

THE late Sir John Kirwan, when President of the Legislative Council was asked by an enquiring reporter one day: "How many Australians do you think will be remembered in Australia a thousand years from now."

Sir John, cultured, charming and kindly, did not hesitate in his reply: "Only one," he said "Ned Kelly. Tradition and fiction will make him Australia's Robin Hood."

When I went to Glenrowan a few years ago, I asked an old chap what Ned Kelly was really like. He said: "Ned Kelly was a gentleman."

In Melbourne about the same time I put the same query to an old police officer. His reply: "Ned Kelly was a murdering scoundrel."

Maybe it is still too early for us to try and sort out the threads, but in this story, gathered from many records, I propose to tell you of the exploits of this amazing character and allow you at the finish to sum him up

It CAN be done



But... Don't try it

A few people seem to be able to break all the rules—even defy the law of gravity—and get away with it, for a time at any rate. But it is nearly always dangerous.

A few people, too, seem to be able to get through life without saving, but that is also dangerous.

When all is said and done, most of us find it better to keep to the rules. We shouldn't take risks with the laws of gravity any more than we should with the good rule of saving something every pay day.

Over 4,440,000 people have accounts in the Commonwealth Savings Bank. They know that, although some of us are "born lucky," for most of us it is safer, surer and more profitable to save.

COMMONWEALTH Savings BANK

THERE'S A BRANCH OR AGENCY IN YOUR DISTRICT

The Real Story of NED KELLY

JOHN (better known as Red) Kelly was born in County Tipperary, Ireland, and in common with the great majority of his countrymen, had very few material possessions.

With the poverty and oppression that was his birthright, however, he inherited also a strong, healthy body, a quick mind and a clear eye . . . plus a full measure of the reckless courage, the quick temper, the flaring resentment which were to flood his homeland with the blood of Irish rebels along with that of their hated, foreign, "Police landlords."

Inevitably 'Red' Kelly had his clash with authority and, just as inevitably, was imprisoned.

His era happened to be one of determined Empire Building. So Red was shipped, in irons, to Van Dieman's Land, there to expiate his crimes against the Crown in the regenerating environs of a tough, young penal colony.

Kelly served his sentence in full with no remissions for good behavior, and moved to the mainland. Australia was a big, new country where even a convicted Irish rebel should be able to make something of himself, "given a fair go."

He worked for a time in Melbourne, already a fast-growing village with imposing brick houses on Eastern Hill for the gentry and an equally imposing gallows next to the new gaol in Russell-st. for those among the ex-convicts who took their "freedom" too seriously.

Red Kelly envied the big houses and respected the gallows. He moved north to the gold-fields, where rumor had it there was a fortune "just waiting to be picked up."

Kelly found no fortune, but his labors did earn some reward. After a time he returned south to buy a farm at Beveridge and marry Ellen, third daughter of James Quinn, a neighboring farmer.

The farm was small, the home a rough slab hut of green wood and bark. But the land was rich, food plentiful, and the future seemed good. For a time the Kellys were happy.

Newcomers told harrowing tales of "Black '47" in Ireland; English granaries crammed with Irish wheat and 2 million Irish dead in a single famine. Helped by his energetic son-in-law, a skilled bush carpenter, James Quinn prospered.

Diggers drifting back from the goldfields accelerated the war between squatter and selector. Trouble was obviously brewing . . . but the Quinns were used to trouble. They knew what they had and were confident they could hold it against any challenge.

The land was cleared, new huts and stockyards were built. At Wallan Wallan, in 1854, Ellen Kelly was delivered of her



third child and first son, a big, healthy baby whom they christened Edward. Red was inordinately proud of his boy, boasted of his strength and intelligence, dreamed maybe of the future that could be his.

Red was destined to influence that future greatly.

Young Ned was an active lad, loved the bush that was his home and became part of it. He loved, too, the stories that the old people told round the fire at night.

Years later, outside a hotel in Glenrowan, bleeding from a dozen wounds, he was to remember the story of legendary Irish hero Brian Boru, killed at Clontarf in 1014 leading his people to victory over the invading Danes.

He was to give substance to legend with his bitter credo: "Better to fight like a man and die with my mates. I've no stomach to be forever hunted like a dog."

NEXT WEEK

THE FITZPATRICK AFFAIR

Kelly's mother gaoled . . . Ned and Dan outlawed.

by **Thomas Aubrey**

A Brilliant New MIRROR Serial

Quinn the elder, too old and tired for further struggle, sold his property and moved further north to part of the Glenmore station, within sight of Mt. Buffalo and temporarily beyond regular police jurisdiction.

Red Kelly was more stubborn. He stayed on his land and defied both squatters and "traps" to make him move.

Within weeks he was in gaol for the first time since his convict days. Police charge — "unlawful possession of a bullock hide"—was so weak that the minimum sentence of 6 months was imposed by magistrates known to be the reverse of lenient.

Imprisonment lessened Kelly's "prestige" very effectively. He was released in November, 1864, a broken man. The family moved to a smaller holding at Avenal. There Red Kelly died, leaving a widow and 8 young orphans.

At 10 years Ned had more immediate injustices to avenge than had his revered ancient Irish kins.

With his 2 elder sisters he took charge of the Kelly fortunes, moved his grief-stricken mother and younger brothers and sisters to a small farm at 11 Mile Creek, adjacent to his grandfather's property.

The land was rich and fertile; the established graziers were determined that it should not be displaced among the migrant riff-raff. They formed associations and councils; they impounded any cattle that did not bear their brand . . . and they found their own stock slaughtered, their best horses stolen. More police were summoned and the war, waged so successfully by the law and so tragically by the Kellys in the south, began anew.

In 1869, old man Quinn died and his family spread out over the surrounding countryside. The clan was a fertile one and numbered more than 2 score brothers, sisters, husbands, wives and children.

From Mansfield in the south to Yarrowonga in the north, from Euroa in the south-west to Tallangatta in the north-east, the Kellys had friends and blood-relations. It was, and is, real Kelly Country.

Powerful interests had become alarmed at the inrush of aggressive new settlers. Wealth rallied to protect its monopoly; pressure was exerted and the LAW moved in on the "Kelly Country."

Assistant Chief Commissioner of Police, Supt. C. H. Nicholson, directed that "the officer in charge of that district . . . should endeavor, whenever they committed any paltry

crime, to bring them to justice and send them to Pentridge even on a paltry sentence, the object being to take prestige away from them, which was as good an effect as being sent to prison with very heavy sentences . . . because the prestige those men get up there from what is termed their flashness helped them to keep together, and that is a very good way of taking the flashness out of them."

Early in 1864, 10 charges were brought against the clan; two convictions were recorded. James Quinn, Jr., was gaoled for six months and fined £10 for assaulting the police and illegally using a horse; James Kelly, Red's brother, was said to have stolen cattle. He spent three years in prison.

All were fanatically loyal; blood was their pride and their law. Truly they were "faithful to the death."

DENSELY wooded hills and ranges gave sanctuary to those adventurous enough to have earned a "wanted" notice outside the local police stations, and the Kelly boys came to help and learn from the "Wild Colonial Boys" always hiding there.

Ned was the "bush telegraph's" most trusted messenger. Close-lipped, shrewd, tough, he was already the best horseman in the district, a crack shot and more than a

match for most men in a brawl.

He knew every inch of the countryside, boasted he could lose the "traps" blindfolded if need be. And in a score of wild night rides through the gullies and gorges, often leading stolen horses, he more than proved his point.

Tall (5.10), well built, handsome, with the first stubble of a black beard on a strong jaw, he had much of the "prestige" Supt. Nicholson dreaded. He regarded the police as his natural enemies. They, in turn, decided to break the Kelly spirit, once and for all.

In the early part of 1870, Ned was arrested and charged with having aided Harry Power, one of the district's minor bush-rangers and an escapee from Pentridge gaol. Police failed to produce any positive identification and 15-y-o Ned was released.

Later in the same year Ned had another brush with the law. In the course of an argument with a hawker, Ned knocked him down and was consequently charged with assault.

He received 3 months' gaol on this charge, a similar sentence on an additional charge of having sent the hawker's wife an obscene note. The "obscene note" in the case was a parcel of a bull calf's anatomy which the Kelly boys sent to McCormack and his childless wife with a note to the effect that the new country needed population and the McCormacks were not doing their share.

Grim humor, but typical of the age and frontier country. McCormack claimed later that he laid the charges in the heat of his humiliation at being beaten by a mere boy, and that the police refused to let him withdraw them.

Supt. Nicholson sent another report to his superior in Melbourne, Capt. Standish.

"Until this gang (eldest 15) is rooted out of the neighborhood, one of the most experienced and successful mounted constables in the district will be required in charge of Greta. I do not think the present arrangements are sufficient."

He also told of the Kelly home: "I visited the notorious Mrs. Kelly's house on the road . . . to Benalla. She lived . . . in an old wooden hut with a large bark roof . . . There were no men in the house, only children and 2 girls about 14 years of age, said to be her daughters. They all appeared to be existing in poverty and squalor."

It was to this poverty and squalor that Ned returned in May, 1871, after his first term in prison.

Harder now and bitter, Kelly settled down to work to support his mother and her 7 other children. Determined to stay out of trouble, if only for their sake, he worked, as had his father before him, as a carpenter and general bush handyman.

His undoubted "prestige" still told against him, however.

A neighbor and close friend, one "Wild" Wright, lost a fine mare and enlisted Ned's help to recover it. He neglected to tell him that the animal

EXCLUSIVE

To Be Continued

STOP PRESS

SYDNEY RACES

CAMPBELL GRADUATION

STAKES: Radiant Prince 1

Audacious 2, Devilish 3. Ser: Bar-

wick.

CAMPBELL GRADUATION

STAKES: 20/1 Radiant Prince.

SO: 53/7/9. Place: 51/2/3, 7/6,

5/10/9.

MELBOURNE RACES

TWO-YEAR-OLD MILE (U)

Graftspear 1, Nealing 3, Wynvale

3. All started.

LAWN HCP: 25/1 Burdindl, SO:

58/4/6. Place: 52/5/7, 51/16/6, 17/6.