

Harry Dashboard and Fisher's Ghost

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In the year 1832 there appeared in an obscure and short-lived Sydney newspaper the first published account of the legend of Fisher's Ghost, a tale that still exerts a powerful grip on the imagination of Australians. It was presented in an anonymous thirty-stanza poem, "The Sprite of the Creek!" Ever since the poem's significance was recognised by Elizabeth Webby and Cecil Hadgraft in 1968 its authorship has been a puzzle. This paper, which draws on material on the National Library of Australia's Trove Digitised Newspapers website, traces the author of the "Sprite" through a series of pseudonymous identities over the thirty years 1830 to 1860 and, with the help of library manuscripts and official records, reveals a likely candidate: James Riley (ca.1795–1860), Irish-born ex-convict, "bush tutor" and associate of the Hume family, early explorers and settlers of the southern districts of New South Wales.

The Sprite of the Creek!

In September 1832 *Hill's Life in New South Wales*, a weekly newspaper owned and edited by Sydney printer, publican and amateur thespian Arthur Hill, published the verse romance "The Sprite of the Creek!" The poem appeared in two parts, the first on September 14 (its title misprinted "The Spirit of the Creek!") and then the entire poem, with some author's corrections, a week later. It was published anonymously, with the head-note: "AN AUSTRALIAN TALE, founded on the Murder at Campbell Town, of a Sheriff & Bailiff, named F*****."

The murder by George Worrall of his partner Frederick Fisher at Campbelltown, and Worrall's trial and execution, were widely reported in the press. In June 1826 Fisher, a well-off local landowner, disappeared. His friend and neighbour Worrall explained that he had gone home to England—an unlikely tale as Fisher was still a ticket-of-leave convict. Worrall attracted more attention when he began selling

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This research would not have been possible without access to the digitised historical Australian newspapers on the NLA's Trove website. All of the newspapers cited can be accessed there apart from *Hill's Life in New South Wales*, the *Yass Courier*, the *Albury Banner* and *The Currency Lad*, for which various libraries hold microfilm, and the *Weekly Register*, which is available on the NLA website "Australian Periodical Publications 1840–1845." The SLNSW kindly checked pages missing or illegible in microfilmed and digitised newspapers.

his friend's effects acting on written instructions obviously forged. He was arrested on suspicion of murder. Then in October bloodstains were found on a fence near Fisher's house. When a new search uncovered a lock of hair and a tooth, the police called in the Aboriginal tracker Gilbert. He tasted the creek water and, proclaiming "white fellow's fat," guided them to a spot on the boggy bank where, in a shallow grave, they found Fisher's remains. Worrall was charged, tried and hanged in February 1827, confessing on the scaffold.

All of this was reported in the newspapers of the day. Meanwhile, rumours circulated in Campbelltown that the discovery of the body was no accident. One night, so the story went, local settler John Farley had rushed terrified into the Harrow Inn announcing that he'd seen the ghost of Frederick Fisher sitting on the rail of the bridge nearby. It had beckoned to him and pointed back towards Worrall's land before fading away. It was the ghost, rumour insisted, that had prompted the police search. "The Sprite of the Creek!," published six years after the event and using fictionalised protagonists—Fredro for Fisher, Wurlo or Wurlow for Worrall, and Falvonis for Farley—was the first published account to introduce into the narrative the ghost of Frederick Fisher. The poem opens as Falvonis bursts into the inn, ashen-faced, eyes rolling, hair on end, to blurt out the horrible visitation. We are taken back to the fatal night, as murderer and victim sit drinking. We witness the blow which "severs the scull," the burial in "the creek's marshy bosom" and the tracker's relentless pursuit and discovery. The poem spares neither gore nor melodrama but, ghost aside, cleaves fairly closely to events, down to the gallows confession.¹

But who wrote the "Sprite?" The possibility that it may have been young Sydney barrister, novelist and poet John Lang was flagged in 1968 by Hadgraft and Webby on the suggestion of John Earnshaw. Victor Crittenden was arguing the case for Lang as recently as 2007, but Webby had already shown in her 1971 thesis that Lang was an unlikely candidate: in June of 1846 the "Sprite" was re-published in revised and footnoted form as "The Sprite of the Creek. An Australian Tale—Founded on Facts" under the name "Felix" in the Sydney sporting and satirical newspaper *Bell's Life in Sydney and Sporting Reviewer*. By that time John Lang had left New South Wales for India, never to return. Felix's letter to the editor, printed above the poem, explained the circumstances of the original publication in *Hill's Life* and in extensive footnotes summarised the murder, the search for the body and the trial of 1826–1827.²

¹ *Hill's Life in New South Wales*, September 21, 1832, 4. For reports of the confession and execution, see e.g. *The Monitor*, February 10, 1827, 2, and *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, February 6, 1827, 2.

² Cecil Hadgraft and Elizabeth Webby, "More Substance to Fisher's Ghost?," in *Australian Literary Studies*, Vol 3, No 3, May 1968, 190–200; Victor Crittenden, "The Five Ghosts of John Lang," in *Margin—Life and Letters of Early Australia*, No 71, April 2007, 4–14; Elizabeth Webby, "Literature



Fig. 1: A later illustration of the appearance of Fisher's ghost, from the *Muswellbrook Chronicle* of Saturday 26 December 1908, p. 7. Reproduced from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article107690178>.

There is no obvious reason to doubt Felix's authorship, but who was he? His footnotes suggest a Campbelltown link. He seems familiar with the locale and people like Farley/Falvonis, the tracker Gilbert, and publican John Patrick. Was he a local? There is some support for this in a letter from his friend "Cullum Dhu" to *Bell's Life*, written a month after the reappearance of the "Sprite." The letter recollects Felix as the life of the party at Mr Hurley's King's Arms inn at Campbelltown, and Felix travelling to Menangle to see "Mr. T——r" on unnamed business (the Taber family being early Menangle pioneers). It gives Felix's name as "R——," and quotes (or rather misquotes) from another of his poems, "Billy McDaniel." Further evidence that Felix knew the locality appears in a letter over

and the Reading Public in Australia 1800–1850," Vol. III (PhD diss., University of Sydney, 1971), 76–77. Felix's "Sprite" appeared in *Bell's Life in Sydney*, June 27, 1846, 1.

his name to the *Sydney Herald* of 1840 advocating a bridge at the dangerous Menangle Ford over the Nepean River.³

Another scrap of evidence supports an Appin–Campbelltown connection. Early newspapers usually sported Notices to Correspondents, a few column inches in which the editor could chase subscriptions, answer readers’ queries and keep in touch with regular contributors including the paper’s far-flung country correspondents. A note in *Bell’s Life* in June 1846 reads:

Our Rockwood friend has apparently misunderstood us. The ‘Sprite’ will probably appear in the shape of a pamphlet; but a press of urgent and unpleasant business has of late interfered to drive away more pleasing pursuits of the Muse.

The message obviously concerns—and was probably intended for—Felix as author of the “Sprite.” Brief and cryptic as it is, it is important not only because it supports an Appin–Campbelltown connection for Felix but also because it provides a clue to his identity. Rockwood was the home at Appin of Francis Rawdon Hume, youngest brother of the explorer Hamilton Hume. The Hume clan settled in this district before making the shift south and west to the plains of Goulburn, Gunning, Yass and Boorowa in the 1830s and 1840s. Felix’s connection with the Humes is further supported by a letter he wrote to *Bell’s Life* in August 1846 regretting the departure of Francis Rawdon Hume from Rockwood for “his establishment in the interior.”⁴

One item links Felix directly with another contributor to *Hill’s Life*, identified simply as “J. R.” In December 1845 Felix’s song “Australia Advance!” appeared in W. A. Duncan’s *Weekly Register of Politics, Facts, and General Literature*. It had, as *AustLit* notes, previously been published over the name J. R. in *Hill’s Life* in August 1832. There, an author’s note explained that the song, set to the air “Sprig of Shillelah,” had been written “some months back with an intention of its being sung at the Anniversary Dinner of the ‘Agricultural and Horticultural Society of New South Wales.’” It is a fairly typical early Australian anthem, perhaps more lively than some, although its reference to the infant colonial wine industry is unusual.

There is circumstantial evidence for a link between J. R. and Felix in another cryptic notice from the editor of *Bell’s Life* to a correspondent in August 1847:

‘Felix.’—We very much regret our inability to procure by any means, more than one number of the paper required by our esteemed correspondent. That, though imperfect, is herewith forwarded. We will communicate with Mr. J. R.⁵

³ Cullum Dhu’s letter is in *Bell’s Life*, August 1, 1846, 3; for Felix’s Menangle ford letter see *Sydney Herald*, June 8, 1840, 2.

⁴ The editor’s note to Felix is in *Bell’s Life*, June 20, 1846, 2; Felix’s letter lamenting F. R. Hume’s departure is in *Bell’s Life*, August 8, 1846, 3. Hume moved his family to Frankfield near Gunning, then on to Castlesteads near Boorowa.

⁵ *Bell’s Life*, August 7, 1847, 2.

The following brief survey of the published output of J. R. and Felix tends to support a common identity, a local interest in the Appin-Campbelltown region and subsequently the Southern Districts—Argyle and the Murrumbidgee—and a connection with the pioneer Hume family and their relatives and associates.

Verse by J. R.

The initials "J. R." may of course belong to any number of newspaper poets. Public servant John Rae, for example, thought enough of his work to collect and republish it at his own expense and under his full name.⁶ There were others, but four newspaper poems attributed to J. R. show some evidence which links authorship with Felix, with Appin-Campbelltown, or with the Humes.

In November 1832, three months after "Australia Advance!" *Hill's Life* published a second J. R. piece, a short "Epitaph" for the harmless and whimsical Jack Field, a bricklayer killed in a drunken squabble in a Campbelltown pub, as the author explains in a covering letter. It is clear from the letter that J. R. knew and liked Field.⁷ Interestingly the poem's final punch-line, "We could have better spar'd a better man!" (Prince Hal, of Falstaff, in "Henry IV") would re-emerge in Felix's elegy for another eccentric, John White, in 1848.

J. R.'s initials are also attached to two later elegies apparently connected with the Humes. In April 1848 *Bell's Life* printed "On the Death of a Fine and Engaging Child, Who Fell a Victim to Hooping Cough at the Age of Six Years and Four Months." Though not named, the subject is likely to be Jane Mitchell Hume, fifth daughter of Francis Rawdon Hume then of Frankfield, near Gunning, who died on December 23, 1847 at Collingwood, another Hume property near Gunning, of whooping cough. The newspaper notice of Jane's death gives the same cause and exact age as the poem's title.⁸ Six years later another of F. R. Hume's daughters died young. The unnamed subject of "On the much-lamented death of a youthful wife and mother who had formerly been the author's pupil" in the *Goulburn Herald and County of Argyle Advertiser* of December 1854 is undoubtedly Elizabeth "Lizzie" Hassall, Hume's eldest daughter, who died in childbirth at Frankfield in July 1853. The title here suggests that J. R. was a teacher or private tutor, and the lines "In bridal robes I saw her stand / Beside her only choice," and "I saw her leave the parent home, / And with the loved one go," suggest that the author was actually present at Lizzie's marriage to Thomas Hancox Hassall, which had taken place only a year before at Hume's home Castlesteads, Boorowa. Both points are clues to J. R.'s possible identity.

⁶ John Rae, *Gleanings from My Scrap-Book*, printed by the author, Sydney, 1869.

⁷ The *Sydney Gazette*, November 10, 1832, 2, reports how Field was accidentally killed by William Eggleton in a brawl at Patrick's Public House, Campbelltown, on October 15; Eggleton would be acquitted.

⁸ *Sydney Morning Herald*, December 28, 1847, 3.

Verse and Prose by Felix

When *Bell's Life* published Felix's revised and annotated "Sprite of the Creek" in June 1846 his name was already familiar to Sydney readers. His first poem had appeared in the *Australasian Chronicle* in October 1842. The elegy "Lines, Written as a tribute of sincere respect to the memory of the late John Kennedy Hume, Esq., of Collingwood, county King ..." recounted the shooting of J. K. Hume, brother of Hamilton and Francis Rawdon Hume, by the bushranger Thomas Whitton on the streets of Gunning on the night of January 20, 1840. Felix's footnote here purporting to give the actual words of Whitton and Hume at their meeting suggests some personal knowledge of events. He would return to the same theme six years later in an "Epitaph for J. K. Hume." Then in early January 1845 the *Weekly Register* printed a tragic ballad, "The Horseman Who Faced the Storm," "owre true a tale" recounting, as Felix explains in a footnote, the death of "Mr. B——." Again there was a Hume connection: the subject was in fact George Barber, pioneer settler of Glenrock, near Marulan, who disappeared in a winter storm in 1844 riding home from Goulburn. Fearing foul play, Barber's brother-in-law Hamilton Hume offered a reward, but when the body surfaced the following spring in the Wollondilly River the inquest found accidental drowning.⁹ The poem would be republished twice by the *Goulburn Herald*, once in 1848 credited to Felix and again in 1860 under another name, "Harry Dashboard." Felix was in distinguished company at the *Weekly Register*. Duncan favoured the poetry of his friends Charles Harpur, Henry Halloran and Henry Parkes, but he thought enough of Felix's work to print, in December 1845, a revised version of "Australia Advance!," the anthem published by *Hill's Life* in 1832 where it had been credited to J. R.

Felix would also try his hand at another verse romance, "Sir Ulin and Bertha of Glein. A Romantic Ballad." A story of betrayed love and supernatural vengeance owing something to the gothic "tales of terror" verse of Scott, Southey and Monk Lewis, this appeared in an 1848 *Bell's Life*. But his most ambitious poetry—and arguably his best—was comic. "The Luprechaun; or, Fairies' Shoemaker, An Irish Legend of '98" was a four-part serio-comic ballad, complete with footnotes, set in the time of the troubles of 1798 and couched "in the strains of the Munster tongue." Spread over four issues of *Bell's Life* in October and November 1845, it is the sad tale of Pat Kavanah who captures a "luprechaun" but is undone by his own greed. That the author of the "Luprechaun" also wrote the "Sprite" is confirmed by his friend Cullum Dhu's letter:

However gratified a good portion of your readers in this district were at the appearance of the Leprechaun (sic) of our friend Felix at the commencement of

⁹ Stuart Hamilton Hume, in his *Beyond the Borders: An Anecdotal History of the Hume and Related Pioneering Families from 1790* (Canberra: Jennifer Hume Macdougall and Prudence Grieve, 1991), 43, believes that Barber, hazarding an old short-cut across Towrang Creek, had been caught in a flash flood. The inquest is reported in e.g. *Sydney Morning Herald*, September 9, 1844, 2.

your journal, many were surprised at his subsequent silence, considering the many good things he has at his disposal that have never met the public eye, it was spoke of to write to you when the "Sprite of the Creek" appeared to the satisfaction of all that know the author.¹⁰

On republication of the "Luprechaun" in 1860, attributed to Harry D——, the author noted that it had been written upwards of a quarter of a century previously "amid the wild and romantic scenes bordering the Cataract River, East Bargo," suggesting that it dates from around 1835. In his "Introductory Ode, with Address to a Friend" Felix explains that he heard the story from Andrew Doyle, the grey-haired "Nestor of Kilfoyle," long since dead, who had guided his early years, teaching him the secret of contentment. Both teacher and place, however, are probably fictitious: Felix's source is very likely an article "Superstitions of the Irish Peasantry.—No. V. The Luprechaun," in *The Dublin and London Magazine*, July 1825, particularly pages 195–97, where the identical story of "Kavanagh" is told in prose. It was reprinted in Sydney in *The Currency Lad* in 1832, and Felix may have seen it there.

Two years later he submitted a second long piece of Irish tragi-comedy. "Billy McDaniel; or, 'The Ould Fellow' Balked. An Irish Legend" was a comic verse epic in ten cantos, published over seven weekly issues of *Bell's Life* in July and August 1847. Billy McDaniel, a drunkard, is ensnared by the Devil but, flown off to an Irish country wedding, contrives to save the bride from his clutches. Again, Felix's primary source is literary: "Billy McDaniel" is a verse retelling of the tale "Master and Man" from *Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland* by the antiquary Thomas Crofton Croker (1825). The story was reprinted in a *Sydney Gazette* of 1830, which is where Felix may have found it. Croker was a member of the brilliant Deipnosophists or "supper sages" club of Cork, an exclusive gathering of Irish wits that included Richard Millikin, with whom, as we shall see, Felix claimed a special link.¹¹

In July and August of 1848 *Bell's Life* gave its readers the last of Felix's long poems, a pair of mock-elegies set in a rambling prose reminiscence of Sydney before the 1840s depression, "The Good Old Times. A Rhapsody." The poems, both originally written in the 1830s, celebrated a well-known eccentric, the whale-oil merchant, lamp contractor and language-mangler John White. The whimsical "Laudatory Address to John White, of the 'Blazing Star,' George-street, Sydney," Felix explains, had originally appeared as an advertisement in the *Herald* in 1834. The "Elegy on John White," a tongue-in-cheek lament, was written some years later, "when I heard that poor John had 'doused his glim'" — which occurred in 1835. In addressing Death in the latter, Felix inserts a scrap of

¹⁰ *Bell's Life*, August 1, 1846, 3.

¹¹ The *Dublin and London Magazine* article appeared anonymously but was probably the work of the journal's editor Michael James Whitty; it was reprinted in *The Currency Lad*, October 27, 1832, 4, and November 3, 1832, 4. Croker's story was reprinted in the *Sydney Gazette*, June 12, 1830, 4.

rueful self-description: “Or when at some poor luckless elf, / Some hare-brained poet, like myself, / Sans home or kindred, friends or pelf, / You dart your lances ...” That the Felix of these reminiscences is also author of the Humbuggawang despatches is shown in a passing remark, “Memo.—Remind Tim D. of publishing the little article he penned on the subject of labour.”

The Humbuggawang Despatches

Over the thirteen years between 1847 and 1859 Felix submitted to *Bell's Life* a series of twenty comic sketches set in rural Humbuggawang, a mythical location somewhere on the Murrumbidgee. They were satires on New South Wales politics, in particular the politics of the liberal democrats and the radical separatists—Charles Cowper, Henry Parkes, John Dunmore Lang, Daniel Deniehy—delivered in the words of Felix’s Irish stockman-poet friend Tim Donohue. The comedy derives in part from Tim’s whimsical analyses of the politics of the day, driven by a crack-brained and mischievous radicalism; in part from his slapstick “stage Irish” persona; and in part from song parodies interleaved throughout the dialogue. In the earliest sketches—Felix calls them “Murrumbidgee operatics”—he and Tim share the stage alone, but later come the “swarries” or soirées in Tim’s riverbank hut, well-lubricated gatherings of his stock-keeping brethren, where we meet Wagga Wagga Larry and Possum Dick and hear incendiary despatches from the Tarcutta Slasher, Conkey Bob, Tim’s brother Botherd Jerry and the market analyst Augustus Doolamaun O’Fluke. The targets of Felix’s satire, expressed ironically through Tim’s effusions, are the progressive causes of the 1840s and 1850s: extension of the franchise, repeal, separation from England and republicanism. On the way, there is many a crack at the anti-transportation movement, the slave-seeking squatters, the dysfunctional Sydney Corporation, John Dunmore Lang (the blowbladder “Holy Legislathor” or “Prosbitearian Pope” as Tim calls him), the Bank of Australia’s bizarre land lottery, railway speculation, the colony’s feeble defences against the Russians, and the liberal Cowper ministry of the later 1850s.

Felix mocks Tim for his politics but his language reveals an affection for his friend’s character and an admiration for his muse: “I think it a singular jumble of devil-may-care drollery,” he says of Tim’s ironic address in welcome to Doctor Lang in 1847, “... how, in the name of all the Donoghues ... you manage to gather such a chaos of strange matter into your brain, and haul it out verse after verse, as if they were fastened by a string to each other, I am not a little puzzled to know.”¹² Elizabeth Webby called the despatches “Felix’s crowning achievement,” describing the series at some length.¹³

Tim Donohue was not the only “stage Irishman” used as a mouthpiece for satirical comment—the voice was a popular one in mid-nineteenth century

¹² *Bell's Life*, May 8, 1847, 3.

¹³ Webby 1971, 78–81.

Australian newspapers, as Webby noted. Many papers sported one or more regular correspondents specialising, for better or worse, in this voice. The models were British and Irish: the creations of comic poet Thomas Hood and Irish writers in magazines of 1830s and 1840s like *Blackwood's*, *Fraser's* and the *Dublin University Review*, such as Thomas Crofton Croker, William Maginn, Edward Kenealy, Clarence Mangan, Charles Lever and Frank Mahony ("Father Prout"). One more immediate model for Tim's despatches may be Kenealy's dialect piece on the Cork wits, "A letter from Mr. Barney Brallaghan, piper at Paddy's Goose public-house, Ratcliffe Highway, to Oliver Yorke, Esquire; containing a diverting account of the late Richard Alfred Millikin, auther o' 'The Groves of Blarney,' and some of his Kintemporaries," which appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1842.¹⁴ Millikin has a particular significance here. Felix usually stays in the background in the despatches, but the first one may contain some autobiographical clues. He tells Tim that when a Cork schoolboy he knew the author of that famous song "The Groves of Blarney:"

Tim.—Yerra wisha, Misther Felix, af you only had the flute or fiddle here, to rise me a bit now an' then, when I'd be sthrainin' some o' the words, an' houldin' others back to make 'em fit the music, we'd bate the very play-house itself. I suppose you know the tchune?

Felix.—Indeed, Tim, I do; and knew, also, the man who wrote the "Groves of Blarney"—Richard Millikin—he was a fellow citizen of mine, and often patted my young head as I passed his shop in George's-street, in the "beautiful city," on my way home from school; his ostensible calling was that of a haberdasher: but the operative mantua-makers and sempstresses of Cork, on discovering that he took orders for ladies' dresses, and had them imported from London, ready-made, deridingly styled honest, jovial, and gifted Dick Millikin, the "Man Milliner." And now, Tim, hit out with the song; if it have the same effect on me that it had on your master, I'll have it published—depend on't—and you shall have a whole newspaper with your song inside of it, to your own cheek.

Tim.—More power to ye, then; an' now, here goes.¹⁵

Millikin, who was born in 1767 at Castlemartyr, county Cork, and died in 1815, was an attorney by trade, as well as a poet, painter and actor. If Felix was a schoolboy at the time, as he tells Tim, he would presumably have been born late in the eighteenth or in the first decade of the nineteenth century, at or near Cork. We must be very wary, however, of taking Felix's words at face value—of confusing the author and his protagonist.

¹⁴ *Fraser's Magazine*, Vol.25, January 1842, 65–80, heavily revised as the opening chapter of Kenealy's *Brallaghan, or The Deipnosophists*, London: E. Churton, 1845, 1–55.

¹⁵ *Bell's Life*, January 2, 1847, 4.

Felix's "Elegiac Pieces" Manuscript

In a folder of Hamilton Hume's papers in the National Library's manuscript collection is a handwritten booklet of eighteen pages, patched and stained, entitled "Elegiac Pieces By Felix."¹⁶ It contains four poems apparently in the author's own hand, all of them previously published (with minor variations in wording), along with some author's notes on two. The poems are:

"Written as a tribute of respect to the memory of John Kennedy Hume, Esquire, of Collingwood, County of King, who lost his life while intrepidly attempting to aid a neighbour whose dwelling was attacked by the notorious "Whitton" and his sanguinary associates, on the 20th January, 1840."—a version of "Lines, Written as a tribute ..." as published in the *Australasian Chronicle* in October 1842. The manuscript version is signed Felix.

"The horseman who faced the storm"—a version of the poem published in the *Weekly Register* in 1845 (as the author notes) and republished under the name Harry Dashboard. The manuscript version is signed Felix, and a prefatory note confirms that the subject was indeed George Barber of Glenrock.

"On the death of a fine and engaging child, who fell a victim to Whooping Cough at the age of six years and four months"—a version of the poem published in *Bell's Life* in 1848 (as the author notes in the manuscript). The manuscript version is signed not Felix but J. R., and is dated "Gunning, January, 1848."

"(Proposed Epitaph.) Sacred to the memory of J K H, of Collingwood, in this county, who lost his life at Gunning on the night of the 20th January, 1840, aged years. Requiescat in pace."—a version of the poem published as "Epitaph, for J. K. Hume" in the *Goulburn Herald* in 1848, where it is signed Felix. There is no date or signature on the manuscript version.

The tribute to J. K. Hume is prefaced by a note that reveals something about Felix himself:

This poem was conceived shortly after the tragical occurrence to which it relates, but was not even committed to paper before the beginning of the year 18[?? *obscured*] when I was engaged as tutor at Glenrock; so it may be said that, notwithstanding the various objects and pursuits which called forth my attention for a period of two years, or more, I still managed to retain on what Hamlet calls "the book and volume of the brain" an indelible copy of the subject. It appeared in the *Australasian Chronicle* about the time abovementioned when that journal was under the able and talented guidance of W. A. Duncan, Esq. Felix."

A single page in the same folder, but separate from the "Elegiac Pieces" booklet, contains a further poem, again with a Hume connection. "Lines elicited

¹⁶ Hamilton Hume—Papers, 1840–1855, Sir John Ferguson Collection, National Library of Australia, MS 3575.

by the spirited movement lately made in Goulburn, towards awarding a Public Testimonial to Hamilton Hume, Esq. By Geelong" is a version of an ode published by the *Goulburn Herald* in July 1855 and attributed to "Geelong," at a time of renewed agitation to honour the man they called "the Discoverer of the Southern Country." Despite the pseudonym, the handwriting in this manuscript appears to be the same as that in Felix's "Elegiac Pieces."

The National Library material provides some useful supporting evidence for Felix's (and J. R.'s) association with the Humes and their relatives. It reveals that around 1842 (that is two years after J. K. Hume's death) he was tutor at Glenrock, the property near Marulan of George Barber, brother-in-law of Hamilton, John and Francis Rawdon Hume, and the subject of "The Horseman...." It is clear, furthermore, that the manuscript was valued by and retained in the hands of the Humes themselves. On the front cover appears the signature "Andrew H. Hume," and "Kings School," together with a hard-to-decipher word, perhaps "Gunning." These words appear twice, as if in youthful practice. The writer is undoubtedly Andrew Hamilton Hume, first son of Francis Rawdon Hume, who attended the school between 1844 and 1849. Known to the family as "Little Hamilton," he would become right hand man to his childless uncle Hamilton Hume; hence, presumably, inclusion of the booklet with the MS 3575 papers which are mainly Hamilton's. Andrew's signature, together with variations in wording between the manuscript and published poems, suggest a date for the manuscript of 1848 or 1849.

Other Identities

As with J. R., we must exercise caution in trying to identify Felix. The name means "fortunate" or "happy" and could be used by any number of correspondents. Newspapers from New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria all include letters and articles by Felixes, but none apart from those noted contains evidence pointing towards the author of the "Horseman" or the Humbuggawang despatches. There are, however, several items under other names that are plainly or—on the basis of style, subject and locale—quite likely his. We know that "Dick Lightpate" was the name he used for "Head Matter," the original of the ode to John White that first appeared in the *Sydney Herald* of 1834. We know that he called himself "Geelong" for the 1855 ode for Hamilton Hume. He was possibly responsible for the Razorback road satire "A New Ditty to an Old Tune" attributed to "A Child of Song" in *Hill's Life* in 1832, which resurfaced as "The Razorback Mountain" by "Caleb Menangle" in the *Goulburn Herald* in 1851, when the perennial fight over the route of the Great South Road flared yet again. He may be "Owen Bulgruddery," who sent the publican's lament "Teetotally Undone" from Appin to the *Australasian Chronicle* in 1841, and he may be "Bibo" who in 1849 sent the

Goulburn Herald a poem in praise of cut-price Yass innkeeper Charles Quail.¹⁷ He may also be “Felix M’Quill,” author of “The Luckless Journey; or, One Half Pint Too Much,” a delightful comic epic published over three issues of the *Chronicle* in 1842. This is a cautionary tale with a moral: smallholders Andrew and Peg haul their year’s grain harvest to Sydney only to fall victims to their weakness for rum, returning home to their children cheated, robbed and empty-handed. Set in Macquarie’s time, footnotes provide the reader of 1842 with commentary on the colony’s primitive early marriage customs, coinage and so forth. The author’s tolerant position on temperance is made clear in the epigraph to Canto III: “O, that men should put an enemy in their mouths, to steal away their brains! / Every inordinate cup is unblest and its ingredient is—a devil” as well as in the body of the poem. There are strong stylistic similarities with Felix’s work, and his “Billy McDaniel” employs the same quotation from “Othello.” Webby in her 1971 thesis assumed that this author is the Felix of the Humbuggawang despatches. I agree that this is likely, but have found no further corroboration that Felix and Felix M’Quill are one.¹⁸

Felix may have moved west by mid-1847, as did many Appin-Campbelltown settlers. In May, the editor of *Bell’s Life* writes: “Felix.—Gunning. Will hear from us in a day or two,” and there is a similar note in July. Felix’s defiant resolution to give his ballad “Sir Ulin and Bertha” to Dan Casey who was going to Gunning and would put it in the Post Office there appears the following March.¹⁹ On the other hand, it is possible that Felix was simply highly mobile, travelling regularly along the Great South Road.

Verse by Harry Dashboard

As we see, a third major identity emerges: two items by Felix, “The Luprechaun” and “The Horseman ...,” were republished by the *Goulburn Herald*, the first in 1859 under the name Harry D—— and the second in 1860 under the name Harry Dashboard, the form most frequently encountered. This poet, who takes his pen-name from the board at the front of a carriage that protects the occupants from muck dashed up by the horses’ hooves, writes exclusively from the Gunning-Yass-Boorowa district, to the Goulburn and Yass newspapers. Where the poems

¹⁷ Respectively “A New Ditty to an Old Tune” by A Child of Song, *Hill’s Life*, December 28, 1832, 2; “The Razorback Mountain” by Caleb Menangle, *Goulburn Herald*, February 8, 1851, 6; “Teetotally Undone” by Owen Bulgruddery, *Australasian Chronicle*, November 11, 1841, 2; “Impromptu on the magnanimous innkeeper who advertised in the ‘Goulburn Herald’ an intention of lowering the prices of his grog-stuff” by Bibo, *Goulburn Herald*, February 17, 1849, 3.

¹⁸ “The Luckless Journey; or, One Half Pint Too Much. An Australian Sketch” by Felix M’Quill, *Australasian Chronicle*, September 20, 1842, 2; September 22, 1842, 1; and September 24, 1842, 2. See Webby 1971, 48.

¹⁹ The editor’s note is in *Bell’s Life*, May 29, 1847, 2; there is a similar message on July 24, 1847, 2. Felix’s reference to Dan Casey comes on March 11, 1848, 1.

are dated it is often within a few days of publication, suggesting he lives locally. Many are written from "Yassville." This may have been a property or a house in or near Yass, but it has not been identified by local historians and was possibly no more real than "Humbuggawang."²⁰

Harry Dashboard's published poems—twenty-nine identified to date—deserve more attention than we can give them here. His subjects are local matters and colonial politics; his tone, with one or two exceptions, light-hearted. Driven by a gently satirical wit, the poems range from mock odes for country policemen ("A Smart Affair"), coach-drivers ("A Brummisode") and politicians ("Honest Tam o' Yass"), through sketches packed with sly digs at local citizens ("If I pass through your town ..."), laments on the state of the roads and bridges ("A Razorbackantigo," "The 'Murmurs' of the (Gunning) Creek"), pot-shots at his poetical rivals Parkes and Harpur ("A Metrical Flare-up") and radical politician John Dunmore Lang ("The Demagogue"), and such national issues as gold mania ("Mammon's Arrival"),²¹ Chinese immigration ("Traffic in Chinaware") and the bunyip aristocracy ("A Fun-o-Scopic View of Our Peerage"). His contributions were evidently welcome in the *Goulburn Herald* office; on at least two occasions the editor inserts an appeal for anything from Harry, and sometimes—for example in "Traffic in Chinaware" and "A Stir-'Em-Up Railway Chant," a piece urging southerners to stump up for railway shares—his poem will fit so neatly with a *Herald* leader that it might almost be a political cartoon in verse.

Here and there we detect an echo of Felix in Harry's language. His affectionate reference to "rare Brummy" in "A Brummisode" turns up a year later in one of Felix's Humbuggawang despatches. The delightful term "skumfished," a rare North of England dialect word meaning smothered or suffocated, seems to be confined in the Trove newspapers mainly to Felix and Harry. "Go-the-rig," also used several times by Felix and Harry but few others, is another English provincialism, meaning to behave recklessly, apparently used as an exhortation like "go ahead!" or "go for it!"

Like Felix, Harry Dashboard rarely steps into the light. "One of those devil may-care dabblers in verse," he calls himself teasingly in the preface to one poem, "who neither court [*sic*] praise nor fears censure."²² One of his more sombre poems, however, may hold a clue to his identity. "To the Memory of the Late William Henry Broughton, Esq. of Broughtonsworth" is a conventional elegy (signed just "H. D.") for a respected pioneer settler. Broughton was related by marriage to the

²⁰ "Yassville" does appear as a wool-bale brand in the 1934 Sydney wool sales and in the name of an Ipswich (Qld) boarding house, but in neither case can I confirm any direct link with the poet.

²¹ See the cover image "Convivial Diggers in Melbourne" by S. T. Gill for a visual representation of excesses the gold rush enabled.

²² Author's head-note to "The Luprechaun" in *Goulburn Herald*, March 10, 1860, 4; he refers to himself there as "H. D."

Humes, and accompanied Hamilton, John Kennedy Hume and George Barber on their 1821 exploration south to the Gunning district and the Yass Plains. An early mover west, he died at Yass on September 6, 1858, and was buried at his property Broughtonsworth, near Boorowa, the following day in the presence of a large gathering of his friends and tenants and townspeople from Yass. This was the day before Harry wrote his piece dated “Burrowa, 8th Sept. 1858”—meaning that Harry was very likely there among the mourners. We will return to this point shortly.²³

The Hassall Elegy

Among the papers of the pioneer Hassall family in the State Library of New South Wales is a small, plain, single-page privately printed leaflet containing a poem by Harry D——, “On the Death of a Youthful Husband and Father, Who sank under afflicting family bereavements,” dated Burrowa, March 1859. The subject, “poor H——,” is undoubtedly Thomas Hancox Hassall, husband of Elizabeth “Lizzie” Hassall, nee Hume, whose first name and nickname are given.²⁴ Barely nineteen and married less than a year, Lizzie died in childbirth at Frankfield. Baby Lizzie outlived her mother only six months. The child’s death, as the poem laments, “gave the last pang to his woe-smitten heart:” Thomas died two years later at his Macquarie Grove estate, at the age of thirty. The three lie in graveyards far apart. There is nothing in the Hassall papers to help explain the leaflet’s origin, but on grounds of style alone Harry D—— is surely Harry Dashboard, and this poem the pair to J. R.’s elegy for Lizzie, “On the much-lamented death of a youthful wife and mother who had formerly been the author’s pupil.” Furthermore, one stanza, in an echo of the earlier poem, suggests that the author actually witnessed the couple’s wedding:

Ah! little thought those who had heard the words spoken
Which made the sweet gentle-souled “Lizzie” his wife,
That his hopes would all wither—his fond heart be broken—
Ere long he had moved in the sunshine of Life.

A Person of Interest

In summary, J. R. is author of at least one newspaper poem, the anthem “Australia Advance!,” later credited to Felix, author of “The Sprite of the Creek;” Felix is author of two items, “The Horseman Who Faced the Storm” and “The

²³ The poem appeared first in the *Yass Courier* of September 25, 1858, and then in the *Goulburn Herald* of October 6, 1858; a place and date of composition are given only in the former. For reports of Broughton’s funeral see e.g. *Sydney Morning Herald*, September 16, 1858, 3; and *Yass Courier*, September 11, 1858, 2.

²⁴ Hassall Family—Further papers, ca 1849–1998, State Library of New South Wales, MLMSS 7431/1. Internal evidence aside, an accompanying list of contents prepared by the Hassall family donors notes that the poem “must have referred to Thomas Hassall (1825–1855). . . .”

Luprechaun," later credited respectively to Harry Dashboard and Harry D——; and, to close the circle, Harry D—— is author of a companion piece to J. R.'s elegy for his pupil Lizzie Hassall. Other evidence suggests links between these writers and at least two other pseudonyms. In terms of writing activity the three main identities overlap in time, but a broad pattern is discernible: J. R.'s writing commences in the 1830s, Felix's belongs to the 1840s (with his Humbuggawang despatches continuing well into the next decade), and Harry Dashboard's to the 1850s. J. R. and Felix write mainly for Sydney newspapers, the latter becoming a mainstay for the satirical and sporting weekly *Bell's Life*; Harry just for the southern papers. J. R. attaches his name to anthems and elegies; the other two specialise in lively topical verse and satire, but can turn out an elegy when occasion demands.

However, the author behind these masks is elusive. The Hume connection offers the first clue to a possible identity. Mary Bozzom Kennedy, fourth daughter of Francis Rawdon Hume, recalls in her unpublished manuscript "Recollections of an Australian Squatter's Wife" their "old schoolmaster" James Riley:

We used to have an old schoolmaster who taught hundreds of children in different places, for he used to get dissatisfied and go for a change, always finding his way back to the old master. He said he nursed me to sleep as a baby, putting me to sleep in the old Appin home, and after my marriage he wrote asking for a little assistance, which I sent, but the poor old fellow died before it reached him; died alone and friendless, for he would wander. He was a clever man with, unfortunately, one failing. He also used to write for newspapers and while his brain was evolving his subject matter he would stir his tea round and round with the result that his spoon was always worn on one side. How many people James Riley educated in those days can never be counted, but they were many.²⁵

Mary was born at F. R. Hume's original home Rockwood, Appin, on August 25, 1838. She married Robert Henry Kennedy at her father's later home Castlesteads on August 30, 1858. Her memories, if accurate (bearing in mind that they were put on paper more than half a century later), would place Riley at Rockwood around say 1838–1842, and his death around 1858 or not too many years afterwards. While his "one failing" may have been simple wanderlust, Mary could have been hinting at a tendency to drink.

The name James Riley is attached to only one newspaper poem I have found, "The Gundagai Calamity," a lament following the flood that swept away most of Gundagai on the night of June 24, 1852. It commences:

O, mourn, Australia, weep and mourn!
For yonder floats as sad a wail

²⁵ Mrs Mary Kennedy, *Recollections of an Australian Squatter's Wife, 1838–1912*, State Library of New South Wales, A2105, microfilm CY1338, Draft C typescript, 20A.

As e'er on tempest-wing was borne,
Along the Murrumbidgee's vale.²⁶

The poem first appeared two months after the event, in the *Goulburn Herald* of August 28, 1852. There, a footnote reads: "A severe attack of Ophthalmia (sic) on the part of the writer prevented a more seasonable publication of these lines." It became a popular favourite, re-published many times in the New South Wales regional press over the next eighty years. The language is conventional, comparable with the laments of J. R., Felix and Harry Dashboard, but lacking the life of their light verse and prose. However, several pieces of evidence suggest this James Riley may have been our author.

First, "The Gundagai Calamity" is dated "Castlesteads, 19th August, 1852." Castlesteads was then the home of Francis Rawdon Hume, near Boorowa. An outbreak of "ophthalmia" there is confirmed in the (unnamed) Boorowa correspondent's report to the *Goulburn Herald* of March 20, 1852. Second, in 1919 early Gundagai resident James Gormly, M. L. C., who had survived the flood, recalled for the *Gundagai Independent* that the author of "The Gundagai Calamity" James Riley was "a private teacher in Mr. Pat Fennell's family at Appin." Fennell was a well-known publican, auctioneer and landowner in the Campbelltown-Appin district from the 1820s, moving west to Wagga in the mid-1850s. He was undoubtedly the Campbelltown auctioneer "Mr. F——l" mentioned in Cullum Dhu's 1846 letter to *Bell's Life*. Gormly said elsewhere: "When I first knew the Fennell family, in 1842 they resided in the town of Appin. Patrick Fennell reared a family of eight sons and four daughters, and provided a good education for his children. This was a creditable performance at a time when education was costly." The National Library's folder of Gormly's newspaper cuttings includes a single-page, single-sided, printed leaflet of Riley's "The Gundagai Calamity" which states: "The above lines, which were written soon after the catastrophe by a resident of the Upper Murrumbidgee district, graphically describe the loss of human life by the flood...." The leaflet was probably produced for Gormly himself, as it includes reference to a memorial stone he erected for his family in the Gundagai Cemetery. Gormly was an astute observer with a tenacious memory, and wrote prolifically for the regional press. He appears to be a reliable witness.²⁷

In further support of the Hume connection, the name James Riley appears five years earlier in a list in the Sydney papers of twenty-eight Gunning donors to the Irish and Scotch Relief Fund in September-October 1847, near that of F. R. Hume (then at Frankfield) and his Kennedy relatives. This is in the middle

²⁶ *Goulburn Herald*, August 28, 1852, 6.

²⁷ Gormly's recollections are in the *Gundagai Independent and Pastoral, Agricultural and Mining Advocate*, June 30, 1919, 2, and the *Albury Banner and Wodonga Express*, August 16, 1918, 38, and August 23, 1918, 38. The "Gundagai Calamity" leaflet is in James Gormly, Newspaper articles 1902-1918, National Library of Australia, MS 3508.

of the period at which *Bell's Life* is in touch with Felix at Gunning (May 1847 to March 1848), and close to the time it publishes J. R.'s "On the death of a fine and engaging child" which is dated Gunning, January 1848.²⁸

As we have seen, certain poems by J. R., Felix and Harry Dashboard provide in their subject matter evidence of the author's link with the Humes and their relatives and neighbours. Internal evidence in two suggests the connection was a close one. According to J. R.'s elegy "On the much-lamented death of a youthful wife who had formerly been the author's pupil" (and providing that the "wife" was indeed F. R. Hume's daughter Lizzie, which is highly likely), J. R. was present at the wedding of Lizzie Hume to Thomas Hancox Hassall at Castlesteads on August 4, 1852, a bare fifteen days before James Riley was at the same house as shown by the date of the Gundagai poem. As noted previously, Harry Dashboard's elegy "To the Memory of the Late William Henry Broughton" is dated Burrowa (now Boorowa), September 8, 1858. Broughton, a relative and neighbour of the Humes, was buried the day before at his property Broughtonsworth, Boorowa, and it is reasonable to suppose that Harry was present at the funeral. This took place just nine days after the wedding of F. R. Hume's daughter Mary at nearby Castlesteads on August 30, 1858. In between, on September 4, the editor of *Bell's Life* is advising "J. R., Burrowa:" "You are not overlooked and will shortly hear from us."

James Riley is a common enough name, and newspapers of the day provide several possible candidates, the most obvious being father of *Goulburn Herald* proprietor and editor William Russell Riley. That James Riley was a sheriff's bailiff at Goulburn from 1848, and died there in 1871. His son had charge of the paper from 1858, and would publish nine of Harry Dashboard's poems. However, his family came to New South Wales from England no earlier than 1837, several years after the publication of J. R.'s early work. Furthermore, there is nothing pointing towards a literary career or a Hume connection, and his London marriage register entry suggests a man of little education: his occupation there is labourer, and he scrawls his name "Jams Riley."²⁹

Early New South Wales convict and census records and a manuscript at the State Library of New South Wales provide us with a more likely candidate. The 1828 New South Wales Census lists a James Riley residing with the Reverend Thomas Reddall at Campbelltown. He was a convict, 34 years of age, a Government or Assigned Servant who had been transported on the ship "Minstrel" leaving England in 1824, and he had been sentenced to seven years. He was Protestant by religion and was employed by Reddall as a labourer. Reddall, an Anglican

²⁸ *Sydney Morning Herald*, October 4, 1847, 1S. In addition, the *Sydney Morning Herald* of March 10, 1847, 2, lists an unclaimed letter for "James Riley, Yass."

²⁹ London, England, Marriages and Banns—Record of James Riley (Marriage Register, Parish of St Pancras, 1819, 402).

chaplain and educationist, had arrived in 1820 with a remit to introduce the Madras or monitorial system of instruction to New South Wales public schools. Macquarie was a friend and supporter, and sent his own son to Reddall's private school at Castle Meehan, Macquarie Fields. By 1822 he was incumbent at the new St Peter's at Campbelltown. As Felix himself tells us in his footnotes to the "Sprite," Reddall was one of the three Campbelltown magistrates who examined George Worrall prior to his committal for the murder of Frederick Fisher in 1826. It was he who paid out the reward for the finding of Fisher's body, he who laid the remains to rest in the graveyard at St Peter's, and he who (according to some accounts) attended Worrall to the rope in Sydney.

A manuscript in the Mitchell Library provides our next clue. On December 20, 1830, a James Riley wrote from Major George Druitt's estate at Mount Druitt to "Miss Reddall," enclosing two poems. The first was a lament, "Lines written on seeing a favourite Cat kill a young Swallow as it fled from the Nest—Dedicated with respectful submission to Miss Reddall of Clan-Alpine Cottage near Campbelltown by Her most humble and Obedt Servant—James Riley." The second was a light-hearted ode for Druitt's infant daughter Jane, which the author signed "J. R."

Riley explains in his letter that, thoughtless as may have appeared his general conduct while residing at Campbell Town, Miss Reddall's pre-eminence had not escaped his notice. He talks of the respect and gratitude due to her family. He goes on to set the scene for his first poem: beneath the verandah shading the school-room at Mount Druitt, on a jutting ledge, swallows have built a nest of clay and, accustomed to the nearness of humans, fly in and out of the classroom. Tib the cat, favourite of the whole estate, has her perch on the verandah rail. Overhead, heeding nature's summons and urged on by sire and dam, a fledgling launches himself on his first flight:

I mark'd—Tib's fierce, and direful look!
 I mark'd—the bounding spring she took!
 I heard—the little victim's beak
 Send forth a loud, and piteous shriek!
 I heard his Mother's heartwring note:
 While bitt' rest anguish swell'd her throat,
 And wild distraction mark'd her flight—
 Impell'd by madness and affright.
 She rav'd, she shriek'd a mother's pray'r:
 "Oh! Spare my Youngling! Spare! Oh! Spare!"

But despite the frenzy of his parents his fate is sealed:

But fury, courage, nought avails—
 The Victim's clench'd in Tib's fell nails.
 Too true the aim.—too sure the dart—

The murderous fang, points at the heart.
 Vain are his struggles, shrieks, and cries;
 While cruel triumph lights Tib's eyes—
 I tried t' avert the Youngling's fate—
 I rush'd—alas!—it was too late,
 For Tib, remorseless, bore away
 Her wounded, bleeding, dying prey.

Riley offers his two poems tentatively, expressing his apprehensions “lest my humble offering, should, under your tasteful, and critical analyzation, be found worthless and uninteresting.” Excusing the “littleness” of his subject by his own “littleness and obscurity,” he adds

... should this humble effort of my weak muse, afford the smallest spark of gratification to yourself or any member of the family, it will give me not only real pleasure, but somewhat more confidence, to venture at arresting your favourable notice on some future day.

The fledgling's “untried pinions” are, we suspect, also the poet's:

He, till this hour, no wish did feel,
 To quit his clay-built Domicile,
 But tempted by each nodding spray,
 Which, gently waving, seem'd to say,
 “Take wing! nor like us, helpless Trees,
 “Grow old in indolence, and ease.
 “Tho' insignificant thou art,
 “On Nature's stage, you have a part
 “To act, (if only for a day)
 “In Life's uncertain, bustling Play—

This poem, as well as the little ode for Jane, are plainly the work of an unpublished writer, uncertain of his powers. We do not hear Tim Donohue or Harry Dashboard here, but the tone and language are not so far from “The Sprite of the Creek” or “The Stranger-Lady.” Towards the end of his letter Riley returns to his time at Campbelltown:

I must own, (tho the originality of the piece may suffer by the acknowledgement) that in my feeble endeavours to heighten its colouring, I was mainly indebted to a recurrence of ideas and feelings, associated with moments past spent in the neighbourhood of Campltown, from which I borrowd materials not else where to be found.³⁰

³⁰ Reddall Family—Papers 1808–1897, State Library of New South Wales, A423 (microfilm CY974), 75–82—Letter to Miss Reddall from James Riley.

It seems very likely that the James Riley assigned to Reddall at Campbelltown in 1828 is the James Riley writing to Reddall's daughter two years later, alluding to his time at Campbelltown. The fact that he describes himself in the letter as sitting in (or perhaps on the verandah outside) the "nursery or school-room" at Mount Druitt "transposing music" when he witnesses Tib's fell deed suggests that he is employed as a schoolteacher, and the didactic tone of parts of his letter tends to support this. Reddall had seven surviving daughters in 1830, the two eldest being English-born Mary Bannister Reddall (aged 22 in 1830) and Isabella (aged 16). Riley's Miss Reddall is most likely Mary. Like her sisters, she would spend the two decades following her father's death in 1838 helping her mother run their seminary for young ladies at Campbelltown, marrying late in life.

Convict and court records from England and New South Wales help to build a picture of this man. His name appears as James Riley or Ryley, the spelling interchangeable but his identity verifiable by reference to his trial or his ship. His crime was, in modern terms, fraud. The record of evidence at his trial, at the Middlesex Gaol Delivery at the Old Bailey on December 2, 1824, is brief:

FRANCIS GRAHAM GODDARD. I live at No. 61, South Molton-street. On the 7th of August, at half-past 10 o'clock at night, the prisoner (who was a stranger to me) came to hire a lodging for W. L. Peel, Esq. I showed him our apartments; he said, they would perfectly suit the gentleman, and he would enter the next morning; he then asked me to go with him to fetch the gentleman's luggage; we went to Vere-street, and he asked me to wait an hour in the public-house at the corner of Henrietta-street, while he went to fetch a porter from the Thatched-House Tavern, where the gentleman was, who, he said, was the brother of Sir Robert Peel. I said, I could not wait an hour; he said, "Then wait ten minutes;" and as he did not return, I went home in about twenty-five minutes. I did not see him again that night, but I saw him afterwards at a friend's house where he came to take a lodging for a gentleman.

CAROLINE ISABELLA GODDARD. I am the wife of Mr. Goddard. I was at home when the prisoner came to take our lodgings; my husband's statement is correct; after he and the prisoner had been gone ten minutes or half an hour, the prisoner returned, and asked me to let him have 9s. 6d., as they were in want of some silver to pay the portage of the gentleman's luggage; that Mr. Goddard did not happen to have any silver in his pocket, and had told him to run back to me for some. I am quite certain he said it was for Mr. Goddard to pay the porter. I gave him 2s., which was all I had. I did not see him again.³¹

Ryley pleaded distress, putting in a written defence, but was sentenced to be transported for seven years, his crime technically "theft—grand larceny." Sir

³¹ Old Bailey Proceedings Online, December 1824, trial of JAMES RYLEY (t18241202-5). Of 896 Old Bailey convictions for "grand larceny—theft" that year only 234 were punished by transportation.

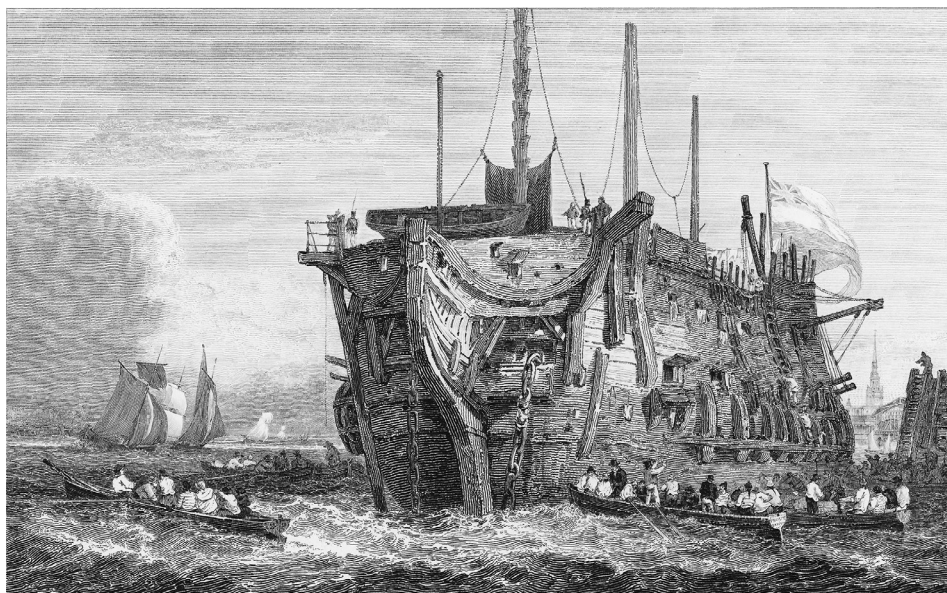


Fig. 2: "Prison Ship at Deptford," engraving by George Cooke (1781–1834), published by Longman & Co., 1826. 94 x 150 mm. National Library of Australia, an9058437.

Robert Peel was at the time Home Secretary, and his brother William Yates Peel the Tory member for Tamworth. The severity of Ryley's sentence—when only around a quarter of convictions for this crime were punished by transportation—may have had something to do with the standing of those gentlemen. He spent three months on the prison hulk "Justitia" at Sheerness before being transported on the "Minstrel," sailing from London on April 10, 1825, and arriving at Port Jackson on August 22. Unusually, there were no deaths on the voyage, the men appearing in the "best of health" on landing, according to the *Sydney Gazette*.

The New South Wales convict records show that Ryley was born in 1795 at Cork, and that he was a clerk by calling. He was 5 feet 4¾ inches (164 cm) tall, his complexion brown (or sallow) and pock-pitted, his hair dark brown (later described as grey) and his eyes blue (later described as dark brown). While many of his shipmates were sent straight off to labour in clearing gangs, Ryley was allocated on arrival to the Principal Superintendent's Office, and in the General Muster of October 1825 was listed in government employment at the Prisoners Barracks in Sydney, suggesting that he was recognised as a "Special" or educated convict with clerical skills (though this is somewhat at odds with his status as "labourer" with Reddall in 1828). He was granted his Certificate of Freedom on December 23, 1831. The "Sprite of the Creek!" appeared nine months later.³²

³² This section draws on: UK Prison Hulks Registers 1802–49—Justitia Register 1803–36; "Free Settler or Felon" website at jenwilletts.com; NSW Convict Indents—Bound Indentures 1823–26;

Felix's manuscript in the National Library makes no mention of James Riley by name, but some physical features argue for a direct connection. The handwriting of the Felix and Riley manuscripts is extremely similar, down to the antique initial "long s" in "ss;" and the manuscript initials "J. R." beneath Felix's "On the death of a fine and engaging child ..." (1848) bear a very close resemblance to those at the foot of Riley's ode for baby Jane Druitt (1830), including in the backward flourish to the tail of the "R." Furthermore, in two places in his manuscript, Felix uses the same unusual "dotted x" footnote symbol "✕" (a variant of the asterisk) employed by Riley in his ode for Jane Druitt.

Conclusion

This paper proposes an identity for the author of the poem "The Sprite of the Creek!," the earliest known written account of Fisher's Ghost, published anonymously in 1832. It provides evidence that Felix, author of the republished "Sprite," was responsible for some sixty published items, mainly comic and satirical verse, over the period 1832–1860 under the pen-names J. R., Felix and Harry Dashboard. In all three guises this author's work reveals a connection with the Hume family and their relatives Barber, Broughton and Hassall, explorers and pioneer settlers of the southern districts of New South Wales, and in particular with the family of Francis Rawdon Hume of Rockwood, Frankfield and Castlesteads. The paper proposes that a likely identity for Felix is James Riley, tutor to the children of F. R. Hume (among many others), and identifies this James Riley as the Irish-born convict earlier assigned to Campbelltown clergyman, schoolmaster and magistrate Thomas Reddall, and the author of an unpublished poem dedicated to Reddall's daughter. Riley's presence in Campbelltown in 1828, so soon after the Fisher murder, and his association with Reddall, who played an important role in bringing the killer to justice, explain the familiarity with local people and events apparent in the footnotes to the republished "Sprite." Other evidence aside, the strong similarity of the handwriting in two manuscripts—Riley's poem for Miss Reddall (1830) and Felix's Hume elegies (ca 1848)—argues for a common identity.

If this identification is accepted, we can piece together a skeletal career:

1795—Born at Cork, Ireland; religion Protestant.

1824—Tried in London and convicted of theft, sentenced to seven years transportation.

1825—Arrives in New South Wales per "Minstrel (2)"; assigned to government work in Sydney.

1828—Assigned to Rev. Thomas Reddall, Campbelltown, as labourer.

NSW Convict Musters 1800–49—General Muster, 1825; Butts of Certificates of Freedom, 1831, Dec; *Sydney Gazette*, September 1, 1825, 3, and January 12, 1832, 1; *Sydney Herald*, January 16, 1832, 4. Riley's ship is generally referred to as "Minstrel (2)."

1830—At estate of Major George Druitt at Mount Druitt, probably as schoolmaster; sends two MS poems to Miss Reddall at Campbelltown.

1831—Granted Certificate of Freedom.

1832–1834—Publishes verse in Sydney newspapers (including “The Sprite of the Creek!”) anonymously and under pseudonyms J. R., Dick Lightpate and A Child of Song; possibly living at or near Campbelltown.

ca. 1835—“The Luprechaun” composed in wilds of Cataract River, East Bargo.

ca. 1838–1840—Riley is schoolmaster to family of F. R. Hume at Rockwood, Appin.

1840—Felix writes to Sydney paper about dangers of ford at Menangle.

1841—Owen Bulgruddery’s “Teetotally Undone” sent to Sydney paper from Appin.

ca. 1842—Riley is schoolmaster to family of George Barber at Glenrock, Marulan; also to family of Patrick Fennell of Appin during this period. Felix publishes elegy for J. K. Hume. Felix M’Quill publishes “The Luckless Journey.”

1845—Felix publishes elegy for George Barber of Glenrock, comic epic “The Luprechaun” and anthem “Australia Advance!”

1846—Felix publishes revised “Sprite;” writes letter lamenting departure of Francis Rawdon Hume from Rockwood, Appin.

1847—First of Felix’s Humbuggawang despatches published by *Bell’s Life*; Felix publishes comic epic “Billy McDaniel.” Probably living at or near Gunning.

1848—J. R.’s elegy for F. R. Hume’s daughter Jane Mitchell Hume, written at Gunning; Felix’s comic odes for oil merchant John White published in Sydney. Harry Dashboard’s first poem, written at “Yassville,” published in Goulburn paper.

1849–1853—Harry Dashboard writing from “Yassville,” “Gammonawang” and Gunning. Bibo writes from Bowning.

1851—“The Razorback Mountain” by Caleb Menangle published.

1852—James Riley writes “The Gundagai Calamity” at F. R. Hume’s home Castlesteads, Boorowa. J. R. probably present at wedding of his former pupil Lizzie Hassall (nee Hume) at Castlesteads.

1854—J. R.’s elegy for F. R. Hume’s daughter Lizzie Hassall.

1855—Ode for Hamilton Hume by Geelong published.

1857—Harry Dashboard resumes writing for Goulburn and Yass papers, from Boorowa, Gunning, Bobbera and “Yassville.”

1858—Harry Dashboard probably present at funeral of W. H. Broughton, Boorowa.

1859—Harry D——’s elegy for Thomas Hancox Hassall (leaflet); last of Felix’s Humbuggawang despatches published.

1860—Last known Harry Dashboard poem published.

We know little enough of Riley’s origins, but even less of his fate. Mary Kennedy said that after her marriage in 1858 Riley wrote asking for a little assistance, which she sent, but “the poor old fellow died before it reached him; died alone and friendless, for he would wander.” His last published poem, appropriately enough a reprint of the lament “The Horseman who Faced the Storm,” dates to October 1860. Although he may have continued work under other pen-names, or left the colony, or simply ceased writing, it seems most likely from what Kennedy says that he died around late 1860 or not too long afterwards. There is no readily identifiable record of his death in the State Births, Deaths and Marriages registers, and no death notice in the press—even in newspapers that published so much of his work and whose editors called him “our esteemed correspondent” and “our old friend.” He may indeed have died unhonoured among strangers.

“The Sprite of the Creek!” has reappeared a number of times since then. Hadgraft and Webby printed it in their 1968 article. In the 1990s it was included in two very different collections, *The Poet’s Discovery: Nineteenth-Century Australia in Verse* by Jordan and Pierce, and *Four Accounts of Fisher’s Ghost* by Stephan Williams. Several other works of Riley’s have resurfaced, and there are doubtless more to find. J. R.’s “Australia Advance” from *Hill’s Life* is reproduced in *The Poet’s Discovery*. “A New Ditty to an Old Tune” appeared in *The Big Book of Australian Folk Song* in the 1970s under the title “The Razor-Back Mountain,” the compiler Ron Edwards noting there that the song had been sent to him by writer Nancy Keesing who had found it in *Hill’s Life*. The “New Ditty” is also included in Butterss and Webby’s *Penguin Book of Australian Ballads*. Harry Dashboard’s “A Voice from the Bush” has been anthologised by Lyall Gillespie in his *Early Verse of the Canberra Region*. Finally, in her 1994 *Southerly* article “Song and Verse of the Old Southern Road” Valerie Thompson quotes from “A New Ditty” and Harry Dashboard’s “A Brummisode,” and refers to Riley’s “The Gundagai Calamity.”³³

³³ *The Poet’s Discovery: Nineteenth-Century Australia in Verse*, ed. Richard Douglas Jordan and Peter Pierce, Carlton, Vic: MUP, 1990; *Four Accounts of Fisher’s Ghost Put Together Between Covers*, Stephen Williams, Woden, ACT: Popinjay Publications, 1990; *The Big Book of Australian Folk Song*, ed. Ron Edwards, Adelaide: Rigby, 1976, 305–6; *The Penguin Book of Australian Ballads*, ed. Philip Butterss and Elizabeth Webby, Ringwood, Vic: Penguin Books, 1993, 82–83; *Early Verse of the Canberra Region: A Collection of Poetry, Verse and Doggerel from Newspapers, Other Publications and Private Sources*, ed. Lyall L. Gillespie, Campbell, ACT: L. Gillespie, 1994; Valerie Thompson, “Song and Verse of the Old Southern Road,” *Southerly*, Vol. 54, No. 1, March 1994, 75–85.

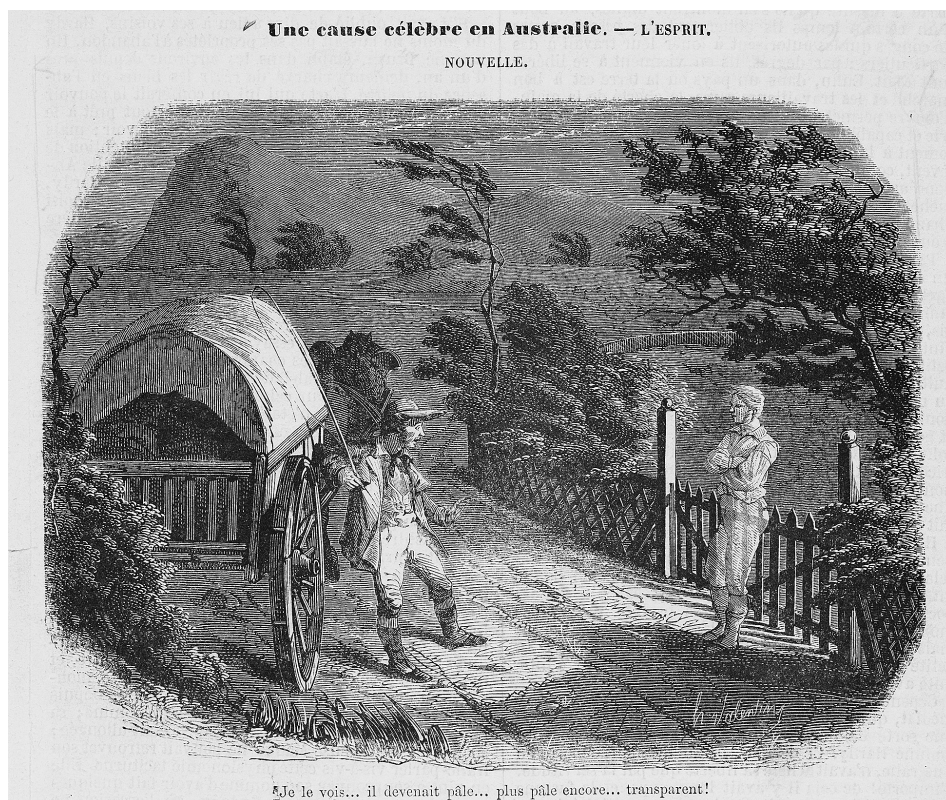


Fig. 3: Illustration from French version of the Fisher's ghost story, published in *Lami de la maison: revue hebdomadaire illustrée*, vol. 1, no.11, 20 March 1856, reproduced from the State Library of New South Wales copy, call no. Q054/1. John Lang (1816–1864) had published a version of the tale as "A Ghost Story" in Calcutta in a journal he edited entitled *The Mofussilite* in 1845. Lang's version was reprinted anonymously in *Household Words*, edited by Charles Dickens in 1853, whence it was borrowed for the French version.

Appendix. Works Attributable to James Riley

Anonymous Verse

- “The Spirit of the Creek!,” *Hill’s Life in New South Wales*, September 14, 1832, 3. Part-publication, comprising first 13 stanzas.
- “The Sprite of the Creek!,” *Hill’s Life in New South Wales*, September 21, 1832, 4. Full poem with some author’s corrections.

Verse by J. R.

- “Australia Advance!,” *Hill’s Life in New South Wales*, August 24, 1832, 4.
- “Epitaph” (for Jack Field), *Hill’s Life in New South Wales*, November 30, 1832, 2.
- “On the Death of a Fine and Engaging Child, Who Fell a Victim to Hooping Cough at the Age of Six Years and Four Months,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney and Sporting Reviewer*, April 1, 1848, 1. Dated Gunning, January, 1848. A manuscript version with minor variations appears in the booklet “Elegiac Pieces By Felix” (Hamilton Hume—Papers, 1840–1855, Sir John Ferguson Collection, National Library of Australia, MS 3575), signed “J. R.”
- “On the Much-lamented Death of a Youthful Wife and Mother who had Formerly Been the Author’s Pupil,” *Goulburn Herald and County of Argyle Advertiser*, December 23, 1854, 4. Dated December 1854.

Verse by Felix

- “The Sprite of the Creek. An Australian Tale—Founded on Facts,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney*, June 27, 1846, 1. A revised version of the 1832 anonymous original in *Hill’s Life in New South Wales*.
- “Lines, Written as a tribute of sincere respect to the memory of the late John Kennedy Hume, Esq., of Collingwood, county King, who lost his life while intrepidly attempting to aid a neighbour whose dwelling was attacked by the notorious Whitton and his sanguinary associates, in December 1840,” *Australasian Chronicle*, October 8, 1842, 1. A manuscript version appears in “Elegiac Pieces By Felix” (NLA MS 3575) under the title “Written as a tribute of respect to the memory of John Kennedy Hume, Esquire, of Collingwood, County of King, who lost his life while intrepidly attempting to aid a neighbour whose dwelling was attacked by the notorious ‘Whitton’ and his sanguinary associates, on the 20th January, 1840.”
- “The Horseman Who Faced the Storm,” *The Weekly Register of Politics, Facts and General Literature*, January 4, 1845, 6; republished twice by the *Goulburn Herald*, once attributed to Felix (December 16, 1848, 4) and again under the name Harry Dashboard (October 3, 1860, 4). A manuscript version appears in “Elegiac Pieces By Felix” (NLA MS 3575).
- “The Luprechaun; or, Fairies’ Shoemaker, An Irish Legend of ’98,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney*, October 11, 1845, 4; October 18, ?; October 25, 4; and November 1, 4; on republication in 1860 attributed to Harry D——.
- “Australia Advance!,” *Weekly Register of Politics, Facts and General Literature*, December 20, 1845, 294; a slightly revised version of the anthem published by *Hill’s Life* in 1832 attributed to J. R.
- “Billy McDaniel; or, ‘The Ould Fellow’ Balked. An Irish Legend,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney*, July 10, 1847, 4; July 17, 1847, 4; July 24, 1847, 4; July 31, 1847, 4; August 7, 1847, 4; August 14, 1847, 4; and August 21, 1847, 4.
- “Sir Ulin and Bertha of Glein. A Romantic Ballad,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney*, March 11, 1848, 1 (in an untitled letter to the editors, in effect the fourth Humbuggawang despatch).
- “Laudatory Address to John White, of the ‘Blazing Star,’ George-street, Sydney,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney*, August 5, 1848, 1 (as part of article “The Good Old Times. A Rhapsody”); poem

previously published as advertisement "Head-Matter," attributed to Dick Lightpate, *Sydney Herald*, August 11, 1834, 4.

"Elegy on John White," *Bell's Life in Sydney*, August 12, 1848, 4 (as part of article "The Good Old Times. A Rhapsody").

"Epitaph, for J. K. Hume," *Goulburn Herald*, December 23, 1848, 4. A manuscript version with minor variations appears in "Elegiac Pieces By Felix" (NLA MS 3575) under the title "(Proposed Epitaph.) Sacred to the memory of J K H, of Collingwood, in this county, who lost his life at Gunning on the night of the 20th January, 1840, aged years. Requiescat in pace."

Felix's Humbuggawang Despatches

"An Operatic Entertainment on the Banks of the Murrumbidgee," *Bell's Life in Sydney*, January 2, 1847, 4; reprinted by request on January 9, 1847, 4. Subsequently republished in *Moreton Bay Courier*, January 30, 1847, 4; *Goulburn Herald*, January 13, 1849, 4, and again on August 25, 1855, 2S; and in part or whole in *Geelong Advertiser*, January 22, 1847, 1; *Port Phillip Patriot*, January 26, 1847, 4; *Melbourne Daily News*, 26 February 1849, 4; and *Corio Chronicle*, March 14, 1849, 1. Includes song "The Murrumbidgee, sure 'tis a pity ..." (Air: "The Groves of Blarney").

"Murrumbidgee Operatics. Act II," *Bell's Life in Sydney*, May 8, 1847, 3. Includes songs "B' the piper that Moses invagled at Tara ..." (Air: "Langolee"); and "Wisha, Doctor, welcome back! ..." (Air: "The Shanna Van Vuchth").

"Scene from the Murrumbidgee Operatics," *Bell's Life in Sydney*, February 26, 1848, 1. Includes song "Hail to the Chief who supplies us with cannibals! ..." (Air: "Hail to the Chief").

"Sir Ulin and Bertha of Glein. A Romantic Ballad," *Bell's Life in Sydney*, March 11, 1848, 1 (in an untitled letter to the editors, in effect the fourth despatch).

"Tim Donohue's Swarry! Fraternizing on the Murrumbidgee!! A Five Gallon Keg Chok Full of Meagherism!!! Telegraphed by Felix," *Bell's Life in Sydney*, May 5, 1849, 1. Includes song "Och! our Council will assemble ..." (Air: "Tullamore").

"Tim Donohue's Second Swarry! Ferment on the Murrumbidgee! A Despatch from Head Quarters! A God-send for the Display of Papineanism and Wigandsquirtism! Ineffectual Attempt to Check the Avowal of Republican Principles at Humbuggawang by a Barricade of Railway Chi-yikes!!!! Constitutional Means (Draining Kegs and Blasting Out Songs.) Considered Unavailing, and a Determination to Resort to the Fizzical!!!! Telegraphed by Felix," *Bell's Life in Sydney*, July 14, 1849, 1. Includes songs "Chaw yer bunkum! fire away! ..." (Air unspecified but plainly "The Shanna Van Voucht"); "Railway Chi-yikes" (Air: "What's That to Any One, Whether or No?"); and "Come rouse ye up, ye valiant sows! ..." (Air: "The Cruishkeen Lawn").

"Tim Donohue's Third Swarry! Prefaced by the Gigantic Railway Spec. and Contemplated Monster Cod-fishing Establishment!! A Second Despatch from Head Quarters, Received at Humbuggawang. Total Abandonment of the Fiz! Appale for Compensation on the Kennedian Slum!!! The Wake of Agitation!!! Telegraphed by Felix," *Bell's Life in Sydney*, October 13, 1849, 1. Includes songs "Tare an' ouns! boys, we're murder'd ..." (Air: "Rory O'More"); and "Appale for Compinsation" (Air: "Dainty Davie").

"Interesting Despatch from the Murrumbidgee! Tim Donohue, Finding Himself 'Blew-moulded' through Want of Agitation, Resolves to Offer Himself as a Member for Humbuggawang!! His Appeal to the Electors!!!," *Bell's Life in Sydney*, June 15, 1850, 2. Includes song "When great Brian Boru for his soord had no work ..." (Air: "You Know I'm your Priest").

"Despatch from Humbuggawang," *Bell's Life in Sydney*, April 24, 1852, 3. Includes songs "Arrah dockther ar ye dun ..." (Air unspecified, but plainly "The Shannavanvought"); and "Mischif a Brewin', Boys" (Tchune: "Whin I lived at Ballinacracy, dear").

- “Despatch from Humbuggawang. Felix’s Prospects at the Diggings. Tim Donohue’s Lamentation for the Demise of the Sydney Corporate Body,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney*, January 14, 1854, 1. Includes song “Tim Donohue’s Soroful Lamint for the Crewel End an’ Murther of the Sydney Corprit Body” (Tchune: “Miss Baley, who sthole the lether britches”).
- “Tim Donohue’s War Shout,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney*, March 17, 1855, 3. Includes song “Tim Donohue’s War Shout” (Tchune: “The Green Flag Flyin’ Afore Us”).
- “Depatches from Humbuggawang Titivated by Felix,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney*, March 24, 1855, 1.
- “Despatch from Humbuggawang. The Democratic Nudgings of O’Fluke and the Skibbereen Celt Disregarded by Tim Donohue, Who Makes a Last Appale to John Bull. Titivated by Felix,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney*, September 22, 1855, 3. Includes song “The Last Appale” (Tchune: “The Fine Ould Irish Gentleman”).
- “A Humbuggawang Despatch,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney*, November 8, 1856, 1.
- “A Humbuggawangian Version of Auld Langsyne,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney*, December 6, 1856, 3. Includes song “A Humbuggawangian Version of Auld Langsyne.”
- “Signs of the Times at Humbuggawang,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney*, December 20, 1856, 3. Includes song “Tim Donohue’s Last” (Tune: “Langolee”).
- “Humbuggawangian,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney*, December 5, 1857, 4. Includes song “A Cabbynet Chant” (Tchune: “London, aghra, is the Devil’s Own Shop”).
- “Humbuggawang Despatch Extraordinary,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney*, March 27, 1858, 4. Includes song “The Song of Simpathy” (Chune: “The Boyne Water”).
- “Humbuggawangian,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney*, August 21, 1858, 3. Includes song “Hould Fast!” (Tchune: “Rory O’More”).
- “A Humbuggawang Lyrick,” *Bell’s Life in Sydney*, September 3, 1859, 3–4; reprinted September 24, 1859, 3–4. Includes songs “The Holy Legislathor” (Tchune: “The crather’s niver aisy”), and “Tim Donohues Ologone Over the (Purtinded) Resignation” (Tchune: “The codger was but winkin”).

Verse by Harry Dashboard

- “A Brummisode” by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Goulburn Herald*, August 19, 1848, 4. Dated Yassville, August 7, 1848.
- “If I pass through your town where’s the best place to lunch ...” by Harry Dashboard, *Goulburn Herald*, October 21, 1848, 2. Dated Gammonawang, October 1848.
- “A Smart Affair” by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Goulburn Herald*, March 24, 1849, 3. Dated Yassville, March 1849.
- “Jack Chancit’s Prize Song” by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Goulburn Herald*, May 5, 1849, 6. Dated Yassville, April 24, 1849.
- “The Bridge of Sighs (at Yass)” by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Goulburn Herald*, March 9, 1850, 6. Dated Yassville, March 6, 1850.
- “A Stir-’Em-Up Railway Chant” by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Goulburn Herald*, March 30, 1850, 6. Dated Gunning, March 26, 1850.
- “A Few Words of a Sort, Addressed to Time” by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Goulburn Herald*, May 18, 1850, 6. Dated Yassville, May 9, 1850.
- “The Song of the Bridge (a-la-Hood)” by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Goulburn Herald*, October 26, 1850, 6. Dated Yassville, October 1850.
- “A Razorbackantigo” by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Goulburn Herald*, April 12, 1851, 4. Dated Yassville, April 1851.

- "Mammon's Arrival (A Gold Ditty)" by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Goulburn Herald*, September 6, 1851, 6. Dated Yassville, August 1851.
- "The Razorback Trust" by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Goulburn Herald*, March 13, 1852, 6. Dated Yassville, March 2, 1852.
- "Traffic in Chinaware" by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Goulburn Herald*, March 27, 1852, 4. Date and location obscured.
- "A New Version of 'London Bridge is Broken Down'" by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Goulburn Herald*, September 4, 1852, 6. Date and location not provided.
- "A Song, by Way of Winder-up to the 'Bridge War' of the 'Yassites'" by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Goulburn Herald*, May 14, 1853, 6. Dated Yassville, May 2, 1853.
- "A Fun-o-Scopic View of our Peerage" by Harry Dashboard, Esquire, *Goulburn Herald*, October 8, 1853, 4. Dated Yassville, September 1853.
- "A Yassagram" by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Yass Courier*, December 19, 1857, 4. Dated Burrowa Gunyah, December 1857.
- "A Metrical Flare-up" by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Yass Courier*, April 3, 1858, 4. Dated March 1858, location not provided.
- "The 'Murmurs' of the (Gunning) Creek" by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Goulburn Herald*, April 24, 1858, 4, and *Yass Courier*, May 1, 1858, 4. Dated Gunning, April 17, 1858.
- "Well Done!" by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Yass Courier*, May 1, 1858, 4. Dated Bobbera, April 21, 1858.
- "To the Memory of the Late William Henry Broughton, Esq., of Broughtonsworth" by H. D., *Yass Courier*, September 25, 1858; dated Burrowa, September 8, 1858. Reprinted as "To the Memory of the Late W. H. Broughton, of Broughtonsworth" by H. D. in *Goulburn Herald*, October 6, 1858, 4; date and location not provided.
- "A Backer-Up" by Harry Dashboard, Esq., *Goulburn Herald*, March 5, 1859, 2. Dated Yassville, February 1859.
- "The Stranger-Lady" by Harry D——, *Goulburn Herald*, March 12, 1859, 2. Dated Yassville, March 1859.
- "On the Death of a Youthful Husband and Father, Who sank under afflicting family bereavements" by Harry D——, leaflet. Dated Burrowa, March 1859. Hassall Family—Further Papers, ca.1849–1998, State Library of New South Wales, MLMSS 7431/1.
- "A Voice from the Bush" by Harry Dashboard, *Yass Courier*, April 9, 1859, 4. Dated Yassville, April 1859.
- "Song. Honest Tam o' Yass" by H. D., *Yass Courier*, June 25, 1859, 2. Dated June 11, 1859, location not provided.
- "The Demagogue" by Harry Dashboard, *Goulburn Herald*, October 5, 1859, 4. Dated Yassville, September 1859.
- "Jim Soolivan's Fears—T'itivated by Harry Dashboard," *Yass Courier*, March 3, 1860, 4. Dated Yassville, February 1860.
- "The Luprechaun: or Fairies' Shoe-maker. A Legend of '98" by Harry D——, *Goulburn Herald*, March 10, 1860, 4, and March 14, 1860, 4. A slightly revised version of the poem by Felix published in *Bell's Life* in 1845. Dated Yassville, February 1860.
- "The Horseman who Faced the Storm" by Harry Dashboard, *Goulburn Herald*, October 3, 1860, 4. A reprint of the poem by Felix which had appeared in the *Weekly Register* in 1845 and the *Goulburn Herald* in 1848. Dated Yassville, 1860.

Verse under Other Names

“Head Matter” by Dick Lightpate, *Sydney Herald*, August 11, 1834, 4, republished as “Laudatory Address to John White ...” by Felix in *Bell’s Life* in 1848.

“Lines Elicited by the Spirited Movement Lately Made in Goulburn, Towards Awarding a Public Testimonial to Hamilton Hume, Esq.” by Geelong, *Goulburn Herald*, July 21, 1855, 4. A manuscript version under the same title is in NLA MS 3575.

Verse by James Riley

“Lines written, on seeing a favorite Cat kill a young Swallow as it fled from the Nest—Dedicated with respectful submission to Miss Reddall of Clan-Alpine Cottage near Campbeltown by Her most humble and Obedt Servant— James Riley” in letter to Miss Reddall from James Riley dated Mount Druitt, December 20th 1830. Reddall Family—Papers 1808–1897, State Library of New South Wales, A423 (microfilm CY974), 75–82.

“When I relief from sadness seek ...” in letter to Miss Reddall from James Riley dated Mount Druitt, December 20th 1830. Reddall Family—Papers 1808–1897, SL NSW, A423 (microfilm CY974), 75–82.

“The Gundagai Calamity” by James Riley, *Goulburn Herald*, August 28, 1852, 6. Dated Castlesteads, August 11, 1852. Reprinted extensively, e.g. in *Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal*, September 25, 1852, 2; *Gundagai Independent and Pastoral, Agricultural & Mining Advocate*, June 30, 1919, 2; *Gundagai Times and Tumut, Adelong and Murrumbidgee District Advertiser*, January 11, 1929, 2; etc.