

1 CAMPASPE PLAINS: 1838 – 1843

In 1836 Sir Thomas Mitchell travelled through western and central Victoria, returning to Sydney with glowing reports on the quality of the grazing land to be found there, which immediately attracted the attention of the squatters. Accordingly, in early 1838 Henry Monro applied for and was granted the right to occupy a squatting run comprising some 50,000 acres south of the junction of the Coliban and Campaspe Rivers, about 100km north of Melbourne and near present day Mia Mia. His interest in the run at Boro Creek was sold and in early 1838¹ he travelled overland with his prized cattle, sheep and horses, following the route taken by Sir Thomas Mitchell from Portland to Sydney in 1836 (“the Major’s route”) which took him directly to his new Campaspe Plains run, having crossed the Murray near present-day Howlong. On the journey, Monro was accompanied by his overseer, Charles Christie, and several assigned servants as well as Jane and the six young children, including Frank, then aged about 8 years. It would have been a considerable logistical effort to organise transport and supplies for the 600km journey which probably took around 6-8 weeks. Monro would not have dawdled as it was essential that following the granting of the squatting licence his right to occupy Campaspe Plains had to be confirmed by having his stock on the property.

¹ *The Australian* newspaper, 17th April 1838, page 1;