

## **History of the Courthouse Hotel, Mr John Hanlon, and the “Hanlon Letter”**

On the Monday evening of 10 February, 1879, Mr Edwin Living (pronounced Ly-ving), the Teller at the Bank of New South Wales in Jerilderie, stopped at the Lauriston Hotel to rest his horse while on the way to Deniliquin to report the raid on Jerilderie by the Kelly Gang.

While at the hotel, Mr Living agreed to leave the ‘Jerilderie Letter’ with Mr Hanlon for him to copy and to be picked up upon his return. Mr Living continued on to Deniliquin, and was then summoned to Melbourne the following day.

On Thursday, 13 February, 1879 Mr Living called into the Lauriston Hotel on his return to Jerilderie from Melbourne, and persuaded Mr Hanlon to hand him both the “Jerilderie Letter” and the copy that Mr Hanlon had made. Much to the disgust of Mr Hanlon, the copy he had written out was never returned to him, as promised.

Mr Living died in Wangaratta in 1936, one branch of his family being bequeathed the original “Jerilderie Letter” and another branch of the family given the copy that had been made by Hanlon.

The “Hanlon Letter” was sold to the Federal Government for \$40,000, whilst the original “Jerilderie Letter” was eventually given to the State Library of Victoria.

In the late 1890’s, the Lauriston Hotel was destroyed by fire. Mr Hanlon sold the land to Mr Alex Landale of Wandook, and took a selection on Wargam Station which he named Paragon Park. In 1906, he was appointed Chairman of the Windouran Shire Temporary Council, and later elected as a Councillor of the first Windouran Shire Council.

Mr Hanlon retired to Wodonga, Victoria, in 1910, and died in 1923, his wife, two daughters and five sons surviving him.

The Courthouse Hotel continued to trade until 1922, when it was delicensed.

In 1919, a drover visiting Jerilderie, and who was staying at the Royal Mail Hotel, went to the Courthouse Hotel where he got into a card game with a person who was a boarder at the Albion Hotel (named Traveller’s Rest Hotel pre-1885).

The drover was displaying flu-like symptoms and, after the card game broke up, he returned to the Royal Mail Hotel where he was staying, while the Albion Hotel boarder returned to his place of residence.

The four patients to be admitted to the local hospital, where they later died from what was to be subsequently diagnosed as the Spanish Flu, were the drover, the boarder at the Albion Hotel, the wife of the licensee of the Courthouse Hotel, and an adult son of the licensee of the Albion Hotel.

Between 16 and 30 April 1919, the Jerilderie Municipality area was gazetted as an “infected area” and placed under quarantine.

This meant that anybody coming into the area and/or wanting to leave - for a distance exceeding 10 miles - had to have a medical clearance, or show evidence of inoculation.

The de-licenced Courthouse Hotel continued to be used for private accommodation and as a boarding house, until demolished in the early 1940’s



*Empire Day celebrations in front of the Courthouse Hotel, 1919.*



*Main street looking west, 1904. Courthouse Hotel on the left.*