LOST IN THE BUSH

On Thursday last, Mr. F. R. Cole, the auctioneer, and Mr. John Tighe were returning from Appin to Wollongong with some cattle; and, when a short distance from the former place, they overtook Mr. Charles Quin, an old resident in this district, who also had a few head of cattle. They travelled on in company for some distance, until two cows strayed away from the herd into the bush, when Mr. Quin and Mr. Tighe went in search of them. The two men met, however, in the bush, some short distance off the road, but neither had fallen in with the cows. They parted again, Mr. Quin saying he would make a further search, and then come out on the road. Mr. Tighe then at once returned to where Mr. Cole was; and, after waiting some time, and Mr. Quin not appearing, he went in search of him. He proceeded to the spot where they had parted in the bush, but could not find any trace of him. And, after a diligent search, returned again to Mr. Cole. They both then pursued their journey slowly, thinking that Mr. Quin might have made a longer round than they at first anticipated he would, and, consequently, had come out on the road some distance ahead of them.

They did not see anything of him, however; and, it being sundown when they got to the top of Mount Keira, they deemed it advisable to come on to Wollongong that night, and to return on the following day, if nothing should be heard of him in the meantime, to resume the search. They met the mailman on his way up to Campbelltown, and acquainted him of the fact of Mr. Quin being lost in the bush. Mr. Tighe went up the mountain on the following day, but heard nor saw nothing of the missing man. On Saturday morning, Mr. Cole, Mr. B. Rixon, Mr. Tighe, and a constable, went in search. On reaching the spot where Mr. Tighe left him, Mr. Rixon commenced tracking his way over the ranges, through gullies, swamps, and scrubs, till night closed on them. His track was of course very sinuous, but they supposed the distance to be not less than twenty-five miles. They camped for the night, and resumed their work in the morning for about an hour, and having had nothing to eat from the previous day, Mr. Rixon proposed that they should strike off for the Cordeaux River, then distant, to the south-west, some ten or twelve miles, which they reached about noon yesterday, and got refreshments, and came into Wollongong in the afternoon. When Mr. Rixon having obtained a fresh supply of provisions, accompanied by Sanders, the constable, and ——Brazier, started again, and expected to reach the former camping place by night, and resume their search in the morning. There can be little doubt as to the fate of Quin, for they describe the course he took as leading sometimes south-west, west, and north-west, in a country, perhaps, never trodden by the foot of a white man, and his track latterly showed evidence of his horse flagging, and it is probable they will find horse and man dead together. Quin is a man far advanced in life, and physically unable to bear up for any length of time under such privation and sufferings. Mr. Rixon will add another instance of his great usefulness in
tracking,—his thorough knowledge of the bush, his quickness of sight in marking any changes in appearance of the ground, where others would see nothing to observe. On this occasion, we are told, his tact in this respect was astonishing, and often his companions were kept on the run through rushes in the swamp and over bare rocks, where no marks were visible to them. It may not be generally known that it was Mr. Rixon that discovered the body of Gorman in the Cataract River, a fortnight back, after several days spent by other parties in the search. On that occasion he went from his neighborhood to the spot, made a canoe of bark, and shortly found the body. We have in him all that sagacity or instinct belonging to the aboriginal in these respects, coupled with a considerable degree of that intelligence belonging to our own race. If he succeeds in this, as he surely will, the public should take some steps to mark their estimation of his extraordinary service.

—ILLAWARRA MERCURY, 13 April, 1857.
(The sequel will appear in a later Bulletin)

THE BLOW FAMILY

In connection with the Blow family reunion announced in the August Bulletin, Mr. Doug Blow of Albion Park has provided us with this sketch of the history of the family:

John Blow was born in County Monaghan, Ireland, in 1796, and arrived in Australia, with his third wife Ann and four children of a previous marriage, on the “Susan” on 10th March, 1839, after eight months at sea.

They first stayed with a Mr. Shortridge near Wollongong. At the time of the 1841 census John and Ann Blow were working for J. Osborne at Garden Hill, Wollongong, their household consisting of six free persons, including a baby John. Their son William, his wife Catherine (nee Miller) and baby were residing in another house on the same property. From 1840 to 1856 John and William and their young wives brought seventeen Blow children into the area. They later bought a farm near Dapto from James Shoobert and lived there.

In 1850 John and Ann Blow, with a family of ten children, moved by bullock-dray to the Foxground Valley, where they were the first white settlers. They took up a holding of 330 acres just outside the northern boundary of the Berry estate. They first lived in a home with split slab walls and bark roof, and proceeded to clear the very densely timbered country for dairy farming.

Foxground was named after the thousands of flying foxes that camped there by day. Thirteen of John and Ann’s family started out from Foxground and the family are now thousands strong and spread all over Australia.

William Blow, the eldest son, who stayed on at Dapto, died in 1856 and is buried in Brownsville C. of E. cemetery. He had seven children and there are now about 2,000 descendants from him alone.