## **KELLY, Thomas**

On 23rd January 1895, at the Wesleyan Church, Newtown, Thomas Kelly, police constable, aged 24 years, of Bulli, N.S.W., married Rose Caroline Granter, of Wickham, near Newcastle.

Thomas’s parents were Michael & Mary Kelly; Rose’s parents were John & Susan.**1**

Children of the marriage were:

Roy W. S., born 1896, district of Woonana

Doris M., born 1898, district of Ryde

Percy A. J., born 1903, district of St. Leonards

Carline [Caroline] M., born 1906, district of St Leonards**2**

In 1895 there was concern among the residents of Beecroft regarding crime, and the Beecroft Progress Association used their influence to try to address the problem. In late 1895 the Inspector-General of Police intimated that he could not see the necessity of establishing a police station in the district, but he would make provision for special patrols in the locality by the Ryde Police.**3**

In April 1898 a police station was established at Beecroft, due to further representation from the Beecroft Progress Association and agitation from residents for additional police protection between Ryde and Hornsby Junction. Constable Kelly, the Ryde lockup-keeper, was transferred for duty in the district. Constable Kelly’s prior position of lockup-keeper at Ryde was filled by Constable Thomas R. Cornock, from Granville.

A suitable house could not be found in Beecroft for the new policeman, so the authorities were considering building quarters near Thornleigh, on the vacant land adjoining Moran’s Waratah Nursery. However suitable accommodation was eventually found at Beecroft – a house in the midst of a small orchard, located in as Railway Crescent, owned by William Abram but sold in 1912 to Melbourne Green, after which the police was asked to vacate the premises as Mr. Green wished to occupy the property. The police station was then established at Thornleigh.

Constable Kelly’s only trouble was with the “bike” supplied by the Department, is that he couldn’t ride it.

His presence and reputation were soon having a wholesome effect.**4**

In August 1898 Constable Kelly of Beecroft was appointed local Sanitary Inspector for his particular district under the provisions of the new Public Health Act. He was also entrusted with the duties of Inspector of slaughterhouses and of cattle intended for slaughter.**5**

In January 1900 Constable Kelly, in charge of the Beecroft Police station, startled some of his hearers by stating, whilst giving evidence in a case, that until recently he was a police constable stationed at Beecroft, but was now a member of the Contingent about to sail for South Africa. He was going to the front as a private, having been given leave of absence, by the Police Department. He was said at the time to be a most efficient officer, and straightforward and most zealous in the performance of his duties.

Constable Kelly was succeeded at Beecroft by Constable William H. Wade.**6**

Thomas Kelly was among the first to volunteer for service in South Africa and sailed to South Africa in January 1900.

Thomas Kelly, Service No. 420, served with the N.S.W. Medical Team (A.M.C.).

He reached Heidelburg, Transvaal, sometime in June with the A.M.C., and was quite well.

He was decorated for gallantry and mentioned in despatches.

In November 1900 he returned home from South Africa. ‘Though in good health and spirit, he has had a thorough tanning, and has lost about three stone in weight. He escaped the Boer bullets, though.’

He resumed duty in the police force, not at Beecroft, however, but at Shellharbour.**7**

In 1929 Police-Inspector Kelly, of Burwood, who had been a member of the police force for 35 years, commenced long service leave prior to retirement. He had served, at Bulli, Ryde, Beecroft, Castle Hill, Parramatta, Shellharbour, Liverpool, Manly, Lidcombe, Marrickville, and Ashfield and Burwood.**8**

On 27th June 1932 Thomas Kelly (ex-Inspector of Police) died at a private hospital at Ashfield, aged 62 years. His residence was 2 Yeo Avenue, Ashfield. He was buried at the Methodist Cemetery, Rookwood.

He was survived by Mrs. Kelly, two sons (Mr Roy Kelly, chamber magistrate at Kempsey, and Mr. P. A. J. Kelly, deputy town clerk at Ashfield), and two daughters (Miss Doris Kelly, on the clerical staff of Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, and Miss Caroline Kelly, on the teaching staff of the Technical College at Newcastle).

He was widely known In Masonic circles, namely Ashfield Mark Lodge, No. 96; Supreme Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of N.S.W.; Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of N.S.W.; Burwood Lodge of M.M.M., Prince of Wales R.A.C. No. 5, S.G.C. of N.S.W.; Lodge Welcome, 628, U.G.L.; Prosperity Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners, No. 50.**9**

On 11th December 1949 occurred the death of Rose Caroline Kelly, of 2 Yeo Avenue, Ashfield, aged 78 years, relict of the late Thomas Kelly, Police Inspector, and mother of Roy, Doris, John [Percy A. J.], and Caroline.**10**

**Bibliography**

1 Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, Wednesday 30 January 1895; NSW Registry of Births Deaths Marriages

2 NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages

3 The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 19 Oct 1895

4 The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 23 Apr 1898; The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 30 Apr 1898; The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 14 May 1898; The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 28 Jan 1899; The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 27 Jul 1912

5 Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 20 Aug 1898; Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Wed 24 Aug 1898

6 Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Saturday 20 January 1900; New South Wales Government Gazette, Fri 27 Apr 1900; The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sun 13 Jan 1901

7 Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Saturday 4 August 1900; Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Saturday 15 December 1900; The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sun 13 Jan 1901; Australian War Memorial records

8 Daily Telegraph, Monday 13 May 1929

9 Sun (Sydney, NSW), Mon 27 Jun 1932; Sydney Morning Herald, Tuesday 28 June 1932

10 Sydney Morning Herald, Mon 12 Dec 1949

**NOTE**: Additional information contained within Beecroft Cheltenham History Group book ‘Beecroft and Cheltenham, the Shaping of a Sydney Community to 1914’.