

B e g i n n i n g s

M E L B O U R N E A N D W A L L A N

1 8 5 0 - 1 8 5 4

The Kelly Story starts three blocks from this historic exhibition — at St Francis' Church, Lonsdale Street. There, on Monday November 18, 1850, Father Gerald Ward married Ned Kelly's parents, John 'Red' Kelly and Ellen Quinn.

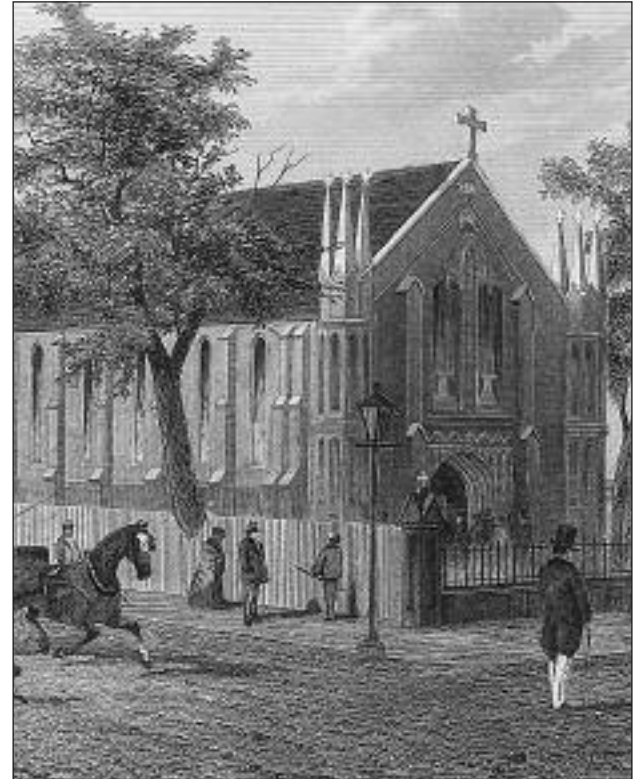
Nine years earlier, 'Red', from Tipperary, Ireland, was convicted of stealing two pigs. He was sentenced to seven years transportation and served his time in Van Diemens Land (Tasmania) before crossing to the Port Phillip District of New South Wales, soon to become Victoria.

Ellen Quinn's family was from Antrim in Northern Ireland. Her parents, with their eight children, arrived in Melbourne as bounty (assisted) migrants in 1841. The Quinns eventually settled on a farm at Wallan, 50 kilometres north of Melbourne. Here, Ellen met 'Red'. And here, after their marriage, the young couple started to raise a family.

Kelly, John 1st
 W. J.
 Apperary
 Stealing 3 Pigs.
 p: M'Quinn

'Red' Kelly's convict background is sketched in the documents of The Convict Indent, which records his transportation to Australia aboard the transport Prince Regent in 1841; the Convict Record covers time served in Van Diemen's Land until he received a Certificate of Freedom in 1848 and crossed to the Port Phillip District.

Archives of Tasmania



St Francis' Church, Lonsdale St, Melbourne – an 1851 engraving by S.T.Gill. Lois Royal

Beginnings

do hereby declare that I am
John F. Kelly
Wife
do hereby declare that I am
Ellen Quinn
Minister of *St Francis Church*
of *the Bend of Cherry Creek*.
were joined together in Wedlock at
St Francis Church
both of Melbourne
Gerald Ward.

The marriage of 'Red' Kelly and Ellen Quinn as recorded in the Marriage Register of St Francis' Church. Ellen, 18 at the time, was six months pregnant.

Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne



Father Gerald Ward, who presided at the wedding.

Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

Ned's first nine years

BEVERIDGE

1854 - 1863

In February 1854, with money made from gold-digging and horse-dealing, 'Red' bought a farm at Beveridge, a little south of Wallan. Here, in December of that year, Ellen bore a son they named Edward — to friends and family, 'Ned' — their second surviving child and first boy.

'Red' worked as a dairyman, carpenter and splitter. He also dabbled unsuccessfully in real estate which, coupled with a weakness for drink, brought him close to ruin. But in 1859 he was able to buy 21 acres and build a timber cottage for his growing family.

In 1862, young Ned started school in the little town's new Roman Catholic Church. In six months, he learnt to read and write to second class standard, before 'Red' sold his farm and took the family 80 kilometres up the Sydney Road (now the Hume Freeway) to Avenel.

Ned's first nine years



The original Kelly block at Beveridge where Ned was born in a long-vanished house.



The Kelly cottage at Beveridge built by 'Red' in 1859. Four-year-old Ned might have helped his father. Here, three of the Kelly children were born – Jim (1859), Dan (1861) and Kate (1863). The house was added to by later owners and is today in a critical state of disrepair.



Father Charles O'Hea who baptised Edward (Ned) Kelly, third child of Ellen and 'Red', probably while riding circuit from his parish at Pentridge (Coburg). Twenty-five years later, O'Hea stood by Ned at his execution.

Melbourne Catholic Archdiocese



The Quinn Homestead, Wallan, photographed in 1964.

Private Collection

Ned's first nine years



Young Ned Kelly's initials (EK and two K's) carved into the door of his grandfather's forge at the Quinn homestead, Wallan. Also seen here are sample 'burns' of newly-made branding irons – the Q with a dropped tail and the later JQ. Private collection



*A New Life
and a Death*

A V E N E L

1 8 6 4 - 1 8 6 7

While the Kelly family scraped a living from a rented dairy farm, Ned and the older children attended the Avenel School.

Ned won lasting fame as an 11 year-old by rescuing a seven-year-old boy from a flooded creek. His heroism was rewarded with a silk sash.

When 'Red' Kelly was sentenced to six months gaol for butchering a neighbour's stray calf, Ned's bravery may have won his father lenient treatment a generous remission and imprisonment in the local lock-up instead of a distant gaol.

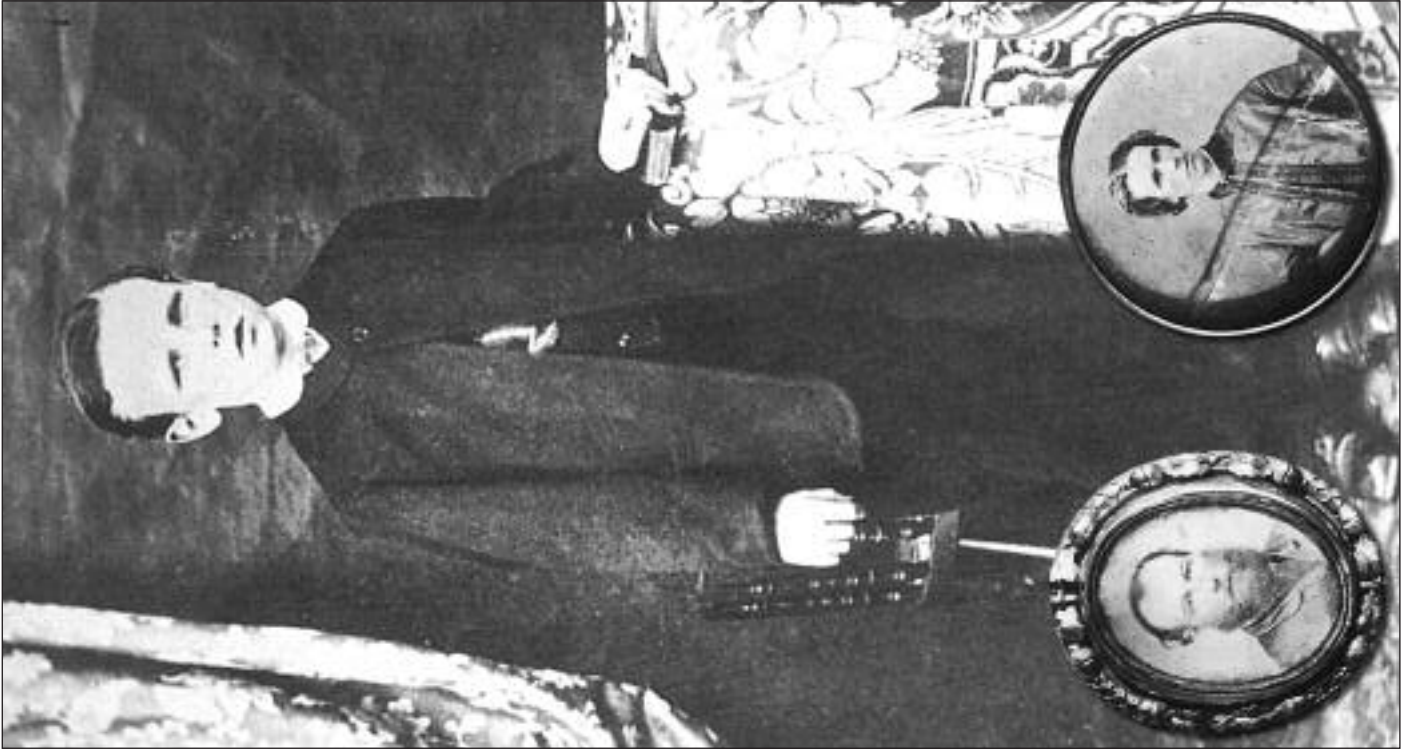
But when Red returned to the family, he also returned to the bottle and scarcely more than a year later died of dropsy — an illness that bloats the body.

Ellen Kelly was a widow at 33, with seven children. Ned Kelly, just turned 12, signed his father's death certificate and stepped into his boots.

A New Life and a Death



Site of the Kelly House on Hughes Creek near Avenel



Richard Shelton who was rescued by young Ned from Hughes Creek, Avenel. Two of Richard Shelton's sons are still alive. A grandson, Ian 'Bluey' Shelton, was a famous Essendon footballer. Richard's grateful parents, Esau and Margaret (seen in locket portraits), presented Ned with a handsome green silk sash. Keith McMenemy/Shelton Family

A New Life and a Death



The toll bridge over Hughes Creek, Avenel, in the 1860s. The Shelton family's Royal Mail Hotel lies at top left. Ned's rescue of young Richard took place beside a footbridge out-of-frame to the right. Keith McMenomy/Shelton Family

Edward
Kelly
Son
Ned Avenel

'Red' Kelly's Death Registration, signed by Ned, symbolises the boy's new role as 'man' of the Kelly house, helping his 33-year-old mother care for her six other children. Registrar, Births Deaths and Marriages