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Interview with Jack McCallum on Saturday 15 July 1991

### The Round Mountain

The Byatt's, Jack McMahon and Tom McMahon were all working for Jack Pierce on the Round Mountain lease. And then Percy Fredricks was out there with George Day doing all the fencing.

One time old Jack Mahon came down from there to get the rations and so forth. It was Melbourne Cup time. Well, anyway when he was going back out Jack Pierce gave him a bottle of rum to take back out to the boys. Jack landed there that day and he was pretty full. He got thirsty on the way back out see. Anyhow they said 'don't worry about the rum Jack, what won the Cup?' 'Oh well', he said, 'what's the name was first, who's it was second', and he said, 'I'm buggered if I know what it was!' If he'd had any more he couldn't of remembered that they'd even run the Cup.

Mick Russell from Adaminaby used to come through every year to Jack Pierce's Greg Greg coming down from the top of Yellowboy to Cooinini paddock near the Cooinini Creek.

Faulkner and Whitehead then had Round Mountain and the 15 Mile after Pierce. Jack Bailey built the new Round Mountain hut for Faulkiners and he also built Bradleys hut. George Finch and Harry McGuinness and old Wesley Clarkson all worked there when Jack Bailey built Round Mountain hut.

Bradleys had Burns Creek and in through there. Bob Byatt and John Byatt, Leo Byatt were out at Round Mountain hut too. Old Bob Byatt had Black Jack and Emu Plain managed for Jack Pierce. Bob lived at Jagumba. As for the other side, who finished up having it after Cheyney I don't know.

### Round Mountain Swamps

Billy Cummins who managed Possum Point built the Round Mountain Swamps Hut. It was burnt down in the fires that destroyed Ogilvie's hut. Honeymoon Brake was near the Swamps Hut down from Sam's Rails on the top of Round Mountain. The dinner camp on the old stockroute was just below the Tombstone Rock in Ogilvie's Creek.

The Toolong Country

I fenced in the horse paddock around O'Keefes hut and at the Toolong hut, straight across from Paton's hut. The Thorburns (Arden) built the Toolong hut for Percy Rial who had the Toolong country from 1946. However, Old Toolong was the name given to Wheelers Hut. Gus Murphy was the bullocky for Percy Rial at Toolong Hut. Jack Kidman must have had Toolong after Percy Rial. I don't remember him.

Poor old Jim Crosser is another bloke who put in a lot of time in around Toolong. He was shepherding sheep out on the plains in tents before most of the huts were in use.

Charlie Rial and Bill Daley were mustering sheep and minding the cattle on Patons block. Pat Roach was the last bloke to have the Paton's hut block (K2).

Farm Ridge

Amos Hedger had country out the other side on Farm Ridge. He had a lop eared dog that looked like a water dog to me, but it was a good dog.

The biggest camp oven ever I've seen was at Farm Ridge. How they got it in on the fire I didn't know! The first time I camped in the Farm Ridge hut there was a thunder storm and they'd taken the phone away at that stage, and there was a blue light coming off the wires. I was sitting there and old Texas Webber was sitting there saying 'I wouldn't take any notice of that laddie.'

Naughtons had Farm Ridge leased and also leased the Bogong Swamps to Cecil Willis shepherding sheep. Billy Cummins and George Parkes also worked for the Naughtons.

Cecil Willis put in 2 or 3 days in Hellhole Creek with sheep in <sup>A</sup>37 or 38 when it snowed six inches on 17 April. I knew they were coming out. It was a freak of a year. We pulled the shoes off the horses, myself, Tom Paton and Jim Crosser to go and help Cecil out of Hellhole and back to the hut (Patons).

Deep Creek got it's name when the McMeekins from Ournie came down off the Round Mountain down the creek and got stranded. Jimmy McMeekin was leading the party on their way to Yarrangobilly. They had to shoot the horses. It wasn't far from the Southern Cloud. Steve

Everard went in and shot the horses. He brought the saddles and bridles out with him. Steve Everard worked at 'Welaregang' for many years.

Cecil Willis and I made the last trip in 1940 to Rules Point and Peppercorn hut taking cattle. We rode Kiandra to Tumbarumba in a day, took a mob of sheep off the train and then back to Tooma Station (Jack mentioned Brandy Mary's Crossing in connection with the trip).

Stitch Ridge - gone from the map?

Arthur Day was out at Richardson's Brake and Stitch Ridge. Stitch Ridge is going out towards the Bogong and Richardsons Brake is between the Round Mountain Swamps and the Bogong.

Other Wanderings

I was out on Happy Jacks Plain and stayed in Brook's and Boobee in the '30's before I went to the war in 1941.

I went to Moulds Hut. When I first saw it, it was quite OK. Sanko Smith had all the country out at Cabrumurra. His boundary was the Tumut River to Round Mountain.

Mountain Men

Old Jack Lynn, he rode up from Lobbs Hole when old Mrs Byatt was running the hotel at Kiandra and he pulled up and she came over to the verandah. He said, 'hand us that block of wood there Mrs'. She said, 'What do you want that for?' 'Knock this bloody boot out of the stirrup!'

Barney Finn was a real mountain man, he knew the mountains better than anyone. He was through the whole lot of it. In 1949 he was living at 'The Square' in a hut. There were beautiful peach trees there.

**We toured that country on 30 bob (3 dollars) a week with corned meat and damper. We'd never heard of weetbix even!**

Pugilistic Hut

It was supposed to be the Maginnity's, the publican who was up here at Tooma. Dave Maginnity was supposed to ride from here out to fight a chap by the name of Batson. Anyway, they talked them out of it out there. Luckily for Maginnity they didn't fight, he got too late. This was

before my time out there. Batson came from down here at Jingelic. Jack McMahon said it would be alright going out but it'd be a bugger coming back!

There was only really a frame of a hut back in 1933 or 34, you could ride through it. Elyne Mitchells photo must be earlier than 1948.

Harry Smerdon had country in there but they camped at Toolong. It may have been Bill Whitehead. Goldie Whitehead at 'Bringenbrong Hill' might know something about that (he still drives - 'Bringenbrong Hill' is after Spring Creek on the hill with crossbar over the gate with a bullock skull on it.)