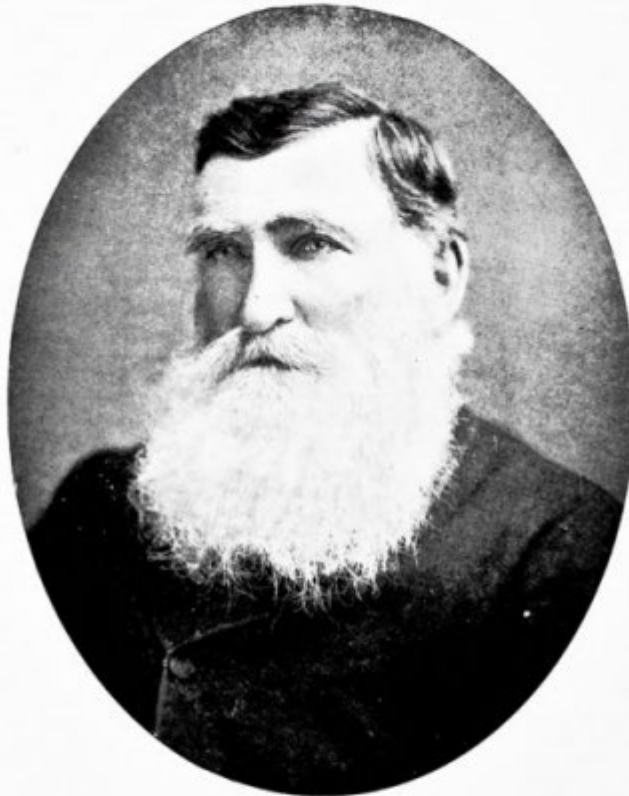


PASTORAL PIONEERS OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA.



DONALD GOLLAN.

SCOTLAND lost a good son and South Australia gained one of its best pioneers when Donald Gollan migrated in 1839. He was born near Inverness on January 11, 1815, and was brought up on his father's farm. He was married in 1838, and with his bride came out to Adelaide when officially the province was only three years old. Soon afterwards Mr. Gollan settled at Strathalbyn, and he became one of the most influential men in the south, mainly on account of his high sense of honor, his adherence to truth, and his delicacy and politeness towards those with whom he had dealings.

A southern newspaper credited him with the distinction of having named Strathalbyn, but the claim was quite without foundation. That honor was one which belonged to

the Rankine family. At any rate, there is no disputing the fact that Mr. Gollan, in conjunction with Mr. William Rogers, of Sander-grove, built the first house in Strathalbyn on the site where the Terminus Hotel now stands. Later he opened the house as an hotel, and continued the business until 1852. He had driven the first mail coach from Adelaide to Strath-albyn, and he built the first flour mill in the latter town. There his name is perpetuated by Gollan Crescent and Gollan Street, and also by the curiously christened Gol-Col-Hoop bridge over the River Angas. Messrs. Gollan, Col-man & Hooper were the three leading identities who secured the erection of that structure, and the residents showed their gratitude by bestowing the name indicated, which has never fallen into disuse.

After quitting the hotel business, Mr. Gollan, with his wife, took a trip to the land of his birth, and upon returning to South Australia entered upon pastoral pursuits. The Rev. Canon Poole says in his published reminiscences:—"I fancy somehow that old Donald Gollan was a man that, like Dogberry, had had 'losses,' but like that famous character 'had everything comfortable about him.' I only surmise this, for I was too young to be taken into his confidence even if, canny Scot as he was, he had any disposition to do so." Another writer said that Mr. Gollan was too open-handed to ever be a rich man. Without detracting in any way from his well-founded reputation for generosity, one would be nearer the mark in saying that the periodical reverses suffered by this grand old man of the south were due

largely to his lack of power to concentrate. Some of the choicest squatting properties in South Australia passed through his hands, but he was essentially a rover, and a man who liked to dabble in little places. After this lapse of time it is difficult to fix with certainty the chronological order of his pastoral ventures, but it is probable that Campbell House, on the lakes, was his first pastoral love. With the financial backing of Mr. R. Barr Smith he took over the lease of Campbell House from Duncan McFarlane, one of the founders of Mount Barker. It was then a cattle run. He tried unsuccessfully to pass on the lease to the father of Mr. G. G. Hackett, of Narrung, and then, against his wish, was compelled by legislation to purchase the property in the auction room. Subsequently he sold it to the Malcolm's, whose connection with the Lakes country will furnish the next pastoral pioneer sketch. Narrung station was taken up by the Hon. John Baker on a lease from the South Australian Company. That station, known originally as the Square Mile, was also forced into the auction room, and a memorable battle for its possession occurred between Messrs. Baker and Gollan, with the result that the handsome price, for those days, of £6 an acre was paid by the well-remembered legislator. Mr. Gollan then secured the Burnside estate in the Strathalbyn district, made a home there, and bred a good type of Merino sheep. It was only a small place in those days, and about the year 1874 it was sold to Mr. W. L. Marchant, for whom Douglas Gooch became manager. Mr. Marchant added to the area of Burnside by purchasing a number of farm holdings, and eventually the estate was acquired by the Government and cut up for closer settlement. Mr. Gollan next established himself at Point Sturt, on Lake Alexandrina, and proved the possibilities of the country for cattle and sheep breeding, but it remained for the subsequent owner, John Howard Angas, to make the place famous by reason of his great Shorthorn stud operations.

Tailm Bend, now a quickly rising railway junction on the River Murray, was once a sheep station in the hands of Donald Gollan. There is much diversity of opinion concerning the derivation of that puzzling name. It was known originally as Pine Camp. One story is that Tailm Bend, which marks a sharp turn in the River Murray, was a favorite spot for tailing cattle in the overland days. Allan MacFarlane, Senr., however, was firm in the contention that Tailm was "a miserable corruption of the aboriginal word 'thelim,' meaning, it was believed, 'bend.'"

In Mr. Gollan's days the run was known as Taleam, and it included a mile and a half of frontage to the river except for a 20-chain road that had been reserved for travelling stock. Mr. Gollan parted with it in J. H. Parr's auction room on February 26, 1869, together with a woolshed and 1,500 ewes, including 900 in lamb to pure Merino rams. The total area was 2,300 acres of freehold, and some of the sections were enclosed with a two-mile stone wall. At the same auction sale Mr. Parr unsuccessfully offered on Mr. Gollan's behalf 3,833 acres of freehold in the hundred of Burdett, with a frontage of seven miles to the east side of the Murray, four miles north of Thompson's Crossing. The head station was built in substantial fashion on section 152, and the stock yards were quite new. Four hundred cattle and 1,600 sheep were depastured. Another property which was temporarily in Mr. Gollan's occupation was that known as Binnie's Look-out, in the Tatiara country on the road to Bordertown from Wellington. This covered 14 square miles, which was held for rent and assessment amounting to only £7 per annum. Still another little proposition was a seven-mile block near Maria Creek, while on freehold land and country leased from the Education Council in the scrub towards Kingston Mr. Gollan depastured between 6,000 and 7,000 sheep. His operations also extended more deeply into the south-east. Murrabinna was taken up in the early forties by Thomas Wood and George Kendle. Later Mr. Gollan held it, and sold to Messrs. Hutchison and Dunn, who saw it cut up for agricultural purposes. Mr. Gollan had more country in the neighborhood of Jupiter Creek, in the Mount Lofty Ranges. His last purchase was Belvidere Farm, near Strathalbyn. The published obituary notice mentioned Belvidere Farm as the place of his death, but as a matter of fact he passed out at Point Sturt from heart failure following upon a severe accident.

When the Murray River Crossings Select Committee sat in 1864 one of the principal witnesses examined was Donald Gollan. He had become so inured to pioneering conditions that, in his evidence before this Committee, he opposed the proposal to erect a bridge over the Murray. He had known the crossing at Wellington for years before the causeway was built, and declared that the punt would be sufficient for stock crossing requirements for years to come. Much depended on the condition of the fences and on the drovers with the stock and the assistance they gave the punt men, who were very capable in preventing the animals from getting into the reeds and

swamps. Mr. Gollan went on to say that it was possible to cross 10,000 to 12,000 sheep daily, and he had taken as many as 75 head of cattle in the punt at one time, all of them being over two years old. Wellington was much better than Thompson's Crossing, because at the latter place he had had to pull weak cattle out of the bog with ropes. Mr. Gollan advocated raising the causeway at Wellington by 3 ft., but said that the greatest need was bigger reserves on the eastern side of the river although Messrs. J. & A. Cooke, the lessees of the country in the immediate vicinity of the punt, had been very liberal, and had refrained from impounding trespassing stock that had got out of hand. Mr. Gollan, together with Messrs. Baker, Davenport and Boord, subscribed money for the purpose of adding to the yard accommodation for stock at the punt. He said he had known four hooks two inches thick, which secured the punt, to be snapped by the weight of cattle rushing on to the ferry together. Cattle were going from the Lacedpede Bay district to Ballarat for marketing, and the provision at Wellington was sufficient for ten times the traffic then offering, was Mr. Gollan's concluding observation.

Mr. Gollan died on February 25, 1888, at the age of 73 years, and was interred in the Strathalbyn cemetery, where friends caused a monument to be erected over his grave. The wonderful esteem in which he was held was exemplified by the fact that the funeral cortege was made up of 80 vehicles, and 400 people were at the graveside. The "Southern Argus" said of him:—"He was universally loved and respected for his good qualities and kindness of heart and disposition; always ready to say a good word for or to any one, and ever seeking to serve others. Perhaps the best title one could give him was that of a thorough christian gentleman, one who did not talk much about religion, but who lived it and manifested its power in his daily life. It will not be saying too much when we assert that he scarcely had an enemy, and that to know him intimately was to admire and respect him."

Lady Way, wife of Chief Justice Way, was a niece of Donald Gollan, and lived with him and his wife for many years. He brought her father out to South Australia. Mr. Donald Gollan McCallum, of Meningie, brother of the Hon. Thomas McCallum, M.L.C., was named after the subject of this memoir, the two families having been on very friendly terms.

The portrait produced on the opposite page was kindly furnished by Mr. James Bell, an ex-Mayor of Strathalbyn.