

Site of the Saddlery of James Mahood

Shortly after 2.00pm on Monday 10 February 1879, the Editor of the *Jerilderie and Urana Gazette*, Samuel Gill, called at Mr James Mahood's saddlery to apprise him of the hold-up presently underway at the Bank of New South Wales, by members of the Kelly Gang. It would appear that Mahood was somewhat sceptical of Gill's narrative, so Gill left to raise the alarm in other quarters.

Mahood was left in no doubt as to the veracity of Gill's account when, later that day and shortly before 5.00pm, Steve Hart, in company with Thomas McDougall, proprietor of the Traveller's Rest Hotel, appeared at his saddlery shop demanding to see the saddles Mahood had for sale. On selecting one, Hart ordered Mr McDougall to pick it up and carry it back to the Traveller's Rest Hotel, where Steve Hart had tied up the unsaddled horse of Senior Constable Devine.

Apart from the money and a gun taken from the Bank of NSW, the police guns and a horse assigned to Senior Constable Devine, Mr Mahood was unfortunate to be the only citizen to have an item - a saddle - stolen by the Kelly Gang.

All drinks at the Royal Mail and Traveller's Rest Hotel were paid for by Ned.

Bank documents destroyed were mortgages and other documents held by the Bank as security. Unfortunately for the clients, the Bank's head office had copies, as did the Land Titles Office.

Within 14 days of the robbery, the banknotes were in circulation in Benalla, Wangaratta, and Beechworth, whilst Devine's horse was recovered from the upper reaches of the King River in Victoria.

On 25 July 1870, James Mahood became the registered owner of Lot 3, Section 22, in Jerilderie, in consideration of the sum of £14-17-4. At the same time, he also purchased Lot 4, immediately to the north, for the sum of £13-8-9.

In 1886 parts of Lots 3, and all of Lot 4 were either sold to the Presbyterian (Uniting) Church or the Presbyterian Minister, Reverend Dykes. In May 1887, the residual of Lot 3, on which Mahood's residence and saddlery shop were located, was sold to Donald S McLarty of Bundure Station, who lost no time in on-selling the land to William Elliott representing the Progress Association.

One of the responsibilities of the Progress Association was to procure for the town the services of a doctor and, later in 1887, the Association was successful in enticing Dr Archibald Robinson to commence practice from what was once the saddlery shop and residence of James Mahood.

In September 1891, Dr Robinson became the registered owner of the property, and although Dr Robinson died suddenly in 1914, the property remained in the ownership of the Robinson family until March 1958 when it was purchased by Mr Valentine Chapman.

For some 40 years Mr Chapman had conducted picture theatres in Jerilderie, and his original intention was to build a picture theatre on the property, alongside the rental homes. With the advent of television into Australia, Mr Chapman decided not to proceed with his proposal and, in June 1981, the property was sold to Mr Barry Creedy, who at that time owned the motel diagonally across from the flats.



Chapman's Flats

In comparing this photograph with that of James Mahood's saddlery shop, it is obvious that the saddlery shop was demolished and extension were added to the east (or right) of Mahood's sleeping quarters to provide the surgery for Dr Robinson's medical practice. Immediately behind this building was the separate kitchen, bathroom and laundry facilities. In later years they were two separate flats.

Jerilderie Shire Council acquired the property from Barry Creedy in 1988, designating it as community land, and then in 2010, after discussions with departmental officers and various stakeholders, relocated the Cenotaph to this site.



James Mahood

JAMES MAHOOD came to Australia from Ireland in 1862, and in the following year established a saddlery business in Warrnambool, Victoria.

After approximately three years he, along with a brother named William, decided to try his luck in the newly developing district of the Riverina.

In 1886 Mahood decided to return to the Warrnambool area and purchased "Blackwood Park" at Wangoon.

James Mahood died on 7 August 1906, at 60 years of age, and is buried in the Warrnambool cemetery.

As at 2007 "Blackwood Park" Wangoon is still in the ownership of the Mahood family.