. Sproule is very good to look at but there is nothing in him, except lumbago which makes him grumble dreadfully and fads, which make him an irritating companion. He is a very tidy man but I don't think you would like him as he can't bear to hear a machine going or the girl to stand near him when waiting at table "because her stays creak". He certainly won't supplant Mr. Wills in my good graces.

I am sending my dear little girl a puzzle game, the only thing I have which may help to amuse her and teach her to count. Ethel can show her. I hear that Gastric flu sometimes recurs and Mrs. Sproule has cured dozens of cases of it by homoeopathic medicine "Baptisia Tinctoria IX" so that if you liked to try it you could have it by you. It could do no harm in any case. Her little girl had it three times. I wish I could have Ida down in Gippsland for a change, I would take such care of her and never scold her again - until next time or until I got a liver.

By the way, to change from the sublime to the ridiculous - if you want to know the best brand of tin jams, it is Peacocks, a Hobart or Tasmanian firm and the strawberry, pear, etc. is equally better than any home-made jams I ever tasted. I have been waiting patiently for my story to come out but it has been delayed so I have written to them today.

You didn't say if you saw "Beneath the Brigalow" which appeared in due form.

Tell Mr. Wills I heard Commotion was dead, poor old horse.

Must conclude. Am in a dreadful hurry.

With love to all and to Ethel, Ida and Hebe, believe me, ever your loving friend.

E. Lamont

After the collapse of the station Horace and Sarah returned to Melbourne where they eventually had a substantial house "Waggo Merne" built for them in Wrixon Street Kew by Sarah's brother John into which they moved in 1904 or 1905. It was indeed fortunate that Horace had placed some considerable assets in Sarah's name as a wedding gift, and in any case Sarah had money from the Beswicke family as well. Otherwise they were not have been able to live in the style in which they did. Horace, however, did not find it easy and took employment as a wool classer; for a number of years he was the head of the woolshed at "Wantabradgery", a Riverina property of the Payne family. In addition he was involved in selling insurance for the Australian Mutual Provident Society for some years. This letter to Cedric shows the situation clearly:

Bengaralong
Victoria Road
Auburn
June 10 1903

Dear Cedy,

It seems quite an age since Horace¹⁹¹ wrote to me. Mother sent a letter you wrote to her, we were very sorry to hear you had hurt yourself, how shabbily the accident society treated you. It was a great pity you had not the money to fight them. I feel sure you would have won but there is such a risk in going to law.

What terrible losses have occurred in the Springsure district. I am very sorry for Mrs. Kavanagh, even if the selectors can get money advanced to restock they will find it difficult to get either cattle or sheep as the drought has been so general. I was very sorry to hear you had such a loss in your quiet herd. By the paper I saw rain had fallen in Springsure, Emerald and Anakie so hope to hear you have got some at Minerva so as to give you winter herbage even if it is too late for grass.

Hope you have been able to get a sale for the horses you were breaking in. Army remounts are selling well in Victoria, I saw that from £30 to £35 a head had been paid last week at Wodonga.

What sort of sheep have they on Cullinlaringo? I never see any HSW wool sold and I always look for the old brand, have they changed it?

Business is bad for me this year and hard to get, I have never felt the pinch as I do now and do what I will I have not been able to pay my debts. We have to live very sparingly, we only use 1½ pounds of meat a day for five of us. Ethel is at the Homoeopathic hospital and likes the work but she has a lot to do, they have only 24 nurses there now so it makes the work heavy.

She is still in the typhoid fever ward, they are very successful with typhoid and have only lost two patients since the first of January. I wish you would send me Mr. Creed's address soon, I want to write to him about insurance, he may wish to take out a policy for the daughter. Our childrens policies are absolutely the best in the world.

Poor old Morrison¹⁹² died last week, he had such a large funeral and I saw a lot of my old school mates there. Geo Tait was asking after you. Fred Curlewis was here last week, he had not been down for 30 years, he asked to be remembered to you. Do you remember Tom Bent at McFarlands, he was there in our time?

I hope they have a lot of sheep at Wantabadgery this year so that I can make a few pounds to put me straight. I hear Mother is looking splendid, hope Berry and Children are well. I should dearly like to see you all again. Ask Horace if he wants to take out a policy for his youngster, it would cost him about £4 per £100 to get £120 in 20 years.

Is Schofield with Horace at Minerva? he must be getting very old. How about the selectors on Cullinlaringo,¹⁹³ they must have lost all their stock especially the man down below Broughtons and those dry ridges would be very bad after so long a drought.

Did McLean suffer much out at Richmond? Who owns Meteor Downs? You did not say when you wrote if Cedric had returned from South Africa, where is he now?

Arthur Wills¹⁹⁴ is running the Willsmere dairy himself, he has any amount of grass there but only milks about 20 cows.

I suppose all the kangaroos, wallaby and emu are dead, it must have been easy to poison the dingoes, are there many about Minerva now?

Ida and Hebe are grown tall, Rene is taller than Ethel and all of them are taller than Sarah.

I hear J.G.¹⁹⁵ is P.M.¹⁹⁶ at Warwick and is married again. I often see AC¹⁹⁷ in town, he lives in Hawthorn. Do you ever see Ned Diddal in Rockhampton? Dan Ellaway is living in Melbourne and gets an old age pension, he looks well but he is a lazy old devil.

Sarah and girls all join in much love to Berry, children and self. Write and give me the news.

Your affectionate brother

H. S. Wills

P. S. Did Minnie get any salary when she was in Dr. Voss' hospital? Ethel has to pay an entrance fee and gets no salary for 12 months, then only £10 in the 2nd year and £15 for the 3rd year.

#9030610 T S W C Collection

Horace and Sarah continued to live on at Waggo Merne, seeing their children married from there, Rene the youngest in 1906, Hebe in 1910 and Ethel in 1911. Sarah, however, was not well and suffered for a number of years and finally succumbing to a number of conditions including (according to my grandmother) hydatids and she died 17 December 1916 after a long illness. She knew that she was dying and not long before she did so she wrote this incredibly sad letter to her children:

Undated

Waggo Merne

If God calls me I must walk through the valley of the shadow of death alone (how I hate the word), tho not alone for He has promised to be with me. Will each of my loved ones cut a lock of hair and put it in my dead hand, it is all I can take with me to my lonely grave. Now dearest ones I leave you in God's hands and live your lives so we may meet again an unbroken family in our Father's Kingdom, is the prayer of your

Loving wife and mother

S. E. Wills

Talk to the little ones of me sometimes, they will never know how I love them.

Horace stayed on at “Waggo Merne” until after the marriage of Ida in 1921, and in the middle 1920s he sold the property and moved to live with his daughter Rene in Alfred Street Kew where he died on 9 October 1928.

CHAPTER 15

THE CHILDREN OF HORATIO S. H. WILLS

THE FIVE YOUNGEST: EGBERT, ELIZABETH, EUGENE, MINNA AND HORTENSE

I have not got, nor have I been able to find, many letters from the other children. They were all much younger and had little to do with the station at Cullinlaringo.

I did have some photos and through the kindness of their descendants in the case of Egbert, Elizabeth and Minna and from the collections of Tom Wills, my uncle Lawton and those from my own collection I have been able to find photographs.

The pen pictures which follow are the best I could do from the various sources available to me.

Egbert Spencer Wills

11 November 1849 to 11 September 1931

Egbert Spencer was born at Lexington and moved with the family to Geelong as a small child in late 1852. He was only 9 years old when he went with his two brothers, Cedric and Horace, to England with his father in 1859 and was educated in England first and then in Germany. He returned to Australia with Horace in July 1862 and went first to Scotch College in Melbourne and was then moved to Geelong Grammar School in 1864 where he remained until 1867. Egbert was an extremely good athlete and was in both the football and cricket teams at Geelong Grammar for three years, and was captain of cricket there in 1867.

I have no idea why Egbert left school under a cloud, but a copy of a letter contained in the letterbook of Geelong Grammar's headmaster, addressed to Mr. Morris (Horatio's trustee) says:

*Grammar School
Octr 5th 1867*

"Dear Sir,

As you are interested in young Egbert Wills I beg to call your attention to the insulting manner in which he has quitted this School, and to the grossly impertinent and discreditable production which I enclose.

He has met here with nothing but kind treatment, yet he has left without a word of farewell to any of my Masters or myself. Mrs. Wills has given me no intimation of his leaving but the boy comes into my house, and without a word to any of the servants even - takes the sheets off his own bed and removes his box. What more could he do if we had neglected and ill-treated him, instead of treating him with every consideration and kindness for years?

The enclosed is as much of an insult to me as to the person to whom it is addressed.

Believe me/Yours faithfully,

J Bracebridge Wilson

*P.S. I shall forbid my boys to have any communication with Wills
and flog anyone who disobeys my direction.
Geelong Grammar School history.*

After leaving school Egbert went to join his two brothers at the end of their trek from Cullinlaringo to Wentworth on the 8th of October 1869 and spent a short time with them, but he never took an active part at Cullinlaringo although he had a financial interest.

He made his career with the Bank of Victoria which he joined in 1869 and where he stayed until his retirement in 1914. His athletic prowess enabled him to play first grade football for both the Melbourne and Geelong football clubs.

He married Mary Beswicke, the sister of Horace's wife Sarah, on 15 September 1875 and had one daughter, stillborn, in 1877 and three sons, Egbert Horatio (b.1878), Stanley (died in infancy) and Eric Wilfred (b.20/9/1891 d.25/7/1973). In later years he lived with his son, Eric Wilfred, and died in September 1931 just nine months after the death of his wife.

With the exception of the letter which he wrote to Horace following Tom's death, (which is contained in Chapter 11) I have no other letters or documents relating to Egbert.

Elizabeth Spencer Wills

7 January 1852 to 21 November 1930

Elizabeth Spencer was born at Lexington and was just a baby when the family moved to Bellevue. Together with her sisters Duckey and Minna she was brought up under a governess, Miss Castieau, at Bellevue.

She lived with her mother in Geelong until her marriage to Edward Lesley Shaw on 3 April 1877 when she was 25. She was, according to her granddaughter, quite small but had a formidable bearing and her one purpose in her later life was to have granddaughters who were "ladies". She was not terribly close to the rest of her siblings and she had apparently had some disagreement with her mother at the time of her marriage, it was only in later life that she again became close to her brothers and sisters.

Her granddaughter, Betty Edward, remembers her well as she used to spend her school holidays with Lizzie at her home in South Yarra. She wrote to me as follows:

*Gran told me that as a child she loved books and would climb into the
hayloft to read, I gained my own love of reading from her. Although she
loved us she was not a warm person and couldn't show her feelings. I
never saw her hugging anyone, perhaps ladies didn't show their emotions!
Nevertheless every Wednesday during my holidays we would walk down to
the Alfred Hospital and visit the children's ward. She would give each
child a bag of sweets and a biblical homily.
In her early married life her husband, a bank manager, was posted to
Yackandandah where Kate Kelly was a regular customer, Lizzie said she
was very impressed and that "Miss Kelly was quite a lady".*

She had 9 children, Edward b. 1878, Leslie b. and d. 1879, Ellen b. 1880, Doris b. 1881, Elshie b.1883, Phyllis b.1886, Horace b. 1888, Lester b. 1890 and Max b.1897.

Her husband was in delicate health and the family moved first to Switzerland and later to England, returning to Australia in 1908 after the death of her husband.

I have only one letter from her written to Sarah Beswicke while she was engaged to Horace and which follows:

December 29 1870

Belle Vue

My dear Sarah,

I am very sorry we shall not be able to go with you on Saturday for Egbert has promised to go to Portarlinton with a gentleman and cannot disappoint him he desires me to say how very sorry he is that he is engaged, but he had promised to go before we got your note.

I am writing this in a great start of alarm as I think a thunderstorm is coming on and I am so foolishly frightened of lightning so put down the mistakes to my fright.

Tell your brother that he is not to forget his carte. I hope you will not be vexed at our being unable to go on Saturday and that you will enjoy yourselves on Monday.

Wishing you a "Happy new year".

Believe me, to be

Yours affectionately,

Lizzie Spencer Wills

#8701229 T S W C Collection

Eugene Spencer Wills

28 January 1854 to 8 July 1937

Eugenie Spencer, always known as Duckey, was born at Bellevue and had the same upbringing as Elizabeth and Minna. She was in later life "a bit of a girl" according to her great niece, Betty Edward, who knew her well in later life. She married twice, first to Peter Tyson the son of a wealthy Queensland grazier in November 1877 when she was 23. Tyson turned out to be an alcoholic and she eventually left him after only two or three years of marriage.

The following letter, written by Emily Harrison to her brother Horace, gives some idea of the situation. The actual date of this letter is very probably 1 September rather than 1 August as it describes the death of Egbert Spencer, the son of Cedric, who was accidentally shot by one of his brothers on August 4th as confirmed by the Cullinlaringo diaries.

Esk

August 1 1888

Dear Horace and Sarah,

Thanks for what you have told me but I like the Evening Herald style, the behaviour of the culprit, - affecting scene between him and his mother, - arrival of the father! and you do not half say anything. I expected at least to hear Berry was sick, poor thing. Every dog has his day and perhaps they have had theirs, anyway if not this blow should bring them all up with a round turn and Caddy saying that all his trouble has come since Emmy came here is rather full of meaning.

Anyway I did not poison the cat and perhaps Caddy may live to be sorry for the way he has treated me. How does he mean I goaded them? Did he ask me up to be insulted and not correct such children even if they goaded mine. I would not for my sake and their own allow them to insult anyone strange after the conversations Dr. Wilkie and I had he should go to Caddy the very hour almost he arrived on Springsure.

How much was the special? What a fool the girl must be to snap a cap instead of taking it off. Did anyone take the trouble to ask the Chinaman if he loaded the gun or did you all take the boys word? I would not! It is dreadful as Caddy himself gave the boy the gun. Perhaps I am the only person who was going to resent the children's uncouth manners and as things did not go as smoothly during my visit as during others why were we much afraid to complain, so C is unmanly enough to blame me instead of himself. It will come home to him more and more each year now and he will have many a rap from his conscience.

The best thing he can do is to go near town and put the whole lot to school, it is more than wicked having a poor spirited girl to teach those unruly children. I am very thankful you had the common sense to let yours be curbed. Ethel is a dear good child and I feel proud of her. I feel one could love Ceddies Rose and Ruby and I think fat Ivy for though she is cheeky she is easily managed with a kind word and as for dear little Tom I am very sorry to think I may never see him again.

Poor old Aunt Roope how does she come off in the smoke? Whenever the dear baby cries again without any assignable cause you may be sure it will be the little ear anyway no harm will accrue from one drop of Laudanum put in a little warm oil and put in her ear and then a little wool. Warm in one spoon and pour into another. I heard of Mr. Willis in Rockhampton, in 5 months he took 75 pounds and had the cheek to marry.

I came to Brisbane and Duckey had never been to the train though a wire for her had arrived from me, so I settled it all and left for Esk arrived at 9. Fanny met us as your wire was here, also one of agony from Duckey to proceed to Allora. I don't know why, when I got out there I saw no one and just as the train was leaving asked the station master if he knew anything about her and he coolly said "oh yes you are all to go on to Clifton" there she was staying with a Mrs. Chapcott.

So we both went to the hotel and stayed there three or four days, she could make up her mind to nothing. True enough she had been back to the Glen since all the telegrams and had been run out afresh and it appears that even when sober he has never spoken to her since her return from Melbourne, so she said. She at the same time told me she had confided the operation to him, the donkey, for when tight in bars they say he says horrid things of her.

I also heard that he runs her out but keeps Maude, everything D wants has to be said through M to Peter. Maude gets the credit of being a little more to him than Duckey pays her for. I was inclined to the same idea but cannot say I observed anything in the short time I had the opportunity. Maude and Peter drove in one day, Maude came in and said that he had been looking at my arrival for some time and when he saw it said he would bring in the buggy and have it mended as D would want to drive me about but he drank more in the meantime and took it home again same evening.

D & I went to Warwick to consult a solicitor about her responsibilities etcetera and asked for police assistance but the sergeant met me on the platform this evening and said they dare not interfere, but go to Allora as it was in their patrol so I wrote and the sergeant there said the same.

I neither mentioned D nor Peter's name but he guessed all of course, everybody knows everything. He told us the only thing to do was to go to a solicitor and get a magistrate's order and then she could get her things.

Peter sent her such a long letter inviting us out and etc and telling her she was responsible for his debts and a lot of rot and etc and she is so ignorant. We drove out about 6 found Peter had gone to Clifton, so had T. I was writing the letter to the Allora constable when D & M ran in pell mell, "run and hide Peter is mad drunk and we shall have to fly". I said I would not but they said I must as he would be sure to break the lamp on me so we all ran and hid under a fence and he came in swearing, threw all my things out into the garden, put out lights, threw a jug of water on the floor and banged all doors. After terrible cold sweats and hard frost and damp chills found an ex policeman had come with him so we put on a front and went to the kitchen and bribed the man to sleep near us.

He (Peter) asked for me and insisted on me sitting near the fire, kept on lifting me chair and all asked what made the water on the floor, - drew up his trousers and showed dry drawers and said "you see I didn't do it" and then told me he hated me because I had always hated him and had tried to separate him and Duckey. He asked me how long I was going to stay said I could stay two days. Duckey never appeared but hid in bedroom. Peter had 2 bottles of whisky and kept drinking all evening got very bad and asked me to kiss him, I said I would not, then he kissed me and the brute had only half blown his nose and it got on my cheek!

Tell Horace to look away whilst you read this.

Then he said he would sleep with me and such a lot of horrid things and then forced himself into the bedroom and when he saw D a diabolical expression came over him we turned him out. Then he said be sure and keep the door shut when you are undressing as I am going to look through the keyhole, and McGie in the next room all the time! We four females all in one room, all too frightened as they talked of guns and razors and hit the bottle. He kicked the wall in his boots all night.

I thought I would die in the night with laughing, Jane, an elephant of a girl, wanted to relieve her feelings in the night and groped about in the dark and breathed like a porpoise and made such a dreadful noise that Duckey yelled at her. Then we hear McGie get up at half past 4 and sneak out and I sent Maude after him to keep him. Peter and all got up early after breakfast which I took with everything on ready for flight and on the very edge of my chair, then he asked me to take Duckey south and I could pack her things.

So McGie took him out and we just had a large box opened in the bedroom and D's wedding presents all on the bed and floor when in he flew in such a fury and called us all thieves and ordered us off without any luggage. He said I ran - so did sheep! He got worse and worse and said he would lock us all in a room and got a big stone to throw but the man took it and told us to fly as he could tell he meant it. I was so nervous by this time that Jane and I ran for a fence, my tongue fell on the top rail and I was so weak and blind for a

moment that I could not see if he was after us. We got through and then saw Duckey and M going it double quick time and we all headed for the haystack, after hunting for us McGie came on horseback to look for us as he was afraid some might be in the house.

At two o'clock a man and an Esk boy arrived and they went to the house and one got him in a room while the other rode in the horses and brought us the buggy, and we slept at Clifton that night and went to Feltons the next day. All the way to the Glen Duckey kept saying if you don't promise not to strike Peter I wont take you out - such an idea - and when there they told me I must not virilate him but be open to everything so that she could get her things, and when he spoke to me she and Maude would shake their fists and make such faces . I did not know what they meant or what to do so I was made such a fool of and on the way to Feltons she said the same about Mr. Tyson, but I told her I would act naturally. Maude and I made her go mad after tea he and I got chaffing and she said we were hard hearted brutes and left the room.

He was very hospitable, she expected him to fly to Peter but he said he would not go and be insulted by a drunken man but asked her to come and live at Feltons, no use crying over spilt milk and that if she travelled as much as he had she would see her case was not nearly so hard as many and was not an isolated one and he would drink himself to death. She said he was an old beast and etc. We stayed 3 days as it rained and Mr. Buchanan went over to the Glen and saw that Peter would not give up anything and when he came and met us at Shirleys said he got him to Allora and asked Clarke to give him something and keep him delayed for 2 days, and D could go out and take what she liked. So as we had had words I left her and came here asked M to put all she could on a cart and send in consigned to Mrs. Maxwell at Esk and 5 boxes arrived the day after I did.

One moment she called me and asked me to help her and etc and when I gave any advice she called me cruel, said she would allow no one to say anything of Peter and what sickened me I heard her tell Mrs. Hoggettes that I wanted her to get a magistrate's order and etcetera and Peter could do nothing violent. Then she turned on me and said all her relations were being hypocrites she also told me I was very coarse, as I said before and so long as she took the Lord's name in vain in every sentence she need not blush for me. She is dreadful. I put up with more insults from Peter for her sake as she asked me, than I ever had from all the men I knew all my life. Maude Thorn made use of low language Duckey used to laugh and think it clever and say its not Peter its the grog.

As long as I live I hope I shall always retain sense enough never to go to Duckey again in any quandary with Peter.

I told her I was glad your head was screwed on tighter than mine. Then she let out at you both, she said all she wanted was for you to reason with poor Peter. I told her to send you a post office order also to pay her bill but goodness knows how when she was without sixpence and I had to pay all incidental expenses, but got an IOU yesterday. She said she would not pay one servant to stay at the Glen, now she says she will pay Baker. She certainly had a loan of me for a fortnight and I am disenchanted this trip with a sister and brother.

Mr. Tyson condemned you for leaving the sheep and said he has made it a rule through life to follow all stock of his own, if not drovers are careless and some say the sheep should never have been trucked as it only saved about 9 days travel and they should have gone the route D. Wallace's have. They have just passed here and the drover is to be dismissed as he has destroyed thousands of acres of grass by fire some people burned clean out. Strange to say I came down in the night train with Mr. Allen (your sheep) and we met a Mr. Hooper at breakfast and he said the worst of the downs is it breeds wormy sheep.

Harry is in Brisbane for two days, he will not see me, Pussy is up to her eyes - shake downs all over the house last night. We leave her on Friday by train (I am sorry to say as the steward and I fight). Fanny says Mrs. D. Wallace drinks like a fish and someone wrote from Melbourne to George Thorne not to allow his wife to go about with her he if thinks anything of her. Duckey had words with Chapcott on the platform, I was so sorry as she had been staying there nearly if not quite a week when I arrived at Clifton. George is down here valuing properties, his wife and children were here on Sunday he wants to take me to see his place but it is too far, he talks of visiting Melbourne. I have not heard of Mother since I was at your house

I wonder if you will read all this I should not have crossed the other letter but I thought I could get all the news in the 2 sheets. If you have not written to Sydney post office write to Kew Did I tell you to get from Edith my family Herald supplement? I did not read it but they wrote it, it will do to fill up an hour for you I have had much mending and washing kiss all the best love to Tiger.

If the station is carried on again it would be more economical to have a good strange manager.

Feltons is carried on very differently to Cullinlaringo, one house servant and 4 men and the manager for 3 stations and his wife and family not allowed on, the men have to cook for themselves. That is if you want it to pay. Hoping you will have a better time at shearing than you usually do at Cullinlaringo

Your ever loving

Emily

#8880801 L W C Collection

It was believed in the family that she was pregnant when she left Tyson, and she later married T. G. Cue. She had one child Eva from that pregnancy and the child was always known by the name Cue. I have not been able to establish the dates of her marriage to Cue or the birth of Eva who remained unmarried until her death in 1972. She was no more fortunate in her second marriage than she was in the first, as Mr. Cue also turned out to have a serious drinking problem and they were separated prior to his death.

She lived in South Yarra, not far from Lizzie, and became devoted to the Church of England and had a crush on the Anglican Archbishop of the time. She worshipped regularly in St Pauls Cathedral. She became very close to Lizzie and her family and was remembered by them with great affection. Duckey died in Melbourne in 1937 at the age of 83.

Minna Spencer Wills

1 March 1856 to 14 February 1943

Minna was born at Bellevue in March 1856, four years after Horatio and Elizabeth settled there and built their last home. She was a happy child as we see from Mrs. Roope's diary and grew up with the three sisters who surrounded her in age, Lizzie was 4 years older, Duckey two years and Hortense was five years younger. She was educated, first by Miss Castieau and later was sent to school in Geelong.

Other letters in my collection show that the girls led a very active social life and married early except for Minna who was 27 when she married, extremely late by the standards of the day.

I have found but one letter from her to Horace on the occasion of his 67th birthday in 1914 which is full of family news and shows how the members of the family constantly kept in touch by letter.

*Coorabelle
Geelong
June 16 1914*

Dear Horace and Sarah,

First of all Horace, many happy returns of the day, I hope you will both be spared to each other for many a long day though I know you are both ill now, which I am very grieved to hear. Lizzie said you were in bed on Sunday looking so nice Sarah. I hope you will soon be up and about, but be sure you are very careful of yourself for Horace's sake - you mean so much to each other - one couldn't do without the other.

Lizzie says Ethel's children are sweet but the poor little baby¹⁹⁸ had been having a bad time - how fortunate you are having four girls all so near you I hope Hebe is having a good time - I told Lizzie that Reggie¹⁹⁹ says his head is quite giddy - Harold and Bertha²⁰⁰ miss so much and Lizzie says can you remember Horace and Sarah kissing, one could hear them all over the house - do you remember?

Isn't it funny - I am so glad Harold is married, it will settle him and Bertha writes me such nice letters. They have started very comfortable and the company have built them a charming bungalow 5 miles from Reg. Reg seems very happy, he is looking splendid so brown and getting fatter - What a prize a girl will get in Reg !!!

How is Ida - my best love to her please and how is Sidney? Is he happy at school?

I want to catch this mail with very much love in which Claudia²⁰¹ joins me.

Your affectionate sister

Minnie S. Bloomfield-Brown

#9140616 T S W C Collection

Her husband, Henry Blomfield-Brown, was born at The Vicarage in Boreham, England on 4 January 1851 and so was 32 at the time of his marriage.

He worked for some time for the family's agent, W. F. Ducker in Little Malop Street Geelong and this connection is no doubt how he came to meet Minna.

The *Advertiser's* history of Geelong shows that he purchased Ducker's business in 1884 and continued it under that name until 1 January 1887 when he changed the name to H. Blomfield-Brown and Co. He was a licensed auctioneer and is shown in the records

as having auctioned many important properties in the latter part of the 1800s. He was clearly progressive and his name is to be found on the initial list of 33 subscribers to the new telephone company in 1888.

He and his wife had an impressive house at 66 Virginia Street Newtown which they named "Coorabelle", the same name as was applied to the home of her brother Horace as part of the Cullinlaringo Station. It stands today in perfect condition.

Henry died at Coorabelle on 8 March 1923 at the age of 67 and was survived for almost twenty years by Minna who eventually died at Toorak on 14 February 1943 just before her 87th birthday. She was the last surviving child of Horatio Spencer and Elizabeth Wills.

Hortense Sarah Spencer Wills **16 August 1861 to 2 July 1907**

Hortense was born just two months before her father's death and it was fortunate that he got to hear of it before he died.

We know little of her, she lived with her mother until her marriage at the age of just 17 on 18 February 1879 to Dr Clarence George Harding and shortly afterwards they went to live in England.

She had one child, a daughter Kathleen, who in turn married and had one daughter Desiree. We have no further details of this side of the family. Hortense pre-deceased her mother dying on 2 July 1907 in England at the age of only 45 years.

The only letter of hers which I have is this rather charming note written to her brother Horace when she was a 16 year old schoolgirl:

*Fairfield Hall*²⁰²
June 23rd 1877.

My dearest Old Horace,
*I have kept you waiting long enough by this time I think, but it is no use writing to you from school because there is not a bit of news. Up there Lizzie and Ted*²⁰³ *are progressing well.*
They have such a dear little cottage, it is so comfortable and pretty inside. I came down a week ago and thankful I am to be away from that place.
I went to tea with Lizzie on Tuesday and on Wednesday both Mama and I went to tea and spent the evening. David Strachan and Mr. Horne were there, a Mr. Stokes also, he is a nephew of Mrs. J. Shaws and is just out.
He is so amusing Horace you would explode at some Irish songs and stories he knows, he is going to Queensland soon I think. Duckey, Egbert, Mary, Tom Whyte, Tyson and I went again on Thursday evening and had a very nice one. Mind Horace if Mama asks you, if it is necessary that I should go up be sure you say yes won't you, Horace, because if you don't I shall have to stay at school all the time they are away and I could not stand that, so be sure you say yes and if I go I shall be under your care. I wouldn't be afraid of my life if so!
I hope Sarah and Bella enjoyed the Ball, of course Miss McDonald danced all the dances.
Duckey says she wrote you a long letter some time ago and has not had an answer, did you get it? Duckey and I are going to the Rink tonight, there are such a lot of new members, too many Egbert says, he has not room to skate.

Well, he went out to Bellevue yesterday and says you would not know the garden was ours, isn't it a pity. Mr. Rutherford is going to alter all the place.

Duckey got a fine old lecture from Emily this morning and she most kindly brought me into it, so no doubt she thinks she is funny, so do I, I think she is beastly funny. I don't care a hang as long as I get on all right with Mama. You, Minnie, Egbert, Lizzie, Duckey, Sarah and Mary get a few lines, all the rest can RIP and think what they like. Do you ever find it hard to write letters? I do! My dearest Horace, I had better stop. Oh, we forgot it was your birthday last Saturday so I hope my VERY VERY many happy returns of the day are not too late to be accepted. Now you old Duck, Goodbye.

Give Sarah and Ethel my best love, believe me, ever your loving sister.

Hortense

Love to Bella

PS. Be sure you tell Mother that both she and I must go up there. We can see Sydney. I want to go so much. Do help us, won't you?

#8770623 T S W C Collection

There are, at the time of writing several hundred direct descendants of Horatio Spencer Wills still living in Australia, a number in the United States and possibly some of Hortense's in the United Kingdom.

This book, I trust, will be a record of their ancestry of which they can be extremely proud.

WILLS - Edward Spencer

Son of Edward and Elizabeth Wills of The Parish of St Lukes Finsbury London

Edward Spencer b. 13/8/1778 m. 1795 Sarah Harding (b. 1776 d. 8.7.1823) d. 14.5.1811

Sarah b. 23.4.1796 M. (1) Dr William Redfern (b. 1774/5

d. 17.7.1833)

| William Lachlan Maquarie b. 27.7.1819 m.1842/3 ?

| Walker (b. & d. ?) d. ?

| 6 Children

| Joseph Foveaux b. 7.2.1823 d. 9.4.1830

m. (2) 24.6.1834 James Alexander

| Sarah b. 9.2.1835 m. 1853 Phillip van der Byl

| (b. 28.4.1827 d. 14.5.1892) d. 8.10.1905

| 7 Children

Thomas b. 5.8.1800 m.(1) 18.6.1822 Celia Reiby (b. 1802
d,28.9.1823)

| Alice b. 6.5.1823 d. 14.4.1824

m. (2) 1827 Mary Anne Barry (b. 21 9.1801 d. 19.5.1870)

| William Henry b. 12.12.1827 d. in infancy

| Catherine Spencer b. 24.11.1831 m. 12.2.1850 Capt.

| Lewis Charles Conran (b. & d ?) d. 22.12.1864

| 4 children

m. (3) de facto Mary Anne Mellard

| Arthur b. 18.2.1857 m. ? Marie Fairbairn (b & d ?)

| d. 14.10.1932

| 1 child

| Harry b. 18.2.1857 m. ? Alice Butters (b. & d.?) d. ?

| 4 children

| Frederick b. 19.7.1860 d. in infancy

| Charles b. 15.11.1861 d. in infancy

Eliza b. 10.9.1802 m. 9.10.1818 Capt. Henry Colden

Antill (b. 1.5.1779 d. 14.8.1852) d. 30.9.1858

| Margaret Campbell b. 27.6.1820 d. 22,7,1849

| unmarried

| John Maquarie b. 31.5.1822 m. 16.8.1851 Jessie Hassall

| Campbell (b. 28.3.1834 d. 7.2.1917) d. 4.6.1900

| 10 children

| Alice Sophia b. 27.3.1824 m. 8.5.1856 Henry Moggeridge

| (b. & d. ?) d. 30.1.1920

| 2 children

| Henry Colden b. 7.4.1826 m. 1.1.1850 Teresa Hatch

| (b. & d. ?) d. 17.3.1913

| 6 children

| William Redfern b. 3.1.1828 m. 29.11.1860 Mary Bell

| (b. ? d 9.8.1905) d. 5.9.1905

| 12 children

WILLS - Edward(Contd.)

Eliza (Contd.)

Thomas Wills b. 20.11.1830 m. (1) 7.5.1851 Sarah Maria
McKee (b. ? d. 3.3.1852)

| 1 child

m. (2) 15.8.1854 Isabella Fisher (b. 22.9.1836
d. 28.10.1875) d. 18.5.1865

| 4 children

Edward Spencer b. 20.7.1832 m. 24.1.1857 Mary
Campbell (b. 27.3.1838 d. 14.4.1927) d. 9.2.1917

| 11 children

James Alexander b. 7.11.1834 m. (1) E Poynton (b. & d. ?)

| 2 children

m. (2) ? Susanna Caroline Wild (b. & d. ?)

| 9 children

m. (3) 13.2.1899 Florence Mary Waugh (b. & d. ?)
d. 15.2.1920

| 3 children

Selina Eliza b. 17.10.1837 m. 21 8 1854 Capt Robert
Francis Pockley (b. & d. ?) d. ?

| Some children

Edward Spencer b. 16 2 1805 d. 1828 unmarried

Elizabeth Selina b. 30.11.1807 d. 18 1 1811

Horatio Spencer Howe b. 5.10.1811 **See separate**

tree for details

HARDING - WILLS - HOWE. Jane

Edward Wills' wife Sarah married again to George Howe on 5.10.1812 when Horatio was exactly one year old. They had one daughter.

| Jane b. 9.11.1816 m. 12.2.1831 Capt. James Harrison (b. ? d. 21.7.1867) d. 23.11.1880

| Adela b. 11.9.1834 m. ? Henry Norcott (b. & d?)
d. 23.7.1910

| 1 child (Amos)

Henry Colden Antill b. 16.10.1836 m. 10.11.1864 Emily

Spencer Wills (b. 25.12.1842 d. 6.12.1925) d. 2.9.1929

| 10 children

George b. & d. ? m. twice (no details)

| 3 children

Kate b. & d. ? m. ? Olfson Bagge

| 6 children

Alice b.. & d. ? m. ? Skinner (no details)

Horace b. 1848 d. ? unmarried

John Arthur b. & d. ? m. ? Nellie Vivian

| 3 children

Ernest b. 1855 m. ? Laura Augusta Armstrong

| 4 children

WILLS - Edward - Horatio
Horatio Spencer Howe Branch

Michael Wyre b.1791 (transported from Ireland on "Three Bees" 1813) d. 1823 married 11.5.1815 Jane Wallace b.1789 (transported from Ireland on "Catherine" 1813) d.? had three children Catherine, Elizabeth and Anne.

Horatio Spencer Howe b. 5.10.1811 m. 2.12.1833 Elizabeth Wyre (b. 1817? d. 28.12 1907) d. 17.10.1861

Thomas Wentworth b. 19.12.1836 m. de facto Sarah Theresa

Barber (b. & d. ?) d. 2.5.1880

| No children

Emily Spencer b. 1.12.1844 m.10.11.1864 Henry Colden Antill

Harrison (b. 16.10.1836 d. 2.9.1929) d. 6.12.1925

| 10 children

Cedric Spencer b. 1.12.1844 m. 20.3.1872 Elizabeth (Berry)

Henrietta McDonald (b. 26.12.1850 d. 25.1.1944) d. 23.1.1914

| 11 children

Horace Spencer b. 16.6.1847 m. 15.8.1872 Sarah Eliza Beswicke

(b. 4.5.1851 d. 17.12.1916) d. 9.10.1928

| 6 children

Egbert Spencer b. 11.11.1849 m. 15.9.1875 Mary Beswicke

(b. 27.6.1853 d. 10.12.1930) d. 11.9.1931

| 3 children

Elizabeth Spencer b. 7.1.1852 m. 3.4.1877 Edward Lesley Shaw

(b. 16.1.1849 d. 8.4.1908) d. 21.11.1930

| 9 children

Eugenie (Duckey) Spencer b. 28.1.1854 m. (1) 16.11.1877 Peter

Tyson(b. & d. ?)

| No children

m. (2) ? T. G. Cue (b. & d. ?)

| 1 child

Minna Spencer b. 1.3.1856 m. 14.6.1833 Henry Blomfield-Brown

(b. 4.1.1851 d. 8.3.1923) d. 14.2.1943

| 3 children

Hortense Sarah Spencer b. 16.8.1861 m. 18.2.1879 Dr George

Clarence Harding (b. & d. ?) d. 2.7.1907

| Katherine

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

1. He was a printer's apprentice and his Master, Millar Ritchie, gave character evidence at his trial.
2. This is a quaint English legal term of the time which meant that felons to be hanged were not granted a clergyman at their execution.
3. "Voyage to Sydney etc etc" see Editors notes.
4. See full text of this agreement in Chapter 2.
5. This was always said, by my Grandmother, to have been a kidney disease. I imagine such oral history is very often correct.
6. This was at number 96 George St. See the illustration.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

7. Mary married a Mr. John Willey and two of her daughters, Emily and Selina, subsequently came out to Australia in 1824. Selina married David, the son of Major Johnston. (See note 10) and subsequently bore 8 children before dying at the age of 55 in 1866.
8. Sarah, who was only 2 years and 6 months old when the Hillsborough sailed. The voyage must have been a particularly anxious time for the mother of such a small child.
9. Family name for Sarah, used so as to avoid confusion with her mother who bore the same name.
10. Major George Johnston b. 19 March 1774 d. 19 February 1820. He was court-martialled and cashiered for his part in the Rum Rebellion.
11. Jane Howe, later Mrs. Harrison. See her entry in Chapter 3.
12. William Cowper was a Church Of England Minister and officiated at the wedding of Sarah (Sally) Wills to Dr. Redfern See Chapter 3.

13. Michael Robinson was transported for blackmail. He was famous in his time in the fledgling arts world in Sydney and was also a poet.
14. Isaac Nicholls was a neighbour of the Wills family and was the Postmaster in Sydney.
15. These documents show Thomas Wills as the “next friend” (an adult acting on behalf of a minor) who briefed William Charles Wentworth as the barrister for the case in which Thomas Wills sued Joseph Underwood, Michael Robinson and Robert Howe as trustees for the Estate of George Howe.
The children named in the case were George Terry Howe (1806 - 1863), Sarah Howe (1810 - 1891), Horatio Spencer Wills (1811 - 1861) and Jane Howe (1816 - 1880).
The case was conducted to protect the interests of the children following the perfidious George Howe’s disgraceful alteration to his will. Dr William Redfern was appointed in these documents as receiver of the estate.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

16. We know little of him as he never returned to Australia and lived in Edinburgh and London where he ran the Company “Redfern and Alexander” for many years. I have no record of his date or place of death nor do I know anything of his 3 sons and 3 daughters.
17. Sarah’s husband, Dr van der Byl was not at all liked by the Wills boys who had a lot to do with him while they were at school in England, finding him both officious and pompous. The van der Byls did not have a lot of luck with their children in the sense that three of them died at birth or in early infancy.
One daughter, Mary, married Ambrose Cloete and they lived in Jersey. I have a letter from their son written to Horace and seeking to exchange some stamps as they were both apparently collectors.
18. Mary Anne née Barry. (1801 - 1870) Wife of Thomas Wills.
19. Catherine Spencer Wills (1831 - 1864) Daughter of Thomas and Mary Anne Wills

20. Rosa was the sister of Mary Anne and was not too popular with the rest of the family.
21. Eliza (Antill), sister of Thomas Wills and Sarah (Redfern)
22. James Alexander (1797 - 1877) Second husband of the writer.
23. Edward Spencer Wills (1805 - 1828) brother of Thomas and Sarah who had committed suicide 9 years earlier and whose debts the family had undertaken.
24. Horatio Spencer Wills , then 26 years old.
25. Selina Willey, cousin of the writer, who married David Johnston in 1836. David was the son of Major George Johnston (see note 10).
26. Emily Harding, sister of Selina Johnston.
27. Who later moved to Tasmania and built Entally House near Launceston.

NOTES ON CHAPTER 4

- 27a. Catherine (later Roope) was the sister of Elizabeth Wills. Her details are contained in Chapter 9.
28. Thomas Wills' marriage to Mary Anne Barry was not happy, and indeed he had a long relationship with an English woman similarly named Mary Ann Mellard who bore him four children.
29. Horatio was prone to go off into deeply religious paragraphs from time to time and for no apparent reason.
30. Major Henry Colden Antill, (1 May 1779 to 30 July 1858), husband of Horatio's sister Eliza.
31. Margaret Campbell Antill (27 June 1820 to 22 July 1849) who died unmarried.
32. Frank Clune, author of *Bound for Botany Bay*, see Bibliography.

NOTES ON CHAPTER 5

33. Here again Horatio's memory fails. Burra Burra was on the Burra Creek which flowed into the Queanbeyan River which in turn ran into the Murrumbidgee.
34. Bullabaas were mythical frightening creates in local aboriginal lore.
35. Ned Kenny was a shepherd who continued in Wills' employ and was one of the three survivors of the massacre years later in Queensland.
36. Captain Bunbury was the man to whom Wills sold his first station "Barton" near Lexington.
37. Tom's early education was given by his mother and father.
38. I have no record of property belonging to the two sisters, but it must have been in Sydney.
39. Eliza Allan (a neighbour) and later her infant daughter were buried in the garden at "Lexington" where their graves are still to be seen.
40. The Port Phillip Academical Institution conducted by Mr. William Brickwood of the University of Oxford. The school was conducted in a spacious building known as Napier's room in Collins St. not far from Swanston St. It was established in 1848 and moved in September 1849 to Little Flinders St. [Reference *Melbourne Argus* and *Port Phillip Patriot*]
41. *Like the Ark*, written by Lorna Banfield whose family were publishers of the Ararat newspaper. See Bibliography.
42. Mr. [Captain] Harrison was Jeannie's (Jane Howe/Harrison) husband. I have no idea why Horatio "of course" did not speak.
43. The plan shows a quite large house with a library, dining room, entrance hall, retiring room, bedroom, nursery, three spare rooms, pantry and storeroom. The kitchen was separate from the house, a normal thing for the time in case of fire in the kitchen, as was the servants' quarters. The total size was 65 feet by 64 feet - the equivalent of 42 imperial squares excluding kitchen and servants' quarters.

44. Fan [Frances] is Jane's stepchild born in 1830 shortly after the marriage of Jane to Captain Harrison. She was an illegitimate child and I have no idea who her mother was.

NOTES ON CHAPTER 6

45. Tom Baker was later to die in the massacre along with his wife and two of his children.
46. Mr. Denys was the founder of what became the great wool house of Denys Lascelles. At the time amongst other things he had a boiling down works at the Breakwater in Geelong.
47. Mrs. Roope was at the time in the middle of one of her periodic disagreements with the family.
48. A very early use of wire netting in a fence in Australia. Some of this netting survived into the 1970s.
49. "Jane" is Jane Howe/Harrison (9 November 1816 to 23 November 1880) and her daughter Adela born 11 September 1834. The reason that Sarah felt sorry for them was Jane's catastrophic marriage to Captain Harrison and the same might be said for Adela's marriage to Henry Norcott.
50. Mr. McKerras was a Geelong merchant, later to be a partner of William Roope and later still to cheat William Roope and to go bankrupt, leaving the area in disgrace.
51. Mr. O'Farrell was a farmer with land at Fisherman's Point at Lake Connewarre. This farm was later purchased by Horatio.
52. "Pussey" was the pet name for the eldest of the daughters of Dr. Glencross-Smith who was and remained for many years a close friend of Emily.
53. Thomas Wills Antill was the fourth son of Horatio's sister Eliza Antill. He was born 20 November 1830 and later became the manager of a bank in Geelong and one of the trustees of Horatio's estate.

54. Dr. Ryan had lived for some time in Australia and was a friend of Horatio and Elizabeth. He had returned to Ireland to live and Horatio visited him during his visit to Great Britain in order to take the boys to school there. I have a most interesting letter from Dr. Ryan resulting from this trip. I have no idea why Horatio was in Ireland, but it may have had to do with visiting the relatives of Catherine and Elizabeth his wife's family.
55. The prospective purchase of this small boat was mentioned to Tom by his father in an earlier letter.
56. George and Charlie were the two sons of Dr. Glencross-Smith (brothers of the aforementioned Pussey) who remained close friends of the Wills boys for some years.
57. Mrs. Johnston, formerly Selina Willey, was a cousin of Horatio, the daughter of his mother's sister Mary Harding. She was born in 1811.
58. George Johnston was one of the eight children of Selina and David (see note 25).
59. A great pity that he later did not heed his own advice.
60. Thomas Wills was paying one of his many visits to England where he occupied much time with Mary Ann Mellard.
61. Mr. Anderson's station was at Skipton. He had been an old friend of Horatio, and later Tom Wills was, for a time, engaged to his daughter.
62. This is one of a number of mentions Horatio makes of old school fellows. I have been unable to establish what school he was at in Sydney.
63. Mrs. Conran was Catherine Spencer Wills (24 November 1831 to 22 December 1864), the daughter of Thomas Wills.
64. The Pockleys were the family of the youngest child of Henry and Eliza Antill, Selina Eliza born 17 October 1837 and who married Captain Robert Francis Pockley in August 1854.
65. Pat Manion, his wife and two children were amongst those killed in the massacre. The name is spelt as Mannion and Manyon as well as Manion throughout the book. I do not know which is correct.

NOTES ON CHAPTER 7

- 66. This little girl was to be killed just seven months later. Her name was never recorded.
- 67. This child also was killed in the massacre and again there was no record of its name or gender.
- 68. Once again Horatio mixes his dates. In fact his birthday is 5 October.
- 69. Mr. Kavanagh, who was overseeing the farm at Bellevue, was later to go to Cullinlarigo where he served as overseer for many years.
- 70. Elliott was “Gid” [Gideon] Elliott, a famous Victorian cricketer and a team mate of Tom at the Richmond cricket club. George, who died in the massacre, was his brother.
- 71. Once again this is in error. It was in fact Horatio’s 50th birthday two days later.
- 72. William Albrey was later discharged by William Roope and left the station in 1862.
- 73. There is no record of the number of aboriginals killed in retaliation for the massacre, but if Australian history is indicative I suspect that the number was high.
- 74. The two Wills families were not in any way related, but it is interesting to see that they both died at a time close together and in hostile environments.

NOTES ON CHAPTER 8

- 94. Baker was the overseer for the trek up and he, his wife and two children were killed in the massacre. He was employed for years by Horatio.

95. Elizabeth seems to have come to this death toll from Mr Morris' remark (see Mrs Roope's diary) and the "Sydney papers" refers to the editorial in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 12 December 1861 which expressed the view that the massacre was in retaliation for injuries inflicted on the Aborigines by white men (but not H. S. Wills). It spoke of the kidnapping of Aboriginal children and concluded "the slaughter of the seventy cannot be justified except upon reasons which point to the annihilation of the race."
96. There were a couple of mentions that the family might dig up the body of Horatio and rebury it, but this in fact was never done.
97. Younger brother of Colden, later drowned.
98. Both boys did go to Scotch College but later were taken away and sent instead to Geelong Grammar so as to be nearer their mother.
99. This is the first mention of Tom leaving the station to play cricket.
100. Child of Adela Norcott, sister of Colden Harrison.
101. Jane Harrison, Horatio's half sister.
102. Eliza Beswicke, mother of Sarah and Mary Wills.

NOTES ON CHAPTER 9

103. This refers to the fact that Tom was engaged for a while to Alec Anderson's daughter, which engagement was later broken off by her father presumably due to Tom's drinking and debts.
104. Mrs. Morris, wife of the manager of the Bank of Australia in Geelong. Her husband was a trustee of Horatio's estate.
105. The Presbyterian minister in charge of St. George's Church at Geelong.
106. Thomas Wills Antill, manager of the Union Bank in Geelong, Horatio's nephew and one of the two trustees of his estate. Thomas Antill was the son of Horatio's sister Eliza.
107. Captain Pockley was married to H.S. Wills' niece Selena Eliza who was incidentally Thomas Wills Antill's sister.

108. Mr. McJennet was the Church of England minister at Moolap.
109. The husband of Mrs. Morris (see Note 104).
110. The daughter of Dr. Glencross Smith. One of his four children who were all great friends of the Wills children over many years.
111. Alice Harrison, sister to Colden and daughter of H.S. Wills' half sister Jane Howe.
112. Not 18 men, but 10 men, 2 women and 7 children.
113. Minna Spencer Wills (b 1 March 1856 d 14 February 1943), the second youngest of the Wills children, at this time five years old. She was later Mrs. Henry Blomfield Brown and lived in Virginia Street Geelong.
114. Miss Castieau was for many years the governess of the female Wills children.
115. Miss Curlewis was the daughter of an adjoining land owner who held considerable property on the shores of Corio Bay.
116. Wills was 50 years and 12 days old at his death.
117. A copy of this will is carried as an appendix to this book.
118. A long, maudlin and almost incomprehensible poem.
119. The owner of considerable property in and around Drysdale. She married very late in life.
120. Alec Anderson was an old friend of Horatio and had been responsible for teaching Tom farming.
121. Now called Leopold to distinguish it from Kensington close to Melbourne.
122. He entered the ministry but was drowned at the age of 21.
123. Later to be the husband of Emily Wills.
124. Elizabeth rented out the Bellevue farm and thus had no need of these implements and stock, as she had no intention of carrying on the business.

- 125. The first words describing the great friction between William Roope and Tom Wills which was later to cause Mr. Roope to resign and move to Rockhampton.
- 126. This is the first indication of Colden's courtship of Emily.
- 127. A partner of William Roope in his Geelong merchant business. McKerras defaulted, causing Roope a heavy loss.
- 128. Charles was the first of the family to be accidentally shot and within but twenty years the same fate befell Cedric's child Egbert Spencer.
- 129. Fanny Harrison did not marry Mr. Hornbuckle as shown in this diary, but in fact married Dr. Budd, so I have no idea how this mistake came about.
- 130. This is just another of Mrs. Roope's rather sad self pitying comments.
- 131. She was a very devout Presbyterian, (although we know that she married in a Roman Catholic Church) and it is quite surprising to find her going to any Church of England.

NOTES ON CHAPTER 10

- 75. If this is true Mr. Roope was born on 8 June 1801 and this appears to match up with other evidence.
- 76. I have no knowledge of why Tom felt this way about Jane Harrison.
- 77. Mr. Amsink was in some way either a friend or perhaps a past employer of Tom. He is mentioned many times in the correspondence.
- 78. Mr. Crawford was an Anglican minister in Geelong.
- 79. As may be seen in the chapter on Tom, he captained Victoria a couple of times in inter-colonial matches while he was in theory still living at the Station. It is obvious that he was more interested in cricket than he was in running the property.

80. This is probably Henry Norcott who married Adela Harrison. He died quite young leaving Adela with a small son, Amos. I do not have much information on him.
81. Mr. Johnson was one of a number of managers appointed to Cullinlaringo.
82. Horace and Egbert on their return were sent to Mr. Morrison's school in Melbourne (later Scotch College), but after a reasonably short time they transferred to the Geelong Grammar School. I have a lovely old book which was a prize won by Horace whilst at Scotch.
83. This Mr. Morrison was another of the managers appointed by the Trustees to the Station.
84. Bird was a carrier who contracted to deliver dray loads of goods to a number of properties in the Springsure area and carted the wool back for sale. I have a very beautiful photograph of a load of wool on Mr. Bird's bullock drays on their way down to the coast.
85. Ah Chu was one of the shepherds taking flocks on this trip. The sheep were divided into four roughly equal flocks of about 2,500 each in the care of a shepherd.
86. Ethel Mary Wills (27 July 1875 - 22 June 1919), eldest daughter of Horace and Sarah Wills, later to become Mrs. Fordyce.
87. Eva Irene Wills (7 June 1888 - 18 November 1980), youngest daughter of Horace and Sarah Wills, later to become Mrs. Cooke.
88. Horatio Spencer Howe Wills Jnr (28 August 1876 - 30 August 1960) and his wife Margaret Alice. He was the eldest son of Cedric and Berry Wills.
89. Minnie Spencer Wills Jnr (26 July 1881 - 23 December 1962), later to become Mrs. George Creed, second daughter of Cedric and Berry Wills. There is no record of her having a baby in June 1903, so presumably she miscarried. Her first child born after this date was Ethel Ruby who was born 22 November 1903.
90. Cedric Spencer Wills Jnr. (29 November 1877 - 27 September 1957) had for some reason been in South Africa and indeed married in 1912 a South African woman (Luzyje Eade).

91. Colden Spencer Wills (15 October 1888 - 20 May 1972), the youngest of Cedric and Berry's children who lived for many years on Minerva Creek Station and whose grandson, my cousin Thomas Horatio Spencer, is still living at Minerva Creek.
92. Thomas Wentworth Spencer Wills (25 July 1886 - 22 May 1963) died unmarried and left his share of the property to Antill Wills.
93. Emily Spencer Collins (16 August 1875 - 5 February 1960), later Mrs. Alex McLean. She was the child of Cedric and Berry's eldest child Elizabeth.

NOTES ON CHAPTER 11

132. She was in referring to her sister-in-law, Elizabeth, and the confinement was that of Eugenie Spencer.
133. Mrs. Alexander was the only one of the family to refer to Thomas Wentworth Wills as "Thomas". The other members of the family always referred to him as Tom so as to distinguish him from his uncle.
134. Dr. and Mrs. Phillip Vanderbyl; Mrs. Vanderbyl was Sarah Alexander, b 1835 d 1905.
135. This son must have died in infancy as there is no mention of him among Mrs. Vanderbyl's children.
136. Mr. Amsink was a friend (or colleague?) of Tom Wills.
137. The Johnson family of Georges Hall were related to the Wills through the marriage of David Johnson to Selena Wills, the sister of Sarah Harding/Wills/Howe.
138. Captain Pockley was married to Horatio's niece.
139. Thomas Wills (b 1800) spent a lot of time travelling to and from England. He had a second family of children to a woman called Mary Anne Mallard to whom he was not married but who took his name. There were four children of this liaison.

- 140. This is no doubt just the first shot in the long battle between the trustees who were reluctant to invest in Cullinlaringo and Thomas, Cedric and Horace who felt that the trustees were penny-pinching. This battle went on for many years.
- 141. This refers to Mr. Anderson's decision to break off the engagement between his daughter and Tom Wills.
- 142. Longstop was William Josiah Hammersley, one of the authors, with Tom, of the Melbourne Football Club's rules. He also played cricket for Victoria with Tom.
- 143. Mr. Johnson at that time appointed manager of Cullinlaringo.
- 144. Tom was not Victorian born but was born in New South Wales.
- 145. This should read "on the Molonglo" but as we know this is not correct.
- 146. This was Brickwood's Seminary.
- 147. Sarah Theresa Barber, de facto wife of Tom Wills.
- 148. I have no idea what particular feud was raging in the family at the time which caused Egbert's wife Mary "not having anything to do with" Emily Spencer Harrison, Egbert's and Tom's sister.
- 149. Bertie is Egbert Horatio b 7 December 1878.
- 150. Mary and Bella's father Mr. Charles Beswicke.

NOTES ON CHAPTER 12

- 151. Selena was the daughter of Captain Pockley and his wife Selena Eliza Antill.
- 152. I am not aware who Aunt Ruby was.
- 153. Etty is Esther Emily Johnson born 3 January 1838.
- 154. Uncle David is David Johnson born 1801 married to Horatio's aunt Selena Harding.

- 155. Little G is George Robert Johnson born 24 May 1843.
- 156. Fanny Johnson b 12 December 1846. I wonder what “congestion of the brain” was?
- 157. Mr. Johnson the manager appointed by the trustees.

NOTES ON CHAPTER 13

- 158. This is an illustration of how Cedric showed a very mature interest in the management of Cullinlaringo. He always appeared to be the best of the brothers in this aspect.
- 159. The home of Sarah’s grandparents.
- 160. The long time overseer at Cullinlaringo. He was on the 1872 drove down to Wentworth.
- 161. This was to be Ruby Spencer b. 23 November.
- 162. In view of the baby’s sex I presume that she did not bother to inform Sarah!
- 163. Egbert Spencer Jnr, then just two years old. He was accidentally shot by one of his brothers when he was only seven. This accident was a catalyst for gun instruction for generations afterward. In my own case my father gave me a stern warning about it when he first taught me to handle a gun.
- 164. Rose Spencer b. 16 September 1882, later Mrs William Geddes.
- 165. Ida Claire b. 3 June 1880, Sarah’s second daughter.
- 166. Emily Spencer b. 16 August 1875, later Mrs Alec McLean.
- 167. P. H. McDonald, an uncle of Berry’s

168. Eva Irene b. 7 June 1888. Sarah's youngest daughter and my grandmother.
169. Ivy Spencer b. 30 July 1885, later Mrs. Frederick Tyrell
170. Horatio Spencer b. 28 August 1876 eldest son of Cedric and Berry.
171. Mrs Roope died less than a year later.
172. Emily Spencer Harrison who was never too popular with Cedric's family as is evidenced by the letter about Duckey in Chapter 15.
173. Edith Spencer b. 6 June 1874, later Mrs. George McDonald.
174. Minna Spencer Wills/Blomfield-Brown.
175. Alec Robert McLean b. 28 February 1908, then 12 months old.
176. Alec Angus McLean b. 2 August 1861. The writer's husband.
177. Ruby Spencer Wills (Mrs. Stephen Creed) b.23 November 1883 and her daughter Ruby Audrey b. 21 February 1908.
178. Minnie Spencer Wills (Mrs George Creed) b. 27 April 1880.
179. Elizabeth Spencer b. 12 March 1873, later Mrs Arthur Collins.
180. Ada Berry b.22 February 1900.
181. Ivy Spencer b. 30 July 1885. She was then 24 and did not marry for a further 5 years.
182. Elizabeth Margaret McLean who died just 3 years later in 1912.
183. My father Sidney Bertram Wills Cooke then 2 years old.
184. There is a beautiful little family cemetery in the garden of Minerva Creek and a number of family members are buried there.
185. Cathleen Harding was the daughter of Hortense Sarah Spencer Wills. I have no idea what this reference is about.
186. She never did marry.
187. Mary Wills, wife of Egbert Spencer Snr.

188. Another of the McDonald uncles of Berry.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 14

189. Obviously she was not impressed because the marriage did not take place until August 1872
190. The wife of the man who was the Cullinlaringo overseer for many years.
191. The writer's nephew b. 1876.
192. The Headmaster for many years of Scotch College in Melbourne where Horace and Egbert attended school after their return from Germany.
193. This is the first intimation I had of the fact that Cullinlaringo had been broken up for selection after it was lost to the family.
194. Arthur Wills b. 18 February 1857 the son of Thomas Spencer Wills. The property referred to as "Willsmere" (or parts thereof) was in the hands of Arthur's family until after World War 2.
195. Yet another of the McDonald uncles of Berry's.
196. This acronym stood for Police Magistrate.
197. A.C. McDonald was Berry's father.

NOTES ON CHAPTER 15.

198. Horatio Spencer Wills Fordyce b. 30 March 1914. Always known as Billy.
199. Reginald Blomfield-Brown b. 24 January 1890.

- 200. Harold Blomfield-Brown b. 22 April 1885 and his wife Bertha née Dickey
- 201. Claudia Blomfield-Brown b. 12 March 1884, later Mrs. William Beasley.
- 202. The school at which Hortense was a pupil. I have no information about this establishment.
- 203. Elizabeth Spencer Wills and her husband Edward Shaw.

APPENDIX

THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF
HORATIO SPENCER HOWE WILLS

14 January 1861

This is a transcription of the will of H. S. Wills written by hand in Geelong just before he left to begin his great trek to Cullin-la-ringo.

He appointed his bank manager John R. Morris and his nephew Thomas Wills Antill, son of his sister Eliza, also a bank manager, as his executors and trustees.

It is a complex and detailed document and its ramifications show up several times more in subsequent letters and documents and did include the removal of Tom from the management of the station by the trustees in 1864.

The will was signed on each page by Henry Speed and Charles Porter, clerks to the solicitor, and by H.S.W; they also witnessed and signed the document.

THIS IS THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT of me HORATIO SPENCER HOWE WILLS (generally known and called by the name of Horatio Spencer Wills and sometimes Horatio Howe Spencer Wills) of Belle Vue in the Parish of Moolap in the County of Grant in the Colony of Victoria Esquire I GIVE AND BEQUEATH to each of my Executors hereinafter named and to my Solicitor Christopher Samuel Friend a gold mourning ring and I DIRECT my Executors to obtain such rings and to pay for the same out of my personal estate I GIVE DEVISE AND BEQUEATH unto my dear wife Elizabeth Wills for and during the term of her natural life if she shall so long remain my widow all that and those my farm lands (consisting of about one hundred and eighty six acres) and the dwelling house and buildings thereon erected situate at Moolap aforesaid and known as Belle Vue Farm Together with the household furniture plate linen glass china books and other things in and about the said dwelling house together with the live stock (which may be on or about the said farm at the time of my decease AND ALSO my carriages carts wagons ploughs harrows and all and singular the implements and things of and belonging to the said farm AND as to all the rest residue and remainder of my personal estate (except my stations on the Nogoia at Queensland and known by the name of Cullinlaringo and the sheep cattle horses and other stock and articles and things which may be depasturing thereon or of and belonging thereto I GIVE AND BEQUEATH the same unto my good friends Thomas Wills Antill of the Union Bank of Australia in the town of Geelong in the Colony of Victoria aforesaid Gentleman and John R. Morris of the same place Esquire Manager of the Bank of Australasia (hereinafter called "my Trustees") and the survivor of them his executors administrators and assigns UPON TRUST to sell and dispose of such part thereof as shall not consist of money as soon as conveniently may be after my decease either by public auction or private contract and out of the money which may arise and be produced by such sale or sales as well as out of

such part of my personal estate as shall consist of money in the first place to pay satisfy and discharge all my just debts and funeral and testamentary expenses in the next place to invest the residue thereof (if any) in and upon real or Government security or securities in the Colony of Victoria AND I DECLARE

that the said Thomas Wills Antill and John R. Morris and the survivor of them his executors administrators and assigns shall have full power to vary and transpose the same from time to time as they or he shall think fit and to stand and be possessed of the interest dividends and annual produce thereof and therefrom and for the same trusts ends intents and purposes as are hereinafter mentioned and declared of and concerning the same AND as to all my real estate I give and devise the same unto the said Thomas Wills Antill and John R. Morris and the survivor of them his heirs and assigns upon trust to receive and take the rents issues and profits thereof and to stand and be possessed thereof upon the trusts and for the ends intents and purposes hereinafter declared of and concerning the same AND as to my said Station on the Nogoia together with the sheep cattle horses and other stock depasturing and being thereon and also the hurdles implements and things thereunto belonging I GIVE and bequeath the same unto my said Trustees and the survivor of them his executors administrators and assigns upon trust to carry on and conduct the same for a period of ten years from the first day of January One thousand eight hundred and sixty one and for that purpose to employ my son Thomas Wentworth Wills to manage and superintend the same AND also I empower my said Trustees or Trustee for the time being to hire and employ such other persons at such salaries as they or he shall think proper and to enter into such Contracts and Agreements and to make such engagements respecting the premises as they or he shall think reasonable and to increase or abridge the said station business or concerns and my capital therein and generally to transact all matters or concerns respecting my said station business or concerns and to do or cause to be done all acts and deeds relative thereto in such and the same manner to all intents and purposes as if such trustees or trustee were absolutely entitled to or interested in the premises it being my intention to give my Trustees or Trustee for the time being full discretionary power and authority to carry on the said station business and concerns in such manner as to them or him shall seem most advantageous and most for the benefit of the persons interested under the trusts hereinafter expressed AND I HEREBY DECLARE that all losses charges and expenses attending or to be incurred in the carrying on of my said station business and

undertaking and the concerns thereof respectively shall be borne paid and defrayed out of the gains and profits thereof AND I DIRECT that all wethers above the age of four years which may be raised upon the said station except such as may be required for the use and consumption of the same shall be sold at the option of my said Trustees or Trustee for the time being and also all ewes above the age of five years I DIRECT to be sold in like manner and I declare that the money which may from time to time be produced by the sale and sales of such wethers and ewes as well as the clear profits which may arise from my said station business shall be held by my said Trustees and the survivor of them his Executors administrators and assigns upon the trusts and for the ends intents and purposes hereinafter declared of and concerning the same AND I hereby declare that my said Trustees and the survivor of them his heirs executors administrators and assigns shall stand and be possessed of the rents and profits of my real estate and of the dividends interest and produce of my personal estate so to be invested as aforesaid and of the profits of my said station on the Nogoia and the produce of the sale and sales of the aforesaid wethers and ewes UPON TRUST in the first place to pay thereout unto my said dear wife Elizabeth for and during the term of her natural life the sum of Five hundred pounds per year for her own use and benefit Also to pay to my wife the sum of One hundred and thirty pounds per year being at the rate of thirty two pounds ten shillings for the clothing of each of my four daughters that is to say Emily Spencer Wills Elizabeth Spencer Wills Eugenie Spencer Wills and Minna Spencer Wills the sum of One hundred pounds per annum as the salary of any governess who may be engaged by said wife for the purpose of teaching such of my children as may in her discretion require to be taught by a Governess and the sum of One hundred pounds per annum to be laid out and expended in and about the repairs of the said farm dwelling house and buildings called Belle Vue and in keeping the garden belonging thereto in proper order and condition in the second place to pay and apply thereout the sum of Four hundred pounds per annum on such part or parts thereof in equal proportions or otherwise as to my executors may appear

necessary and expedient in and towards the education support and advance in life of my Three sons Cedric Spencer Wills Horace Spencer Wills and Egbert Spencer Wills now at school at Bonn in Germany on the Rhine and in the third place and subject to the payments aforesaid being first made to pay the sum of One hundred pounds per annum by quarterly payments unto my sister Jane Harrison now of Victoria Parade Melbourne

for the term of her natural life and to pay to my sister Mrs. Alexander the wife of James Alexander of London the sum of Twenty five pounds per annum for a period of seven years computing from the day of my death the first payment of such annuity to be made within three months from that day and to pay to my daughter Emily Spencer Wills the sum of Thirty pounds per annum for pocket money during the term she shall remain single and unmarried AND to pay to my said son Thomas Wentworth Wills the sum of One hundred and fifty pounds for his second years service as Manager of my said Station Two hundred and fifty pounds for the third year and Three hundred pounds per annum for the seven following years computing from the first day of January One thousand eight hundred and sixty one AND my Will is that the surplus or residue (if any) of such rents issues profits interest dividends and annual produce profits and money after such payments shall have been made as aforesaid shall be suffered to accumulate in the hands of my trustees or the survivor of them or his heirs executors administrators or assigns until the same shall from time to time amount to the sum of Three hundred pounds and then to invest such sum or any larger sum if the same shall amount to a larger sum in or upon real or government security or securities as aforesaid with power to transpose the same PROVIDED always and my mind and Will is that upon either of my daughters being married or otherwise removed from the care and control of my said wife the payment of the said sum of Thirty two pounds ten shillings per annum hereinbefore directed to be made to her for the clothing of such shall cease to be paid AND in the event of all my daughters being removed from the care and control of my said wife whether by marriage or otherwise then the payment of One hundred pounds per annum hereinbefore directed to be made to her for the salary of a Governess shall also cease to be paid AND my mind and

Will is that upon the first marriage of any daughter of mine my said trustees or the survivor of them his executors administrators or assigns shall pay to such daughter the sum of One thousand five hundred pounds as a marriage portion upon the day of such marriage Provided Always and my Will is that if my Trustees or the trustees or trustee acting in the trusts of this my Will shall not have a sufficient sum of ready money in their or his hands to pay the said One thousand five hundred pounds upon the day of any such marriage as aforesaid then they or he shall forthwith and as often as it may be necessary call home collect and get in so much and such part of my personal estate as may have been invested by them as aforesaid as shall amount to the said sum of One thousand five

hundred pounds and shall pay the same to such daughter as soon as conveniently may after any such marriage AND in the event of the marriage again or death of my said wife whichever shall first happen I direct my said Trustees and the survivor of them his heirs and assigns to let my said farm lands and premises known as Belle Vue Farm for any term or term of years not exceeding Ten years from the First day of January One thousand eight hundred and sixty one to sell and dispose of the live stock carriages carts wagons ploughs harrows implements and things household furniture plate linen china glass china books and other things in and about the said farm and premises in such way and manner as to them or him may seem best and the money which may arise and be produced by such sale after payment of the expense thereof and also the rents and profits which may arise and be produced from and by the letting of the said farm shall go and be applied in the same way and manner and to such ends intents and purposes as is hereinbefore declared of and concerning the rents issues and profits interests dividends and annual product of my real and personal estate AND further my Will is that at the expiration of Ten years from the said first day of January One thousand eight hundred and sixty one or as soon after as conveniently may be my said Trustees or the survivor of them his heirs executors administrators and assigns shall sell and dispose of the whole of my real estate entirely and altogether or in parcels and either by public auction or private Contract for such price or prices as may be fairly gotten for the same and shall call home collect and get in such real or Government security or securities as aforesaid PROVIDED ALWAYS and my mind is that if my said wife shall not be married again at the expiration of the said ten years then the real estate and personal estate hereinbefore devised and bequeathed to her for life shall not be sold until her marriage again or death as aforesaid but when sold the money which may be produced by such sale or sales shall be subject to the same trusts as are hereinafter declared of and concerning the money to be produced by the sale of my real estate and the calling home and getting in of the real or government security or securities AND I hereby declare that my Trustee and the survivor of them his heirs executors administrators or assigns shall have power to buy in and to rescind any Contract or Contracts for the sale of my said real estate or any part thereof and to resell the same without being answerable for any loss which may happen thereby and also to invest any special or other stipulations in any Contract for or Conditions of sale either as to the title or evidence of the title or otherwise of and concerning such real estates or any part thereof and to execute make and do all such

conveyances surrenders assurances and things for effectuating any such sale or sales as may be necessary or expedient AND further to stand and be possessed of the money which may arise from such sale or sales of my said real estate and from the calling home collecting and getting in such real or government security or securities as aforesaid UPON TRUST for the whole of my children to be divided amongst them as hereinafter directed that is to say AND I hereby direct my Trustee or the survivor of them his executors administrators or assigns either themselves or himself or some competent person or persons to be by them or him employed for that purpose to set a value on my said station on the Nogoia and the sheep cattle horses stock implements and things which may be thereupon and thereunto belonging at the expiration of the said Ten years and I declare that the sum so set thereupon shall be considered as money and shall be taken in connection with the money which may be produced by the sale or sales of any real estate and the calling home collecting and getting in of such real or government security or securities as aforesaid and such moneys as may be in the hands of the Trustees or Trustee for the time being of this my Will at the expiration of the said term of ten years and so that the same may be estimated as one sum AND I further direct my said Trustees or trustee for the time being his executors administrators or assigns to divide the said sum into equal parts or shares that is to say a part or share for each of my children and the issue of such of them as may be then dead such issue taking the deceased parents part or share per stirpes and not per capita AND my mind and Will is that a moiety of my said station on the Nogoia together with a moiety of the sheep cattle stock horses implements and things thereon and thereunto belonging shall be the absolute property of my two sons the said Thomas Wentworth Wills and Cedric Spencer Wills their executors administrators and assigns as tenants in common and shall constitute two of such parts of shares aforesaid PROVIDED ALWAYS and I hereby declare that if a moiety of such station sheep cattle stock horses implements and things shall not amount in value to Two equal parts of the whole of such estimated sum as aforesaid then my said Trustees and the survivor of them his executors administrators and assigns shall pay to each of my said sons the said Thomas Wentworth Wills and Cedric Spencer Wills their executors administrators or assigns such a sum of money as shall make their respective shares equal in value to the share of each of my other children AND I direct my said Trustees and the survivor of them his executors administrators and assigns to sell and dispose of the remaining moiety of my said station sheep cattle horses implements and things in such a

way and manner as to them or him may seem fit AND after payment of the expenses of such sale or sales to stand and be possessed of the balance of the purchase money as and for part of the aforesaid estimated one sum and to pay and apply the same accordingly PROVIDED always and my mind and Will is that if either of my daughters shall have received the sum of One thousand five hundred pounds on her marriage as aforesaid then such daughters part or share shall be One thousand five hundred pounds less than the part or share of any other child PROVIDED also and I hereby declare that the share of any son of mine entitled under this my Will shall be invested for his own benefit until he shall attain the age of twenty one years and upon his attaining that age then the same shall be paid over to him and that the share of any daughter of mine shall be invested for her own benefit until she shall attain the age of twenty one years or be married whichever shall first happen and upon her attaining that age or being married the same shall be paid over to her AND I declare that my Trustee and the survivor of them his heirs executors administrators and assigns shall and may exercise the same powers and shall have the same authority about touching and concerning the sale or sales of all or any part of my said real estate which may be reserved as hereinafter mentioned as I have hereinbefore given to them or him in about touching and concerning the sale or sales of my real estate aforesaid AND I declare that the annual income hereinbefore given and bequeathed or directed to be paid to my said wife shall not be subject to the debts control or engagements of any future husband with whom as may intermarry and that the part or share to which either of my daughters shall have recourse and to which either of them shall be entitled (and whether the same shall be expectant or vested) shall not be subject to the debts control or engagements of any husband with whom such daughter may intermarry AND in the event of my said son Thomas Wentworth Wills misconducting himself and his conduct and management of my said station on the Nogoia being of such nature as to make it necessary for my said Trustees or the survivor of them his executors administrators or assigns to remove my said son from the management of such station I hereby empower my said Trustees and Trustee for the time being of this my Will to remove and displace my said son Thomas Wentworth Wills from the superintendence and management of the said station and in his place and stead from time to time to appoint any other person or persons to superintend and manage the same AND in the event of my said son being removed from the superintendence and management of the said station as aforesaid I hereby declare that he my said son Thomas Wentworth Wills shall not

participate in the final distribution of my estates as aforesaid but in lieu of his part or share shall receive for the term of his natural life the yearly sum of One hundred pounds and no more AND in such case I direct my said Trustees or the survivor of them his heirs executors administrators and assigns to reserve and retain such and so much of my real estate or personal estate as would from year to year during the life of my said son produce the said sum of One hundred pounds clear of all outgoings and to pay the said sum to my said son by equal quarterly payments of Twenty five pounds each and also in the event of the marriage again of my said wife to reserve and retain so much and such part of my real and personal estate as shall be sufficient to produce clear of all outgoings the annual sum of Five hundred pounds to be paid to my said wife during her natural life and the annual sum of One hundred pounds to be paid to my sister Jane Harrison for the term of her natural life AND the annual sum of thirty pounds to be paid to my daughter Emily Spencer Wills for the period of Ten years from the first day of January aforesaid provided she so long remains unmarried AND I direct my said Trustees and the survivor of them his heirs executors administrators and assigns as the said annuities shall respectively cease to be paid to sell and dispose of or to call home the real or personal estates out of or by which such annuity shall have been produced and to divide the proceeds of every such sale or sum so called home in the same way and manner as is hereinbefore directed of and concerning the final distribution of my estates and I further direct my said Trustees or trustees for the time being of this my Will during the Ten years aforesaid to pay satisfy and discharge irrespective of the monies hereinbefore by me directed to be paid to my said wife and children respectively all and every bill charge or fee for any medicine or medical advice which may be had by either of them or any or either of them I give all estates vested in me as Trustee or Mortgagee unto the said Thomas Wills Antill and John R. Morris their heirs and assigns subject to the equities affecting the same respectively AND I declare that the receipt or receipts of the Trustees or trustee for the time being of this my Will for any sum or sums of money payable to them or him under or by virtue of this my Will shall be an effectual release and discharge for the same or for so much thereof as in such receipt or receipts shall be expressed to be received and that the person or persons paying such sum or sums of money shall not be bound to see to the application nor be answerable for the loss or misapplication of the same AND also that if the said trustees hereby appointed as hereinbefore mentioned or either of them shall happen to die or be desirous of being discharged from or refuse or

decline or become incapable to act in the trusts hereby in them respectively reposed as aforesaid or shall leave this Colony before the trusts hereby created shall be fully executed then and in such case and when and so often as the same shall happen it shall and may be lawful to and for the surviving or continuing trustee by deed from time to time to appoint any other person or persons to be a Trustee or Trustees so dying or desirous of being discharged or refusing or becoming incapable to act in the trusts hereby created or leaving this Colony as aforesaid AND when and so often as any trustees or trustee shall be appointed as aforesaid all the trust estate money and premises or such of them as shall then remain subject to the trust aforesaid shall be thereupon with all convenient speed conveyed assigned and transferred in such sort and manner and so that the same shall and may be legally and effectually vested in the person or persons to be appointed as aforesaid either solely or jointly with the surviving or continuing trustee or trustees as occasion may require to the uses upon and for the trusts intents and purposes hereinbefore expressed and declared of and concerning the same trust estates and moneys or such of them as shall be then subsisting undetermined and capable of taking effect AND the person or persons so to be appointed as aforesaid shall have all the powers and authorities of the trustee or trustees in whose room he she or they shall be substituted AND I appoint the said Thomas Wills Antill and John R. Morris executors and my said wife executrix of this my Will IN WITNESS thereof I have to this my last Will and testament contained in this and the eight preceding sheets set my hand this fourteenth day of January in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and sixty one -

H.S.H. Wills

Signed by the above named Testator in the simultaneous presence of us who in his presence at his request and in the presence of each other have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses -

Henry Speed - Chas.I.Porter Clerk to C.S. Friend, Solr. Geelong

BIBLIOGRAPHY

In my research for this book I have read, in some cases contributed to and in some case quoted from, the following published works all of which have direct relevance to this book:

The Try Excelsior News...Vol.III No.10...The Try Boys Society...June 1896

The Story of an Athlete...H. C. A. Harrison...Alexander McCubbin...1923

The Emancipist...,J. M. Antill and R. A. de Warren...Angus and Robertson...1936

Like the Ark...Lorna Banfield...F. W. Cheshire...1955

The History of Geelong and Corio Bay Walter Brownhill 1955

Bound for Botany Bay...Frank Clune...Angus and Robertson...1964

Cricket Walkabout...D. J. Mulvaney...Melbourne University Press...1967

Green pastures and gold...Lorna Banfield...Mullaya...1974

Ancestor Treasure Hunt...Richard V. Pockley...Wentworth Books...1976 and 1978

Voyage to Sydney in the ship Hillsborough 1798-1700 and a description of the Colony...William Noah...Library of Australian History...1978

A Nest of Hornets...Gordon Reid...Oxford University Press...1982

Letters from Victorian Pioneers...T. F. Bride...Currey O'Neill...1983

Bat and Pad - Writings on Australian Cricket 1804 -1984...Mullins and Derriman...Oxford University Press...1984

Running with the ball...A. Mancini and G. M. Hibbins...Lynedoch Publications...1987

The History of the Richmond Cricket Club...Frank Tyson...Hudson...1987

By His Own Hand....David Frith...ABC Enterprises...1990

Roots of the Mighty Oak Robert G. Antill Weston & Co 1991

A History of Australian Cricket...Chris Harte...Andre Deutsch...1993

The Formative Years of Australian Cricket 1803-93...Jack Pollard...Angus and Robertson...ND

The Road To Kardinia....Russell Stephens...Playright Publishing...1996



Horatio Spencer Wills



Edward Wills Grave



The Home of Edward and Sarah Wills



Sarah Wills (Redfern/Alexander)



Sarah and James Alexander
Roke Manor Hampshire
Circa 1873



Thomas Wills



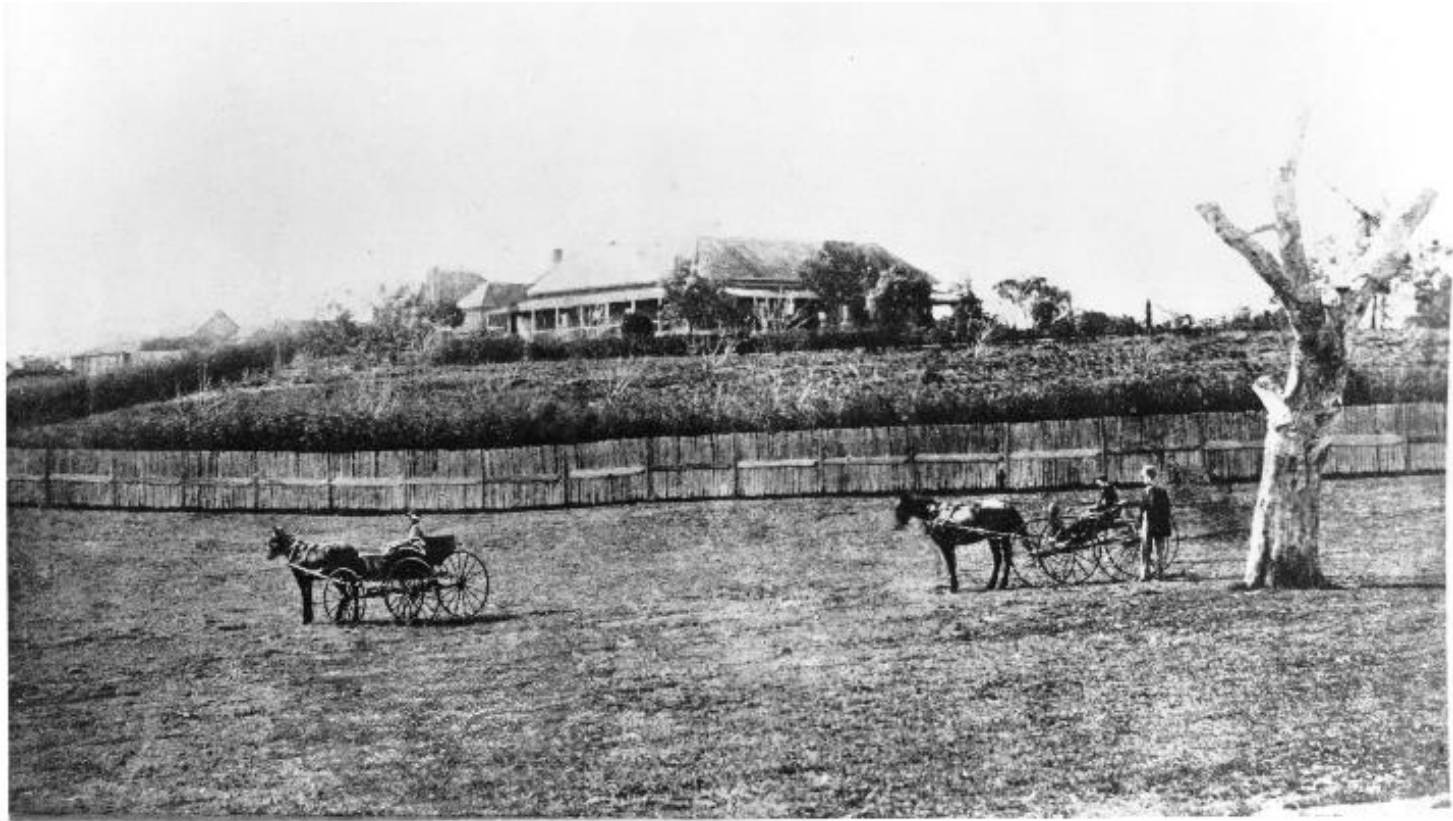
Eliza Wills (Antill)



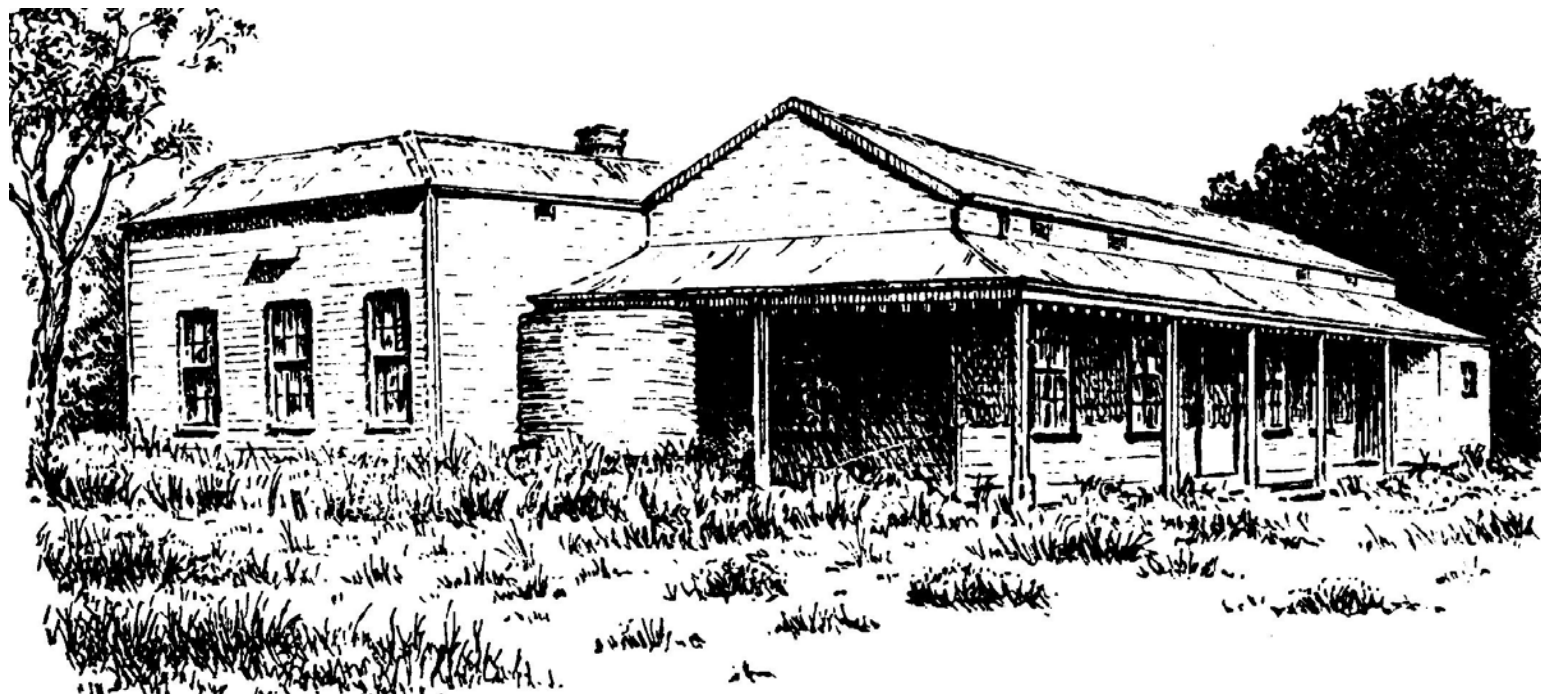
Jane Howe (Harrison)



Horatio Spencer Wills
1857



Lexington Circa 1849



Bellvue
Circa 1940



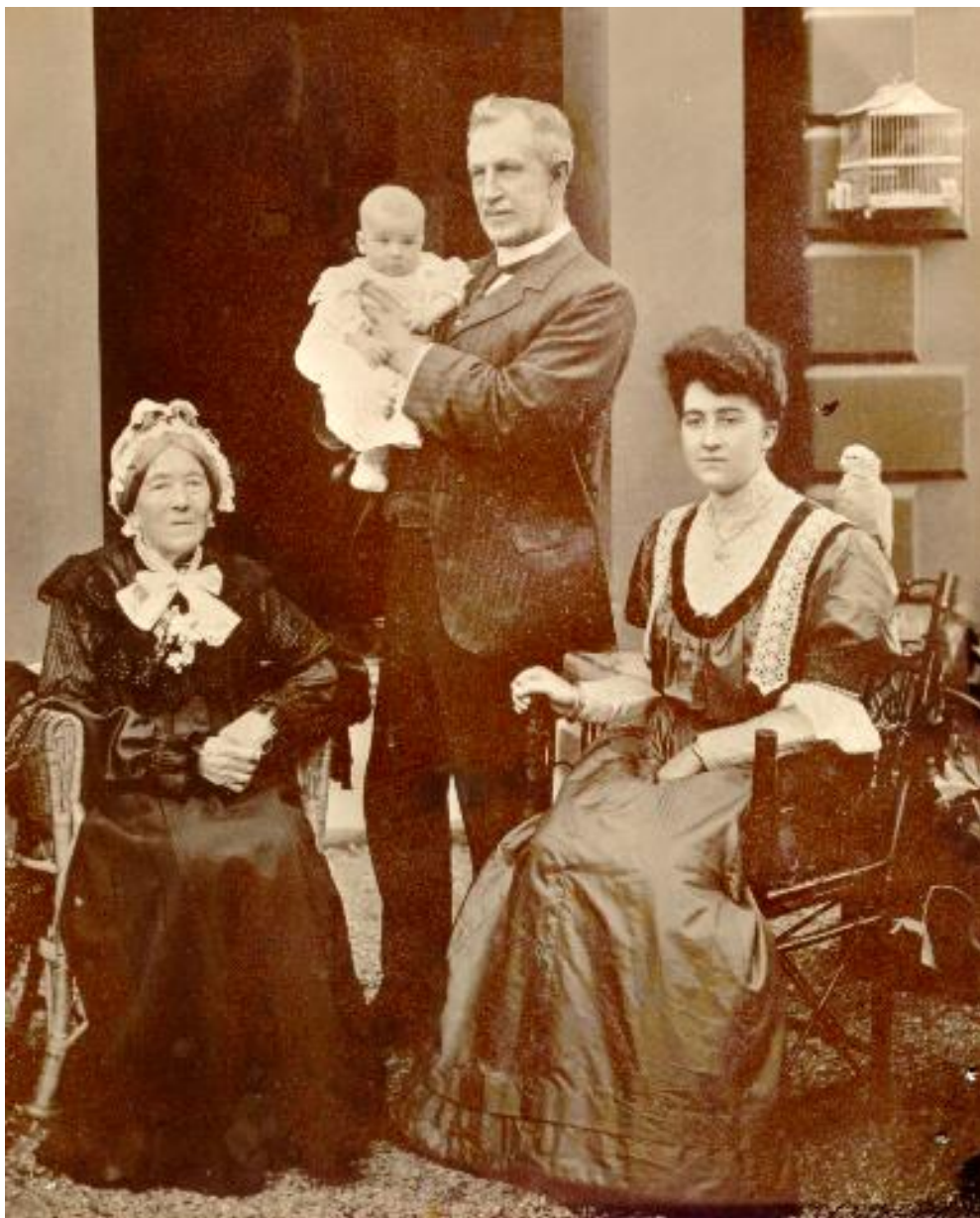
H S Wills Grave at Cullinlaringo



Horatio Wills' memorial
St Marks Church Leopold



Elizabeth Wills



Four generations - 1907
Elizabeth Wills, Horace Wills,
Eva Irene Wills (Cooke), Sidney Bertram Wills Cooke



Cullinlarringo Station Circa 1885



Australia's first wool press
Horace Wills Circa 1923



Thomas Wentworth Wills
Circa 1864



Emily Spencer Wills (Harrison)



Cedric Spencer Wills



Elizabeth (Berry) Wills
Nee McDonald
Wife of Cedric Spencer Wills



Horace Spencer and Cedric Spencer Wills
1859



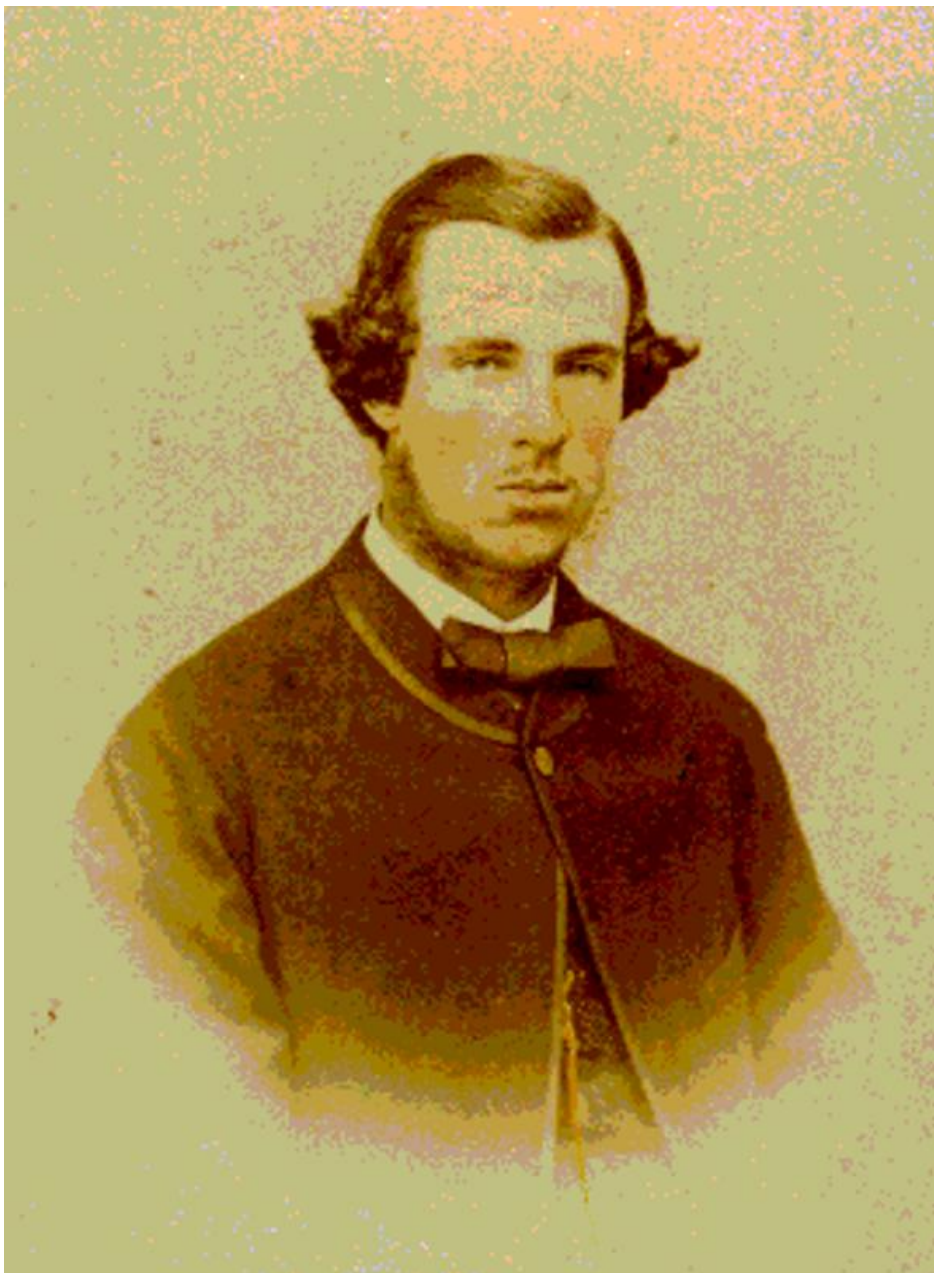
Horace Spencer Wills
Circa 1872



Sarah Eliza Wills (Beswicke)
Wife of Horace Spencer Wills



Horace Spencer Wills Family 1910



Egbert Spencer Wills



Mary Wills
Nee Beswicke
Wife of Egbert Wills



Elizabeth Spencer Wills



Eugenie (Duckie) Wills



Eugenie Spencer (Duckie) and Minna Wills
Circa 1862/3



Minna Spencer Wills