



King Palmer

*(After this interview was recorded, King gave me a copy of an article written by his daughter Nadine (now Nadine McPhan) for a school project when she was in high school. It was a brief history of the Yarralong district and was compiled from notes that she took of discussions she had with her grandfather, George Palmer (King's father). It appeared in **The Lakes Magazine** published by Wyong High School in 1953. It is reproduced here before the interview because it refers to earlier times.)*

In 1888 the construction work for the railway was going on between Sydney and Newcastle. At the time there was no dwelling where the present township of Wyong now stands.

The present residence of Mr Collie, which in those days was a wayside hotel on the road from Gosford to Maitland, was the centre of Wyong. The intention was to make a railway station at Wyong, so several people purchased blocks of land and built small cottages on them. The first building of any consequence was a small hotel built by a man named Garth, where the present Grand Hotel is now standing. A storekeeper from Newcastle named Brackenridge built a general store which is now the Rainbow Cafe.

W.J. Chapman started another store on the top of the hill. He was also postmaster at the time. Several more businesses then started along the front street. Later they were all destroyed by fire and more up-to-date shops were built. The main industry of the district was timbergetting. Before the railway ran, the main market for timber was Maitland and Gosford. Transport from Gosford to Mangrove Creek was by water. In the early days there was an abundance of softwood timber such as red cedar and white beech and silky oak. It was usually used for shipbuilding and furniture. Jilliby was the best place for hardwood timber.

Until the railway ran through there were not many inhabitants around where Wyong now stands. There was a main road from Gosford to Maitland.

Wollombi and Laguna are much older townships than Wyong as can easily be seen by the old homesteads. Wollombi is one of the oldest towns in NSW. At one time the Wollombi valley was the main source of the colony's wheat supply. There the wheat was milled, and the flour hauled by bullock teams to either Morpeth on the Hunter, or Wisemans Ferry on the Hawkesbury, and thence by boat to Sydney. Stock used to be driven from the far west and north through Wollombi and Wisemans Ferry to Sydney. After the railway line ran through from Homebush to Waratah the stock were all taken by train.

In those days Wollombi was a busy place with five hotels, but when the traffic discontinued through the town, Wollombi township decreased rapidly in size and importance. George Palmer was the first coach driver in Wyong about fifty years ago. He went thirty six miles a day into Wyong and back to Yarramalong. Then the Palmer sons took over with the motor bus. It was the first bus ever to run to and from Wyong, but Seargents ran a large fleet of buses to various centres.

About thirty five years ago The Entrance consisted of about half a dozen houses, and picnic parties from Wyong and other centres were catered for with launches, run by a man named Hughes. Later, Taylor Brothers, who took over, ran a regular service which was discontinued when the road transport from Wyong proved too strong a competition for the small launches.

One of the oldest homesteads in the Wyong district is situated at Bebeah, eight miles from Yarramalong. It is usually called The Old Stone House and was built by one of the early pioneers of Brush Creek, whose name was Christenson. He supplied the valley with cheese made in his own dairy and also bacon of his own curing. He frequently travelled by spring cart over the Brush Mountain to dispose of his produce in Laguna and Wollombi.

Many of the early pioneers of the Yarramalong Valley originally were pioneers of the Maitland district who were disheartened by losses through recurring floods and came here, where such risks were practically unknown.

One bad feature of the early settlement of the Yarramalong Valley was the destruction of valuable timber by the early settlers who needed the land for cultivation. Millions of feet of hardwood were felled and burned, and even cedar and beech met the same fate. Yarramalong at the present day consists of two shops which stock nearly all requirements. Our road was tarred about four years ago and we will soon have electricity which will be a great asset.

King: A lot of the people now wouldn't believe what we went through years ago when I was only a kid - how we had to work. If you couldn't get out and earn a bit, well, you had to starve. I can remember the tramps that used to go through with their billycans and a pack on their back - not like the packs now, but a blanket rolled up with a bit of rope round it. They'd call in and want to do something for a feed. People used to do those sort of things. It was all farms here, and they'd always find something for 'em to do, and give them a feed and a couple of bob - which was worth about ten dollars now. And away they'd go.

Bill: This was during The Depression, then?

King: That's right. Now if you go back - I'm 79 now, and I've lived in the Yarramalong area all my life. The old place was up there just this side of where Smith's mill is now, and my Dad selected that - there's ninety acres there. My Dad was one of the first ones in Yarramalong - he was George Palmer. And his father was the first schoolteacher in Yarramalong.

You go back then and things took years to change, but now, things are changing every week! In every way. I used to drive the bus - the bus line has always been in the family. My brother was the first one to have a bus run. My Dad used to have a coach and two horses. He used to go in to Wyong and back, and it took all day to do the trip.

Now Bertie Beavan, I can remember he had an old car and he used to have something to do with the mail. But I was only a kid then and I don't remember Dad doing it by coach. But I do remember the first bus that my brother had, and I was about 5 or 6 year old, and I can remember going to the Wyong Show. Dad had the coach, and Reice, that was my brother, he'd only just got the bus. Holy jesus she was a quick trip in the bus compared to the coach! But Bertie Beavan came into it somewhere too, with this old car. I used to go for rides with him before I started school.

Anyway, that 90 acres went from just this side of where Charlie Lauff lives right down to where Rene Smith lives now. That was the other boundary fence.

Bill: Has the house gone now?

King: Yes. What happened was, that house where Joe Thomas lives now was given to me for a wedding

present when I got married. Just this side of it on the bend in the road there's a house high up on the hill. Well, down below from that house was where the old homestead was built. After Dad died, we were looking after Mum, so we shifted over to live with her in the homestead and rented the other place out. And it will be thirty three years next month since that house got burnt down.

What happened was, it was a stinking hot day and I had just come in and layed down because it was so hot - it was a bugger of a day - and I said to my wife Doris that it was hotter even inside than it was outside. I could hear the iron on the roof cracking and that, but I never took any notice of it. I'd just bought a sow with young pigs, so I decided to go down and see how they were settling in. I wasn't gone long when the next thing I hear is the wife Doris screaming out. So I raced up and holy ghost here's the flames all coming out! There was a short in the power and she started to burn up in the top part.

All this area around here near the shops belonged to Mum. At that time you could just cut your place up into blocks and say to the council that you had, with no red tape or anything. So she cut this up into blocks. There was only one house up the back here then. Greentrees used to live down Wyong Creek, and they wanted to build a butcher's shop here. They built the shop, and then they wanted a house built so they could live close to the shop. When our house burnt down we never saved a thing from it hardly - everything went, so we came down here and shifted into the house up the back. When Mum died all the blocks were sold.

Bill: Did you have insurance on the house in those days?

King: Yes, we had insurance, but they're buggers, you know. It was the Yorkshire Insurance Company then and we'd been in it from when it started - but holy ghost they wanted to cut me back, which they did, and they cut me back a lot.

This was all dairying around here then, from the top end of both creeks right to Wyong. When I was a kid going to school we had a dairy farm. At that time it was all cream that was sent - no milk. The cream went to the butter factory which was where the milk depot is now in Wyong. But there only would have been a handful of houses round about here then. And about the same number all the way up to Brush Creek. Once you went past Braithwaites then that was it. There was nothing after them.

Bill: Why do they call you "King"? Is that a nickname from when you were a kid?

King: Well there's a bit of a story to it. There was nine of us in the family. Reice was the eldest - he was 21 years older than me - and I was the youngest. And in between there were three boys and a girl, but they all died with something when they were babies - a lot of babies died back then. I wouldn't know what it was, really. Anyhow, when World War I broke out there were two of Dad's greatest mates - they were cousins. One was called Eric Waters and the other was called King. They left to go overseas with the War, and they said to Dad that if it was a boy to call it after them, and it might live. I was on the way, see, when they went - I was born in 1915. Eric came back, but King was killed overseas, so they carried his name on and I was called Eric King Palmer. But nobody calls me Eric.

But there's plenty got nicknames round here though. Take Kenny Fernance down there - there were about six boys in that family and they all had nicknames. Their father's name was Jack, but they called him Barraba, because he'd come from up Barraba way. At that time there were so many Fernances about, you know, - like there were two Jack Fernances. And they didn't say Joey Fernance, or Kenny Fernance - it was Joey Barraba or Kenny Barraba, or George Barraba - to keep them all separate.

Bill: Did that happen with the Waters' too? There was a lot of them.

King: No. They all got their proper names.

Bill: And did your wife come from the valley?

King: She lived down Wyong Creek. You know where the sign to Kidman's Lane is today opposite that

goat farm? She lived over there. It opens up in there - it's surprising. I'd like to go back and have a look at it now. I've never been back there for over thirty years.

Bill: Did you work at dairying till you started with the council?

King: No. Actually I used to just do things around home. My first job after I left school, I went out to Kulnura and worked on the tomatoes for a bloke called Fred Young. That was my first job. I remember George Waters - that's my nephew - they lived at Linga Longa. See my Dad owned all that too. Where Wally's is, (*Yarramalong Manor*) that used to be a dairy there - a dairy and bails.

Bill: And the old Inn was opposite, up high, wasn't it?

King: Yes, but that was before my time. That burned down. The bottom part is built out of stone and they used to have the cellars there. Anyway, when Dad died, his property was split up and my sister got that dairy there. (digression)

...And there used to be lots of boarding houses. Linga Longa was one. And another one down here by the bridge where Ivan Grant lives - that was a boarding house. Andy Grant had that - that was called Homeleigh. And up the gully there where Jones owns, that was Lyall Waters', and that was called Lugona - that was a boarding house. Then they went up Ravensdale. I don't know who lives up there now - not far past Charlie Lauff's on the right hand side there's a big place there - that was a boarding house. And there was one down where that Kidman's Lane is - that was Kenyon's, another boarding house.

They were full at Christmastime. People would come from Sydney mainly - they'd come for a country holiday. At that time my brother had the buses, and he'd be doing two trips to Wyong a day at Christmastime. Usually he only did one trip, but then the school kids started going in to the High School, and that brought the two runs then from out here. (Digression)

Bill: How old were you when your Dad died?

King: I'd have been in my mid-twenties, I suppose.

Bill: Were you married then?

King: Yes. I was married when I was 22. So I'd probably have been a bit older than that when Dad died. Yes - I'd have been round about thirty.

I had to sell one of my places. There was 40 acres down the other side of the cemetery, and I had to sell that. So it was a sort of bad start, but I'm happy what I'm doing.

Bill: You never worked on the timber at all?

King: Yes I did a bit. With the pulpwood. After I'd finished up at Kulnura - we used to go up there by pushbike.

Bill: Up Bumble Hill?

King: Yes. It used to take us three quarters of an hour to get out there, and twenty minutes to come home! Of course the road was all gravel then, too. I only worked on the tomatoes for about twelve months, then I had a go at the pulpwood. Then I was working in a mill at Wyong. Then I got another job with a bloke that did all concreting - drains and that. He was the first fellow to go into ready-mixed concrete. He had a place out at Long Jetty. I worked for him for a good while.

I went from there to the milk factory, and I wasn't there for very long because I was working in the bottling department and I was allergic to something in the rubber boots that gave me dermatitis. It took a while to fix, and when I came back they put me in the produce section. Then a job came up in the mill that used to be at Wyong where BBC is now. When I was at the milk factory you only worked short hours

each day, and you had to put seven days in before you got two days off, to make up for the short hours. But at the mill it was better, because it was only five days a week.

I got my licence when I was eighteen, and I used to drive the bus two days a week. The brother used to go to Maitland with pigs and cattle on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and on those days I'd drive the bus. I did that for years - till well after I got married.

Bill: And the bus only went in to Wyong and back? No other bus routes?

King: No, the only other thing we did was when the dole was on and you had to go in to collect your ticket. Reice used to take the fellers in that were working on the Mooney Bridge putting the road through. They were on the dole, and had to have these tickets to collect their money, and he'd take them in on a Friday afternoon and take 'em back on the Monday morning. When Reice died, Ashley took on the bus line then. He was Reice's son, and he just went ahead in leaps and bounds.

Bill: And did you go to school here at Yarramalong?

King: No, I went to Brush Creek. I started at Ravensdale first, and a fellow by the name of Hawthorne was the teacher. He lived down there - there used to be an old place just the other side of where the cemetery is - that forty acres we used to own that I mentioned earlier. There used to be a house there underneath some camphor laurel trees that I think are still there, and he used to drive from there to Ravensdale school in a sulky. Then he left, and my youngest sister, who's years older than me, married a schoolteacher that came from Mudgee, and he was teaching up at Brush Creek, so I went to him then. Then he got transferred back to Ravensdale and I went back there, so I started at Ravensdale and finished at Ravensdale. He taught me practically through all of my school years, and he also taught my daughter and son.

Bill: And there were no high schools then, were there?

King: No, the only high school was the one up on the side of the hill at Brush Creek - 'cos it was up high!

We used to own that part there where Reg Etienne lives now. It used to reach as far as Bub Fernance's - Billy Squatter's brother-in-law, and we used to run the dairy cattle up into there. When I was going to Brush Creek school I'd have the cows milked and everything before I went to school. I'd drive 'em up and put 'em in the paddock up there of a morning, then drive 'em back of an afternoon - then milk 'em again. No shoes or anything. And on the hill, when the young bladey grass comes up it's like little thorns, and by jeez I had to pick my tracks through that! I used to hate that. (Digression to look at flood photos).

Dad was the local vet - he was everything! He was a councillor for many many years. The council used to be at Gosford, and was called the Erina Shire Council then, and he used to get up at three o'clock in the morning to ride to Wyong every fortnight to go to the council meetings. He'd ride to Wyong and catch the train to Gosford. He done that for three terms - nine years. He had a bullock team too that my cousin used to drive for him. And he was a blacksmith - actually he was a jack of all trades. There was a lot of valuable old stuff went up when that house burnt down that can never be replaced. It was a big loss, that was.

Now Billy Squatter - his grandmother and my Dad were brother and sister. But Mum used to do all the dairying herself. Dad had the bullock team and did the blacksmithing with another blacksmith in the area who'd work with him every Sunday shoeing horses and things.

Bill: And your Mum ran the dairy as well as looked after the house, and cooked, and all that?

King: Yes. She was always an early riser. I'm an early riser and I sometimes think I might have got it from her. I'm over at the farm here at quarter to seven. But she'd often have ten or twenty minutes' nap through the day. I do that, too.

Bill: Did you have any mates you used to knock around with as you were growing up?

King: Oh, yes. I'd go to dances - I used to take them to the dances in the bus. At Yarramalong, Wyong Creek, and Jilliby and Kulnura. But the brother wouldn't let me drive out to Kulnura. I think he thought I might come down the hill a bit fast! Then I'd go and pick 'em up and bring 'em back. More seemed to go from Ravensdale to the dances than from Brush Creek. Actually we never had any particular friends, in a way - we used to get together from all over the place. Some would come from Wyong. These days, if people come together like that they'd probably clash, but we were all friends. We used to have some beer at the dances, but we couldn't afford much. Mostly it was wine at two bob a quart. But you know, we'd have our beers, and we'd always hide it. We'd have to put it away somewhere because someone might come and knock it off. So we used to plant it under the hall or somewhere. And after a dance there might be two or three'd go out and have a drink. Some of those would have some planted somewhere else, so the next time we'd go out we'd go with them and have a drink of theirs. And that's how it was years ago.

Bill: And was it only the fellers that would go outside for a quick swig, or did any of the women drink too?

King: No. You'd very seldom... well, at that time you'd never take a woman outside with you like that. They'd be considered rough, you know, drinking. But then, as years went by the occasional girl would go out, or a wife, you know. You'd always take a glass out with you then, because you could only buy the big bottles then, and we'd be all drinking after each other. You'd pass the bottle round, and there'd be one following the other, and there might be half a dozen of us standing around in a circle.

Bill: Were dances the main entertainment, or were there parties and things as well?

King: Oh yes, there were parties too. Getting back towards my early twenties they'd often have parties. Greentrees down here that used to live down at Wyong Creek - they had a fairly big house and they used to have lots of parties, and really good parties too. Everyone would enjoy themselves.

I remember one time we went to a party up at Ravensdale one cracker night. I would have been about thirty then, and I'd just bought a beautiful new overcoat. A double-breaster I'd saved up for, and it was the highlight of my life. I didn't want to take it too close to the party so I hung it on a stump about fifty yards from where the bonfire was. When I was going home and I went to get it she was all burnt! She was in ashes! The bloody sparks had burnt it!

Bill: I suppose it was a while before you had a car, was it?

King: Yes. My Mum bought me a car - an old secondhand thing from a bloke out at Jilliby. The bloody old thing was worn out before I got it, and I blew her up. She used to use more bloody oil than she did petrol. I ran out of oil on the way back from Morrisset on a trip I did with the Knights from Ravensdale and she blew up. So that was the end of that one. But I've always had a vehicle.

Going back about fifty years, when they had the Shows on in Wyong, Reice used to have to do two trips on the Friday, because people would be sending in all their produce for the Show. The top of the bus would be all tall corn, and sorghum, and the roofrack on the bus would be all covered with all the likes of that. There'd be fowls in coops to go in to be shown, and there wasn't many cars then. Those days you had to tender for the mail, and Reice had had it for some time. But Charlie Davis put in a very low tender, to buggery under Reice, and he got it. But his tender was so low that he went broke - he couldn't make a living out of it, and so we ended up with his bus as well, and I used to drive it.

But it was really great when the Shows were on then. Braithwaites used to always scoop the pool with their Jerseys - every Show. So there'd be cattle, horses, and farm produce all going in - coming from everywhere. From the top end of both creeks to Wyong, they all depended on the bus. Two trips on the Friday, and three trips on the Saturday, and I'd bring the late ones home in the Charlie Davis bus, as we came to call it. There'd be a buckjump show or something like that on after the Show, and I'd have to wait to drive the last bus home. Everybody knew everybody then, you know. And you trusted everybody.

If there was anybody that knew you, they'd always do you a turn if they could - and they wouldn't give you a bad turn, either.

Bill: How did you get on for petrol and oil then? There weren't petrol stations everywhere then, were there?

King: We used to buy petrol in four gallon square drums. Before Reice got married, when he lived up there in the old place, he built the shed for the bus, but then he got a car. So he had to add a bit on to the end of the shed then, and he built it out of bloody kerosene drums! You'd cut the top out, and down one side, and flatten 'em out. And he built the bloody shed out of 'em.

Bill: So you had to cart your petrol from Wyong?

King: Yes. Used to get it in a box - two drums to a box. Then after Reice got married he lived up where Denny Lee's is now. See that belonged to Dad too - and Reice got that place, and he put a bowser in there. When Dad died, my eldest sister got the two houses he owned in Wyong. Millie was the next one, and she got Linga Longa, and then my youngest sister, who's just turned 90 and is in a home at Wyong, she got the place where Reg Etienne lives now.

Bill: I don't suppose you can remember when they tarred the road, can you?

King: Indeed I do. They were getting the gravel from Kulnura, from up at Red Hill. It was really good, but they discovered afterwards that it used to go down real hard like, and the tar wouldn't stick to it. It was a good road, but terrible when it rained. I'll never forget one time when I was driving the bus coming up that bit of a hill just the other side of Stinson's Lane there, they'd just regravelled that, getting it ready for the tar, and holy jesus we got all this rain, and it was so slippery! Oh christ! I was an hour getting a mile.

Another thing, too. I remember it was on the Wednesday, and we had a helluva flood. It came up quick, really quick. I was driving the bus on this particular day... See, we used to deliver all the parcels from Wyong - meat, groceries, some would even send in for a reel of cotton, and they'd leave notes in their boxes. We had to put all the orders in, and we'd pick 'em up - or they'd deliver them down to the bus at the station there - and we used to leave in there about half past twelve.

This day, between eleven and half past, the police came and told me that they'd rung from out here to say to come home as soon as possible because they'd had a helluva downpour up the road, and the creek was coming down like a big tidal wave, and to get home as soon as I could. So, I had all the parcels in ready to go, and I started to head off. But what was happening was that people were ringing up orders to the grocery places, and for extra meat, you know, and here I am trying to get back and they'd race out from the shop: "Hang on a minute! Here's an order for so-and so." And they're coming out with meat parcels and grocery parcels, and bread and everything like that. Did I have a load of stuff! Anyway, I just got to the other side of the bridge here at Yarramalong, and that's as far as I got, but most of the parcels were for further on.

So, the flood was still up the next day, but it had gone down a bit by the afternoon. And I remember Keith Fernance's cousin that lived up Ravensdale, he come down. The old shop was here then, and he'd come down to get some things. He rode through it on horseback. Someone rang the emergency place in Wyong for a boat, and they brought a boat out - it come round the mountain. They brought it out because we had all the groceries and meat, and they thought that all the meat would be going bad - 'cos it was the next day by this.

So by this time Reice had arrived, and of course he was floodbound too. And he was afraid of water. He couldn't stand water, and over the bridge here it just rushes over - you couldn't walk through it if it was only eighteen inches under because it would just wash your feet from under you. So this Reg Fernance said that if we could get a rope and tie it on to the boat, he'd pull it across with the horse. Righto! So we

load up all the bread and groceries and meat into the boat. Reice and I gets in it and tie the rope onto the boat - and away we go! And holy ghost, she got about half way and then she went sideways and the boat hit the gravel skid of the culvert there and we couldn't move it. The horse had stopped, and Reg Fernance had the rope over his shoulder and he's digging the horse in the ribs to make him go, and the next thing the horse makes a plunge and I can still see it - when he made the plunge, the horse went straight from underneath Reg, and he went backwards over the horse's rump and into the water! He had a big army overcoat on, and he had to let the rope go.

Reice jumped out 'cos he thought we were going to capsize, and when he did the water went into the boat then, and talk about a mess! Everything was soaked! And as Reice jumped out his shoe got caught and it went downstream. It finished up they got the boat out - but I'll never forget that! That'd be going back fifty years or more.

Another real adventure I can remember is when I had a tractor accident. It was a million to one I'd be killed as it happened, but I got out of it without a scratch. I was going up this hill, not long after I started looking after the farm over here. I thought when I was going up that the steering didn't seem right - it felt a bit loose. I got to the top, and I went to turn round, and by christ then I could tell there was really something wrong. So I thought: "Bugger this, I'm not going any further, I'll go back." So I got off and looked everywhere, but I couldn't find anything wrong, and I started back down anyway. When I got halfway down I lost the front wheels altogether. No steering, and the axle and everything went back underneath it, which made the front of the thing drop down, and it took off and went down over the side off the track. I tried to jump off, but with the seat - one of those spring seats, it was a big tractor, too - a 175 Massey - when I'd go to get up to try to jump out my legs'd get caught under the steering wheel, and it was jumping around that much and going sideways, I knew it was going to roll.

There was a bank a few feet high, and how it stayed on its wheels before I got to there I don't know. But when I come to the bank, that's when I knew I was going to get killed, because I could see it was going to roll on me. Of course this was before roll bars came in. What happened was, when it went over the bank, before it actually rolled, the axle broke and the big wheel just flopped over, and all the weight was on the top, and the wheel stopped it from rolling, and I got out from underneath it.

I got a crane from Wyong, and Roscoe Fernance with his four wheel blitz to come up to load it. (Shows photos of the aftermath). And that's how it finished. It shook me up. I was nights where I couldn't sleep. Within about ten minutes from when it rolled there was people everywhere, because they'd heard the crash, and all they could see was dust. They couldn't believe it when they seen me walking down the hill. But I don't remember walking down the hill - it was a sort of a blank, you know. But there's so many things can happen in the bush. I suppose everyone has their share of close shaves. (Digression)

This woman friend I have now, I used to go to school with her husband when I was only about eight year old. When they came out from England they lived up Brush Creek at the stone house, then they shifted from there to Ourimbah Creek. Her husband, Reg, was the eldest of the family - the Dawson's, and he always used to keep in touch with me. Keith Fernance knows him well. I'd often see him when I was working out there on the council, but I'd never met his wife. Anyway, he had a heart attack. He was driving his tractor in his orchard at Ourimbah - he had a load of oranges on the carry-all and he finished up down in the ditch.

Now I used to do all the social work at the Mangrove RSL - I was on the Board of Directors there for years and used to do all the social part of it. At one of the monthly dances we held there, Eunice Jurd, Stan Jurd's daughter from up Ravensdale, introduced me to this woman who turned out to be Reg Dawson's wife that I'd never met. We've been friends ever since.

Bill: When I first came up here in 1977, I came across Harold Ward up at the Mangrove Mountain RSL...

King: Yeah, Harold. I often go out and have a beer with Harold, because he was on the Board when I was.

Him and Ray Taylor. They were more or less the foundation members of it. But I haven't seen him for the last couple of months.

Bill: He was very helpful to me. Before I started building my house I built a log cabin to live in, and I needed the tops lopped off three trees that I slung the cabin on. I was too new to chainsaws and treefelling to be game enough to get up a fruitpicker's ladder and do this myself. I was yarning to him across the bar, and when I asked him where I might find someone to lop these trees, he offered to come and do it. He didn't know me from Adam, but he came all the way out to my place the next weekend, lopped the trees, drank a couple of bottles of homebrew with me, gave us some useful information about the area, and wouldn't take a cent for his trouble. And I thought to myself: "Why should this bloke bother to do this? Things certainly are different here to back in town." It was a nice introduction to the place.

King: Yes. That's Harold, alright. But it was always like that, back then.
