

Reminiscences

FRED PERRY

My Grandfather Samuel worked for Mr Wood, of Lowther Park, in 1837, and apparently continued working for John Grant when he purchased this property. He was residing in the district when he purchased land near Antonio Creek in July, 1853. Samuel married Isobel Flint, from Scotland, at Glen Roy in 1849, and they had 7 children. It is supposed that Sam Perry met Isobel Flint whilst she was staying with her aunt, Mrs James Nairn who owned the Albion Inn, Hartley.

I went to school at Cheetham's Flats, starting in 1903, and we had to pay 3d. a week. Others attending were Elsie, Lily, Allan and Ruby Morten; Ern, George, Arthur, Lizzie, Walter and Maggie Mays; Robert, Tom, Lloyd and Alma James; Everitt, Nina, Celina, Dora, Lance, Charlie and Mabel Sedger; Leda Barrett; Ruby and Grace Sandell; My sister Vera and brother Lander. We had to walk from our home at Antonio Creek approximately 2½ miles to school, and my first teacher was Mr Cullip who married Ada Sandell.

Near our old house are standing the apple trees which my Grandparents grew from seeds of apples they bought at the first Bathurst Show in 1868, and these trees are still bearing fruit.

Before World War I many cricket matches were played on the flat ground opposite Ron Jenkins. The teams from Anarel, Meadow Flat, Tarana, Rydal, Bowenfels, Lowther and Hampton, used to compete against each other. My Aunt Maggie Mays and the Glassons used to run horse races in this same paddock, when I was a young man, to raise money for the war effort (World War I). The prizes given were mainly bridles.

When the duplication of the railway was going through at Sodwalls in 1914 700 men worked on the job. of these 400 were Maltese. Crane and O'Grady the gangers used to come to dances at Rydal, which were run to raise money for the war effort. The hall then being opposite the gate leading into the teacher's residence.

The flats near the road crossing Antonio Creek was a calico town. The married men and their families lived in big tents, whilst eating houses made of tin and hessian catered for the single men, who got meals there for 1/-.

Payne had a store, which was a temporary building, opposite N. Graves' home. Here he sold all the navvies' requisites, and had his slaughter yard down near the creek.

The first tennis club at Sodwalls started opposite the Post Office. People like the Griffiths family, who were all good players, came down from Jerry's Mount. Mrs Tom Griffith was chosen to play in Country Week. The Burtons and Dobbies also came along.

Before I married, Lander, Allan Morten and I often used to ride out to the Oberon Show.

When Mrs Foley started the subsidised school at Sodwalls she applied to have the Cheethams Flats school, which was then unused, to be transported there, but the Cheethams Flats people got up a petition to keep their school. This petition was granted and a subsidised school was started in 1937 with my mother (Fanny) as the teacher. The school grew too large so a public school was started. my daughters Verna and Ilma and Lander's son Jack went to this school, as well as Mick Mays' children, Rita, Margaret, Norma, Betty, Barry and Dulcie; Lena and Dena Charkos; George Mays' daughter Dorothy; Ern Mays' daughter Beryl; Jack Mays' children Ron and Neville; Ivy Mays' son John; Arthur Eather; Neville Finch; Joan Morten; Ken Tulley; Allan Morten's children Fay and Valerie; Walter Mays' children Margery and Bobby; Ray Gibbons' children Shirley and Jimmy; Pam Goddard and her brother; and Lenny and Eric Davis.



Pupils of Cheetham's Flat School, Back Row (left to right): Selina Sedger, Emily Jenkins, Elsie Morten, Dora Sedger, Lizzie Mays, Everett Sedger. Centre Row: Lloyd James, Fred Perry, Peter Martin, Frank Martin, Allan Morten, Lander Perry. Front Row: Alma James, Vera Perry, Lily Morten, Maggie Mays.