

SOME HISTORICAL FACTS. MORWELL NAT. PARK.

A man named Alf Foster selected 60 acres on the flat below the Quigley selections, on what is probably Lot 17 on the Shire maps. Foster built a hut about half way up the flat, which then was only a swamp into which the creek disappeared. The hut would surely have been sited on the rising ground on the Morwell side. He fenced a couple of acres with a slab fence to grow potatoes. A road cut across the flat close by the hut. My informant was Mr Reg Page who later owned this little farm. He thought it was then the only route from Morwell to the hills about Budgeree.

Mr Page said* "Jack Grant of Budgeree told me he used to cart from Morwell with the bullocks and when crossing the flat the mud and water would be up to the bullocks' bellies. I was able to trace the old track but the trees had grown up over it. I knew Alf Foster, junior, who is 86 now, and I think his father was out there on the flat before he was born (1866). It was thought at one time that there was gold in the gully but I doubt that any was discovered there." Mr Page thought that the hut had been situated about the middle waterhole on the farm, which probably still exists in spite of the subdivision. At the back of Foster's selection there were two 320 acre blocks selected in the names of Mary and Annie Quigley.

(This history is perhaps not relevant to the present park, but Mr Ivor Madden of Morwell Historical Society could perhaps shed more light on it with dates, etc.)

Reg Page drained the flat by cutting a drain through to take the seasonal water down to Middle Creek. Very little water passed down in summer.

A prospector was working in the present park during the thirties, one George Edwards. He sank a fairly deep shaft just off the present creek track just before one reaches the old gravel pit. The hole may still be seen just off the track on the creek side in scrub. It was filled in but the filling has sunken somewhat. A storm drain encircles the shaft. I doubt any gold was found but the orchids were discovered. Edwards camp was on the highest point of the hill behind the rangers house, on what was later A.P.M. land. It was hung about with orchids on the neighbouring shrubbery, and he used to take generous samples to the neighbouring towns' flower shows and exhibit them. I suspect that he also took a basket full down to the National Herbarium at one time.

(Ellen Lyndon)

* About 1954