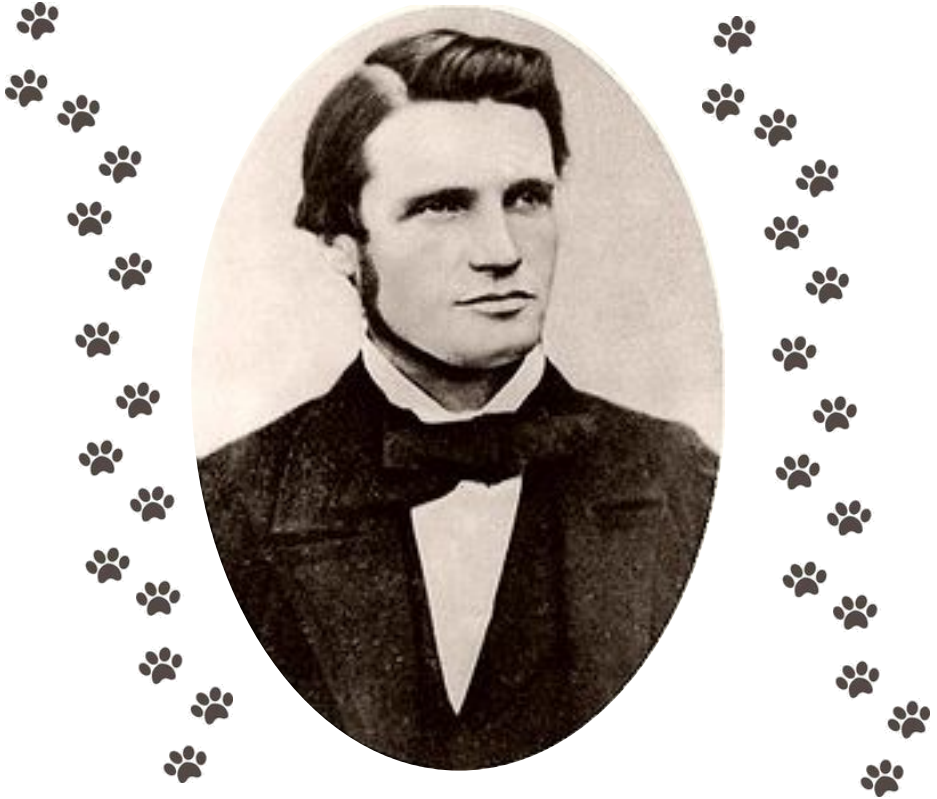


The Adventures of Yarrow Part 1
The trip to the Darling Downs
as told by Yarrow



My master Thomas Archer arrived in Sydney Harbour at midnight on the 31st of December, 1837. Soon after he headed off to Wallerawang, his great uncle Mr Walker's station near Bathurst NSW. Tom spent time on the property and then returned to Sydney to work in the office of W Walker and Co.



Thomas Archer

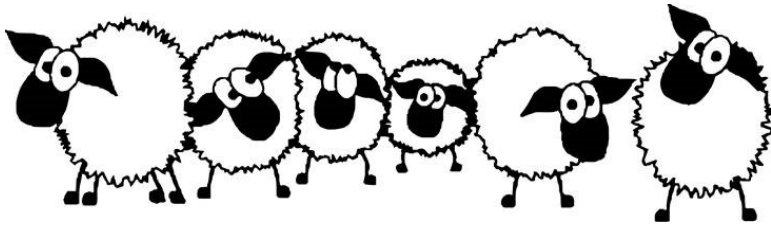
At the age of 20 in September 1841, Tom arrives at Durundur Station with his brothers David and John.

My story with Tom starts a little earlier on the trip to the Darling Downs in 1839.

Tom found me along side a track, lost, after being separated from my previous master during a whopping storm. Tom said ‘Hello Boy, want to come along with us? We could be in need of a good sheep dog.’

Tom was passing through Yarrow in Roxburgh County in the Bathurst district and thought Yarrow would be a good name for his new dog.

Tom looked like a pleasant man so I tagged along side of them. He offered me a piece of mutton from his pack which I thoroughly enjoyed. So our adventures were to begin.



In 1839 David Archer and his cousin Edward Walker formed a partnership known as David Archer & Co. Between them they owned 5000 sheep and planned to take them to the Darling Downs area where it was reported to be good sheep country.

John Archer joined them as the cart driver and Tom went along as a general hand.

The plans are halted with the outbreak of ‘Scab’ with the sheep and camp had to be set up at a bit of unoccupied country on “Tarrubal Billy’s Creek” where they formed a temporary station at a place the Aboriginals called Birallan.

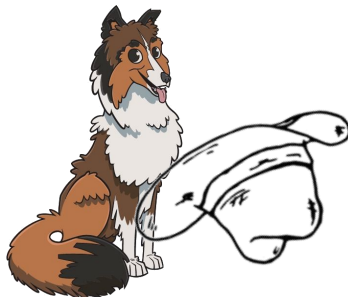
At Birallan Tom had his first experience as a shepherd and taking charge of a flock of sheep and I was so pleased to be able to help him.

A convict shepherd who had charge of the flock was a quiet, decent man but a bad bushman. He kept the sheep huddled near a creek where there was no grass and the poor beasts were nearly starved and took every opportunity to scatter in the bush searching for grass.

The dingo's would attack them when they scattered which made them scatter more and the flock numbers were dwindling.



Tom and I took charge of the job. It was a tough job for the first few weeks to keep them together, but by taking them out on good grass, they weren't so hungry and became more manageable. I would herd them back to the creek by the evening so they could drink. Tom carried a bottle of water for me so I had water to drink during the day. He poured it into his hat for me to drink from.

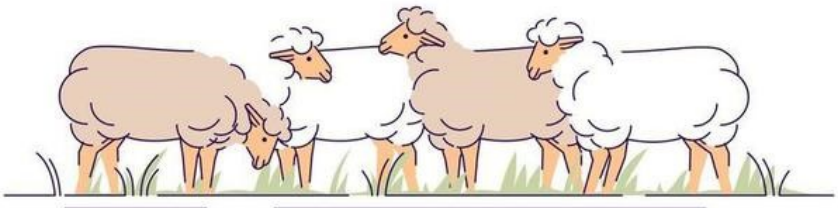


Sometimes Tom would get bored with his job as shepherd and would sit under a shady tree to read one of the many books he had.



I, as always kept an eye on the flock and when a sheep would stray I would give a short yap and Tom would look up and notice me looking in the direction a stray sheep had wandered. Tom knew I was concerned a wild dingo might get the stray sheep and when Tom got up I'd run around him giving barks of excitement and he knew to follow me and we would find the stray together.

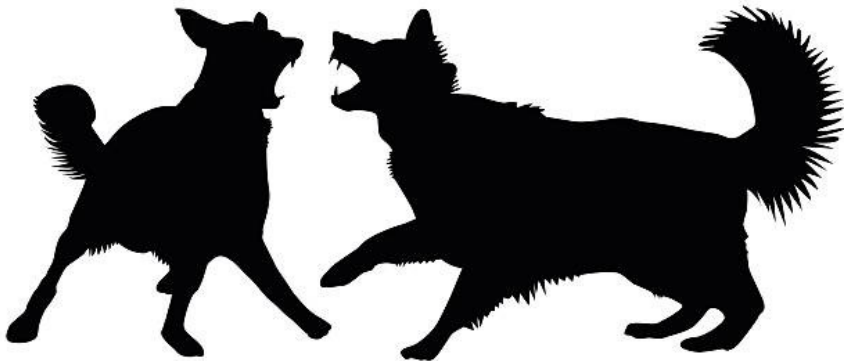
We always worked as a team and never lost a sheep on our watch.



We were sometimes pretty hard up for food. Dusty Bob and his wife taught Tom to find tree grubs which he cut out of the forest oaks with a tomahawk. Tom shared his meal with me and cooked up they tasted pretty good, raw not so much unless you were really hungry.

On one occasion Tom and I had to look after a flock of lambing ewes. There was no time to be sitting under tree's reading books for Tom because it took all our time to look after our charges and to keep the dingoes from snapping up young lambs.

Tom knew I detested the native dog and would fight to my last breath to save the lambs.



It took many months of dressing to cure the sheep. The dressing consisted in dipping each individual sheep in a solution of corrosive arsenic and the dipping was a long and tedious affair. Yards and huts had to be built and a wool-shed erected. It took nearly a year to shear and dress the sheep.

Our start for the Darling Downs had been put off for about a year and by the time we arrived there a great part of the best country had been take up.



Coming soon, the Adventures of Yarrow Part 2

Arriving at Durundur Station



Yarrows story is based on facts from the Archer Brothers letters and Tom's book 'Recollections of a Rambling Life'. To fill in some unknown particulars Yarrow's writer is filling in details based on other historical happenings.



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