MARTIN LYNCH'S MEMORIES

No Honour Among Thieves

[1] recolet McGlaughin Underwood and York the bushrangers those men where prisoners of the Crown. The were under the sentence of death from there start for been under arms. McGlaughin and York took Underwood life they caught Underwood keeping a log book of all the bits of deperations of what they committed in the way of the theft of what they eat they burnt him in a log of the northerns end of Townsend McGlaughin and York had some disunion and seperated York was some time afterwards executed McGlaughin still remained in the bush until his 7 years transportation was up his freedom was Gazzeted in the Govermem Gazzete he went into Sydney to Goverment House and got his liberty he afterwards became the ownerer of the Cabbage tree farm. Now belongs to the Mr. Stewart of Kieravale he remained their untill some few months before his death he died in some of the instution or Hospitals of Sydney or parramata he was put there by Thomas Kelly who he willed his farm to his son Peter Kelly no more of this now.

[MS. notes by Archibald Campbell]:

Fearful Tragedy at F. Meadow

Early in Mr. Lynch's experience three bushrangers—he thought from the Appin direction—haunted the district, their main hiding place being in a piece of dense brush standing between Council Chamber & Townsend's and winding of Fairy Creek.

Their names were Underwood, Mclaughlin & York. They contind in district two or three years. Police, mounted & otherwise, although continually looking for them not capturing them.

Sawyers & settlers, mainly on account of fearing reprisals from them, gave them food & clothing now & again. They (the bushrangers) also shot & killed a cow or bullock occasionally—from the herds in the district.

The terrible end of one of them came about thus:- McLaughlin & York started from the camp (near back of Townsends) one day to shoot a steer, in Bellambi direction. Having forgotten to take bullets with them, McLaughlin returned for same, & coming unexpectedly on [Underwood] found him writing in a kind of note book. McLaughlin could not read, but suspected unfaithfulness on part of [Underwood] toward his companions—on acct of the book, which appears to have been seen for first time. He accordingly returned to York & informed him of what he had seen [Underwood] doing. Both decided not to look for the steer that day but to go back to camp at once. Did so & demanded from Underwood what he had been writing. He denied having written anything, or being seen doing so. Under pain of instant death, he was made produce the book—in which York (who could read & write) found that the day & date of every depredation they had committed was entered—& as to how each raid was carried out.

This was taken for granted as being prepared for evidence to be given against them (McLaughlin & York) by Underwood who they
concluded intended to turn "Kings Evidence" against them.

They ordered him at once to fall on his knees & prepare for death in a few moments—both standing over him with loaded muskets. He kneeled down accordingly, begging for his life to be spared, but to no avail.

McLaughlin suspected that York was hesitating at taking part in the dreadful deed. Both would fire simultaneously at Underwood's head.

McLaughlin—by way of strategy to test York's fidelity in the gruesome situation, fired through [Underwood's] thigh instead of his head—pretending that his gun slipped—he reloaded at once remarking: "I missed him then, but I will do him this time." Instead of pointing the gun again at [Underwood] he did so at York'[s] heart, saying - If you don't shoot him dead, I will put this bullet through your heart. York then at once, & under cover of McLaughlin's musket, shot [Underwood] dead through the head.

They then burned the body in the hollow log of a big tree & (Lynch) had frequently seen particles of the bones in the position of the fire, even many years afterwards. The tragedy was perpetrated near where the road cutting saw mill now stands.

After a time the two remaining men separated—York was hung for some depredation committed in some other part of the country. McLaughlin was reprieved on some account, & settled at Fairy Meadow where Mr. Bate resided (afterwards). He lived there several years—was said to have disturbed nights rest occasionally & died of a loathsome disease.

The story of the terrible tragedy was related by McLaughlin, and possibly also by York before his execution.

[A note on Martin Lynch appeared in the December Bulletin. In both the reminiscences and Campbell's notes, "now" means "in 1898"].