



# CLARK BARTLETT STORY

from

MONTO HISTORY CENTRE

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Clark Bartlett first came to Cania in 1927 as a miner. He would build fires on the rocks in his claim and when hot, threw water on them and they would shatter. While the rocks cooled down he would go shooting Possum and Dingos. As there was a ten shilling bounty offered for Dingo scalp Clark walked all over Cania hunting them. (Clark had a great respect for the Dingos but hated them). He often did fencing and mustering for the early land holders to help support his life style.

He returned to his parents at Ceratodus for a time but came back to Cania in 1936 with his wife Ivy and son Norman, made camp on the Three Moon Creek, later they moved to the hut site. In these humble building they reared 6 children 3 boys 3 girls.

Clark went into partnership with good friend Harry St John selling honey, fruit and vegetables from their three market gardens, 2 up in the gorge the other at the hut. Clark lived off the land, fishing from 3 moon Creek, shot wild life for his meat and will tell you that Wallaby is the best, the vegetables came from their garden. Clark had a gift for grafting and grew many varieties of grapes and fruit trees, some producing as many as six different fruits. There are still a few growing near his hut. His daughter Gwen has inherited this talent and has transferred many of the varieties to her own garden at Gin Gin.

Clark was the first person to promote Cania Gorge. Reporters from Truth, Sunday Mail and Post came to interview him on his hermit like life style. Clark soon convinced them that he lived in the best place in the world and proceeded to walk them through his little bit of heaven. They must have been convinced by what they felt and saw, because they went back and wrote raving reviews about Cania. (that can be seen at Monto History Centre)

At this time it was not a National Park and the Picnic Area was used for camping, many times it was over crowded, but Clark was always there to help. He has 8 signed visitors books, with over 12000 signatures with messages of gratitude and hundreds of letters of thanks from all over the world.

This was the beginning of travellers visiting our now world famous Gorge. Clark proudly took them on the many walks he discovered while hunting. He willingly shared his home made bread, showed them where and how to find gold and his local knowledge was invaluable. Clark is a life member of the National Parks and for many years recorded the rainfall for them. He also had the Cania mail Run and a successful mower repair business.

Clark's love and dedication to Cania was obvious to all who had the privilege to meet him, but sadly in 1991, after living in Cania Gorge for 55 years and at the age of 86, Clark went blind from Glaucoma. All the buildings were infested with white ants, to protect the tourist they were pulled down and burned. The **Log Hut** was left standing in memory of a man who choose to live the style of life our pioneers were forced to live. Clark had his 90th. birthday on the 1/12/95 and wants to reach a 100.

**In 1990 I did a video recording of Clark's life at Cania Gorge. See it at Monto History Centre.**

**Clark the many tourists you have befriended will miss you, but Monto will always remember your dedicating to our famous Cania Gorge.**

In appreciation of Clark's commitment to Cania

Written by Beryl Bleys with thanks to Clark.