

## TATONG.

A very large and representative gathering assembled at the cairn erected at Tatong yesterday to pay tribute to the great explorers, Hume and Hovell. A more perfect day would have been difficult to select, and the keenness evinced by the residents culminated in a burst of applause as Mr. D. H. Coghill, who has been the moving spirit throughout, extended a hearty welcome to these present. At the same time they were indebted to the Historical Society for their work in promoting such a far-reaching movement.

Addressing the assemblage, Mr. Coghill gave an interesting account of the early days and the energy of the pioneers. He said all honor was due to Hume as a great Australian explorer and bushman. Hume started in 1814, when he and Surveyor Meehan discovered Lake Bathurst and Goulburn plains. In 1822 a party went the east coast of N.S.W. in search of rivers, and Alexander, Barry and Hume penetrated inland nearly to Braidwood, which was taken up by the Coghills. In October, 1836, Captain John Hepburn, John Gardiner, and Joseph Hawden met by appointment at Howe's station, on the Murrumbidgee, 180 miles from Sydney, and started with the first overland mob of cattle for Port Philip. Mr. Stapylton was met returning homewards with portion of Sir Thomas Mitchell's exploring party from Australia Felix, and gained information that enabled them to pick up his dray tracks, as the weather was very wet and the marks deep. The Murray was a bar, and the drays were turned into a punt to enable them to cross. They crossed the Ovens at Wangaratta, Broken River at Benalla, and the Goulburn. Christmas was celebrated by killing a fat bullock. These men took up country now known as Gardiner's Creek, which enters the Yarra above Toorak. This was the first cattle station in Australia Felix. Hepburn and Hawdon returned by sailing boat to near Twofold Bay. On reaching Sydney he advocated the first mail service. The then Governor, Sir Richard Burke, interested himself, and the contract was let to Hawdon. Thus was the first overland mail between Sydney and Melbourne originated. About the middle of 1836 a perfect mania for sheep set in, prices advancing up to £3 a head. Cap-

of 1836 a perfect mania for sheep set in, prices advancing up to £3 a head. Captain Hepburn next awaited the arrival of his family from England, and with them and a flock of sheep he started from

Strathallen, N.S.W. William Coghill had his sheep mustered on the Murrumbidgee, waiting to accompany him. Mr. Wm. Bowman caught up and joined them. Captain Hepburn took a track eastward of his previous one, Ebden, Howey, and Hamilton having preceded them. They crossed the Murray at the same spot as Hume and Hovell with 9000 sheep in 2½ hours, without the loss of a sheep. In a short distance they came on the Major's line (Mitchell's), which was quite easily recognised. On the Goulburn river Captain H. and David Coghill, being in advance, came suddenly on natives, and instantly 100 spears were pointed at them. They got off their horses, took a book and their guns, and approached the natives, and spent an hour with them. On the morning of March 2, 1838, they crossed the river all safe without any molestation from the natives. The first sheep squatters were Capt. Hepburn, A. Millison, C. H. Ebden, Capt. Brown, Harrison, Coghill and Bowman. No other flocks had crossed the Goulburn up to that date.

Cr. T. E. Harrison (shire president) expressed thanks on behalf of the council, and referred to the picturesque surroundings as an ideal tourists' resort.

An item by the school children, "Sunny Victoria," proved to be a pleasing break, and Mr. C. R. Long, of the Education department, expressed his pleasure at being present to do honor to the explorers. It was most agreeable to listen to the school children singing, and the efforts of the local people in erecting the cairn spoke well for the district. He was an ardent supporter of national sentiment, and the occasion was particularly fitting, for Hume was a Scotchman and Hovell an Englishman.

At the invitation of the committee, Mr. Long introduced Miss Molly Beard, a young schoolgirl, who unveiled the memorial, and Master Harry Lewis placed a laurel wreath at the base of the cairn. Mr. Leach, M.A., district inspector, expressed delight at his association with

pressed delight at his association with the movement, and to be present at the unveiling of the splendid cairn. It was indeed fitting to have Mr. Long present, as he was a guide and advocate of Australian history. It was through his efforts that a considerable amount of new information concerning the explorers had been gathered.

Cr. A. Harrison, who was gratified at the response of the residents, particularly as the cairn was built by voluntary effort, moved a hearty vote of thanks to the visitors, which was carried in the spirit that ranked predominant throughout the whole of the movement.

During the day the children were entertained at a sports gathering, and a dance in the evening concluded a day which will long be remembered in the district.