

The water colourist of Redcamp: Constance Evans (nee Burton-Bradley)

By D. Evans Evans (*HAFS: E2.2a.5b.2c.1d.1e*)

Constance Muriel 'Con' Burton-Bradley (*HAFS: E2.2a.5b.2c*) was a descendent of the enterprising Hungerford (maternal) and the seafaring Burton-Bradley (paternal) families. Con was the second child of Muriel (nee Hungerford, *HAFS: E2.2a.5b*) and Prowett Burton-Bradley, and their older son was Robert Prowett 'Bob' Burton Bradley (b. 14-5-1908, d. 9-4-1989, *HAFS: E2.2a.5b.1c*). Before meeting Prowett Burton Bradley, Muriel was a nurse at Sydney's Royal North Shore Hospital as the fetching photo of Muriel below shows. She also did some nursing in the Rocks area of Sydney, a tough part of town in that era. Reputedly, she was held in such high esteem by the people of the Rocks that no ruffian would interfere with her passage through the area for fear of retribution. Muriel's interest in the medical arts was obviously passed on to her daughter Con's interest in medicine. In the late 1920's and early 1930's Con studied medicine at University of Sydney which was a brave course to study for a woman at that time. However, before she finished her degree, the economic realities of the great depression curtailed the Burton-Bradley families' ability to nurture this pursuit.



Muriel Hungerford
(**nee Hungerford**) c1901 Royal Nth
Shore Hospital, Sydney
b. 24-6-1879, d. 21-10-1966



Prowett Burton-Bradley
b. 16-7-1881, d. 25-9-1956



Constance (Con) Muriel Evans
(**nee Burton-Bradley**) c 1930
b. 30-10-1909, d. 15-4-1975

Married 28-9-1906, St Paul, Wellington, NZ



Florence Dorothy Massey
Hungerford (later Walpole)
b. 22-6-1897, d. 29-6-1956



Evan Mylor Evans
b. 4-4-1888, d. 31-3-1953



Capt David Gerald Evans MC, MiD
8th Battalion AIF, b. 8-12-1889
DOW 20-9-1917, Menin Rd, Belgium

Shortly after discontinuing her studies she met and married Evan Mylor Evans from the Redcamp property, Myrrhee in North Eastern Victoria. It seems likely that this match was introduced due to friendship between William Boyle Hungerford's (Beecher Hungerford line, *HAFS B.3a*) family and the Evans family who lived 5 km West of Redcamp across the Mt Bellevue "range" at Fairfield Park on the Fifteen Mile Creek, Myrrhee. During William Hungerford's stay at Fairfield Park, a young Dorothy 'Dorrie' Hungerford (*HAFS: B.3a.2b*) formed a close relationship with the soon to be Captain Gerald Evans (details: <https://vwma.org.au/explore/people/232126>). The photo above shows that Dorothy was a handsome young woman. Con's father, Prowett-Burton-Bradley, was also in the Moyhu district in the early 1930's as a proponent of the burgeoning broom millet industry.

Gerald before the war had been a champion sportsman, being a star player in the Moyhu Football Clubs run of premierships from 1909-1911. At the Melbourne Grammar School, Gerald was in the 1st XVIII Football and the 1st VIII rowing teams. Unfortunately, WWI and duty interrupted Dorothy and Gerald's relationship when in 1915 Gerald enlisted in the 1st AIF and then sailed for Egypt on 29th September 1915. A number of letters from Gerald in Egypt and France have survived and where in letters home Gerald obliquely refer to the "Turtle Doves," Dorothy and her younger sister Marjorie Huon Lamb Hungerford (b. 5-10-1902, d. 12-3-1977, *HAFS: B.3a.3b*). Gerald's 'luck,' despite surviving the ferocious battles of Pozières (July-September 1916, MiD), Bullecourt (May 1917, MC), ran out on the first day of Battle of Menin Rd near Ypres on the 20/9/1917. On that day Gerald was mortally wounded by a German SOS barrage (Save Our Souls), when leading his Company up for the mornings attack. His wallet was eventually returned to Redcamp and in it resided the above faded photo of Dorothy Hungerford. The photo has resided, rarely disturbed, in Gerald's wallet for over 100 years.

Happily, after WWI Dorothy recovered and later married George Victor 'Vic' Walpole, another but more fortunate AIF servicemen, (details: <https://vwma.org.au/explore/people/91859>) in 1922. Dorothy and George were married on the 24th February 1922 at the Holy Trinity Cathedral, Wangaratta. Together they lived and farmed the 'Hurdle Creek' property at Whorouly South near Myrtleford. There they had a family of seven children (2 boys and 5 girls).

The loss in 1917 of both Gerald and his brother Pte Francis 'Ken' Evans within a three week period (details: <https://vwma.org.au/explore/people/291803>) had a devastating effect of the Evans family, particularly those at Redcamp. It was perhaps the reason Gerald's next oldest brother Evan did not become inclined to marry until he was 42 years of age. Then again, perhaps he was waiting for another fetching 'Hungerford' in Con to enter his life. Con and Evan where married on 9-12-1933 in St Johns Church of England, Melbourne. Together they had four children, David Mylor (*HAFS: E2.2a.5b.2c.1d*), John Francis (*HAFS: E2.2a.5b.2c.2d*), Elinor Constance (*HAFS: E2.2a.5b.2c.3d*) and Evan Douglas Evans (*HAFS: E2.2a.5b.2c.4d*) at Redcamp, see below. The picture of Elly Dunlop is very reminiscent of Con at around the same age by my memory.



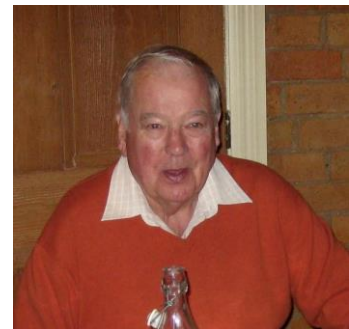
David Mylor Evans AM
'Springer' b. 1934



John Francis Evans
'Killer' b. 12-12-1935 –
d. 8-2-2016



Elinor Constance Evans
'Elly' (Dunlop)
b. 1938



Evan Douglas Evans OAM
'Doug' b. 1942
HAFS: E2.2a.5b.2c.4d

Evan Mylor Evans was the second youngest son of John and Eleanor Lucy Evans. Similar to his brother Gerald, Evan was an excellent sportsman being a member of the 1st XVIII Football and 1st XIII Tennis teams at the Melbourne Grammar School. An early Australian Davis Cup player, Pat O'Hare-Wood, suggested that Evan was one of the best players in Australia at the time because he really struggled to beat him. He was also a member and captain of the Moyhu Football club premiership teams of 1909-1911 along with his brothers Gerald and Harry Evans. It was probably football injuries (knees/ankles) that spared Evan from the dangers of WWI and potentially similar fates to Gerald and Ken. Evan certainly tried to enlist multiple times but was knocked back on medical grounds each time. Evan was a JP and councillor on the Oxley Shire until 1947 when

a substantial stroke left him restricted to a chair. This stroke was most likely increased by Evan's heavy smoking, which we know today predisposes us to such ailments. He finally died seven years later in 1953.

By the 1940's, what is called the "Old House" (below) was getting to a point beyond repair. The Old House had started out as a stockmen's wooden slab hut in the 1850's or 1860's for the then John Evan's squatters run, Whitefield Station. Over the years as the house had been up graded and added to as the family shifted from the King River to the Boggy Creek valley and as the family grew. It was composed of an interesting array of architectural styles, that if a dog, would be rightly called a 'bitser.' Presumably agricultural times were reasonably good on Redcamp in the mid 1940's so a 'New' house was designed and built. The New house was ready to occupy around 1951. Unfortunately, this time coincided with Evan's stroke and left Con as a mother of four children (5-13 years) and an incapacitated husband who could barely communicate. It was perhaps these circumstances that lead Con to pragmatically plant a large one-acre orchard with apples, pears, oranges, lemons, plums, cherries, almonds and other useful trees. Around the house was planted an extensive garden of primarily flowering plants and trees. In some ways a mini botanical garden. By 1980's sensibilities, the rambling garden had fallen into disrepair and was considered to be a fire risk. Con's garden was thus cleaned up and removed, particularly on the South West side which posed the greatest fire risk.



The "Old House" Redcamp, c 1920



The "New House" Redcamp, 1983, yours truly with Smiley the dog in foreground, Mothers Hill behind

Con, or in my case 'Gran,' was an accomplished water colour and oils artist, focussing on native vegetation and flowers in particular. Gran's uncle, Cyril Hungerford (b. 5-4-1873, d. 16-6-1950, *5HAFS: E2.2a.1b*), also had some artistic talent in his youth and studied in the renowned Julian Ashton school (Australian Heidelberg School principle) in The Rocks, Sydney. The painting below of the Hawksbury River was one of three oil paintings that were given to Muriel and then later passed on to gran after Muriel died in 1966. Another of the painting of uncle Cyril's was of Paramatta Police Station. Later uncle Cyril became a partner in the accountancy firm Hungerford, Spooner and Co, Chartered accountants.

After Evan's death in 1953, Gran stayed on at Redcamp for a number of years until John, Elly and Doug had completed their schooling. My father David came home from school and proceeded to learn how to manage the property from his cousin Jim and other well-intentioned people that were part of or employed by Evans Bros. Once her children had completed school Gran was free to pursue her interests. My first memory of Gran was visiting her flat in Croydon with my parents. I must have been about three and a half years old. This must have been shortly before Muriel's death in 1966 because I can still vaguely remember Gran and an elderly great Gran. The flat had a large window looking across a small gully to a bush area. The window allowed in a substantial amount of natural light onto a large table on which Gran did her artwork. This generally consisted of watercolours of the native flowers she loved, complete with their binomial Latin species names. Examples of Gran's artwork are displayed below. Con apparently had a stall down at the "Brush and Bottle" store in Croydon where she sold her art for a little extra spending money. It must have been a matter of a few months of my visit before Muriel had a bad fall, breaking her pelvis and femur, which mercifully rapidly resulted in her death (21-10-1966) at ripe old age of 87 years.

It was a few years later, in 1970, that Gran ended back at Redcamp to live in "The Flat" in which she had started out her married life with Evan. The Flat had originally been relocated to extend the Old House and had later been again shifted and attached to the New House. By this time her life time habit of smoking was beginning to catch up with her, just as it had with her husband Evan. Like the declining vigour in her breath,



"The Hawkesbury River at Richmond," NSW, 6th April 1901, oil on wood, painting by Cyril Hungerford

emphysema was sucking the life from her. That was not something that an energetic farm boy of eight years knew to understand. To me Gran was somebody who was not so busy as to spend a little time with their grandson. I was fascinated with her painting that she continued to produce on the same large table in the living room. How she deftly applied the watercolour washes to make the different flowers appear seemed miraculous. As such, I was willing to spend many hours watching her paint, particularly in the colder months. It was of course no chore for me to visit Mothers Hill behind the house to pick sprigs of *Hibbertia* for her to paint from. It seemed that these flowers were her favourite. If I was particularly lucky, I would get to share in Gran's dinner of fried rice which she made up from a left-overs from previous meals. This did not concern me as I remember it tasting great, but perhaps that was my liking for the salt in the soy sauce that was liberally applied?



Calectasia cyanea (Blue Tinsel Lily)



Acacia diffusa (Spreading Wattle)

Wider trips a field yielded other flowers for Gran to paint. My favourite were the orchids, most particularly were the Spider and Tiger orchids. These could sometimes be found in the bush on Banksdale, which was a part of Redcamp. After about two years, Gran's emphysema was getting too difficult to manage at Redcamp which was 40 km from Wangaratta and help from the Wangaratta base hospital. She firstly moved into a semi-detached unit in St Catherine's nursing home but did not continue to paint there. The final move was into the HP Dicker Ward at the Hospital and not long after that Gran's breath finally gave out. I remember going with dad (David) on the tractor to the foot of Banksdale to cut some fronds of tree fern located in a gully there to go on top of her coffin. I am sure she would have appreciated that. My mother Bunty Evans later remarked one day that Gran always said that she liked the golden, bleached blue and yellow straw colors of summer the best. This was perhaps the benefit of a watercolorist's eye.



Caladenias (Spider Orchids)



Diuris sulphurea (Tiger Orchid)



Hibbertia lueaeacis (Showy hibbertia)



Blandfordia hoilis (Christmas Bells)



Dorothy hungerford, c1920, written on back "Love from Dot"

Photo sent to Minnie Evans



On the back of Photo

Mina D Hungerford

Found in Gerald's wallet after he was killed