

as he was as helpless as a big guano after leaving a dead bullock or horse.

I kept throwing him in the dust until I got him across the street . . . I threw the big cowardly Hall on his belly I straddled him and rooted both spurs into his thighs he roared like a big calf attacked by dogs and shifted several yards of fence I . . . tried to make him let the revolver go but he stuck to it like grim death to a volunteer he called for assistance . . .

they got ropes and tied my hands and feet and Hall beat me over the head with his six chambered colts revolver nine stitches were put in some of the cuts by Dr Hastings And when Wild Wright and my mother came they could trace us across the street by the blood in the dust . . .³⁵

Humour, a swaggering bravado and a touch of poetic licence characterized Kelly's account written over eighteen years later and, central to it all, a disturbing reference to a pistol-whipping, an event confirmed by Hall's own report of the incident in 1871.

In a moment Hall said you are my prisoner for Horsestealing and made a jump and caught him by the neck but coat, waistcoat and shirt all gave way so he gave another spring and caught him by the shoulder and pulled him right off the horse but could not hold him by the flesh . . . As Kelly jumped out of his hands he ran for a scrub on the other side of the road. Hall then pulled out his revolver called on Kelly to stand when he immediately turned round to show fright and in reply to Hall said Shoot and be damned. Hall then presented the revolver straight at this face and snapped it three times and each time the hammer hitting the cartridge but it would not go off . . . Kelly then rushed at him to try and take the revolver from him and in the struggle succeeded in catching it by the muzzle and barrell. The Senior Constable wrenched it out of his hands . . . and struck Kelly with all his might 4 or 5 times on the head but could not stun him and the only effect the blows had although they were given as he said before with all his might was simply to leave that part of his head a mass of raw and bleeding flesh.³⁶

Hall, who was 6 feet in height and weighed over 16 stone, had something of an advantage in the fight, and the pistol-whipping of a 16-year-old in the course of an arrest is indicative of how over-zealous some of the rank and file had become in implementing their superiors' orders. The press justified the violence by pointing out that Hall had needed several people to help him complete the arrest.³⁷

The effect of Ned Kelly's arrest on the Greta Mob was electric. Hall found the police station surrounded by Kelly's friends and he built a large fire for illumination in case the station was attacked. He sent to Benalla for reinforcements and for a doctor to stop his prisoner's bleeding. Ned Kelly was taken to Wangaratta under escort the fol-

lowing day although Arthur, one of the reinforcements, was bemused by the precautions taken by Hall. The mare was stabled to prevent it being stolen by a Mob member before the trial. Wild Wright was located by police on 2 May and fled under police fire. He was arrested at 1 a.m. at Mrs Kelly's on 3 May. Gunn was arrested, almost as an afterthought, on 20 May. Hall, convinced that Kelly's friends would seek revenge, refused to do bush duty alone.³⁸

When the case came to trial later in May, the charge of horse stealing had been amended to receiving: the horse had been stolen in early March while Ned Kelly was in jail. Hall's deposition at the trial differed from his original reports and in an attempt to prove that Kelly and Gunn had known that the horse was stolen, he introduced a neighbour of the Kellys, Murdoch, as a corroborative witness. Murdoch proved to be of limited value. He had a record and admitted to being afraid of Hall: the Senior Constable had recently arrested him on a charge of having in his possession a carcass for which he could offer no satisfactory explanation.³⁹ The prosecution stressed the criminal records of the prisoners and their connection with the Quinn clan and Ned Kelly and Gunn were found guilty of receiving. Both were sentenced to three years at hard labour, the sentences being served at Beechworth and Pentridge Jails and on the hulks. Before his seventeenth birthday, Ned Kelly was once again the guest of the Queen (see plate 9). Wild Wright was sentenced to eighteen months for the illegal use of the horse, a curious paradox for the horse received had not been, legally, stolen.

Senior Constable Hall was rewarded £5 and congratulated by Hare and Standish. The Chief Commissioner also felt confident enough to reduce Greta to a one-man station after the arrests. But Hall's refusal to do duty alone had created problems for the Senior Constable. At the end of May, he was dismounted, officially because he was overweight and had worn down too many horses, but probably because Hall's refusal to do bush duty and his requests to be transferred struck his superiors as being something less than courageous. He was transferred to the Geelong foot police, taking with him twenty sovereigns raised by the respectable members of the community. It was some time before he was allowed to remount.⁴⁰

Hall's successor at Greta, Montgomery, was considered unfit for the special demands of the station. His horse grew fat, an indication that it was rarely used, and he spent too much time drinking with the Quinn clan and their friends for his superiors' liking. He was replaced by Flood, an efficient man who, like Hall, always endeavoured to have at least one of the clan behind bars.⁴¹ He was also a horse thief.

The rest of the Kelly family had also found themselves the subjects

- 26 *Benalla Ensign*, 6 May 1870.
- 27 *Victoria Police Gazette*, 22 March 1870. *Benalla Ensign*, 18 March 1870.
- 28 *Benalla Ensign*, 6 May 1870.
- 29 *Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, 10 May 1870.
- 30 *Benalla Ensign*, 1 April 1870.
- 31 *Ibid.*, 3 June 1870.
- 32 Ned Kelly: Jerilderie Letter, Kelly Collection, P.R.O.
- 33 Hall to Barclay, 22 April 1871, Police Correspondence, P.R.O.
- 34 *Victoria Police Gazette*, 25 September 1874. *Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, 5 August 1871. Wright was sentenced to three years for receiving stolen horses in September 1874, the charges being brought by squatter Byrne, and one month for assault in 1877 after a 'friendly ruckus'. (See Prisoners Released Lists for 2 May and 17 December 1877, *Victoria Police Gazettes*.)
- 35 Ned Kelly: Jerilderie Letter, Kelly Collection, P.R.O.
- 36 Hall to Barclay, 22 April 1871, Police Correspondence, P.R.O.
- 37 *Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, 27 April, 2 May 1871.
- 38 Hall to Montfort, 20 April 1871, and to Barclay, 22 April 1871; Barclay to Standish, 4 May 1871, Police Correspondence, P.R.O. *Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, 13 May 1871.
- 39 Greta and Glenrowan Occurrence Book, 14 December 1870, R.S.P.A. *Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, 2 May 1871.
- 40 Correspondence between Barclay and Standish, April to June 1871, Police Correspondence, P.R.O. *Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, 5 August 1871. *Benalla Ensign*, 8 July, 18 August 1871.
- 41 Police Commission, Evidence, Q 1034 Nicolson, Q 3215-16 Montfort, Pioneer Edition.