

When the young men failed to select homestead blocks, Messrs. John Horton and John Crow selected living areas on "Old Bostobrick" and an adjoining area called "Cut Bank Creek" and, in conjunction, worked their holdings raising horses and cattle. The stockyards they built nearer the road are still used for station work today. Horton was killed from a fall off his horse near Little Murray Bridge and the property was eventually sold.

The current owner of "Bostobrick", Glynne Tosh, has written that it has been long held in her family's history that "*horses from The Australian Light Horse Brigade were turned out into the Guy Fawkes when it was part of "Broadmeadows Station" many years before it became a National Park.*" Although details and dates have passed with previous generations, this oral history has been recounted by others. It is documented that successive owners of the property continued the breeding of cattle and horses on "Bostobrick".

Wrights of "Wongwibinda"

In January of 1885, Mr A.A. Wright bought a station called "Kangaroo Hills" from Mr Withycombe, in the Northern Tableland ranges between Guyra and Ebor on the western side of the Guy Fawkes River.

On the day he bought the property, Mr Wright wrote in his station diary of a stallion called 'Eclipse' and his 15 mares and also mentioned 15 geldings, "these being the working horses on the station." 'Eclipse' is recorded as being in the pedigree of 'Cecil', one of the primary stallions who had so much influence on the bloodlines of the stock horses in the Hunter Valley and the New England and noted as a foundation sire of the Australian Stock Horse Society. Many of the Wright horses traced back to 'Radium' who stood at stud at "Kunderang Station" for much of his life, was the famous son of 'Cecil', and at least thirteen of his sons appear the Australian Stock Horse pedigrees. Some horses had a double cross or were line bred to this foundation bay sire. ("Line-breeding", where horses carried a common ancestor in their pedigrees are bred together, should be considered distinct from the term "in-breeding" which is the production of offspring by parents more closely related than the average.)

Around 1900, Mr Wright stood a 'Saladin' horse named 'Leo' at his property "Dyamberin" and the well-known sire, 'Forest King' in the 1920s thought to have also carried 'Saladin' blood. Over the years, their stallion list had been based on Thoroughbred breeding with influences introduced from Cob, Pony and Arab horses.

In one of his internationally famous books, Mr Maurice Wright records: “My great grandfather, Phillip Wentworth Wright, came to the Hunter Valley, NSW in 1838 from England, where he established “Bickham Station” near Murrurundi and commenced breeding horses, Hereford cattle and fine wool Merino sheep. The cattle and horses were purchased mainly from George Wyndham of ‘Dalwood’ near Maitland, who had imported them from his family’s studs in England about 1827. Many of the ‘Dalwood’ horses apparently sprang from the Petworth Stud, the biggest and most successful stud in England at that time.”

In 1908, the large station along the Guy Fawkes River was divided into two and eventually passed to his grandsons: Mr Owen Wright on “Wongwibinda” of 12,000 acres, and Mr Maurice Wright on “Dyamberin” of 15,000 acres. The properties were bounded by the Guy Fawkes National Park and share boundaries with two others, and most of the country is some 3,500 ft above sea level with a number of valleys and ravines. Horses were a necessity to the Wright Families in the last century as they still are to property holders of the area today, due to the rugged and steep nature of the country.

Mr Maurice Wright went on to gain an international reputation as an exponent of the Jeffery Method of horse handling. He was a Foundation Member, Honorary Life Member and Patron of the Australian Stock Horse Society and the Australian Bushmen’s Carnival Association. The ‘Dyamberin’ name has been associated with a history of well-bred and well-performed stock horses throughout the country. Many of their horses trace back to ‘Radium’, famous son of ‘Cecil’, and many were line bred.

The lines of ‘Cecil’, ‘Bruce’ and ‘Saladin’ overlap considerably. ‘Saladin’ and ‘Cecil’ stood at the same stud. The chestnut sire ‘Cecil’ was thought to have been foaled in 1899. His descendents appear in the pedigrees of 90 of the 305 foundation stallions of the Australian Stock Horse Society Stud Book and is also highly represented by his sons ‘Radium’, ‘Serene’, ‘Giro’ and ‘Eclipse II’. Many horses have been line-bred to ‘Cecil’, his sons or grandsons.

In the days of its very foundation, the Australian Stock Horse Society defined its horses as follows: “Approximately 60% of the ASH stallions overlap in carrying Thoroughbred, Arab, Quarter Horse and half-Thoroughbred blood. Almost all of the remaining 40% are of specific Stock Horse bloodlines which have been developed in the Hunter Valley and New England Range areas of NSW since the beginning of this century, or possibly earlier.

In addition to having a reputation for excellent horses, “Dyamberin” had Hereford and Merino studs, and the cattle may be traced back to Mr George Wyndham’s first imports of Herefords to mainland Australia.

Mr Wright recounted an incident which was recorded in the historical documents of Wyndham about the feat of one horse which escaped and travelled approximately 360 miles in three days to return to his property 'Bukkulla Station' near Inverell: "In those days, there were very few fences across the land and, where they did exist, their construction was of timber only. This meant that if the horse was inclined to jump, he could be anywhere, especially as most of these fences were only a little over three feet high." His account reaffirms that many horses which bolted into the rugged country of the Northern Tablelands were totally unhindered by unfenced properties and could travel great distances.

"There is very little known documentation of the breeding of the early Australian horses. However, it is known that the broad base of the breed was English thoroughbred and the Waler was developed from these horses. These Walers became famous in the last quarter of the Nineteenth Century as cavalry chargers and remount horses for the huge Indian army."

"It is a great pity that there are so few records kept of the breeding of the early Australian horses. This particularly applies to the Wyndham family, whose owners must have had, through their relatives in England, access to some of the cream of British bloodstock. This, of course, was borne out by the fact that they bred some of the top racehorses in NSW early in the nineteenth century, not to mention hundreds of general purpose hacks, stockhorses and buggy horses."

"To add to the confusion, a shipload of thoroughbred mares from England, which was consigned to the Government of New South Wales from the British Government, arrived in Sydney without their pedigrees. These papers had been consigned on another ship which was lost without trace at sea. Consequently, the breeding of these mares always remained a mystery and they were known only as 'Government mares'."

During the 213 years which have elapsed since the First Fleet, the Australian Stock Horse has evolved as a type and the bloodlines referred to in the early days of the Northern Tablelands formed the very cornerstones of the Australian Stock Horse Society. Of the first 305 A.S.H. stallions to appear as the main line in their Stud Book, 'Cecil', 'Saladin', 'Bruce', 'Phalaris', 'Blandford' and 'Gainsborough' are recorded. They have been known by generations of local history to be found in the Northern Tablelands Australian Brumbies.

In one of the earliest articles to be written on the formation of the Australian Stock Horse Society, the importance of our local bloodlines was credited: "Approximately 60% of the stallions have Stud Book Pony in their pedigrees within the four generations recorded. Almost all of the remaining 40% are of specific Stock Horse bloodlines

which have been developed in the Hunter Valley and New England Range areas of NSW since the beginning of this Century, or possibly earlier.”

When such an author and breeder of impeccable credentials as the late Maurice Wright states that early bloodline documentation was lost by the Government of the day for a large portion of the Colony’s foundation mares, latterly dispersed throughout the settled regions, it seems the task set of proving bloodlines under these circumstances has been made impossible.

Mr Maurice Wright, a renowned horseman and writer, was a foundation member of the Australian Stock Horse Society in the early 1970s. He gained international respect for his instruction on the Jeffery Method of handling horses. The Wrights’ property is still in family hands today and borders three Northern Tablelands National Parks, including the Guy Fawkes.

The Cobley Family — “Razorback”

The Brumbies that ran in The Gulf Country were greatly prized, being of good type and very saleable. Mr Ted Cobley spent a lot of time running the horses in the 1930s and 40s. His Aborigine mother reared the large Cobley Family on her own. The family lived a more or less subsistence lifestyle at “Razorback” near Newton Boyd where they trapped rabbits and, as soon as they were old enough, the boys worked on stations. Ted Cobley had a place called “Meathold” in the Chaelundi area and later acquired the lease on “Pine Creek” in 1937.

During his youth, Mr Cobley built trapyards at the mouth of Kitty’s Creek and used the old Plains Yards, about 600 yards from his trapyards, to hold the captured Brumbies. These were the horses which ranged along the Little River and the Mitchell, now known Sara River.

Timbs Family — “Ferndale”

Mr P.J. Timbs son, Kevin, told of the time his father moved from Grafton to “Ferndale” at Bald Nob around 1908. His father was a horse dealer and supplied remounts during the First World War but the property was sold during the Depression after many difficult years when his sons were away on active service. Mr Kevin Timbs remembered chasing brumbies on the Mitchell River in the 1930s when he and his brothers would take it in turns running them until they could trap them. The biggest mob caught was 30 but some horses were found to have bad temperaments and were simply too wild to be successfully handled. At the time, he remembered seeing at least four or five mobs in different areas “and a particularly handy black stallion.” When

he did finally capture the black stallion, the horse fretted and later died. The horses usually ran in mobs of five to seven, and less often from twelve to twenty. Anything smaller were often all colts, bachelor groups who had been chased out of the mob.

Ellis — Dec. 1920s

In a interview by Mr Graham Baldwin, Mr Joe Meehan, a retired grazier who now lives in Dorrig, contributed oral history regarding the Brumbies running in The Gulf Country in the 1920s.

William Ellis, born in 1858, suddenly dropped dead off his horse down at "Combolo". in 1928 while running Brumbies in as replacement horses. His body was packed out on horseback and laid out at The Bluff while the men awaited a horse-drawn hearse to collect him for internment in the Armidale Cemetery. However, during this tragedy, the gate was left open on the yards and the party's stock horses escaped to mix with the Brumbies. They were never recaptured. Mr Meehan clearly recalled of the incident as "My father, Andrew Meehan, and my Uncle Dolf Ellis, were both there at the time and have told the story to me many times." Mr Meehan added: "I remember from over 60 years ago, riding down into what we knew as The Gulf country from the western side, with my cousin, Ambrose Ellis. My father warned me not to take my stallion down because the Brumbies would smell it and try to kill him, and the fence would not stop them."

The Waughs — "Guy Fawkes River Station"

Described as the most colourful and progressive landowners to come to the Plateau, the Waugh Family purchased "Guy Fawkes River Station" in 1888-89. The property was bought from Major Parke's daughter, Charlotte, the only child of the original settler. The area purchased was 40,000 acres which was an average station size of properties on the Plateau at that time. It adjoined "Broadmeadows Station" at "Combolo" and the western boundary was at the present village of Ebor.

The Waughs had a Shorthorn cattle herd numbering some 4,000 head bred from local blood and introduced stock. Their fattened bullocks were recorded as having often taken First Prize at the Royal Shows in Sydney and Melbourne. David ('Pardy') Brown drove the Station's bullock team and Tom Layton worked as Head Stockman.

Historical documents record document that "*Horse breeding was a lucrative business with the Indian Army being a very big client at that time. "Guy Fawkes River" had two stallions and bred extensively for the overseas remount market.*"

The Depression of the 1890s saw the steady growth of bank, company and overseas ownership of Australian pastoral properties in the last decades of the century. In New South Wales between 1866 and 1890, individual pastoral holdings fell from 75 per cent to 40 per cent of the total. It was followed by the worst drought in Australian history which began in 1896 and lasted for seven terrible years, and the by its end saw about half the stock population of 50 million sheep and 5 million cattle obliterated.

The Waugh brothers, in the face of crashing stock prices, drove their bigger cattle to the nearest market at Muswellbrook, which sold for 13 shillings and 4 pence per head. (Major Dangar of "Gostwyck Station" bought quality bullocks in excellent condition for 30 shillings a head.) Additionally, there was pressure from new selectors and these events eventually saw the Waughs sell their breeding herd. George Brown, one of David ('Pardy') Brown's sons, who replaced Layton as Head Stockman for the Waughs, left to take up the same position for Edwin Blaxland on "Marengo".

Around that time when corn was cheap fodder, the Waughs decided to go in for pigs which were allowed to run loose as there were no sties, but selectors continued to move in on the larger holdings and the pigs were run down, caught and sold off. As the size of their country diminished, the family also grew potatoes which were transported to Armidale and Grafton by bullock waggon or sold to carriers.

The nearest telephone was at Hillgrove, so the landowners reliance on their horses was evident. Not only were they valued as stock and for daily management, but they were necessary for survival. It was also recorded in the Waugh history that when medical care was needed, "someone rode to Armidale with a relay of horses and the doctor rode back" and that "The only mail came by pack horse plying between Armidale and Grafton twice weekly."

When the Waugh Brothers partnership was dissolved, "Guy Fawkes River Station" was split up and sold to the Laytons, MacIntoshes and Turnbells. Harvey Waugh retained the "Guy Fawkes" homestead portion, William selected "Cloverlea" and Gordon selected "Donnybrook". In 1917, the remainder of the homestead portion was sold to the Turnbells and then to the Wyndhams

Albert Waugh, Harvey's eldest son, built the first telephone line from Hernani to Ebor and opened an antimony mine at Point Lookout, where the ore was packed out on horses. He also opened a blacksmith business at Hernani. His brother, James ('Harry') Waugh, established an auctioneering business in Armidale and conducted cattle sales at Hernani. He also built the old two-story Ebor Hotel. The third brother Leslie (known as 'L.G.') bought the property "Ellsmere" and was known as a smart cattleman and a good horseman. He later became a Councillor and President of the Nymboida Shire Council. The youngest son, Frank, married Lucy Layton and managed the family property.

The Waughs were great sportsmen and horse lovers. At the Sydney sales, Mr Harvey Waugh purchased a bay yearling colt by 'Cambria', by 'Nodenfelt' out of 'Keepsake' by 'Musket', the sire of the legendary 'Carbine'. He was sent by boat to Grafton where he was collected by Les Waugh, brought home and broken-in. The racehorse went on to have a successful career on the track in Sydney and sired good horses from all types of mares and "the 'Deemster' blood dominated the Plateau for many years."

William Waugh's son, Charles, selected country at Guy Fawkes named "Mudgerybar" and Robert, the youngest son of the family, was a Trooper in World War I. Many of the family moved away from the Plateau over ensuing years and later, the firm Reeve Waugh & Sons bought the property "Maida Vale" which is no longer in the family.

The Maskey Family — "Razorback"

Mr Ernie Maskey of Newton Boyd, was born in 1932, and has lived all his life in this part of Northern Tablelands area, as did his father and grandfather before him. The Maskey Family bred horses on Razorback from the late 1800s and later on Boban between the Mitchell River and Little River which the family purchased from the Newberry Family in the 1970s.

When he was about 14 years of age, he started work on "Broadmeadows Station". The first lot of horses that he remembered seeing, when he was about 10 years old, belonged to the Newberry Family, Mrs Brown and some of the Guy Fawkes River horses. In his interview, he recalled that the Brown Family imported two creamy stallions from England which his father said were named 'Golden King' and 'Creamy Duke'. It was said that Mrs Brown took great care of her horses, using Thoroughbreds, Ponies and some small influence of the Clydesdales. She was breeding for stamina, endurance and type rather than bloodlines.

As a schoolboy, Mr Maskey said that "When we'd go to school, we had to ride horses and we were just reared on them, and everything you did in the bush, you did it by horse." He remembered that as a young boy, he and the other family members used to chase the horses on Corner Camp, Bob's Creek, New Zealand Gully and on the Mitchell River (now known as the Sara River), and would take the horses home and they were broken-in at Razorback. He also recalled horses they chased horses down Kitty's Creek, particularly a young colt that they had pulled out of there when he was a boy. Mr Maskey told of the times he and his father would go out and get Brumbies at Corner Camp or up the Mitchell.

He said in those days, the horse numbers were kept down by property owners, locals who ran the horses in, and occasionally, either stockmen or professional kangaroo

shooters would shoot some of the outside horses if they ever got out of control. During the War years when labour was hard to find, on "Broadmeadows" and nextdoor to Newberry's leasehold country where they had run horses, young fellows had been employed and their inexperience saw some increase in the horse numbers.

Just after the War, the few horses on Ballards and in Kitty's Creek were bay and brown, as he recalled. Over the years, the horses they had caught and some they bred were sold for stock horses and pony club mounts. Mr Maskey said that some of the good pony types caught went on to be bought by people who used them at the Glen Innes Pony Club, so they proved to be pretty quiet, handy and useful ponies. One chestnut he ran out of the Meadows area, he remembered as being "a beautiful horse, quiet and any kid could ride him." He was known and remembered by many around the Pony Clubs circles in the district.

According to Mr Maskey, after the Forestry started cutting timber in the 1970s, they travelled along the forestry roads and he believes that with them came the creamy colour predominant in that area today. Horses from Razorback, across Corner Camp and on the London Bridge side didn't usually come down to the River until they were disturbed by the logging. Once they came in, they never left. No one was mustering them and they were undisturbed and then the different mobs would have bred.

Although Mr Maskey could not remember the exact date of the purchase, he estimated that they had owned the country, which the National Parks and Wildlife Service had recently purchased, for some thirty years or so. He also provided documented evidence that the Park boundary and that country had never been fenced and had been "working cattle country", so when discussing the Brumbies, it should be remembered that it was not then declared National Park. He recalled that there were already horses on the country with nothing stopping them getting to the Guy Fawkes River. He readily recollected that they were good types of stock horses and, in particular, there were many creamies on one side of the Guy Fawkes River and at Corner Camp and believed that those coloured horses originated from that area.

The steep, undulating country which Mr Maskey recently sold to the National Parks and Wildlife Service, some 8,000 acres, is open right to the Guy Fawkes River and he stated that he had horses grazing on that land, some of which had bred with the Brumbies. The Brumby bloodlines were still coming through his horse breeds and he has about twelve horses at Razorback that were bred from the now Park area over the last decade. He said the contract with the NPWS allows him to remove the horses over the coming months from that purchased country.

Mr Maskey said that the horses were sometimes found also along Bob's Creek, Pargo, Boban and Corner Camp on the opposite side, right down to the Henry River. He recollected that after the War, there were a few horses along the western side of the Guy Fawkes River, down Peak Creek to Calico, including Kitty's Creek back to the Boban, and mainly along the Mitchell (Sara) River areas. He said that the Newberry Family bred horses there spread out over miles of unfenced country. None of the country was fenced, he recalled, from "Broadmeadows" to half-way to Ward's Mistake and the horses were able to travel from the Henry River back to Combolo without ever going through a fence.

Mr Maskey stressed that the horses had been successfully controlled and the horse numbers were never a problem. It was his opinion that the numbers only started to build up from 1965 onward. The area has now been a National Park for almost 40 years. From about 1965 with no management, the number of horses in the National Park grew dramatically with the greatest increase on the western side. Mr Maskey said his horses had bred with the brumbies with no fences restricting their movement to and from the National Park. Many of his horses carry the brumby bloodlines. He stated that his "horses have definitely crossed with the brumbies but there have always been horses in what is now known as the National Park all my life — Boban, Bob's Creek, Pargo, Ballards, Box Camp and over to the Henry River, but that's not down the river, not the main river, not the Guy Fawkes, very odd horse came in from the Guy Fawkes. Only the odd horses came off Combolo and Housewater Creek. There were not a lot of horses, they were spread out."

Mr Maskey added that "these horses ran in mobs of around five to seven, sometimes in winter time you might find twelve to fifteen together and then they'd split up, and if you came over to them, they are pleased to see you and they'd follow you back. I'd say as a guess, there would probably be no more than 50 horses all up, on both sides of the [Guy Fawkes] River, all up. These was mostly bays, browns, chestnuts and creamies but no skewbalds. These came later and were by a skewbald [piebald] stallion of Ted Coble's." Mr Maskey believes that over the last decade or so, about forty horses would have gone in and out of the now Park and cross-bred with the Brumbies.

Mr Maskey said that whilst horses may have gone into the Park, they bred with horses that were already there and that those he had had over the last decade at Boban were known to have cross-bred with the Brumbies. Mr Maskey said that there had been horses in the Guy Fawkes River area, now National Park, for as long as he, and his father before him, could remember. He stated: "I am 69 now and I have been up and down that River since I was 10 year old, and the horses in those portions, the Box Creek, Calico, Ballards, Corner Camp, right over to the Henry River, but that's not down the River, not the main River, not the Guy Fawkes, very odd horse came into Guy

Fawkes.” Few horses came up to the top around Combolo at that time, but in those days, Mr Maskey said “there wasn’t a lot of horses” and the few there were spread across the country.

In the early 1990s, the National Parks and Wildlife Service gave the Maskey’s one month to remove their horses from the existing Park. After ten runs covering 12–15 miles, the Maskeys shifted 54 horses from the Little Plains area. The National Parks and Wildlife Service used a helicopter, and managed to trap only 5 but it had made it difficult for Mr Maskey and his brother Billy, by panicking the horses, and on their next ten runs over three days, they caught no more horses.

When asked if his father had ever talked about when he had first seen the Brumbies in his time, Mr Maskey said “He was a great horseman, but I don’t know we ever talked about Brumbies much. We just thought they were just naturally there.”

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A remarkable similarity between rider and horse — neither very flash, but undoubtedly tough!
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Aussie Horses join U.S. Army. Australian War Memorial.

Australian troops with local Arabs in the Sudan at the end of the last century. Australian War Memorial.

Captain A.B. 'Banjo' Paterson inspecting a tired horse. David Kent. Captain A.B. 'Banjo' Patterson was one of the two Company Commanders of an Australian Light Horse Remount Unit in Palestine where the incoming remounts, virtually wild horses from remote parts, were held, broken-in and trained by colonial horsemen known as 'rough riders'. Patterson had also been employed at the front as a correspondent by The Sydney Morning Herald.

Encampment for Australian Light Horse in Palestine. Australian War Memorial.

Horse breaking at the remount depot. Charlie Pascoe

Horse drawn Ambulances and Supply Carts, Hyde Park, Sydney 1898. L. Morgan.

Horsemen bringing in still protesting brumbies on a very short bridle tied to the pommel. They soon learn that it is easier to walk beside the other horse. Australian Information Service, Canberra.

King George V on 'Rupert', c. 1911. Photographer unknown. The horse, 'Rupert' was the most famous Waler of the Edwardian period. He was foaled in 1897 on a Queensland station of 550 square miles. He was the King's mount for at least six years or more.

MacDougall's Hut at the junction of Stockyard and Chandlers Creek, Northern Tablelands, c.1916

Old Fenceline, Northern Tablelands, erected by Peter Ellis, c.1940

On Parade: Australian Light Horse on Display. Australian War Memorial.

Pack horses loaded with artillery. Australian War Memorial.

John Stanton and his registered Australian Stock Horse 'Tarzan' demonstrating cutting without a bridle at the All-Breeds Congress. Photo: Peter Gower. 'Tarzan' was bought from the Upper Macleay in 1963 and won 100 campdraft competitions before his death in 1979. The combination also won Campdraft Horse of the Year and the World Championship Campdraft event at the Sydney Royal Show. (The Champion Died but not His Record, *Hoofs and Horns*, July 1979)

The 12th Australian Light Horse Regiment. Captain Thompson's Collection. Australian War Memorial.

E.R. White of Denman, Hunter Valley. Judy White

E.A. (Ted) Mulligan, mounted on his registered Australian Stock Horse 'O'Briens Red Chan' at the Australian Light Horse Ceremony of the Laying down of the Battle Flag, Armidale, October 1990