



The McLaurin Family Cemetery

One of the first white men to see the Mathoura district was James McLaurin who fortunately for us left a record of his early experiences here. In his memoir he recorded that he first travelled through the Mathoura area in 1840 as part of an overland party taking cattle to Adelaide. The party crossed the Edward River: "The first time white men had crossed it and camped on the Gulpa Creek near Red Bank" James McLaurin wrote. From Red Bank (Mathoura) the party traveled south, picking up the Murray near where, two years later, Henry Lewes founded Moria Station. In 1845 James and three brothers, Alexander, Archibald and Robert, returned to the area and took up Gerapna and Cornella stations. These had originally been settled by the Cropper family but had been abandoned following a series of attacks by indigenous inhabitants of the region.

Augustus Morris, who managed Benjamin Boyd's Deniliquin empire, had then stocked the runs with cattle but when applied for and were granted leases, Morris was ordered to remove his stock. The McLaurin family arrived in Australia in 1838. James was about 16 at the time. After working for a year in the upper Hunter region he and Alexander signed on with Ephram Howe who was getting together a large mob of cattle to drive to Adelaide. This was only a year after Joseph Hawdon had made the first overland trek there and only a handful of droving parties had explored the route by the time Howe's party set off.



Original Cornella homestead

The McLaurin boys continued working for Howe until he became insolvent. One of the Howe's scattered properties was Moroco station about half way between Mathoura and Tocumwal and James, who often moved stocked between there and several stations south of the river.

Howe's empire crashed at about the time the Croppers walked off Cornella. James wasted no time applying for the lease. After hearing the Croppers had left James said "I then applied for the runs to Commissioner Bingham and after some months by paying 10 Pounds got the licence. Bingham held a court at Hennessy's on the Murray before we could take possession and Philips and Graves were allowed to take possession of Warbrecon on the same day, they being the first to take it up." The Hennessy family at the time held the land around Tocumwal.

The aborigines continued to take stock from the McLaurins until about 1848 but never on the scale of the Cropper's losses. In 1848 two McLaurin brothers, Archibald and Alexander left Cornella and operated a hotel at Seymour for several years but eventually returned to the family property. The following year James and younger brother Robert took a large mob of cattle to Melbourne, reaching their destination in little over a week. Their stock topped the market with the highest prices seen in years.

In 1853 James married but his wife Ann died the following year. She was just 21 and is believed to have been the first person buried in the McLaurin family cemetery. The cemetery is close to where the family built their first homestead. In 1855 James began building a flour mill at Albury and was in Tumut when his mother died suddenly in 1856. At about the same time his father, aged 70, suffered a fall from a horse while rounding up cattle. He broke his hip but lived to celebrate his 84th birthday. In 1855 the family brought Moroco Station, east of Cornella and Derulamein to the north. Five years later James moved to the Albury area where he remained for many years.

Monumental Inscriptions, McLaurin Cemetery

Sacred to the memory of James W McLaurin, Died at Moroco, 28th August 1900.
Aged 52 years "Thy trials ended; Thy rest is won"

Sacred to the memory of Mary the beloved wife of James William McLaurin, died at
Moroco, July 28 1897. Aged 46 years. "Thy ways, not mine, oh Lord"

Sacred to the memory of Archibald, third son of A and E McLaurin, who died 19
January 1888, aged 61 years. "Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your
Lord doth come" Matt. 24.42

In memory of Sarah Ann Taylor, second daughter of Alexander and Elizabeth
McLaurin, who died 21 July 1880, aged 26 years. "The Lord gave and the Lord hath
taken away, Blessed be the Name of the Lord."

Sacred to the memory of Elizabeth, wife of Alexander McLaurin, who died 8 May
1886, aged 64 years. "For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to
come." Hebrews 13.14

Erected by Elizabeth McLaurin, to the memory of her beloved husband, Alexander McLaurin, who died at Moroco, on the 2nd
of January 1872, in the 49th year of his age. Deeply regretted by his family and a large circle of friends. "Jesus said unto her 'I
am the resurrection and the light. He that believeth in Me, though he were dead yet shall he live."

Sacred to the memory of James McLaurin Senr. who departed this life December 22 1864, in the 84th year of his age,
leaving a large family to mourn their loss. "Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the light. He that believeth in Me, though
he were dead yet shall he live and whomsoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.'" John 11 25-26 "Be ye also
ready"

Sacred to the memory of Mary, the beloved wife of James McLaurin Senr. who departed this life July 26 1856, aged 73
years, leaving a numerous family to mourn her loss.

Sacred to the memory of Robt. McGibbon McLaurin who died 24th February 1874, aged 47 years. "We believe that Jesus died
and rose again. Even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

Sacred to the memory of Ann, beloved wife of James McLaurin Junr. who departed this life Decr. 21st 1853 aged 21
years, leaving a sincerely devoted husband and a large circle of friends to mourn her untimely loss.

Sacred to the memory of Francis Perrott who died at Moroco, February 5 1870.

Francis Perrott worked for the McLaurin family. There are several other people buried in unmarked graves within the
cemetery enclosure. Their names are not known but may include the following whose deaths on Cornalla were recorded
in the *Pastoral Times*: William Jones (died August 1885), John Van Palt (d. 1877) and a man named Zimmerman who
drowned in the Edward river in October 1879.

Researched and written by David Joss for the Mathoura Visitor Information and Business Centre

Contact us

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