THE BAD BOYS OF BANNOCKBURN

By Ken McNaughton

After I left Melbourne in 1964 I continued my search for family history in Scotland and England and did not return to Melbourne until 1983. Early in 2014 I re-read an entry in my Melbourne diary for that visit:

<div align="center">

McNaughton
2 bachelor brothers
acres + acres
back of Bannockburn
"STRAUCHTON VALE"

</div>

Apparently I made notes after hearing this story but did not record who told me. I was also told the brothers kicked up a ruckus when they visited Geelong.
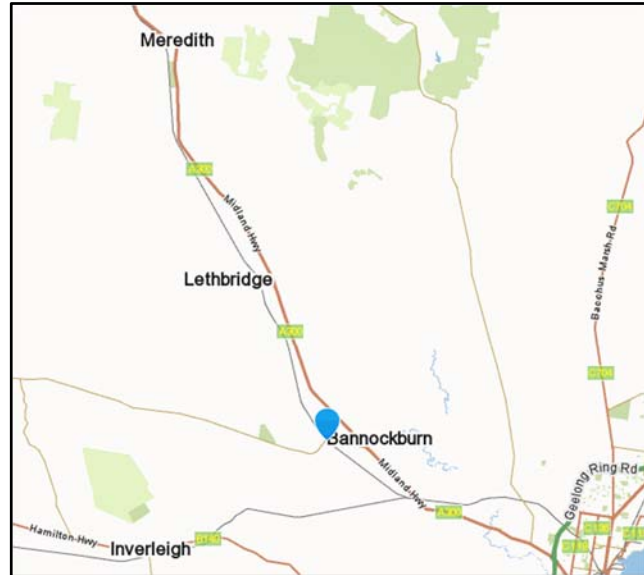
When I emailed the *Geelong Family History Group* (GFHG), John Stewart replied, saying the property/area referred to would be Staughton Vale. I was delighted that my phonetic spelling had been so close and that there really is such a place—a rural suburb 38 km (23 mi) north of Geelong. John sent me a link to the online index of the GFHG where there are ten pages of one-line references to "McNaughton." Many of the references are to obscure books, which may be held in the *Geelong Heritage Centre*, but would be hard for me to find in the U.S. There was one reference to McNaughton brothers, dated 1 March 1917, about a fire in Werribee. There were two pages listed in a book by Derek Beaurepaire, pp. 56 and 170 [1]. There was a reference to McNaughton's Bridge and to McNaughton's Hotel and ten references to its proprietor, Andrew Macnaughton, about whom I have written separately [2]. And there was one reference to the McNaughton Family in another book (Ref. 3, p. 47).

Bannockburn, 23 km (14 mi) northwest of Geelong, was founded in the 1850s and is assumed to be named after the 14th century battle site in Scotland, perhaps by Scottish immigrants. It grew as a coaching stop during the 1850s and 1860s when gold was shipped from the Ballarat goldfields to the port of Geelong. A post office opened on 18 May 1863 was renamed Leigh Road in 1873, Wabdallah in 1875 and renamed Bannockburn in 1892.

In my diary there was a reference to my second cousin, Bill McNaughton, the last of the McNaughtons to run an independent hardware store in Melbourne. I met Bill for the first time in 1983 and he visited me at my parent's home in Burwood. Had he told me about the McNaughton brothers? I didn't have his email address but I telephoned him on 10 March 2014. He did not know anything about the brothers but on March 24th he and his wife Margaret sent me copies of three pages from Beaurepaire's book, pp. 55, 167 and 170, with information about an early McNaughton settler in this area.

Figure 1. Bannockburn is 23 km (14 miles) NW of Geelong.

Duncan McNaughton and his wife, Margaret (née Cameron) left Inverness, Scotland, in 1852 on board the ship *Clifton*. In 1855 he was a blacksmith in Inverleigh, 28 km (17 mi) west of Geelong (Fig. 1). At his forge, Duncan was the local man to see about fabricating and molding farm implements. The initial settlers in this area included George Frederick Read Jr. (1817-54), who had a [cattle?] run at Cargerie near Meredith on the Midland Highway between Ballarat and Geelong (Fig. 2). When the initial settlers departed this area there was a period of dairy farming, then a new style of Merino sheep breeder moved in to make better use of the land.

My friend Davie McNaughtan in Glasgow found an entry for this family in the 1851 Scottish census, the year before they migrated to Australia. They lived in the parish of Kilmonivaig at No. 11 Unachan (?) Street. Kilmonivaig is also a village, situated close to the southeast end of Loch Lochy in Spean Bridge, Inverness-shire. Spean Bridge takes its name from the Highbridge over the River Spean on the road between Fort William and Fort Augustus, in the Great Glen. Duncan, aged 41, is listed as a blacksmith; his wife, Margaret, was 37. Their three sons were George 13, Donald 10 and Duncan 2. There were two daughters, Cathrine and Isabella, both 4, perhaps twins. We will see how the names of Scottish towns reappear around Geelong, possibly influenced by this family.

Duncan and Margaret's eldest son, George, was one of several new settlers with small sheep holdings. He settled at *Glenspean*, which was part of Read's Cargerie estate. George McNaughton was renowned for his cheese-making and was a Meredith shire councilor for thirty years. The *Glenspean* homestead was later owned by A. P. Bell, a Geelong wool-broker and was purchased in 1924 by Neil Wilson Cameron. Neil Cameron Jr. took over *Glenspean* and made cheese, like old George McNaughton did, but from ewe's milk. My cousin Bill McNaughton is a close friend of the Neil Cameron family and has followed their involvement with cheese-making over the years.

George sounds rather too responsible to be one of two rambunctious McNaughton bachelor brothers. But what of Duncan's other two sons? Duncan Jr. settled at *Lochaber* in Inverleigh and Donald settled at *Fernhill* at Meredith. Beaurepaire doesn't tell us anything else about these two, so I like to think we have found the culprits.

The first school in this area opened at Woodburn Creek in 1873. It closed in 1908 and operated in conjunction with schools in Bamganie and Cargerie before moving to She Oaks and being burned to the ground. A new school opened in 1935, closed in 1945 and reopened in 1953. The

McNaughton family provided two acres of land for the purpose. In 1971 the State Government built another school but this too closed.

A branch of the Geelong Regional Libraries opened in Bannockburn on 5 May 2012. I called Jemma on 9 April 2014. She called in a copy of Ref. 3 and arranged to email me copies of pages 36 and 47. On page 36 it says "The worst, or at least the most damaging, flood occurred on 12th and 13th September, 1880. The Ceres bridge had to be lengthened by 60 feet as a result. While Pollocksford, Baker's, Russell's, Fallon's, Native Creek, McNaughton's, McCallum's, Sutherland's Creek and Bruce's Creek bridges were all badly damaged."

Figure 2. Cargerie, Bamganie, Meredith, She Oaks and Staughton Vale are north of Bannockburn.

Page 47 is about the heritage of the shire. "There are many old families, some of which have been in the Bannockburn Shire for over 100 years. Few municipalities have the long line of family heritage that Bannockburn has." The 1980/81 voter's rolls show the numbers of people residing in the shire and their family generations of residence. Bannockburn was older than Barwon, Meredith or Steiglitz, with 37 of the 2nd generation, 22 of the 3rd generation and 5 of the 4th generation. Some of the people in the 4th generation had children in the 5th generation; eleven family names were mentioned. McNaughton was mentioned among 45 family names in the 3rd generation, who presumably had children in the 4th generation when this information was obtained in 1981.

For over thirty years I was haunted by this story about the two McNaughton bachelor brothers and their wild adventures in Geelong. It was such a pleasure to finally get a bit closer to them. Are there any relatives reading this who are happy to own up to this heritage?

REFERENCES
1. Beaurepaire, Derek, "The Stepping Stone: A History of the Shire of Bannockburn," Golden Plains Shire Council, 1995, 211 pp.
2. McNaughton, Ken, "Andrew Macnaughton: Geelong's First Publican," Port Phillip Pioneers Group Newsletter, 13 March 2014.

3. "Shire of Bannockburn: From Pioneers to Presidents," Shire of Bannockburn, 1981.

NOTES
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