

**HAVEY, CHARLES** (1871-1950), grazier, horse breeder, drover, trader and storekeeper, was born on 9 August 1871 at Kapunda, South Australia, son of Irish Catholics Peter Heavey (*sic*) and his wife Elizabeth, nee Power. The third youngest of eight children, Havey was five when his father, a railway carrier, drowned. Nothing is known of his early years except that his older brother Frank left home at age twelve to help support the family, two years before their father died, so Charles probably left home at a young age also.

Havey, a tall, well-built man, was working on cattle stations in South Australia's far north in the early 1890's and owned some very fine horses which he entered at annual bush race meetings throughout the north. He formed a successful partnership with his horse trainer mate, Ike Reid. At the Innamincka races in 1892, held over two days, Havey entered at least five horses, winning prize money of £66 10s. from four wins and five minor placings.

When the great drought devastated South Australia's far north-east at the turn of the century Havey was managing Kanowana cattle station on Cooper's Creek, owned by Thomas Elder's Beltana Pastoral Company. By 1903 cattle numbers on the station had fallen from 20,000 to only 1,600. Havey decided to leave the Cooper country and its unreliable seasons.

In 1905, following his mother's death in August, Havey took up droving and worked his way north into Queensland and then to Borroloola in the Northern Territory. At that time the white population of the Gulf town was six middle-aged men. Although he continued to visit relatives in Adelaide periodically, the Borroloola district was to become Havey's home and the centre of his varied business interests for the rest of his life.

In 1911 Havey and Clifford Lynott, one of the town residents, were granted Pastoral Permit 301 over a 200 square mile block near the Wearyan River, which they named Wearing station. Havey soon bought out Lynott and went on to own a number of other small pastoral holdings in the Borroloola district until the late 1940's, all of which were the subject of annual Grazing Licences. Among them were Yalwonga, near Billy Day's Lagoon (1915-1929), and Bing Bong on the coast. According to the district Stock Report for 1919, "Mr Charles Havey breeds some very fine cattle and horses". It seems that Havey also had a small store at Wearing, taking advantage of its position on the Old Coast Track beside Warby Lagoon.

In his report of a patrol to Wollgorang on the Queensland border in 1913 to investigate complaints of cattle spearing, Senior Constable Dempsey noted that Havey's Wearing station was the only one between Borroloola and the border, and that "between (Borroloola) and the Calvert River there are perhaps 400 natives".

Havey took out a Mining Lease in 1911 (no. 10) and in 1917 was issued with Timber Licence 4 to allow him to remove sandalwood from near the coast. This was renewed the following year when he shipped 3 tons to Thursday Island.

In July 1916 Havey was appointed a Justice of the Peace, a position he held until his death in 1950. Two such Justices could sit as the Police Court, hearing a variety of less serious cases. Stories abound of Havey's unorthodox treatment of those who appeared before him, such as the time he is alleged to have fined an offender a bottle of rum and then adjourned to the Tattersall's Hotel where all concerned consumed the fine.

It is thought that Havey sat on the case against Bill Harney, who went on to become a well known author, and his partners Jack Keighran and Horace Foster on charges arising out of an alleged cattle rustling incident in 1923. The guilty judgement was later overturned on appeal by Judge Roberts of the Darwin Supreme Court, on a legal technicality (the four charges against the accused were heard together without the accused being consulted or consenting). Havey is mentioned in a number of Bill Harney's books, by his nickname "The Lawyer".

Havey moved to the edge of town in 1917, taking up 11 acres for gardening near the junction of Rocky Creek and the McArthur River, adjacent to the famous Chinese Gardens of Borroloola, owned at that time by Chin Kahen. In 1920 Havey acquired a further forty acres of adjacent land for gardening and grazing. When Kahen died in 1926 Havey, who was executor of the estate, bought the 4 acre gardens from the estate for £80, with the consent of the Darwin Supreme Court.

Havey built a very large store next to his garden area, selling goods to surrounding stations and bartering with the locals. Salt gathered from the salt pans near Manangoora was taken to Borroloola where Havey would trade it for flour, tea and sugar. Havey was also the local shipping agent, butcher, Post Master, coroner (by virtue of being a Justice of the Peace) and president of the McArthur River Institute, which operated the famous Carnegie Library. He was also, of course, the judge at the annual Borroloola races.

In 1919 he bought the cutter *Avis* from Captain McLennan of Thursday Island for £120. He used it for delivering freight, transporting gear to his various businesses and hiring out to others, until it was stolen from the wharf in Darwin by two fugitives who wrecked it on the coast of Bathurst Island.

A close association with Aboriginal people, particularly the Yanyuwa, was a major feature of Havey's years in the outback. At Kanowana there were a number of important Aboriginal sites and a permanent camp of about 40 Dieri people, some of whom worked for him. Havey's extensive business interests in the Borroloola district relied heavily on the many Aboriginal people who worked for him and with whom he developed a close relationship. Tim Rakuwurlma, a Yanyuwa from Vanderlin Island, worked on and off for Havey for some forty years assisting him in various ways, including making him a dugout canoe and catching and salting dugong. Another long time employee was Old Pluto, head stockman at Yalwonga, who also supervised the unloading of the supply boat from Darwin, for which Havey was the agent. Havey in turn was able to assist local Aboriginal people. Musso Harvey remembers Havey giving Aboriginal people food from his store during the wet season when bush tucker

was hard to find and as a Justice of the Peace Havey would have been in a position to assist Aboriginal people in legal matters. Although never legally married, Havey lived for many years with Yama, a Yanyuwa woman, and was considered by her family to be a relative.

Despite living so far from Adelaide, Havey occasionally travelled there to visit relatives and attend the races. He came down in 1923 to see his brother Frank who was dying of cancer, and stayed for the funeral. His visits, however, were not welcomed by all of his Adelaide relatives. On one occasion when it was learnt that Charley was travelling by train from Alice Springs, bringing his swag with him, the wife of one of his nephews complained that Charley would no doubt take her husband out on the town and bring him home the worse for wear.

Havey sold his store to Albert Morcom in the late 1940's and also disposed of the last of his grazing interests, being too old to run them.

Early in 1950 Havey became seriously ill. He was brought across the McArthur River to the town in a dugout canoe by a large number of his Aboriginal friends, for evacuation to Tennant Creek hospital by the mail plane. The farewell by the Aboriginals was an emotional one and Havey too was visibly upset. He knew he would never return to the people he had lived with for almost fifty years. Some, however, travelled by truck to Tennant Creek, a distance of 700 kilometres, to be with him at the end. He died in Tennant creek hospital on 12 February and is buried in the Tennant Creek cemetery. The obituary in the *Northern Standard* said that "he was known by all hands from the Administrator down and was liked and respected by all who knew him".

When news of his death reached Borroloola it was marked by the Aboriginals with wailing and the cutting of heads. The oldtimers declared they had never known the Aboriginals to wail for a white man before.

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