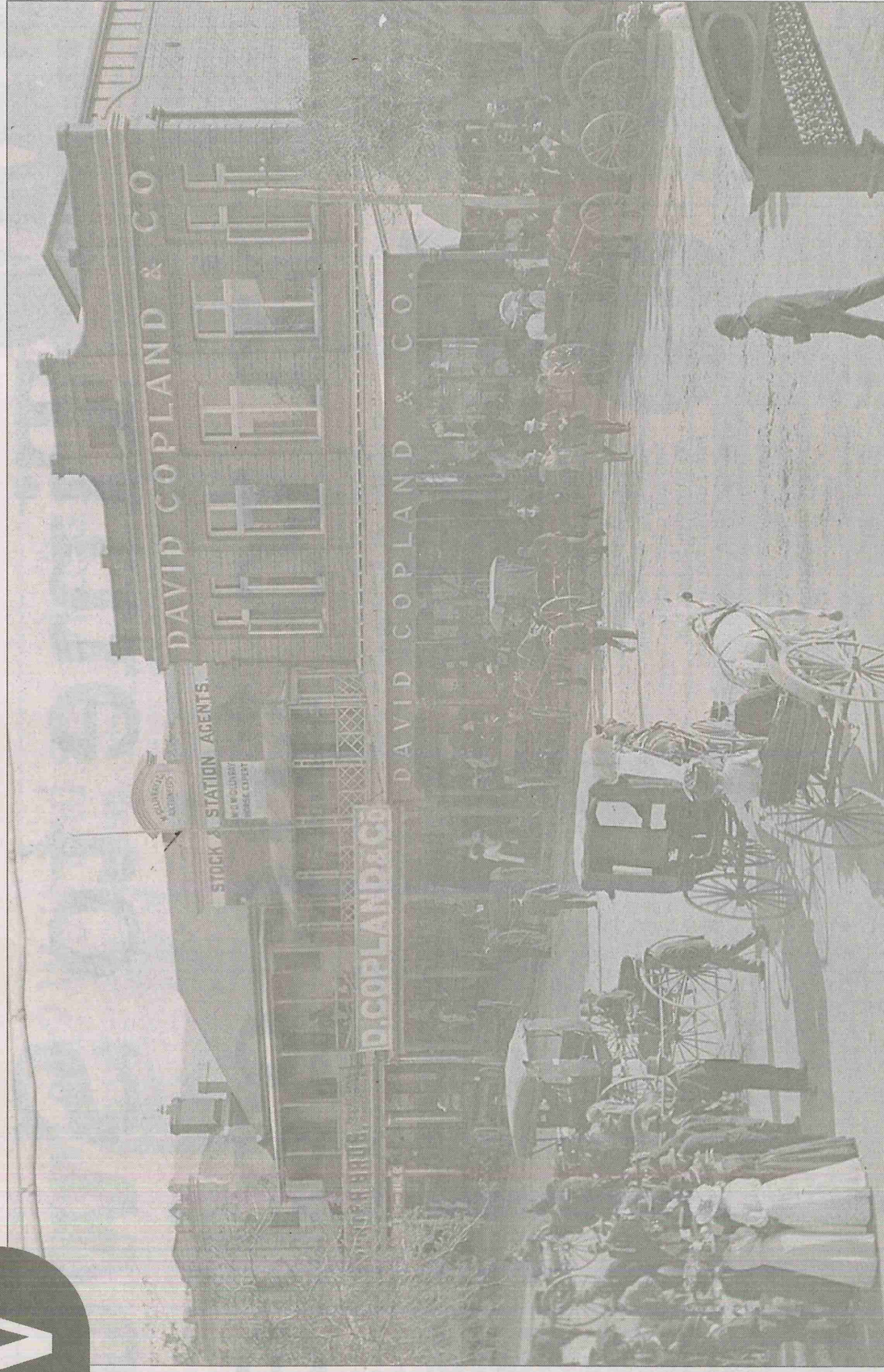




David Copland's store in Fitzmaurice Street, most probably taken sometime between 1897 and 1912 (image courtesy of the Wagga & District Historical Society [RW5/103])

A family's history



at the
archives
Wayne Doubleday

he Copland family – well known and respected citizens of Wagga, played a huge part in the development of the commercial area of the town as well as having long-lasting associations with civic interests for the advancement of the district.

David Copland, founder of David Copland and Company, was the son of a merchant and was born in Fortar, Scotland, in the early 1840s. His parents, David and Ann Copland immigrated to Melbourne when David was about 12 years of age.

David Copland was a young lad when he was employed in the Melbourne office of Stevenson and Sons, merchants, where he worked hard and succeeded in becoming a confidential clerk.

The young David was an intellectual and a widely read young man who developed into a fluent writer and a good conversationalist. He met a school teacher, Elizabeth Laird Dorward Hovell, with whom he shared similar interests.

Elizabeth was born about 1850 in Edzell, Scotland, and at the age of six she also immigrated to Melbourne with her parents. David and Elizabeth married in Melbourne in 1870. Their family consisted of three sons and three daughters.

Their eldest daughter, Nellie Christine, was born in Melbourne in 1871 and in 1872 David relocated his family to Wagga and he put his "merchant" expertise to use by entering into a partnership with a well-known businessman, JT Roberts.

From the beginning, Copland was interested in the welfare of Wagga and the surrounding district and his faith in the commercial, agricultural and pastoral possibilities motivated him to invest in town property as well as a pastoral run.

The Woolshed on Pomingalarna (image courtesy of Sherry Morris).

In 1884, together with Angus Mackay, he purchased "Pomingalarna" where they built their sheep numbers to about ninety thousand. "Pomingalarna" became one of the best-known properties on the Murrumbidgee and when Mackay sold out, Copland became sole owner and later the property was managed by his son, Sidney.

David and Elizabeth Copland were staunch members of the Presbyterian Church and were involved in many community committees. Both were supporters of the Wagga District Hospital. Elizabeth was a talented singer and performed for charity and was the enthusiastic founder of the Wagga Shakespearian Society.

Copland was a member of the National Protection Association, was elected a member of the Legislative Assembly for the Murrumbidgee Electorate from 1889 to 1891, and an Alderman from 1904 to 1908. He was also a member of the Murrumbidgee Pastoral and Agricultural Association.

The Coplands first resided at "Invermay" in Baylis Street where their second child, Frank Fawcett, was born and then at "Stirling" where Sidney, Constance Beryl and Violet Isobel were all born. By 1884 they were able to move to "Hillside" an eighty acre property at the

southern end of town and it was there that their youngest child, Lancelot, was born.

Nellie Christine Copland, eldest child of David and Elizabeth, married Frank Caldwell of the Lake Albert Vineyard. Nellie died tragically at the age of thirty-one on January 28, 1903, leaving four young children.

Frank Copland spent his formative years at Gurwood Street School, then at Kings School in Sydney. After attending university and having to employment experience in Sydney he returned to Wagga and joined the business of D Copland & Company. He was a great lover of art and literature. He passed away in Sydney in August 1941.

Sidney Copland also attended Gurwood Street School and completed his education at Kings School and Scot's College in Sydney. He also entered the office of his father's business and in addition to this, managed "Pomingalarna," and became a popular and well-known pastoralist of the district.

References: *Wagga Wagga – A History*, Sherry Morris; an article titled "The Coplands" by Sherry Morris; *The Daily Advertiser*. July 21, 1920 and August 22, 1941

Compiled by June Dietrich

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you
need to
know

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