

THE KYABRAM TOWN HALL PRESENTS

From the

RATHBONE COLLECTION



INTRODUCTION

The Rathbone Collection is a group of seventy-one paintings of early Echuca and district, painted by George Martinmay Rollo Rathbone (1900-1989).

George Rathbone gained his love for Echuca and district from his ancestors:

"In 1875 my maternal grandparents came from Talbot beyond Clunes in a covered van drawn by one horse. They had three little girls, all born in Clunes, travelling with them. They brought their own goat to supply milk. One of these little girls, Mary Ann, became my mother. My mother went to school in Echuca, and later worked for Mr Chenall.

Two women especially had a profound influence on me, as regards my knowledge of Echuca: my maternal grandmother, Mrs Peter Hart (née Agnes Mason 1851-1941) and my mother, Mrs George Rathbone (née Mary Ann Hart, 1872-1962). Both lived 90 years. My grandfather Peter Hart worked in the timber trade – sometimes in the bush and sometimes at Chadwick's timber mill."

George's maternal grandfather, Peter Hart (Mary Ann's father), unfortunately died in the year 1900 when a big log rolled on him and killed him.

In 1874, the artist's paternal ancestors, William and Elizabeth Rathbone, travelled in a covered wagon drawn by two horses, also from Talbot beyond Clunes, to select 320 acres of land, before survey, on the Wyuna and St. Germain's pastoral runs:

"On today's named road map, this land is east of the junction of Rathbone Road and Warren Road in the Rodney Shire. Rathbone Road runs off the Shepparton-Echuca Road. I was reared on that farm and knew the district very well – having ridden and driven horses far and wide in that area . . . My father, George (1872-1967) lived in the area for ninety-five years."

George related how his paternal grandfather, William Rathbone. In the first few years of farming, he would exchange his few bags of wheat for flour at the Echuca Flour Mill – a journey of one day with another to return. He slept in a hammock attached to the wagon over-night. From this supply of flour, George's grandmother made her own bread, initially cooked in a camp oven on an open fire and in later years in the colonial oven.

Regarding the motivation for his work, the artist said:

"I was reared on the land selected by my grandfather. So since my boyhood days I have been fascinated with the stories of Echuca and the activities on the Murray River and its tributaries. As a schoolteacher, I had received some instruction in pastel art but much later in life I changed to oil painting and in my retirement it became a gripping hobby resulting in these paintings. When I sought further instruction in oil painting tutors said, "We would not change you, we would ruin you, just go on painting."

About 1975, when the late Jock Frater, President of the Victorian Art Society, saw some of George Rathbone's Echuca paintings, he said: "Leave a few of your paintings in the passage at the Society's building. Professor Burke is coming over this afternoon and I will show them to him." On George's return Professor Burt, remarked: "I find them interesting. It is a worthwhile project, and as a collection, one painting helps the other."

Additional favourable comments from viewers at George's exhibitions include:

"I have been around Australia and I haven't seen an exhibition like this about a district."

"This Collection is unique – there is nothing like it in the world."

ARTIST'S CV

EXHIBITIONS:

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 1972 Shackells Old Bond Store, Echuca
- 1972 Geelong Art Gallery
- 1972 AMP Building, Bourke St, Melbourne
- 1970s (exact date unknown) Billilla Mansion, Brighton
 Punt Road South Yarra
- 1979 (September 16-October 14) Gallery Art Naïve
- 1985-92 Rathbone Collection annual display, Paramount Arts Centre, Echuca
- 2011 (9-26th April) *Rathbone: The Raw Edge*, Echuca-Moama Uniting Church
- 2020 (April 6-June 30) *From the Rathbone Collection – living heritage*
Kyabram Town Hall

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 1979 (May) *Pioneer Art Award*, Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery
- 1979 (Aug 12- Sept 9) *30 Australian Naïves*, Gallery Art Naïve, Melbourne
- Raw and Compelling*, Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery (Rathbone won an award at this show – only three were given out of the hundreds of paintings that year.)
- 2004 Echuca Moama Artists Annual Exhibition
- 2011 Echuca Historical Society

REPRODUCED/PUBLISHED WORK

- No. 14: on cover Modern Housewife's Magazine (Qld) and Permanent Building Magazine
- No. 60: on front page Modern Housewife's Magazine and Curtain Call Magazine (Vic)
(all dates unknown)

REPRESENTATION IN COLLECTIONS

- Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery
- Shepparton Art Gallery
- Shire of Campaspe
- Private Collections in Queensland, NSW and Victoria

WORKS SOLD THROUGH AUCTION

- 2008 (September 25) Charles Leski Auctions, Set of three paintings and a scrapbook
- 2011 (March) Leonard Joel Auctions, "ROUNDING UP"
- 2011 (March 12) eBay online auction, "DIALOGUE BY THE GUM TREES"

AUTHORED WORKS

- Biography of Gloria Scobie, the first white woman to live in the West Goulburn Valley. (The artist was invited to unveil a memorial to her at Honeysuckle Creek Homestead.)
- The Hundred Years History of St. Germain's School, 1875-1975
- The Hundred Years History of Undera School, 1876-1976
- The story of Thomas Spencer Cope, 1821-1891. (Written for the Australian Dictionary of Biography, A.N.U. Canberra.)
- 1986 Wrote the Rathbone family history *From Wheels to Wings*

A LETTER ON THE HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE GEORGE RATHBONE COLLECTION
WITH RESEARCHED CORRECTIONS

RICH RIVER REVIEW

Geoff Waters: Editor

106 Sturt Street ECHUCA VIC 3625

Phone 821625

10th August 1984

Mr Bill Carr

Community Arts Officer

Paramount Arts Activity Centre

Echuca, VIC. 3625

Dear Bill,

I am returning the notes on the Rathbone Collection of oil paintings, and feel privileged to have been given the opportunity to read them and to be allowed to correct the few historical errors that I have found.*

They are few and far between, and in many cases Mr Rathbone could not have known of the more recent discovery of our historic past.

As you know, my research has been mainly concerned with the townscape of Echuca, and in this, with a few minor exceptions, Mr Rathbone has done a magnificent job.

There is still some confusion (Painting No. 37) as to the location of the FIRST POLICE STATION contracted for [and] by Henry Hopwood while he was building his NEW ROAD INN in Echuca in September 1853. This was on the road to Sandhurst, at the Campaspe Ford made by Hawdon and Bonney in January 1838. The site is still well identified as it was on a reserve that also provided space for a Pound, and Echuca's first unofficial Cemetery. From this point the eight mounted troopers controlled the stock routes through to the goldfields and the travellers following the Hawdon and Bonney route to Adelaide. However after the second land sale in August 1855 they moved to a new position in Echuca itself, the old 'Gloucester House' site between Heygarth Street and Percy Street so that they could watch over the river crossing that Maiden and Hopwood had developed. The move to the present Police Paddock site was still some time away although a Reserve had been provided for that purpose in the first Land Sale in 1855. Mr Rathbone could not have known of this recently located site.

Painting No. 1. "How Echuca got its name." Frankly the Aborigines had no choice. Hopwood may have hoped that it would be "Hopwood's Ferry" as it was when the Surveyor, Phillip Chauncy arrived in November 1854 to make the plans for the new town on the Murray. But when they were printed for the first land sale in April 1855 - the name "Echuca" had already been chosen - obviously by someone in the Lands Department who did not favour the budding township being named after an ex-convict.

Painting No. 2. The Explorer's Tree. We know where it was as it was seen by Sturt a bare six months afterwards - but it bore no significance for the first timber cutter who came along and it was lost forever.

Painting No. 4. The spelling of 'Moirá', O'Shannasy and Falkiner has been corrected.

Painting No. 9. The sandhills - we are still puzzling out the fantastic geological pattern of the Murray-Goulburn system today. We still may be wrong.

Painting No. 12. "The Bay of Biscay". The Bay of Biscay - well named in the old days, and a repetition of history after the great rains of March 1950.

Painting No. 18. We have to correct the "furphy" of the great number of the Echuca hotels in the riverboat days. With a population of under 5000 in 1881 (the peak year) the CORRECT number of 51 or 52 within the BOROUGH limits is in itself fantastic. The other widely quoted figures refer to the wide district covered by the LICENCING DISTRICT. The figures are easily available but have been strangely neglected by all other historians and local writers.

Painting No. 20. The "Hero" did not fall to pieces in the 1940's but was burnt at Boundary Bend in 1957.

Painting No. 22. The Moama Wharf: The one in the Horseshoe Lagoon survived until recent times until demolished by the Shire Council.

The "Etona" was a "bottom end" boat and only came here in 1961 for restoration by its new owners.

Painting No. 22. The new "Pride of the Murray" is scarcely a rumour today.

Painting No. 22. The "Echuca Hotel". The usual mistake Only the "BRIDGE" was built to a final plan. The others, the "Echuca" included, evolved through a series of rebuilding as the need arose. This Hotel carries the inscription "Founded 1858" but neglects to inform the passer-by that the first sections of the present brick building only date from the boom years of 1873-1874.

Painting No. 39. The Custom House. Although there had been an earlier building, the present one only dates from October 1884 when it was built for a contract price of \$824.

Painting No. 41. Bond Store: Apparently used as the first Masonic Lodge - there is a "Star of David Window" facing the Esplanade.

Painting No. 47. The Oddfellow Hotel. Appears in the 1865 Directory. The painting omits one other hotel along the wharf, the "Belvidere" was on the site of the present Car Yard, then there was an open space used by Hopwood's Auction Rooms and then the Murray Hotel as depicted.

After this, I have no comment to make on the rest of the collection except to say how pleased I am to have been asked to make these few comments and corrections.

I believe that this collection will place Echuca in a most favourable position in the art world, as to have declined it would have shown our community to have been completely ignorant of its present and future importance.

I am so sure of your judgement, and that of Margaret Cilento and other critics that I am staking my own credibility on a special edition of the magazine (which I edit and produce) in October this year, to be available at this exhibition.

We were not ready for it in 1972 - the locality and promotion were both lacking, but with our new historical awareness and the facilities of the Paramount I am sure that it will be a fantastic success.

Regards,
Geoff Waters.



PAINTING NO. 1

HOW ECHUCA GOT ITS NAME

This painting is to remind us of how Echuca got its name. In the "dream-time" the word, ET - CHU - CA was most aptly used by the aborigines, for it means in their language "the meeting of the waters." How right they were - because near this city are the junctions of the Campaspe, and the Goulburn rivers with the Murray river.

In flood times there is a tremendous meeting of the waters. This painting is to remind us of the aboriginal name of the place.

PAINTING NO. 2

JOSEPH HAWDON AND PARTY - THE FIRST WHITE MEN TO PASS THROUGH THE AREA

This is the artist's impression of Joseph Hawdon cutting his name on a tree near the junction of the Murray and Goulburn rivers in 1838. He, with Charles Bonney and party were the first white men to come to this area, when they were taking cattle from the Old Crossing Place on the Goulburn where Seymour is today, to be sold in Adelaide. They have left their account of the journey in their diary.





PAINTING NO. 3

This painting depicts the old "Cook-House" and Shearing Shed on the Moira Pastoral run in N.S.W. It was situated on the left side of the road as you journey from Echuca to Mathoura. In the horse and buggy days the shearers lived at the station. Today they return to Echuca by car, so the cook-house was no longer required.



PICTURE NO. 4

PORTION OF MOIRA PASTORAL "RUN" HOMESTEAD.

This depicts a portion of Moira Pastoral "run" homestead. It is situated on the right hand side of the road as you go from Echuca to Mathoura.

Moira Pastoral run was taken up by H.S. Lewis in 1842. In 1860 he sold it to M. O'Shannesy, then in about 1899, it came into the hands of F. S. Faulkner & Sons Ltd.

It was during the time of O'Shannesy and Faulkner that many brick buildings were constructed as a homestead. Many parts had fallen apart, but the part shown in the painting in the 1960's had been restored as the homestead.



PAINTING NO. 5

MUSTERING SHEEP ON MOIRA PASTORAL RUN

This painting depicts the mustering of sheep on the undulating pastures on part of this "run". The man standing near the old gate is counting the sheep as they pass through the gate.

The old post and rail fence shown in this scene no longer exists -nor are they constructed today. They were made when timber was plentiful on the site and the labour was easily obtained.



PAINTING NO. 6

THE COACH RACING THE DUST STORMS ON THE RIVERINA PLAINS - N.S.W.

In drought years and before irrigation came to the area, the soil dried to a fine powder, allowing strong winds to whip up a tremendous dust storm. You would see a great cloud of dust rolling across the plain, advancing like a great wall that shuts out all the scenery it passes over.

The coachman hurried his horses as no coachman wanted to be overtaken by it. In homes even with all doors and windows shut, the dust would penetrate. At meal time, all food on the table would be covered with paper, which each person raised when he wanted the bread or butter. Hens sitting on the nests would smother and die.



PAINTING NO. 7

THE BOUNDARY RIDERS HUT ON WYUNA PASTORAL RUN

This pastoral run consisting of about seventy square miles, with a frontage of six miles on the left banks of the Goulburn River, was first leased from the Government in 1843, by Michael Forbes Scobie and his wife Flora.

The slab homestead built near the Goulburn river, and subject to flooding was vacated for a new site about 4 miles south of the river.

On this large run, several boundary riders huts were built in isolated places. On today's road map this hut was near the North West corner of Trevaskis and Matheson roads in the Deakin Shire.

These lonely huts were occupied by one man who had provisions from the homestead about once a month. At that time in Australian history there were no inland towns, and the bullock wagons from each homestead visited Melbourne which started in 1836, once or twice a year.

Later in the 1870's when the selectors came to peg-out, before survey, an area of 320 acres of the squatters lease hold this boundary riders hut was used as a church. It is mentioned in the history of the Methodist Church of Kyabram.

Later this slab structure was moved to Mr Lancaster's farm, and served as a kitchen. The bark roof was replaced with iron and the inside walls were lined with hessian covered with paper.

The old slab but fell apart about 1960, having served as a shelter for pioneer Australians for over one hundred and twenty years.



PAINTING NO. 8

KOTUPNA PASTORAL RUN HOMESTEAD

In 1843 William Locke leased this "run" of 118,000 acres (about 80 square miles) from the government. It was on the right bank of the Goulburn river, about 20 miles from its junction with the Murray river.

He called it KOTOOPNA which was the aboriginal name for the wiry grass which the aboriginals used for fishing nets and baskets. He sited his homestead which was constructed of slabs and a shingle roof on the top of a sandhill.

In 1873, after thirty years as a Squatters "run" the area was taken over by Selectors who each obtained 320 acres. They each pegged out their area before the roads were surveyed.

However this old slab homestead on top of the sandhill lasted until 1960, having sheltered the pioneer families for 120 years.

Mr and Mrs Clive Rathbone and family, descendants of the artists grandfather, were the last to live in it.

They said "On windy nights, the old building cracked and creaked with age - they thought it would fall on them."

**PAINTING NO. 9**

**A VIEW ACROSS THE SANDHILLS
TO THE OLD KOTUPNA PASTORAL
"RUN" HOMESTEAD**

What was the geological explanation of the sandhills in this area? Many thousands of years ago, just after "The Ice Age," Australia and especially this area known as Northern Victoria, was very arid. Strong winds blew

the sand into hills and hollows. Later when the climate changed and rivers commenced, they (the rivers) cut through the sandhills and in flood time formed the gullies into swamps and lagoons. When William Locke in 1843 commenced this Kotupna pastoral run, he built his slab homestead on the top of the sandhill, as shown in this painting.

**PAINTING NO. 10**

ST. GERMAINS PASTORAL "RUN" HOMESTEAD

This homestead was built in 1845, on the left bank of the Goulburn river about twenty-seven miles from where the Goulburn enters the Murray river.

It was built with slab walls and a shingle roof by Henry Walker the first licensee. The back door was at the edge of the river. It was named after the Saint Germain's who was the patron saint of many churches in Southern England.

Subsequent licensees were Splatt Brothers; the Burchett Brothers 1850-1860; Irvine Winter Brothers, and finally James McBain who forfeited the licence in 1884. The homestead area was purchased by William Bray who in 1890 built a new brick homestead nearby. The old slab building was moved from the river bank and used as a shed. Part of the structure was still in evidence in 1984.



PAINTING NO. 11
THE HEADSTONE OF AN
ISOLATED PIONEERS GRAVE

This painting shows the isolated headstone of Charles Gowland Burchett who is buried in a lonely grave near the Goulburn river in July 1856. His brothers occupied the St. Germain's Pastoral "run". Burials took place "on

the spot" because there was no nearby registered cemeteries and transport was too slow for a long journey. Some old pioneers told the artist that a stockman and a child are buried near this homestead in unmarked graves.



PAINTING NO. 12
THE BULLOCK
WAGON BOGGED IN
THE BAY OF BISCAY

In the early days this was a difficult boggy patch on the Echuca - Shepparton road at the Mosquito Creek.

It was called the Bay of Biscay because the pioneers remembered crossing the violent rough seas in the Bay of Biscay near England in their sailing ships - so when they got bogged in this wet clay patch on the road they referred to it as the Bay of Biscay.

About 1960, the Country Road Board reformed the road, but they painted the old name BAY OF BISCAY on the sign. People today in motor cars and good roads don't



PAINTING NO. 13

EARLY MORNING START WITH THE BULLOCK TEAM

In the squatting era 1840-1875, the wool laden wagon drawn by a team of bullocks was the only way in most places, of transporting wool to the shipping ports on the coast. In this era before inland towns and roads existed, these bullock wagons from this area travelled to Melbourne.

The bullock team would be fourteen days going the 120 miles and fourteen days returning.

On the return journey they would bring twelve months food supply ie: flour etc.

This long journey was unnecessary around Echuca when in 1864 the railway from Melbourne to Echuca was built and the paddle steamers brought wool to the quarter of a mile wharf built there.



PAINTING NO. 14

JAMES MAIDEN'S JUNCTION INN AND PUNT

James Maiden who was a pioneer stockman, taking cattle from New South Wales to Adelaide, established in 1843 a punt and very good "Inn" on the Murray river crossing place a few miles above its junction with the Campaspe.

This "Inn" was a wooden slab structure. It was known as Maidens Inn, until in 1851 its name was changed to Moama when the first town blocks were sold there.

In 1858 when the Bendigo goldfields were flourishing and there was a greater movement of stock from N.S.W. to feed the hungry multitude of miners James Maiden built the Inn as shown in this painting. Later when he sold his interest for C10,000, the new owner found he had to compete with Harry Hopwoods Pontoon Bridge further down stream, and this sadly decreased the use of this crossing place.

This painting appeared in colour on the front page in lifts MODERN HOUSEWIVES MAGAZINE in Queensland and on PERMANENT BUILDING MAGAZINE in Victoria.



PAINTING NO. 15

THE "LONG PADDOCK" IN 1914 DROUGHT

The area both north and south of the Murray river, suffered periodically from severe droughts.

Sheep and cattle died by the hundreds - later their white

bones could be seen, scattered across the fields. In the year 1914 which was a severe drought, many farmers travelled their flocks of sheep on the roads in search of food. The covered van gave the drovers shelter and a bed at night.



PAINTING NO. 16

HARRY HOPWOODS PONTOON BRIDGE AND BRIDGE HOTEL

Because of the discovery of gold, there was a rapid change in the movement of stock, hence new crossing places on the rivers.

To cater for the movement of cattle and sheep from N.S.W. to feed the thousands of miners at the goldfields (mainly Bendigo), Harry Hopwood built his Pontoon Bridge and Bridge Hotel on the Murray at Echuca in 1858. This was the first bridge across the Murray River and it gave good service for twenty years, until the big Iron Bridge was built in 1878.

His Bridge Hotel was built also in 1858 on the left bank, nearby his pontoon bridge.

The government of N.S.W. gave Harry Hopwood the sole right to charge for the crossing on the Murray, likewise the Victorian government gave him the sole right to the crossing on the Campaspe river - the bridge shown in the next painting.



PAINTING NO. 17

HOPWOODS FIRST BRIDGE ACROSS THE CAMPASPE RIVER AT ECHUCA, COMPLETE WITH TOLL HOUSE.

It was the last privately owned bridge where tolls were collected in Victoria.

In 1858, this single span bridge of 107 feet was built for Harry Hopwood by Mr Bate of Richmond (Melbourne) who also built Harry Hopwoods Pontoon Bridge. It was a narrow bridge where only one vehicle could pass at a time.

It was built across the Campaspe at the end of Warren Street and in line with the pontoon bridge on the Murray river.

In a Private Bill introduced into the Legislative Assembly in Victoria in 1857, Hopwood was given permission to erect the bridge and in return for providing the capital, he was to receive all tolls. In 1867, Harry Hopwood's son-in law James McCulloch had become the owner of both bridges.

As the scale of charges worried the citizens and as the local council was prevented by Harry Hopwoods Private Bridge Act from building another, the protests became more vigorous and so in 1873, the government reimbursed Hopwoods son-in law James McCulloch and the bridge became public property.

Harry Hopwood, who died in 1869, did not see the end of his private bridges.

PADDLE STEAMER ACTIVITIES

The next group depicts the paddle steamers' activities. "Why were the paddle steamers and the wharf built?" you ask. In 1853 South Australia offered a prize for the first paddle steamer to travel along the Murray River. They wished to enrich South Australia with trade from the gold fields in Victoria. In 1864, the Victorian government countered this by building a railway from Melbourne to Echuca - the Wharf making it the largest inland port in Australia.



PAINTING NO. 18

The Echuca Wharf (nearly 1/4 mile long in its heyday) with the Trafalgar and Alfred and loaded Barge "Mary Ann."

The railway arrived in Echuca in 1864, but the wharf services which were also under control of the Victorian railways did not come into service until 1866. Improvements were made in 1877 and by 1885 the Echuca wharf was a majestic structure, 330 yards long with the top decking over 30 feet above summer level of the water.

The Echuca Wharf was a very busy port, the management of which was no sinecure, as a succession of station-masters found out. It handled 97,000 bales of wool in a year as well as handling 19,000 tons of general goods. It was the home port of 35 large steamers and 70 barges, also a regular port of call for 30 more ships.

The crews of the paddle steamers who came mainly from the gold fields consisted of Swedes, Dutchmen, Norwegians, Irishmen, Scotchmen and a few Canadians and Americans.

There were 84 hotels in Echuca, 30 of which were crammed together opposite the wharf. You will read about the Trafalgar in a description of the next painting, so here I will describe the ALFRED which was built in Echuca in 1865. The ALFRED was one of James McCulloch's fleet which brought him great monetary rewards. Later it came under the control of Tom Freeman and during her life of thirty-five years gave good service on the Murray and all its tributaries.



PICTURE NO. 19

PADDLE STEAMER

TRAFALGAR

This paddle steamer was, in its day one of the most magnificent passenger carrying boats on the Murray river.

It was built of red gum timber at Echuca in 1877. It ran passenger trips - day and night - between Echuca and Swan Hill.

During her time she figured in a spectacular rescue when she picked up the manager of GOL GOL Pastoral "run," a Mr John Patterson who had met with an accident.

She travelled up the Murrumbidgee River to the GOL GOL landing pier and back to Swan Hill, a distance of 120 miles, in the time normally taken to travel 60 miles. At Swan Hill a special train was waiting to take Mr Patterson to Melbourne, where with special medical attention his life was saved.



PAINTING NO. 20

THE ECHUCA WHARF SHOWING PADDLE STEAMERS ADELAIDE AND HERO.

Echuca was the first town on the Murray River to have a railway connection with Melbourne. The railway arrived at Echuca in 1864.

This made Echuca the most important port of call for many steamers and barges that travelled the great river net-work of the Murray river and its tributaries.

The paddle steamer ADELAIDE built in Echuca in 1866, was one of the earliest . During her earliest life, she towed barges loaded with wool and other produce from the pastoral "runs" along this net-work of rivers ie -the Murray and its tributaries, as well as delivering stores and food to them.

During the last thirty years of her working life with one skipper Swan Anderson, she towed barges to the logging stations near the Barmah Forest. For many years she lay on the river bank near Harry Hopwoods Bridge Hotel but in 1980 she was restored and placed back in the river.

The HERO was built at Echuca in 1874 and was used for delivering goods to pastoral runs and towing wool laden barges, as well as gathering "red-gum" sleepers from depots along the Murray river. These red-gum sleepers were needed for the vast growing railway lines throughout Victoria.

Abe Dusting was her skipper for many years . She fell to pieces in the 1940's.



PAINTING NO. 21

PADDLE STEAMERS EMILY JANE AND TRAFALGAR AT PITH ECHUCA WHARF, WITH OLD HOTELS AND CUSTOMS HOUSE IN THE BACK GROUND.

A description of the Trafalgar has been given earlier, so I will deal with the EMILY JANE. In 1875, the EMILY JANE was the first paddle steamer to go up the Goulburn river as far as Murchison.

She was built by Mr Buzza at his timber mill on the Goulburn river near Wyuna about 10 miles from Echuca. She was 80 feet long, 21 feet 6 inches wide with 4 foot depth of hold. She was towed to Echuca where her engine was fitted.

The three resplendent kerosene lamps which illuminated the water, the snags and the banks, enabled her to travel at night.

In 1878, on her second trip, she attempted to reach Seymour, but failed because of the rocky bar at Tahbilk. From then on this steamer and her barges did not pass Shepparton.



PAINTING NO. 22

MOAMA WHARF AND PADDLE STEAMER ETONA

Moama had two wharves, one in a horseshoe lagoon which was an offshoot of the Murray River, and which was near the big iron bridge whilst the other wharf was further upstream. This wharf at the lagoon was badly decayed and shortly afterwards disappeared into the water.

THE ETONA PADDLE STEAMER

Missionaries from various religions often travelled to far flung parts of the Murray river and its tributaries.

But in 1899, the Etona specially built for a Church of England Missionary, was launched at Melung on the lake Alexandrina. She took her name from Eton College, England, whose pupils gave the money for her structure.

She travelled the Murray River, holding services at Homesteads and wood-cutters camps.

The Etona cabin was fitted with a chapel complete with an Altar - where both weddings and christenings took place.

At the end of her mission work in 1913, she was refitted by her new owners, for private leisurely trips.



PAINTING NO. 23

**SNAGGING BOAT MELBOURNE AND OTHERS (THE ALFRED AND HERO) AND
BARGES ROTTING NEAR ECHUCAIS IRON BRIDGE.**

In 1864, when Echuca became the first town on the Murray River to have a railway connection with Melbourne, and when the huge wharf was built there in 1865, the boat builders of Echuca, made nearly £22,000 worth of paddle steamers and barges.

These trading boats and barges were to travel the great Murray River and its tributaries.

One of the difficulties was the fallen trees and snags in the river. At first they pulled from the river, with winches and bullock teams, but in 1865 the Victorian Government built a new iron snagging steamer, MELBOURNE, as a further aide. the MELBOURNE had an engine of twelve horse-power and the method employed in raising the snags, was with a long wire rope or chain, to take a purchase on a nearby tree and so lift the snags out onto the river bank.

The snagging boat "MELBOURNE" operated at Mildura in the 1970's as a pleasure boat, was a different one to the old snagging boat.



PAINTING NO. 24

RENOVATIONS ON THE SLIPWAY TO THE OLD SEE WHEELER BOAT MELBOURNE.

This paddle steamer was on the slipway on the Murray River bank on the N.S.W. side, right opposite the old Echuca Wharf during the 1960's.

During the boom in the boat building era in the last century, many paddle steamers and barges were built near-by.

The paddle steamer mounted on a low trolley was pulled onto the slipway with winches, or by a steam-engine which was part of the equipment at that site.

It received a complete renewal of its timber frame - In the painting you will notice a black iron-pot in which a tar-mixture was melted, and which was used for caulking or sealing up the cracks in the timber frame.



PAINTING NO. 25

THE STERN-WHEELER WARADGERY AND THE SIDE-WHEELER LANCASHIRE LASS AT SHEPPARTON WHARF, WERE THE LAST STEAMERS TO LEAVE SHEPPARTON FOR ECHUCA IN 1890.

The Waradgerly built at Moama in 1865 was one of the first to be built there. Its steering wheel cabin was lowered, so that it would not get caught in overhanging branches of trees.

Early in its life when the Waradgerly was loaded with cargo and passengers with its barge "Willandra" in tow, was travelling in a flooded river between Echuca and Balranald there was a fatal accident. The barge "Willandra" piled high with wool, five times above the coamings, tipped over and one of the barge men was drowned. The spot which was six miles from Swan Hill became known to the boatmen as "Willandra bend."

The paddle steamer LANCASHIRE LASS was built in Echuca in 1878. She not only travelled the Goulburn river, but the Murray river and its tributaries, including the Edwards River. Tom Dowell was the first engineer on this boat.

When the Nagambie Weir was built on the Goulburn river, it so decreased the flow of water on the lower Goulburn, which ceased the paddle steamer activities.



PAINTING NO. 26

ARTISTS' IMPRESSION THE BURNING OF THE "RODNEY" ON THE DARLING RIVER DURING THE SHEARERS STRIKE IN THE 1890's.

The Rodney was constructed of red-gum timber from Mr Mackintosh's mills at Echuca in 1875. She was built by Mr Thomas Mc Donald, one of the oldest shipwrights in Echuca. Captain George Doward who was part owner, took command.

The Rodney, along with the GEM and TRAFALGAR, was one of the most spectacular steamers. Her launching was an exciting affair, whistles blew, flags fluttered, and champagne flowed.

During the 1890's this ship ended her eventful career as a cargo and passenger ship. During the early 1890's there was great disagreement between the shearers and squatters, which led to shearers' strikes.

In August 1894, the Union shearers camped at Echuca, tried to prevent a group of non-union shearers from Melbourne, embarking on a paddle steamer. However the Rodney, under Captain Dickson, with forty-five non-unionist shearers, together with a barge laden with merchandise for Wilcannia slipped silently away.

The shearers were to go to "Tolarno" pastoral run, but when they reached POON CARTE on the Darling River and had tied up for the night in swampy marshy water, a group of armed men boarded her and set fire to both barge and steamer. Thus ended the RODNEY as she drifted down stream, burning to the water line.

**PAINTING NO. 27**

**UNLOADING WOOL FROM
THE HERO AND BARGE MARY
ANN AT THE ECHUCA WHARF**

The HERO was built at Echuca in 1874. It not only carried great volumes of wool to Echuca, but towed barges heavily loaded with bales of wool. On return journeys along the Murray and its

tributaries it carried flour and other produce to satisfy the needs of the squatters and their servants.

In later years, it was used to gather up red-gum sleepers for the fast growing railways in Victoria and southern N.S.W. The barge MARY ANN was built at Echuca in 1877 and gave splendid service towed behind the HERO, laden with wool.

The Artists Mother (maiden name MARY ANN HART born 1872 - died 1962) said the young people often had a party and a dance on this barge as it moved down the Murray on a "day's outing."

**PAINTING NO. 28**

**THE ADELAIDE AND WOOL
BARGES AT ECHUCA WHARF**

In painting No. 20, I have described the paddle steamer Adelaide which not only carried wool, but towed barges laden with wool from many places along the Murray River and its tributaries.

The barge "Howlong" was built at Echuca in 1866 and the barge "Alice" was built at Moama in 1882.

This painting shows how busy the wharf at Echuca was when the wool bales were unloaded from steamers and barges, and then transferred to railway trucks which conveyed then to Melbourne.



PAINTING NO. 29

PADDLE STEAMERS GEM AND COROWA AT THE ECHUCA WHARF

This painting shows the GEM in her hey-day. When she was built at Moama in 1872, she was 90 feet long, but nearing the year 1900, she was cut in two, just forward of the paddle wheels and dragged apart by bullock teams.

An additional forty feet section was built in, making her 135 feet long with three decks, of 285 tons weight and drawing only 4 foot of water. As one of the most stylish steamers she now had accommodation for 52 passengers (some of whom were placed in 24 tourist cabins), a crew of twelve and two stewardesses.

In later life working as a passenger craft she made weekly trips from Mildura to Morgan.

Lastly she was towed by the P.S. Oscar W from Mildura to Swan Hill where she has become part of the famous Swan Hill folk museum.

THE STERN WHEELER COROWA

In 1868 at Moama the COROWA was built. She was rebuilt from the hull of the burnt-out LADY DARLING. The COROWA had a working man's look with her yard arms, pulleys and ropes. She travelled the Murray and its tributaries loading produce from and delivering goods etc to pastoral stations and other pioneer workers. Also for as long as the Echuca railway line remained the only one from Melbourne to the Murray, the COROWA was busy on the river between Albury and Echuca, for during the high water season, all trade between Melbourne and Albury passed through Echuca.

The COROWA was under the command of the "Boastful yankee" Captain Gus Peirce, who because of his long service was well known at Echuca and other river ports.



PAINTING NO. 30

THE SNAGGING BOAT MELBOURNE AND A BULLOCK TEAM PULLING LOGS FROM THE RIVER.

When the paddle steamers travelled the Murray River and its tributaries, they were greatly troubled with snags which were made from fallen trees. In their desire to help the steamers progress, and to make the rivers a highway for transport, the Victorian Government built the stern wheeler iron steamer MELBOURNE in 1865. It joined the two punts and bullock teams which had been used to pull the snags from the river.

The Melbourne had an engine of 1, 1/2 horse power, and the method employed in raising the snags, was to take a purchase on near by trees with a wire or chain rope, and lift the snag out of the river onto the river bank.

In 1867 A Royal Commission was appointed by the Government, to investigate the progress of cleaning the rivers.

It was disclosed that the snagging boat MELBOURNE with the barge FRASER was then working on the Goulburn river.



PAINTING NO. 31

STERN WHEELER PRIDE OF MURRAY.

The PRIDE of MURRAY was built at Echuca in 1865 and was propelled by a stern paddle wheel. When first built she had a single deck, but later in her life an upper deck with passengers' cabins were added. She gave regular service over the long distance between Echuca on the Murray river and WILCANNIA on the Darling river.

During the shearers' strike in 1894, she, like the Rodney and the Trafalgar, carried non-union shearers to the shearing sheds along the Murray and Darling rivers. Later the Pride of Murray conveyed the Chaffey Brothers to Mildura with their first pumps for their irrigation schemes.

Later with rotting planks, the old steamer sank into the river mud at Mildura, whilst her engines were used to pump water for the Chaffey Brothers irrigation property.

There is mention of a new PRIDE of MURRAY steamer - a side paddle steamer - no relation to the old steamer. I relied on my ancestors for the copy of the old steamer.



PAINTING NO. 32

PADDLE STEAMER "EDWARDS"

The "Edwards" was built in Echuca in 1875 from the famous red-gum timber that grows in the area. Jackie Dow, who spent forty-five years of his life on the Murray River paddle steamers,

ended his term as skipper of the "Edwards." He boasted he could take her through any river with an inch of water to spare and most times he did so. He said it was very hard hauling station supplies and loading wheat and wool onto the barges he towed, sometimes up and down steep river banks, as well as dodging snags, sand banks and rocks.

In the 1950's and 1960's the P.S. EDWARDS was towing barges to the Barmah Forset, collecting red-gum logs for the saw mills ie: Evans Brothers. Because of her colour and the reflections in the water she lent her-self to the kind of painting shown here.

PAINTING NO. 33

THE PADDLE STEAMER EMILY JANE, THE FIRST STEAMER TO GO UP THE GOULBURN RIVER.

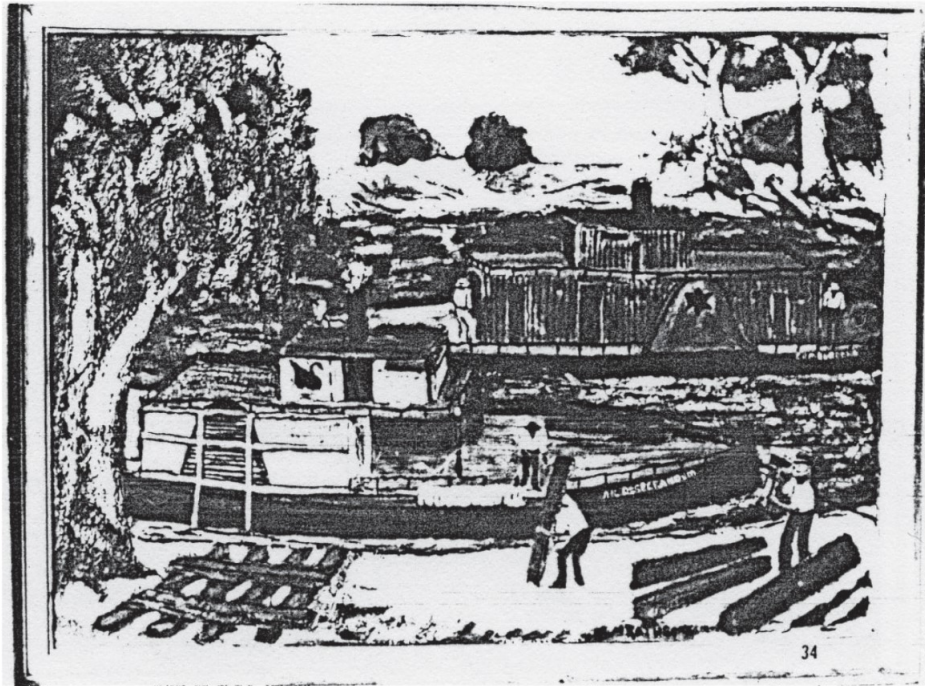
In 1875 the EMILY JANE proceeded up the Goulburn River to Murchison. She was built by Mr Buzza at his timber mill on the Goulburn River, up stream ten miles from Echuca.



She was 60 feet long, 21 foot 6 inches wide, with a 4 foot depth of hold. She was towed to Echuca to have her engines fitted.

The Artists father related how the farmers, working in the nearby fields along the Goulburn river, heard her shrill whistle.

The three resplendent kerosene lamps which illuminated the water, the snags and the eroded river banks, enabled her to travel at night. On her second trip to Murchison, she attempted to travel further to Seymour, but she was blocked by rocky bars at Tahbilk. From then she and her barges did not pass Shepparton.



PAINTING NO. 34

**GATHERING RED-GUM "SLEEPERS" WITH THE PADDLE STEAMERS
NIL DESPERANDUM AND CUMBEERONA.**

The paddle steamer **NIL DESPERANDUM** (so-called descendant of the **MARY ANN**) has a very interesting story. It was built at Mannum in South Australia. It was at Mannum that William Randall built the **MARY ANN** which along with the **LADY AUGUSTA** made the first famous journey along the Murray River.

Then in 1856 William Randall converted the **MARY ANN** into the boat which he called the **GEMINI**. Then the **GEMINI** was converted into the one hundred and eleven foot barge which he called the **NIL DESPERANDUM**. Then in 1870 this barge was converted into a steamer which is shown in this painting. As she often flew a black swan flag and also had a black swan painted on the wheel house she was also called the **BLACK SWAN**. In 1894 she was purchased by Bert Francis and was still in commission in the 1960's and sometimes called the **ALPHA**. She was a steamer with many changes of construction and names.

PADDLE STEAMER CUMBEROONA The **CUMBEROONA** was built in Echuca in 1866. It was one of the top passenger boats of the period and as such travelled the Murray and Darling rivers towing barges loaded with merchandise and produce from the land. No work was done on these boats on Sundays - except some passenger steamers made short pleasure trips. The artist's mother spoke of these trips as one of her teenage delights. In 1874, the **CUMBEROONA** on her way down the Murray River, under Captain Barber, visited the Mildura pastoral run homestead where they were given fruit which was a pleasant surprise to the passengers.



PAINTING NO. 35
RAINBOW OVER EARLY
ECHUCA WHARF LOOK-
ING FROM THE N.S.W.
SIDE

In the background are the buildings beyond the wharf. There are several hotels, the Customs House, and the Old Bond Store. The river is busy with several steamers and a barge. On the N.S.W. river bank there is the remains of an old barge which has been made from red-gum timber and an old traction engine that was used to pull the barges and steamers onto the slipway for repairs.



PAINTING NO. 36
LOADING RED-GUM "SLEEPERS" ONTO PADDLE STEAMER HERO ON
THE MURRAY RIVER

The **HERO** was built at Echoes in 1874 and it travelled the Murray river and its tributaries delivering goods to pastoral "runs" as well as towing barges laden with wool on their return trips to Echuca.

She travelled along this network of rivers gathering red-gum "sleepers" which were used in the new railway lines spreading throughout Victoria. In this painting you will notice the men splitting the logs for sleepers, which have been brought to the loading station.

The next section concerns Echuca itself - In its heydays there were over 100 hotels.- many of them along the wharf frontage which



PAINTING NO. 37

THIS IS THE ARTIST'S IMPRESSION OP THE BIRTH OP ECHUCA IX 1853 WHICH WAS CALLED H. HOWOOD'S NW ROAD INN.

The birth of Echuca took place when Harry Hopwood moved an already established INN called the **NEW ROAD INN** and **PUNT CROSSING**, further up-stream, opposite the narrowest piece of land between the Campaspe and Murray rivers. Here he built an "L" shaped wooden structure (with A square separate kitchen block) which he also called the NEW ROAD INN.

Harry Hopwood also had the contract to build a POLICE STATION on the north east side of the Campaspe River. It Is shown in the background of this painting. (Bush rangers roamed the district).

Also Mr Thomas Lawrence, the builder of the NEW ROAD INN and Mr Taylor built themselves slab huts roofed with bark nearby, to house their families.

A blacksmith's shop made of bark was to the right of the INN. Later the NEW ROAD INN was rebuilt of brick and called the CRITERION HOTEL and often called HOPWOODS OLD HOUSE. Today it is the Echuca MEN'S CLUB. Hopwood built some stables behind his Inn, with sun dried mud bricks.



PAINTING NO. 38

THE ECHUCA HOTEL

In 1858, Thomas Mitchell's butcher's shop was hurriedly converted into the ECHUCA HOTEL.

There was hot competition between Thomas Mitchell and Harry Hopwood who also owned a butchers shop nearby. After a heated argument Mitchell quickly altered, the existing shop and adding adjoining rooms of wood and iron, he obtained a licence in 1858, and he immediately declared open house for the whole day.

The year 1858, was a boom year for brick making in Echuca and Mitchell in order to keep up with his arch-rival Harry Hopwood, who had constructed the brick double story BRIDGE HOTEL, soon built his ECHUCA HOTEL into the double story that we see in this painting.

Beer was 34 a pint pot. There was no early closing and Echuca Hotels had a night life of Melbourne entertainers and theatrical artists - also some from the gold fields at Bendigo would be billed at the STEAM PACKET.

Great rivalry existed between the managers of the big hotels regarding their floor shows.



PAINTING NO. 39 AT ECHUCA WHARF

The **STEAM PACKET HOTEL** and **CUSTOM HOUSE** at the corner of the Esplanade and Leslie Streets.

THE STEAM PACKET HOTEL

This hotel was built on the corner of Hare Street and Leslie Street. the latter separating it from the **CUSTOMS HOUSE**

The Echuca, the Bridge, the Commercial and the Criterion were all built before it. I would say that this hotel was built in the early sixties and was in existence before the government wharf was built in 1865. This hotel was listed in the Butler and Servants Castlemaine and Echuca Directory in 1865 and at that time it was run by Anthony H Forrest. Illustrations in the papers shows that the building has been altered from time to time, and this painting shows its present form in 1960 having existed this way from about 1910. It probably started as a wooden structure with a bark roof.

About 1864 the name steam packet was shown thus:- ie: the drawing and two words

THE CUSTOM'S HOUSE

The building was built across the street from the wharf in 1864. The law concerning three Australian States, ie: Victoria, N.S.W. and South Australia was such - that **MASTERS** of all vessels arriving at ports on the Murray River must report their arrivals to Customs Officers and the goods must be landed at an approved place in the presence of and with the approval of the Customs Officer. The N.S.W. government had a Custom's House at Moama. It must be remembered that N.S.W. controlled the whole of the Murray River and its Constitution stated that the whole of the Murray River is in N.S.W. In 1877 The Customs Act was revised to include duty on all stock movements across the Murray River. The scale of duties on stock and goods and the collecting of them caused great annoyance to businessmen, stock agents, squatters, punt men, and even the ordinary citizen as they went about their business to and fro across the Murray River. The issues between Custom Officers and citizens became so intense that in 1864 Mr Inspector HARE of the Police Department was sent to Echuca to protect the Victorian interests on the Murray River. There was great jubilation in Echuca when the Federation of the Australian states in 1901, brought an end to these Custom Duties. No longer did people buying suits in Echuca try to beat the Customs Duties by wearing two suits back to Moama, or swim their horses or cattle across at lonely places.



PAINTING NO. 40

THE ESPLANADE AT THE ECHUCA WHARF - SHOWING THE ODDFELLOWS, THE MURRAY, THE CRITERION AND THE STEAM PACKET EHOTELS, THE CUSTOM HOUSE AND McCULLOCK'S BOND STORE

I have no definite date for the commencement of the ODDFELLOWS and the MURRAY HOTELS. For sure they were built when the wharf trade commenced to flourish - ie: in the early 1860's. They, during their active periods as hotels, flourished with ales from Echuca's own BREWERY.

Later they were both delicensed and used as private dwellings. The ODDFELLOWS was demolished about 1975, to make way for the NIREBO MOTEL. In the description of another painting I have described that the brick CRITERION HOTEL was built on the site of Harry Hopwood second New Road Inn.

THE OLD BOND STORE McCULLOCKS BOND STORE was built to house large amounts of goods coming from Adelaide to be distributed in Victoria and N.S.W.

Open air storage at Echuca before distribution to places like Bendigo and Ballarat, was unsatisfactory, so in 1828 Morgan and McIntosh engaged V V Moore to build a high brick building which was one hundred feet long and thirty feet high to the apex of the roof. It was later used by McCulloch and Co. as a bond warehouse for shipping agents so that customs duties could be collected.



PAINTING NO. 41

MCCULLOCH'S BOND STORE (SOMETIMES CALLED SHACKELL'S) AT THE ECHUCA WHARF.

In the late 1850's, the merchants in Adelaide used the paddle steamers and the Murray River as outlets for their goods to Victoria and N.S.W.

Trading from small wooden huts was unsatisfactory because of lack of storage. In May 1858 fifty tons of tobacco and a variety of wines and spirits landed at Echuca, and until sold to squatters and various firms in Bendigo and Ballarat, they remained in the open under guard.

So, in 1858 Mr Hughes, on behalf of business firm of Morgan and McIntosh, engaged V V Moore to build a huge brick store near the wharf, one hundred feet long and thirty feet to the apex of the roof.

It became known as the bond store because William McCulloch stored goods there until the Customs Duties were paid.

It was later used as a depot by the Echuca firm of Shackell and White. Mr Shackell bought the building.

On the High Street frontage, in its early days it had the Masonic symbol in a circle and the Star of David in another circle below. In today's renovations these have disappeared.



PAINTING NO. 42

THE OLD COMMERCIAL HOTEL AND THE OLD CHEMIST SHOP

After working for squatters for ten years, GEORGE REDMAN bought a block of land in High Street at the first sale of town blocks at Echuca in 1855.

In 1862, on this site, he built a double story brick hotel, known as REDMAN'S COMMERCIAL HOTEL. It was the fourth Hotel built in Echuca. It is said that REDMAN'S COMMERCIAL HOTEL, along with HOPWOOD'S BRIDGE HOTEL, rivalled similar buildings in Melbourne, not only in external appearance but in internal comfort.

George Redman sold his interest in the Commercial Hotel in 1874 and became an auctioneer, a member of the Echuca Road Board and an Echuca Town Councillor.

Sometime in the seventies this building was extended in brick to take in the little house next door and to look like it is today. It served as a Hotel for one hundred and nine years from 1862 to 1971. This building was subject to severe flooding during big floods on the Campaspe and Murray Rivers. All external doorways had slats nailed to the door jambs. Slabs were slipped into these to help prevent flooding.

The brick building known as the Medical Hall, has been there over one hundred years. In its early days it was occupied by a chemist but later the two small shops became one and was occupied by a butcher.



PAINTING NO. 43

PREPARING FOR THE BULLOCK-TEAMS TUG OF WAR AT HOPWOOD'S CROSSING AT ECHUCA

The BRIDGE HOTEL was built at the MURRAY RIVER CROSSING at ECHUCA in 1885, where HARRY HOPWOOD had his PONTOON BRIDGE and PUNT.

The bullock-teams and wagons had to wait their turn to cross the Murray river on the pontoon bridge. The bullock-drivers whilst waiting would drink and talk at the hotel bar. Arguments would start about the best bullock-team.

This would result in a bullock-teams tug of war in front of the hotel. Sometimes the arguments became so fierce, that the prize was the bullock-team itself and as the driver was so attached to his team, he found himself employed by a new boss.



PAINTING NO. 44

PART OF THE IRON BRIDGE OVER THE MURRAY RIVER

The great iron bridge across the Murray at Echuca is an extensive one and this painting, a portion at the river. Other parts of the bridge allowed for crossings during floods. At the time of building, in 1878, this great iron bridge was the pride of the people of Echuca, Moama and surrounding districts. At that time it was reputed to be the biggest bridge built in all the British Colonies, and the biggest in the southern hemisphere. The bridge provided for a railway, vehicle, stock and foot traffic and unlike the pontoon bridge and punts it was free for all. From then on, Harry Hopwood's son-in-law, James McCulloch took his sole right to crossing fees. (Harry Hopwood had died in 1867, eleven years before this bridge was built). From then on, cattle from Deniliquin were trucked direct to Newmarket in Melbourne - what an alternative to droving them to Echuca. The bridge cost £81,825. The fatal accident:- Huge bridge building is dangerous and several men lost their lives and others were badly injured when one of the cylinders swung out, fouling one of the two cranes gear, which had been used to lift the 150 tons of driving material. The 150 tons of railway iron and stone was used as a ram to drive the cylinder to its foundation (there were 13 sets of cylindrical iron piers). The crane over balanced and men and material were tossed in every direction. A special train took the injured to Bendigo hospital. (At that time Echuca did not have a hospital).



PAINTING NO. 45

SHACKELL'S AND WHITE'S SALE YARDS

This is the back of Shackell's and White's sale yards, where freshly groomed horses and sparkling buggies and gigs were displayed. Farmers from far and wide came to this bazaar to buy farm horses to pull their farming implements, as well, people of all types bought and sold ponies and horses for their buggies and gigs. The CLYDESDALE horses shown in this painting deserve special mention, as this breed did all the hard work on the farms before they were replaced with tractors. These sale yards commenced in 1875 - the frontage to WARREN STREET. The shed at the Campaspe River end of the yards was used for washing and repainting buggies and gigs. The horse bazaar building had stables and harness rooms.



PAINTING NO. 46

This painting depicts the first milk supply in Echuca. Sarah Cochrane for many years drove her goats around the town, milked one or two at her customers front gate and supplied them with milk. This painting depicts Sarah Cochrane in the early morning milking her goats in front of the Bridge Hotel.



PAINTING NO. 47

THE OLD ODDFELLOWS HOTEL

The ODDFELLOWS HOTEL was built when the wharf trade was flourishing in the 1860s. They prospered with ales from Echuca's own brewery. When it was delicensed about 1914, it became a private dwelling. On the top storey there was a large space where in the early days, artistes from Melbourne, Bendigo and Ballarat gave floor shows.

The Oddfellows was demolished about 1975 by Mr O. Berin who built the NERIBO MOTEL on the site.

The next section refers to the TIMBER TRADE. The timber mills were mostly in Echuca. Men also lived in the forest – working for wages or on contract. Huge red gum logs were brought to the river and loaded onto barges which floated down stream or were towed upstream to Echuca. Red gum sleepers were in demand for the newly created railway lines.



PAINTING NO. 48

PIONEER RED GUM TIMBER WORKERS CUTTING TIMBER NEAR ECHUCA

Notice the old-fashioned implements – the crosscut saw worked by two men, and the wedges which were driven with a maul (sledge hammer) into the log to split it. The red gum forests around Echuca were the most important in Australia.

The saw millers, sited mostly in Echuca, depended for their supplies of red gum logs from their own "fellers" or small independent contractors who lived in various places in the forest.

The following names are register as early mill owners in Echuca: Macintosh, McGrouther, Blair and Chadwick, McCulloch and the Murray River Saw Mills.

PAINTING NO. 49

THE LOG BUGGY

As no manufactured articles were available for many purposes, the pioneers had to make things from whatever material was available and suitable. When vehicles were required for transporting large logs, "buggies" were made, on the spot, from the logs in the forest. Log buggy wheels about 18 inches thick



and 4 feet in diameter were cut from red gum logs. Other timber for the body structure of the log buggy was cut with a crosscut saw, an axe and an adze. The parts of the buggy were then fastened together with iron brackets and bolts made by the local blacksmith. These log buggies, drawn by a team of bullocks served a long and useful life around Echuca and district for about forty years, 1860-1900.



PAINTING NO. 50

THE OLD BUGGY WHEELS AND BULLOCK YOKES AT THE OLD SHED

This shed had been an old blacksmith shop in the pioneer days. An anvil can be seen just inside the doorway. Outside, there are discarded broken log buggy wheels and bullock yokes propped against trees – all reminders of days gone by. The plough wheels and the cartwheel are later inventions – yet even these have been displaced and are now silent witnesses of other days. Newer inventions have left these implements as part of past history.



PAINTING NO. 51

PLACING THE YOKES ON THE BULLOCKS AT THE OLD BARK SHED

After some training, bullocks would be called by name and would "line up" to have the yokes placed on them. In this painting, some bullocks are standing patiently while waiting for their yokes. One yoke was placed across the neck of two bullocks, so they soon knew

who their "mate" was. Many of the temporary shelters were made from bark and saplings. No nails were required to hold these bark shelters together – it was done either with pegs or green bullock hide or both.

PAINTING NO. 52 THE WOODCUTTERS' SLAB HUT



This painting shows one example of a woodcutter's hut in the Barmah Forest which

consisted of thousands of acres. The walls of this hut were built from roughly hewn red gum slabs while bark was fastened over a sapling construction for the roof. Sapling poles were added to hold the roof in place. The chimney was also made of roughly hewn red gum slabs. These chimneys were huge so that they could be lined with a clay wall, 6 to 8 inches thick and 5 to 6 feet high. This enabled the woodcutters to have a good log fire on the cold winter's nights. The floor consisted of hard-pressed clay.



PAINTING NO. 53

**A RIVERFRONT HOME IN
THE BARMAH FOREST**

This is a painting of a more permanent woodcutter's home, situated on the Murray

River bank in the Barmah Forest. The walls were built of slabs cut from the forest, the roof was made of old sheets of second hand iron, and the chimney had been made from discarded bricks which some thoughtful driver of a bullock team had brought with him as "back" loading. The woodcutter's food supply was also brought by bullock teams returning from Echuca.



PAINTING NO. 54

A BARK HUT – MADE FROM THE FOREST

Another woodcutters' hut, covered entirely with bark. First, the framework was made from red gum saplings – young gum trees that have grown tall and thin because of growing in thick clumps. Bark slabs are then attached to the framework to form walls and roof. The chimney is made of wood, lined with a thick wall of clay at its lower part. All the material for this construction could be obtained from the forest.



PAINTING NO. 55

**A LOG-LOADING
STATION ON THE
MURRAY RIVER AT
BARMAH**

The saw millers sited their mills in the vicinity of Echuca. The problem of getting the big red

gum logs to the mills was over-come by using the river as a highway. Bullock teams dragged the big logs to the logging station on the river. Using a crane, the logs, were loaded onto barges which had poles across as outriggers. Some logs were fastened outside the barge to the riggers. Then several large logs were placed across the outriggers. When loaded, they floated downstream to Echuca, with a man travelling on the barge to prevent it being caught in snags in the river. Paddle steamers such as the Adelaide and the Edwards were used for towing the barges to the logging stations.



PAINTING NO. 56

**RED-GUM LOGGING
IN THE BARMAH
FOREST**

Here men are at work in the Barmah Forest, which contains thousands of acres of trees. The men have cut the tree down using the old crosscut saw and axes. They have mounted it already onto a log buggy with strong wooden wheels cut from a log in the forest. A team of bullocks under the control of their driver will haul the big log to the loading station on the Murray River. There, with other logs, it will be attached to a barge which will float them all down to Echuca.

This next section is about the SELECTORS.

When gold became scarce, the Victorian Government gave the miners the right to peg out 320 acres of squatters run (land not owned by squatters but used illegally or under licence from the government).



PAINTING NO. 57

LOG CABIN ON THE RATHBONE SELECTION

One such selector was the artist's grandfather, William Rathbone. In 1874, he selected 320 acres of land which was, on today's road map, on the east side of Rathbone Road at its junction with Warren Road in the Rodney Shire. William travelled with his wife and family in a covered wagon pulled by two horses from Talbot (beyond Clunes) – about 140 miles. They finally passed through the slip rails in the boundary fence between Wyuna and St Germaines pastoral runs, where William selected 320 acres.

Depicted in this painting are one of the two log cabins William built to house his family and the covered wagon. This old wagon was on the farm for nearly eighty years before it fell apart. When the artist was a boy, he carted twenty bags of wheat in it to the railway.

In the lower right, beside the wagon, is the cabin trunk of his wife, Elizabeth, who came out to Australia on the S.S. Goldfinder in 1856, and married William Rathbone in Ballarat in Dee, in 1857. Some kitchen artefacts are shown: the stone jar used for carrying salted meat, the camp-oven and the candle-mould, all necessary household items for the pioneer women.

**PAINTING NO. 58**

THE SECOND RATHBONE LOG CABIN

This is the second log cabin built in 1874 by William Rathbone, on his selection at St Germain's, about twenty miles east of Echuca. On today's road map it is on the east side of Rathbone Road at the junction of Warren Road.

When the artist's father (1872-1967) was a boy, this log cabin was his bedroom. A candle or a slush-lamp was used to see him to bed. A slush lamp was a piece of flannel burning in a tin of fat – a very smoky affair. The barrel on the sledge was pulled by a horse, and used for carting water, which was, at times, very scarce. In 1884 William Rathbone sank an 80 feet deep well nearby, and struck a small spring. The sides of the well were lined with slabs. In the yard can be seen an old double furrow mould-board plough which was one of the farm implements devised in the 1880s. In their first years the selectors had little or no farm machinery, since none had yet been invented.

PAINTING NO. 59

THE OLD SLAB-WALLED KITCHEN AND UNDERGROUND DAIRY ERECTED ON THE RATHBONE SELECTION IN 1876



These two old buildings were built on William Rathbone's selection and were there until 1950, when the artist's

brother, Roy, moved them to the Griffith Pioneer Park Museum, NSW. The building with the slab walls and a shingle roof served as a KITCHEN. The huge chimney contained an open fireplace, and years later, a colonial stove was built into the left corner. The small funnel chimney is shown. The colonial stove had a wood fire above and below the cooking compartment and was of great use to pioneer women who had to bake their own bread. The huge mass of dough would be left in a tub, to rise, overnight and then baked next day.

The UNDERGROUND DAIRY was a very important feature at a pioneer home. An excavation of soil to about 6 feet deep was made, above which were placed 4 feet high log walls with a double roof of bark or shingles. On entering the door, you went down steps into the dairy.



PAINTING NO. 60

PIONEER WOMEN WASHING CLOTHES AT THE OLD WOMEN'S LAGOON

Notably, the squatters (those who rented the vast runs) built their homesteads near rivers, but later, when the selectors bought their small area of 320 acres, they were for the most part short of water. This painting shows the artist's grandmother (Elizabeth Martin), who took clothes to wash at a particular lagoon on the Rathbone selection near the Goulburn River.

The artist was motivated to paint this picture because of a story related to him by his father, who pointed out the exact lagoon. The artist's father, as a boy, went with his mother to the lagoon on washing days. Other women would travel there too – some up to twelve miles (about 19 kms) in horse drawn vehicles. Consequently, the time for travelling and washing took up most of the day. So many women came that it became known as the OLD WOMEN'S LAGOON. Here, the women gossiped about their troubles and the affairs of the district. The lagoon-washing era existed from 1874 to 1906 (thirty years), when irrigation channels from the Goulburn River, brought a stock and domestic supply to outlying areas.

Archives in Melbourne contain documents which show that when Albert Rathbone wanted to fence the area containing the lagoon, there was an out-cry from protesters whose views were upheld by the government.

The artist was reared on this farm, and as a boy at this lagoon, he caught catfish and frightened wild ducks. Today, because of levee-banks along the river, the Old Women's Lagoon is no longer clearly defined. Nevertheless the spirit of the pioneer women still lingers there.

Note: This painting appeared in colour on the front page of The Modern Housewife's Magazine in Queensland, and also on the front page of Curtain Call magazine.

**PAINTING NO. 61**

**EARLY MORNING AT THE
STRAW-COVERED
COWSHED AT MILKING
TIME**

Most pioneers used the material available in their environment for building shelters for themselves, their animals, and their equipment. This painting depicts the cow shed on the Rathbone farm. It was built with huge corner

posts, log supports and other rough timber. A layer of tree branches was spread across the roof structure, on which was placed a heavy layer of straw. This straw-covered roof would last for up to thirty years, during which time, it repelled the rain and kept the shed cool in summer and warm in winter.

The milking was done early in the morning, before the children went to school. Children were expected, in pioneer days, to milk some cows before and after school. An adult would milk six to eight cows per hour. Afterwards, the milk was taken to a creamery about six or seven miles away, to have the cream separated from the milk.

PAINTING NO. 62

**MARY OF KANYAPELLA
BRINGING HOME THE COWS
FOR MILKING**

This painting is named in honour of the artist's mother MARY ANN HART, whose parents came to Echuca in 1875 from Talbot near Clunes, in a covered van drawn by one horse. They brought their own



goat with them to supply milk for three little girls, of whom the artist's mother-to-be was one. Many years later, Mr and Mrs Peter Hart rented a farm at Kanyapella near Echuca from Mr Chenall, and it was here that Mary Ann and her sisters helped with the milking.



PAINTING NO. 63

PIONEER WOMEN'S ARTEFACTS

These artefacts were used by pioneer women in and around their log cabins and slab homes. In the big open fireplaces, all sorts of foods were cooked in camp ovens – which not only had hot coals under them, but also hot coals piled over the lid.

The camp oven was used for cooking damper (made from flour and water), meat, and vegetables. To make candles, fat and wax were placed in the candle mould. Candles were used in the house, and in buggy lamps on each side of the front seat.

The scrubbing board and tub were most important and were taken in the dray to the lagoon on washing day.

The tub was also used for bathing the children in front of the kitchen fire.

Bathrooms and running water were unknown in pioneer homes.

The long handle on the frying pan was very useful over the big log open fire.

The iron had hot coals from the fire placed in its box.

This heat helped to dry out the starched collars and dresses worn by the pioneers.



PAINTING NO. 64

**THE OLD SEED
SCATTERER WHICH
WAS DRIVEN FROM
THE WAGON WHEEL**

This SEED SCATTERER was one of the first farm machinery inventions. Until then, the farmer broadcast the seed by throwing it by hand. The machine was securely fixed to the side of the wagon or dray, and small wheel was turned when the wagon wheel revolved. In turn, this small wheel caused a flat disc to revolve, and this disc broadcast the seed fairly evenly over a wide distance. It was no longer used when the seed drill was invented about 1900.

PAINTING NO. 65

**THE FIRST REAPER WAS
INVENTED ABOUT 1880**

When the selectors commenced farming there was no farm machinery, except a small mould board plough and a small set of harrows. The artist's grandfather's first crop was cut with a scythe and or sickle, and the grain was knocked from the head with a flail, (several pieces of leather fastened to a wooden handle).



When this first REAPER appeared on the farm, the sickle and the scythe were discarded. One man with twisted stalks of hay made a band to tie around the sheaf, which was then made into stooks which are shown in the forefront of the painting. The man with the dish gathers up the grain, then throws it up for the wind to blow the chaff away, with the heavier grain falling to the sheet on the ground.

The artist's grandfather's first few bags of wheat were taken to the Echuca flour mill. There he purchased for his wife's bread making, enough flour for many months. It took him a day to go to Echuca, and a day to return, sleeping over night in a hammock between the shafts of the wagon.

**PAINTING NO. 66****FEEDING THE PIGS,
PIONEER STYLE**

The pigsty was made of logs and it had a straw-covered roof. Feeding troughs were made from hollowed-out logs. Food (milk and grain) was carried in tins attached to a yoke, which fitted over the farmer's shoulders.

The sledge with a barrel drawn by horse was used to move large quantities of milk and grain. Most pioneer farmers who milked cows, had a few pigs, which they reared for their own consumption as well as for sale.

**PAINTING NO. 67****DIGGING RABBITS FROM
THE ABORIGINAL OVENS**

In 1854, some rabbits had arrived from England for the Austin brothers near Geelong. These grey rabbits multiplied rapidly and spread swiftly across Victoria and NSW. Around 1880, colonials (i.e. people born in Australia) in the Echuca area saw this strange creature for the first time. The Victorian Government passed a law that landowners had to dig them out of their burrows and eradicate them. This painting depicts men digging rabbits from burrows in the ABORIGINAL "OVENS."

Notice also in the painting the CHOCK AND LOG FENCE which the pioneers used, because logs were always in abundance nearby and did not cost money. Miles of chock and log fences have rotted away and are now part of Australia's history.



PAINTING NO. 68
PIONEERS MEET AT
THE OLD SWING-
GATE

William Rathbone, the artist's grandfather, had several of these swing gates on his farm. The trunk of a tree with a large root "butt" balanced on a post was the main part of the gate, which never dragged on the ground. Notice the post and rail fence on both sides of the big gateposts: the pioneers used swing gates, and post and rail fences because timber was plentiful and close by. By 1980, both these pioneer features have rotted away and disappeared from the scenery, becoming part of Australia's past.



PAINTING NO. 69
THE FIRST SCHOOL AND
METHODIST CHURCH AT
MERRIGUM

In 1875, this log building with a bark roof was dedicated as the Wesleyan Church at Merrigum. It was in the northeast corner of Mr Stokes' property. In 1877, the Education Department leased it as a school and Mr Pearce was the first teacher.

The teacher's big wooden desk, which stood at the western end, became the preacher's pulpit on Sundays. When the building was not used as a school, the leaden inkwells in the scholars' long desks, were covered with a sliding metal cover. There was no ceiling so the bark roof and rafters were visible. Mr Pearce married a widow who owned a nearby farm, and in 1885, when the log church was sold, Mr Pearce had it reconstructed on his farm, where, by about 1950, it had decayed and sunk into the ground.



PAINTING NO. 70

CATTLE RESTING NEAR THE OLD SWING GATE NEAR ECHUCA

This painting shows the peaceful scene of cattle resting in the shade of the big gum trees on a hazy summer day. Sometimes the temperature in summer ranged from 100°F to 110°F (about 37-43°C). In the background are the old swing-gate and post and rail fence described in picture number 68.



PAINTING NO. 71

THE FARMERS RETURN IN EVENING LIGHT AT THE BIG GUM TREES NEAR ECHUCA

In this picture the farmers are going home in the evening from the paddocks where they have worked long hours. One farmer is returning in an old horse drawn wagon. The evening light shows the other man on horseback taking the cows home for milking – the last chore of the day. The milking on some farms was done in the light of a kerosene lantern hanging in the straw-covered cowshed.

(Here the artist retells the old joke of Dad and Dave when milking by lantern light: Dave said to Dad, "By Jove, the sun has beaten us to bed tonight." And Dad's reply was: "Yes, and we will beat it out of bed in the morning!")