

which I think may have been deserted
for some time.

A few comments about the humble farm
we were able to visit because of its proximity to
Canberra. It would no way deserve the classification
of sheep station, even in bad times. but could well
give you some idea of how primitive conditions were
for early settlers. as life was 80-100 years ago. ~~most~~
These are up-market properties but further out. modern equipment
improved pastures. New South Wales began as a penal
settlement in 1788 and the poverty of the soil, ^{round Sydney} made
it very difficult to produce enough fresh food. ^{supplies came from "England"}
explorations richer land was opened up but, ^{droughts} a flood
could soon destroy a good crop. Later three men
managed to cross the Blue Mountains in 1812 (?) and
vast pasture lands were discovered & settled.

In the early 19th when potatoes were the
staple diet of peasants in Europe & Ireland, an outbreak
of "blight" ^{disease} destroyed the crops and famine occurred
causing widespread ^{starvation} deaths. Migrants were ^{assisted} invited to
Australia on shiploads. My paternal grandfather's
family came as a young couple with a little

38 children in 1842 and crossed the Blue Mts probably 39
40 in an ox drawn cart. One part of the rough road was 41
42 so steep, the women went on foot. They arrived in 43
44 Bathurst where Michael & Janet's home is) in 1842. 45
46 Shortly afterwards their 3 yr old daughter died 47
48 and my grandmother ^{Charlotte} was born in July 1842. 49
50 Later ^{the family} they moved to the Hunter River Valley and 51
52 must have taken up a grant of land there. 53
54 Later Charlotte ^{in 1865} married my grandfather 55
56 ~~one~~ of four brothers & a sister who had migrated 57
58 from Tupperary ~~in 1865~~ - three years after Charlotte's 59
60 F. had been killed after a fall from his horse. 60

2.

1 Imagine them setting off for their 1
2 honeymoon with Charlotte on horseback with 17 2
3 head of cattle, a bullock dray, 2 horses and a 3
4 dog. The distance would have been ~~close~~ ^{nearly} 4
5 100 miles (160+ kms) and over a mountain range 5
6 to an area where they each had a land grant 6
7 of 40 acres to begin their married life (other sisters 7
8 had adjoining land. ^{gradually extended as they prospered.} 8
9 The first home of the pioneers was 9
10 usually a "slab" but made of sawn timber with 10
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10 to an area where they each had a land grant
 11 of 40 acres to begin their married life (Other sisters
 12 had adjoining land. Gradually extended as they prospered.
 13 The first home of the pioneers was
 14 usually a "slab" but made of sawn timber with
 15 wooden shutters with leather hinges. Later rooms
 16 were added: in their case we visited as children
 17 a larger weatherboard house with surrounding
 18 verandahs, ^{was built in 1840.} with hardy trees to provide
 19 shade: pepper-corn trees, acacias, cedars and a
 20 huge elm which had been brought 60 yrs before
 21 our day in a saddle-pouch. They worked so hard, clearing land & fencing
 22 haddock & sheep ^{sons grew old enough they acted as shepherds}
 23 Rain-water was collected in tanks
 24 and a dam and windmill provided water
 25 for stock, laundry etc. Round the tank stands
 26 were always such plants as geraniums, fuchsia
 27 madder ^{fishbone} ferns, tended by the women folk.
 28 In remote areas where a settler's house has been
 29 destroyed by fire, one sees a stone or brick
 30 chimney fireplace still with trees ^{even fruit trees} and often
 31 a clump of iris.

32 My grandfather was one who
 33 built a schoolhouse with adjacent sleeping
 34 quarters for an itinerant schoolmaster.
 35 Other neighbours did likewise to share, because
 36 basic education was so important to them.

My father ~~was~~ died before my parents marriage and my ~~father~~ was the 12th child & 9th son so my grandmother was old and frail when we knew her as children. She had been a wonderful horseman, sportsman, sportsman and indomitable and a very devout church ~~man~~ ^{Father} who would ride side-saddle. In my generation ³ descendants studied to become Clergymen & the following generations have been highly successful. Three in a wide range of activities. Three have had the honor to be elected members of the Royal Academy of Science.

Ray, the talkative brother certainly had a competent hand with the electric shears. My brother reminded me that the odd bits from the legs & face are called the "shortings" & are separated from the fleece from back & belly.