

James Stephen Lynch

An Unsung Life

Part Six

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James Stephen Lynch, grazier from Bulgundra Dalgety was his now given title in records. Also listed as graziers from the same property were two of his brothers, John, the eldest and eleven years older than James and Michael just two years older than James. They were both married and had family of their own also living at Bulgundra. All three brothers were involved in local community activities and are mentioned in newspaper reports of sporting events, fetes, fundraisers and being on various committees associated with same. The Dalgety Rifle Club being very prominent in their social life and it seems they were quite proficient when it came to shooting contests as their names feature often in published results.

The Commonwealth of Australia was in its first decade and politics were often discussed and debated not least in the Monaro region which had very nearly become the new nations capital.

The Queanbeyan Age on Tuesday 12th March 1912, page 2, reported such an occasion showing that politics were well and truly alive and active in the Monaro region.

The column's title was:- "Mr. Owen Gilbert's Tour".

"Mr. Owen Gilbert, ex – M L A for Newcastle, accompanied by Mr. F. Warren, district organizer representing the Liberal Association, visited Berridale on the afternoon of Monday, 26th February 1912 and addressed a meeting at O'Brien's hotel, on the present state of politics in New South Wales."

Mr. Gilbert's journey covered seven different towns across the region. Besides Berridale these towns were Dalgety, Nimitybelle, Cathcart, Delegate, Bombala and finally nine days later he finished his tour at Queanbeyan.

The opening day after visiting Berridale on the afternoon of Monday 26th February, he pressed onwards to Dalgety where "the same evening Mr. Gilbert spoke at Quill's Hall, Dalgety. Mr. David Crisp presiding. The audience contained a fair sprinkling of ladies. A vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. James Lynch, and carried unanimously."

That latter quote from the newspaper report about the Dalgety meeting showed that James was an active political person within his home area.

There was another small item that caught my eye. Just eight words. "The audience contained a fair sprinkling of ladies."

In the quite long report of Owen Gilbert's tour of the seven towns and their meetings, the Dalgety meeting was the only one that was mentioned as having ladies present.

One question about James during this period of his unsung life was where, when and how did he meet his future wife Gertrude Eather who seemed to be living with her family in Belmore, Sydney.

There were many discussions and exchange of thoughts between myself and Eugene's granddaughter on this very subject and suddenly she met an old aunt and pressed her on any information she knew of about Gertrude. The old aunt passed on the gold plated news that Gertrude taught music in Dalgety.

What followed was a dozen searches in all different directions most of which seemed to lead to a brick wall.

The following scenario is the final outcome of much searching of old records pertaining to Gertrude, her occupation and her meeting with the Lynch family and James Stephen Lynch in particular.

Gertrude came from a very musical family. Eight sisters who all played piano, several who taught piano, most of them performed in productions for amateur theatre shows in Richmond where they all grew up. Gertrude herself was for some time the resident piano player who sat in front of the theatre when the old silent movies were being shown playing music that suited what was seen on the screen. A very versatile musical lady.

The catalyst in the Monaro region was a gentleman called "Charles Sherwin."

Charles Sherwin was a pioneer school teacher in the Monaro District.

(Glenbog, east of Nimmitabel) 17th April 1885.

(Myalla. West of Nimmitabel). 30th August 1888.

Dalgety. 11 March 1898.

Captains Flat. 1912.

Charles had married Johanna Roach in 1893.

Two of their children were born while they lived in Dalgety.

The photo on the left is of Charles Sherwin and his wife Johanna Roach.

The photo below is of Dalgety Public School early 1900's.





Charles Sherwin is standing back row centre.

Probably some Lynch children among the group.

“The Catholic Press” newspaper of Thursday 30th March 1911, on page 36 carried the following item in its positions vacant column.

“Wanted”, in a small town, a music teacher (piano) for advanced pupils. Must also be a good vocalist, and able to teach singing: A splendid opportunity for an energetic person. Apply to Chas. Sherwin. Dalgety.

Gertrude Elizabeth Eather made the move to Dalgety and began teaching music which was one of her great loves. Another interest that had got Gertrude’s attention was the new political system that was evolving after Federation and she very quickly had herself placed on the local Electoral Roll.

The New South Wales Electoral Roll of 1913, Division of Monaro, lists the following:-

Roll of Electors who vote at “Buckley’s Crossing” Polling Place.

No. 30.

Surname. Eather.

Christian name. Gertrude.

Sex. Female.

Residence. Dalgety.

Occupation. Music Teacher.

No. 73. Lynch. :- Amy Lydia. :- F. :- Bulgundra. :- Domestic Duties.

No. 74.. Lynch. :- Elizabeth Ann. :- F. :- Bulgundra. :- Domestic Duties.

No. 75. Lynch. :- James. :- M.:- Bulgundra. :- Grazier.

No. 76. Lynch. :- John. – M. :- Bulgundra. :- Grazier.

No. 77. Lynch. :- Joseph Moore. :- M. :- Bulgundra. :- Labourer.

No. 78. Lynch. :- Michael. :- M. :- Bulgundra. :- Grazier.

As the above extracts from the Roll of Electors who vote at “Buckley’s Crossing” Polling Place shows, Gertrude Eather and James Lynch plus the extended Lynch family were all living in the same area however the proof of interaction between the Lynch family and Gertrude Eather was to follow with the sighting of the following item from a local newspaper.

“The Manaro Mercury and Cooma and Bombala Advertiser”.

Friday 7th November 1913. Page 2. “Local and General News.”

The results of the examination in connection with the Sydney College of Music held in Dalgety on 20th October are as follows:-

Violin:-

Pauline and Oscar Crisp, higher advanced, (honours).

George Crisp, higher junior, (1st class pass.) (Pupils of Miss May Boylson. Matong.)

Amy Lynch, higher, (1st class pass.) (Pupil of Miss Eather. Dalgety.)

Kathleen Crisp, lower initiatory, (honours.) (Pupil of Miss Long. Jiminbuan.)

Piano:-

Pauline Crisp, certificated pianist. (1st class pass.)

Oscar Crisp, senior, (1st class pass.) (Pupils of Mrs George Crisp. Matong.)

Myra Lynch, higher intermediate. (1st class pass.)

Josie Pendergast, higher junior. (Honours.)

Ines Keating, higher initiatory. (1st class pass.)

Nellie Liddle, lower initiatory. (Pass.) (All pupils of Miss Eather.)

Kathleen Crisp, lower junior. (Honours.) (Pupil of Miss Long.)

Singing:-

Josie Pendergast, and Amy Lynch. higher initiatory. (Honours.)

Myra Lynch and Ines Keating, (1st class pass.) (Pupils of Miss Eather.)

Theory examination:-

Oscar Crisp, lower intermediate. (Pass.)

Leo Crisp, higher initiatory. (Honours.) (Pupils of Mrs George Crisp. Matong.)

Gertrude Eather was listed as from Dalgety while the other teachers were from Matong and Jiminbuan. These were outlying properties and quite often the family employed their own personal tutor to add music to the family education.

As well as teaching piano Gertrude also had pupils learning violin and singing and passing their exam grades. A very versatile musical lady and it appears much appreciated by the Lynch family.

Amy Lynch was the daughter of Michael and Lydia Lynch while Myra Lynch was the daughter of John and Elizabeth Lynch, James Stephen Lynchs' older brothers. There was a piano at the homestead at Bulgundra as was noted when there was a final clearing sale in 1928.

A very talented, versatile, independent lady of those times was Gertrude and James had spent a decade in China with lord knows what range of unusual experiences that would have entailed reactions that were not known in the Monaro region. It is just an assumption, however James could have been asked to travel into Dalgety, collect Gertrude and transport her back to Bulgundra for the music lessons the girls were having. Whatever, there was a friendship that eventuated between James and Gertrude and developed.

Times were changing. W.W.1. was about to erupt. When it did the Australian political fathers decided all able bodied citizens should proceed to the other side of the world. The fiasco of Gallipoli and the losses that went with it coupled with the coming western front demanded more recruits. By 1916 there were many drives to encourage more men to put their hand up.



When Anzac Day was first remembered on 25th April 1916 the various States of the Australian Commonwealth had functions that could not be called celebrations but seemed to be campaigns for more recruitment.

The copy of a poster to the left is from the Queensland Government and its promotion for more to join up.

Each State had its own promotions and there was something of a downturn in new recruits as the small

snippets of news telling of the losses that had been recorded in the Allied Forces reached home.

There were more vitriolic outbursts by the politicians and press on to the males still at home. Mental and peer pressure were being used on those who still remained. It would have been a very testing personal time.

Six weeks before this first Anzac Day, on the 14th March 1916 James Stephen Lynch presented himself at Berridale at a local recruitment drive, passed the medical and was signed in as a member of the First A.I.F.

There is a report in “The Manaro Mercury and Cooma and Bombala Advertiser” dated Friday 17th March 1916, Page 2, that lists the names of those who applied to enlist and where from and also those who passed and those who failed the medical exam.

There was also a list published in “The Goulburn Evening Penny Post” on Tuesday 2nd May 1916, page 4. Under the heading, “Recruiting in Goulburn” It carried the names of 34 men whom it stated had been enrolled at the drill hall, one of whom was James Lynch of Dalgety.

James and the other recruits had their medical examinations checked and ok’d by a senior medical officer before being detailed to their units. James was listed as joining B Company, 55th Battalion.

It was not only James who had departed from Dalgety, Gertrude Eather had also moved on as can be noted by the following advertisement placed in a newspaper at that time.

From “The Catholic Press” Thur. 8th June 1916, under “Situations Vacant.”

Wanted. Music teacher for Dalgety. Subs. Piano. Singing. Painting. P.N’work. Good salary. Apply. Mr. M. Lynch. Dalgety P.O.

The Lynch family had need of a new music teacher. Gertrude had moved back to Belmore to be with her sister Theresa (Tess) and her mother, Ellen, and other members of the family who would come and spend time at “Yabbi”, now the family home for the Eathers.

As recorded in Part one of this very much “unsung life” of James Lynch just two weeks before he departed for active service on the Western Front with his unit, the 55th Battalion and a very uncertain future James Stephen Lynch and Gertrude Elizabeth Eather were married at the church which stood just behind the family home “Yabbi”.

Gertrude Lynch married for just two weeks to James Lynch then faced a very drawn out wait pondering how her new “hubby” was faring half a world away in the midst of a conflict that seemed to be never ending.

James' war service is covered in Part one and the aftermath will have to wait for the next small installment of his very "unsung life."