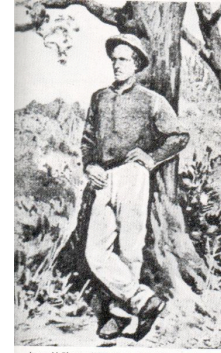


FRANK McCALLUM (alias "Captain Melville")

Frank McCallum used several alias's including "Thomas Smith", and "Captain Melville". Born near Inverness, Scotland, in 1823 he was transported to Van Diemen's Land for seven years for housebreaking. He arrived to Van Diemen's Land aboard the "Minerva" on 29 September 1838 and being only thirteen years of age he was sent to the juvenile establishment at Point Puer. His record shows he was almost immediately in trouble receiving twenty lashes for absence and insolence and a further thirty-six lashes for repeated insolence. Between 1839 and 1848 he was brought before the police magistrates twenty-five times, and sentenced to everything from thirty-six lashes to long periods of hard labour, sometimes in chains. He absconded on three occasions: November 1848, January 1850 and April 1850.



James McPherson (1841-95) the "Wild Scotman" and Queensland's most notorious bushranger.

In December 1852, Melville and his mate William Roberts stuck up a sheep station near Wardy Yallock, tied up the owner Mr Aitcheson and the overseer Mr Wilson, ransacked the house and stole horses. The following day they started robbing numerous diggers and travellers on the Ballarat Road, till they reached Geelong. There they paid a visit to a brothel, where they got very drunk, and Melville boasted about himself and about the one hundred pounds reward offered for his apprehension. One of the women notified the police, but Melville managed to flee, leaving the drunken Roberts behind. On the run he met a young man named Guy mounted on a splendid horse. Melville tried to steal the horse, but Guy wrestled with him and finally overpowered him. Young Guy was surprised, when the arriving police told him whom he had caught.

Melville and Roberts met again in the old South Geelong Gaol. Melville was sentenced to thirty-two years imprisonment, and was taken to the hulk "President" in Hobson Bay; Roberts got twelve years. After a year, Melville was transferred to the hulk "Success" to work in the stone quarry at Point Gellibrand. In October, 1856, a mutiny broke out there, during which Corporal Owen was killed. Melville was one of the nine prisoners who were tried and sentenced. The charge was murder and the penalty for Melville - death. Later the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment, to which he replied: "Well, you'll be sorry for it."

On 11th August he was found in his cell, strangled with a handkerchief. It was never revealed what happened: was it suicide, or was he strangled by the jailers, who wanted to get rid of him and his unpredictable paroxysms of violent attacks. The general opinion was that he was like a wild beast and was better dead than alive.