

Bunding Creek Avenel

Frank Bunting

We can be pretty sure that Bunding Creek is named after my GG grandfather, William Bunting (1836-1904). How so?

William Bunting was born at 'Crewcat', Kilmore parish, County Armagh and baptised nine days later, on 28 May 1836 at St Aidan's Kilmore. As a 16 year old teenager he sailed to Australia in 1852 with a few friends. This escape from Ireland's recent "Potato Famine" was funded by a hefty cash inheritance from Anthony Bunting, a wealthy Dublin musician and brother of Ireland's famous musician Edward Bunting. Edward (1773-1843) is acclaimed as the saviour of Irish music. He was also foster brother to the United Irishman leader, Henry Joy McCracken, and is worth a Google! Anthony Bunting (1765-1851) was William's grandfather. By 1852 William's father John Bunting, a farmer, was suddenly rich.

'Money' is the neighbouring townland to 'Crewcat'. It held the Atkinson family seat where **Charlotte Atkinson** was born. The Atkinsons also attended St Aidan's. They were acquaintances and close neighbours to the Buntings and their farms may have abutted. Charlotte Atkinson, of a similar age to John Bunting of Crewcat, married a wealthy German who was a recent immigrant into the Kilmore district. He was (Baron) Heinrich Ludwig von Stieglitz. "Henry" and Charlotte then moved to the linen industry town of Cookstown on the **Ballinderry River** in Tyrone where they raised their family. After Henry's death, Charlotte and several adult sons moved to the new colony of Tasmania. Then, in 1835 after being unsuccessful in securing a generous land holding, the von Stieglitz family along with some stock sailed with John Batman to Port Phillip. They were amongst the earliest group of Port Phillip district settlers.

After a few years in the Geelong area, the von Stieglitz brothers (with matriarch Charlotte) moved north. In 1838 two of them took up adjacent squatter "runs" on the Werribee River, which they named "Ballan, aka Ballen" and "Ballinee". The town of Ballan, a few kilometres to the south of those runs, is named after them. A third brother squatted near the gold town now called "Steiglitz" south of Ballan. Today on the road north from Ballan to the von Stieglitz homestead on Ballan run, you pass by a cluster of houses at "**Bunding**". Ballan and Avenel are the only places in Victoria, if not Australia, where the geographic name Bunding exists. I guess William pronounced his surname as "Bunding" in his Armagh brogue, as there is strong evidence he worked in both places!

It seems that young William Bunting, on arrival to Victoria 17 Sep 1852, soon headed to the von Stieglitz family at Ballan – no doubt with a letter in his pocket addressed to Charlotte from his father John. William's cousin from Armagh, Sarah Taylor, followed William to Ballan and married David Mairs near there in 1857. But fate had intervened, possibly even before William could arrive in Ballan. Charlotte died on 22 Nov 1852, a month after William's arrival on the "John Pratt". Her son John Lewis von Stieglitz had sold up his 16,000 acre Ballanee run that year and returned to Ireland. By Mar 1853 **Charles Hugh Lyon** and a partner held the Ballanee lease. William may have worked on either Ballanee or Ballan.

There was a small gentleman-grazier friendship group in Victoria at that time involving **Charles H Lyon (Ballanee)**, **Joseph Anderson (Mangalore run)** and **David Lloyd Jones (Avenel run)**, as documented in a book by one of that group, **Hubert De Castella**, a French squatter. C H Lyon and D L Jones became brothers-in-law, as each married daughters of Joseph Anderson of Mangalore. D L Jones married **Fairlie (aka Fairline) Anderson** and they lived at Avenel run. Via the Lyon-Jones

connection, William Bunting apparently moved from Ballan to Avenel in the mid-1850s probably when D L Jones moved from running cattle to sheep at Avenel around then. By 1857, William had moved up Hughes Creek to Tarcombe station.

He was recorded as working at Tarcombe as sheep manager in his 1857 marriage record where he had also declared that “**Jones**” was his forgotten mother’s maiden name. William’s son, another William and my greatgrandfather, also worked on Tarcombe and on other “stations” nearby, before moving to Euroa. He named a daughter Edith **Fairlene (aka Fairline)** Bunting, my grandmother - likely in honour of Mrs Fairlie/Fairline Jones. By the 1860s Irish William owned a house just south of the cemetery at Longwood. But by 1870 his marriage had broken down and he moved to Nagambie where he seems to have become a riverboat man. He is later recorded several times at Wahgunyah, end of the Echuca riverboat run on the Murray River. He died, estranged from his family, across the river at Corowa hospital in 1904 and is buried there.

Irish William had two other sons, Alfred (Ruffy, then Creightons Creek) and John (Longwood). John’s grandson was Edward John (Jack) Bunting. Jack’s father, Brymore (Brum) Bunting, ran the Longwood general store. Jack topped his year at Euroa High School, headed off to Melbourne University and became very successful in life. He climbed to be head of Australia’s public service, Private Secretary to several prime ministers and ultimately was Australia’s High Commissioner in London. As Private Secretary, Sir Edward John Bunting served his close friend Sir Robert Menzies and was his biographer. Here they are at the MCG enjoying a test match.



On the other side of the coin, William Bunting (junior) of Euroa married Elizabeth Anderson Gilbert, later Cross (her step father’s name). Probably to the horror of Sir John’s elders, Elizabeth’s first cousin Edward Griffith married Gracie Kelly, Ned’s little sister. I genetically matched their Griffith descendants who now take care of Ned Kelly’s grave at Greta cemetery near Wangaratta..