



# Alf and the Terrick Tragedy

Greg: [00:06](#) G'day and welcome to Today's Stories from our Past, a podcast about our personal family stories and broader Australian social history. I'm your host, Greg, and my co-host is Peter. Hi Greg. Hi Peter. This podcast explores the Australian experience using stories from our families as a starting point and then expanding them into the wider Australian story. Some of these stories are uplifting, some are sad, some are quirky, some are confronting, and some just ripping yarns. So, Peter, what is today's story all of that.

Peter: [00:44](#) Well, firstly, just a warning. There is some graphic content in this story.

Peter: [00:49](#) It starts with Alf Devaney, a 31-year-old stockman, on Terrick Terrick station lying in the sandy bed of Wooroolah Creek under a brigalow tree, but he's also lying in a pool of his own blood. Alf is exhausted and he's in shock. He must have been thinking to himself, how could I have been so stupid?

Greg: [01:10](#) This doesn't sound too good for Alf. Who is he? What's happened?



Peter: [01:15](#) Alfred Joseph Devaney was a stockman working on Terrick Terrick station, which is out near Blackall<sup>1</sup>. He was born in 1881. His mother died when he was just six, his father died when he was 17 and he was the seventh of nine children, so he had to look out for himself eventually. By 1912, which is when this story starts, he's aged 31 and he's working as a stockman on Terrick Terrick station.

Peter: [01:42](#) OK, well, Terrick Terrick<sup>2</sup> is a famous name in Queensland pastoral history. What can you tell me about Terrick?

Peter: [01:47](#) Well, Terrick is about 70 km southwest of Blackall. That's about 40 miles or so. It was originally established in 1864 and that was just three years after Burke and Wills trekked passed a bit west. So, it's been there a long time. At the time of this story, the station was owned by Australian Estates and Mortgage Company<sup>3</sup>, and it was probably the largest holding in the Blackall Shire. It carried a normal capacity of 170,000 sheep. It was about 535,000 acres, half a million acres or 216,000 ha. Now in 1912, the manager of Terrick was Harry O'Donahoo<sup>4</sup>, my great-grandfather. Harry became manager in 1909 and he stayed there for 13 years until 1922<sup>5</sup>. He only left when he got his own land in a land ballot, so he must have been a pretty good manager to stay there for all that time period.

Peter: [02:47](#) Just some numbers to give you an idea of how big Terrick was. A newspaper article in 1916 says that Terrick shored 8,976 sheep in one day using 43 shearers<sup>6</sup>.

Greg: [03:02](#) That's a lot of sheep, a lot of people.

Peter: [03:04](#) It's a big shearing crew. In 1921 - must have been a good year - Terrick shored 200,000 sheep<sup>7</sup> making it the largest flock in Queensland.

Greg: [03:14](#) That's really, really big stuff.

Peter: [03:16](#) Yeah, that's a big property. So, Alf's a drover out on that property. This story starts on the morning of the 21<sup>st</sup> of October, 1912.



HM (Harry) O'Donahoo

Greg: [03:26](#) Well, this sounds interesting. What happened on that day?

Peter: [03:29](#) Well, at the time, Alf was carting wood and water for the steam boiler on a bore-well drilling-plant. Terrick had contracted to Tom Walsh, a well boring contractor, to drill some new artesian bores. Alf was camped out with Tom Walsh, the well boring guy. Alf was pretty popular amongst Tom and the other guys on the station, but this morning, October the 21<sup>st</sup>, he went over to Tom and he said, *"Look, I've got enough wood and water set up to you for the day. I don't have much else to do, so I'm off. I'll see you later"*. So, he just rode off on his quiet bay mare with his black and white dog trailing behind. He didn't tell Tom where going or what he was doing. Tom thought he was going out to muster some draft horses. As far as he was concerned, he was sober in good spirits and nothing unusual.



Stockmen on Terrick Terrick Station

Greg: [04:26](#) OK, so just like a normal day.

Peter: [04:27](#) Normal working day. But by 11:00 pm that night, Tom, the well-borer, was getting worried because he had expected Alf back long time ago. So, Tom gets up and walks across to a fencing contractor's camp. The nearest one around, near in relative terms on Terrick, means that it was eight miles - that's 13 km - away. So, he trundles off. That takes him a couple of hours walking through the night. When he gets there, he rouses up Alfred Williams, the fencing contractor and says, *"Look, have you seen Alf? You know, he was gone for the day. He hasn't come back"*.

Greg: [05:03](#) Clearly his horse hasn't turned up.

Peter: [05:05](#) No, no sign of the horse. No sign of anything. So, Alf - Alf number two that is - the fencing contractor and Tom look around a bit and they decided that they'd better go searching for him. So, they get a party of about seven guys together. These were other guys at the fencing contractor's place and headed off into the bush. They cooed<sup>8</sup> through the bush, and as a result, they could hear a dog barking back at them. So, they went in the direction of the dog and here they find Alf lying in the bed of the creek. It took them about an hour and a half to find him, so they found him at about four in the morning. Now, I checked the celestial charts and it was about a full moon that night, which explains how they could wander across the Mitchell Grass plains.

Greg: [05:58](#) Yes, visibility would have been pretty good.

Peter: [05:58](#) Yeah, and that's why they could find Alf lying in the creek, but when they find him, Alf is dead. They are obviously a bit concerned about all of this, so off they go again. A couple of them go off to a nearby boundary-rider's hut which had a telephone that connected to the head station on Terrick. They get on the phone and ring up Harry, the property manager. *"Harry, we've got a problem here. We found Alf and he's dead"*. Well, Harry does the right thing. By 9:30 in the morning - it takes a while for all these things to happen across

property - Harry calls the police at Blackall. He says, "Look, there's a dead body out here. You better come out and examine what's happened". At the same time, Harry organizes for telegram to be sent to Alf's sister in Sydney. All of his brothers and sisters live in Sydney and this telegram is fairly short and to the point. It says - "Deeply regret inform you that Alf Devaney met with fatal accident here yesterday". So, the policeman sets out from Blackall, remembering that it's 42 miles away and he's on horseback so the policeman doesn't arrive till 6:00 that night to the head station where Harry, my great-grandfather's got a buggy ready for him. They head off out towards the fencing contractor's place and then to where the body is in Wooroolah Creek and don't get there till 10:00 at night. Now it's a little unclear exactly what happens here but they certainly look at the body and they find that it's badly bruised and, he's dead. So, they probably partially buried the body that night because we know that most of the action happens the next morning.

Greg: [08:05](#) Yes. Okay. So, they've seen the body and they know it's dead obviously. How did he actually die though? What happened there?

Peter: [08:16](#) Well, the first clue was, on examining the body, they find that his right arm below his elbow is missing and he's got a three deep cuts on his right shoulder and there's a ton of blood around the body. So, they look around a bit and they find this trail of blood. It leads to a blue gum tree that's about 20 yards away. The tree is about 15" in diameter. That's 40 cm, so it's not a really big tree, and there's a hollow in the tree about 3 m – 10ft -up. They can see the gory end of Alf's forearm stuck in this hollow. His boots and his pocket knife are lying at the base of the tree.

Greg: [08:59](#) Hmm. Okay.

Peter: [09:01](#) So, their theory on what happens here. Their theory starts when Tom, the boring contractor, reveals that Alf had said to him some time ago that he wanted to collect some parrots and send them to his family in Sydney. Alf notices that there's a hollow in the tree and he knows that there's parrots in there. This is when he's at riding there that day. So, their theory is he rides up underneath the hollow and puts his arm in this hollow to try and get the parrots out. But because it's 3 m up in the air, he stands on the back of his horse to reach. Now, either the horse walked out from under him or he simply slipped and here he is with a leather boots standing on a leather saddle. It wouldn't be that hard to slip. That's right. Once he slips, here he is dangling with his arm up to his elbow in a tree.

Peter: [09:59](#) He obviously struggled for some time there because they can see spur marks in the trunk of the tree where he's trying to grapple with it and you know, taking up weight from his elbow and what have you, but clearly couldn't do that. So, they find his pocket knife at the base of the tree and they conclude that at some stage he decides that, you know, he's got to fend for himself here. He starts to want to try and cut his whole arm off at the shoulder and, there are three deep, 4" long cuts in his shoulder, but no luck. So then, he starts at the elbow. Now we sort of assume that he's got his arm in this hollow right up to the elbow. So, the elbow joints pretty much, you know, beside the tree.

Peter: [10:46](#) Alf. This is, is just really difficult to imagine how painful this would have been and how difficult it would have been. It's probably fairly painful just hanging there. I would have thought so. But he gets his pocket knife out of his, you know, pouch on his belt, starts hacking away at his elbow joint. I'm guessing Alf has seen sheep carcasses butchered by the cook there and he realizes when you're doing a leg of lamb, how hard it is to cut the tendons away and break the joint away. So, he's not unaware of what's going to happen here.

- Greg: [11:21](#) Definitely being out in the bush he'd know that.
- Peter: [11:23](#) Yeah. Anyhow, by himself hanging from a tree in the middle of the day, average temperature at Blackall this time of year is 35°C. So, it's pretty warm, very warm. He hacks away until eventually the joint gives way and he falls to the ground. He struggles away from the tree where he fell to this nearby Brigalow tree and he lies down, and it looks pretty obvious that he dies from haemorrhage. He's in this pool of blood.
- Greg: [11:55](#) Yes.
- Peter: [11:57](#) Pretty gruesome end.
- Greg: [11:59](#) Very much so.
- Peter: [12:01](#) Now, one of the things I find odd about this is that there's no mention anywhere that Alf tried to use a tourniquet when he cuts his arm off. There was a recent movie that came out of America called "127 Hours"<sup>9</sup> where this American guy - he goes bushwalking - but ends up doing the same sort of thing. He gets his arm caught. He can't dislodge his arm from where it is. In his case, a big rock fell on it. And after 127 hours, the American guy decides that his only way out of this is to cut his arm off. Well, he applies a tourniquet so that once he breaks the joint and whatever else, he won't bleed to death. In all of the reports here, Alf doesn't apply a tourniquet and that's probably why he died from haemorrhage.
- Greg: [12:54](#) Yeah. I wonder if that sort of knowledge was common in those days?
- Peter: [13:00](#) Well, you know, he must've had a belt on because he would have had a pocket knife in that leather pouch that all stockman have on his belt. Tourniquets were well known at the time. I mean it's just 50 years before this was the American Civil War and they amputated limbs left, right and centre and applied tourniquets all the time. So, it's not as though it wasn't an existing technology. I'm sort of just guessing that Alf's limited knowledge of the world and his limited knowledge of medicine and stuff was not enough to tell him he needed to apply a tourniquet when all of this was happening.
- Greg: [13:35](#) I guess if you think he's been hanging there for a while, be dehydrated in that heat. You'd have to be thinking about shock I guess and not thinking straight.
- Peter: [13:45](#) Yeah, it's definitely a possibility as to how clearly he was thinking at the time. Nevertheless, they put all this story together and then the policeman hops up the tree and pulls his forearm out of the tree. And what does he find in there? Three parrots! They were down there. The hollow was only three to five inches across. That's about 75 to 120 mm across. It was an oval shape and it was about two feet in where he found the parrots. That's about 600 mm. So, it seems that the earlier story about him wanting to collect some parrots for his family is probably how he ended up in this horrible situation.
- Greg: [14:30](#) Well that makes sense, doesn't it.
- Peter: [14:33](#) Yup. Now the last part of the theory here is that Tom Walsh, the well-boring contractor, he thinks that Alf had been hanging there for three to four hours before he cuts him off. Therefore, he died at 3:30 in the afternoon. No idea how Tom can think this because the policemen thinks he only hung there for an hour and a half before he cut his arm off. Now,

I don't know how these guys can come up with these theories, but, you know, all of us nowadays watch CSI and things on television. We all have intimate knowledge of a post-mortem rigor and lividity and all these sorts of things. Lividity can start within 20 to 30 minutes and rigor can start within four hours or so. So, a skilled person could've looked at Alf's body and, you know, felt his body when they found it and made some view as to whether the rigor had started or not, and looked at his body. They say they looked at his body in detail and could see lots of bruising. In effect, I wonder if the bruising was actually lividity that they could see?

Greg: [15:41](#) Yeah, it does make you wonder but the other thing I guess is that it doesn't matter. At the end of the day, the poor chap has had to sever his arm at the elbow, and got down to the creek, crawled or walked or whatever, and then expired down there.

Peter: [16:01](#) Yeah. And it's pretty clear that nobody else was involved. All the other players didn't know where he was. The policeman was on-site and, you know, he was pretty happy that this was an accident by misadventure, if that's the phrase.

Greg: [16:15](#) And we still haven't found his horse.

Peter: [16:16](#) No, no. The horse seems to have just vanished, which is a bit odd because many horses would have gone back to where they started.

Greg: [16:23](#) Well, that's the norm, isn't it?

Peter: [16:24](#) Yeah. That would have gone home or alternatively they would have hung around but, there's no definitive statement as to what happens to the poor old horse.

Peter: [16:33](#) Yeah. So, we could probably discount somebody coming along and pinching his horse. Okay. So what's happening next?

Peter: [16:45](#) Well, by this stage, Harry's got a pretty good idea of what's happened to his employee, Alf. The first thing that happens is that, in response to Harry's telegram to Sydney, he gets a telegram back pretty quickly from Alf's family saying - "*Send corpse Sydney, All expenses paid here*". Well, Harry responds by telegram straightaway and he says - "*Absolutely impossible comply with your request. Body not found till at least 16 hours after death. Seventy miles to nearest town. Heat intense. Must be buried immediately. Could possibly exhume later on. Death caused by fall from tree whilst trying to get young birds*".

Peter: [17:37](#) Okay. That's part is not quite true, is it. We know he bled to death after he got down from the tree but I guess he'd be trying to spare the family the gory details.

Peter: [17:49](#) Well, in the end, he doesn't spare the family the gory details because, two days later, Harry writes a letter to the Devaney family. Now, fortunately, this letter has been retained in our family archives, let's say. So, it's a very interesting letter. There's a couple of letters involved with this incident. So, I'll read directly out of the letter. There's a few introductory comments, but then he says:

Peter: [18:16](#) *It appears that the unfortunate fellow took the saddle horse from the camp and rode it out about 8 miles to where he knew there was a galah's nest<sup>10</sup> with young birds in it. As he did not return, the well borer and his assistant went out about 11 pm to look for him. They first went to a fencer camp about 10 miles distant, thinking your brother may have gone*

there, but found that such was not the case. The fencing contractor and his men then joined in the search, making a party of seven. They had not gone more than a mile and a half where the dog, which your brother had with him, came to them as they were cooeing, and they then went in the direction from which the dog came and found the deceased lying on his back quite dead and cold with one arm (the right one) missing. Searching round, they found a quantity of blood round a tree twenty yards distant from the body and, on one of these getting on the other's shoulders, they found that the missing arm was in a hollow in the tree about 10 ft from the ground. They then came in to a boundary rider's hut, where we have a telephone and they telephoned the news to us at the head station. It was 4 am when the body was found and it was after 8 am when they got to the telephone, a distance of about 10 miles and we immediately telephoned to the police at Blackall 42 miles distant. A mounted constable came out, but it was 6 pm by the time he got here, and I had a buggy and horses ready and took him out to the place arriving there about 10 pm. We then got the arm out of the tree and, from its appearance, we concluded that it had been cut off with a knife and not torn off by the fall. We then carefully examined the body which was very much bruised, and the examinations confirmed the opinion that the arm had been cut off. The tree was a straight blue gum about 18 inches in diameter at the butt and branched out into two at about 10 feet from the ground both limbs going nearly straight up and in other branches for some feet higher up. The hole, in which the arm was found, is right in the fork of the two limbs and is only about 3 inches by 5 inches being of an oval shape, and the deceased, having once got his arm into the hole and lost his footing, had no possible chance of raising himself sufficiently to allow him to withdraw his arm. As far as we can judge, deceased must have stood up on the saddle and put his hand into the hollow to take the young birds out and the mare – a very quiet old one - must have moved or he slipped off the saddle and was thus left hanging by the arm which must have been in the hole as far as the elbow. It is impossible to say how long the unfortunate fellow hung there, but there is no doubt he realised that his only hope was for someone to find him soon, - or - the only other alternative to cut his arm off and let himself down. There was a very remote chance of anyone finding him before the next day, even if then, and he appears to have decided on the later chance. He evidently tried at first to cut the arm off at the shoulder, as there were several long cuts in that point; one of them being about an inch deep. Then, he appears to have thought the elbow, which must have been just at the top of the hole, would be better and he managed to cut it clean through at the joint and let himself free. He then appears to have walked about 20 yards to the shade of some thick Brigalow trees and lied down, where no doubt he must soon have died from loss of blood and shock. The poor fellow does not seem to have suffered much after reaching the shade of the Brigalows as there were not any signs of struggling and he was lying on his back with his legs quite straight. But no doubt, he must have suffered terrible agony up to the time he effected his release from the tree. We buried him at midnight and the police took charge of his effects. I might mention that he was employed by me, carting wood and water for the engine used by the boring contractor to do the well boring with. I have given you as much detail as I can thinking you and his other relatives would like to know as much about the poor fellow's end as possible and if there is anything in which I can be of service, please do not hesitate to let me know. A magisterial enquiry is to be held on Tuesday next in Blackall and if you wish, I will send you the newspaper report of it.

Yours faithfully

H.M O'Donahoo.

"TERRICK TERRICK,"

Blackhall, 24<sup>th</sup> Oct 1912  
QUEENSLAND.

Mr J. Devaney  
No 2 Fitzroy St  
Marrieville  
Sydney

Dear Sir

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> inst. I sent a telegram to a Miss Devaney, presumably your own and the late Alf. Devaney sister reading:-  
"Deeply regret inform you that Alf. Devaney met with fatal accident here yesterday.  
"Writing." and I duly received your telegram in reply. as follows:- "Send corpse Sydney. All expenses paid here."  
to which I replied as follows:- "Absolutely impossible comply with your request. body not found till at least sixteen hours after death. 70 miles from nearest town. Heat intense, must be buried immediately. could possibly exhumed body later on."  
"Death caused by fall from tree whilst trying to get young birds."  
It appears that the unfortunate fellow, took the saddle horse from the camp and rode it out

Extract of letter from Harry O'Donahoo to Devaney family

Greg: [23:28](#) Wow. That's a very comprehensive report. Quite well written and it certainly gives the family a very good picture of what's happened, very lucid and clear.

Peter: [23:42](#) Yeah, it's really interesting reading that letter, knowing that it's well over a hundred years now, I find the language to be very modern, almost.



Greg: [23:52](#) Yeah, it's just so well done. You would have to admire it even though the subject matter is a bit disturbing.

Peter: [24:02](#) Yeah, but at least the family know exactly what happened and the full circumstances. Anyhow, following that, there must've been a further exchange probably of telegrams between Harry and the family because Harry writes a second letter to them on the 12th of November in response to a request they sent in a letter on the 2nd November where they're still trying to get the body back to Sydney. Harry, by now, points out that given that the body had been already buried, he now knows that it's legally not allowable to exhume the body for at least 12 months. Now, I assume that that was some law. He was told that by the policeman and the 12 months must be time to allow the body to fully decompose and what have you.

Greg: [24:47](#) Yeah, it's interesting. Peter, the amount of detail you've got there. I could ask you if you're making it up, but you do appear to have a bit of paperwork to support your case.

1912		DEATHS in the District of <i>Blackall</i>				
No.	DESCRIPTION.			(1) Cause of Death. (2) Duration of last Illness. (3) Medical Attendant by whom certified, and (4) When he last saw Deceased.	Name and Surname of Father and Mother (Maiden Surname) if known, with Rank or Profession.	Signature, Description, and Residence of Informant.
	When and Where Died.	Name and Surname, Rank or Profession.	Sex and Age.			
1791	22 October 1912	Alfred Joseph Devaney Labour	Male 31 years 1 month	Haemorrhage & Shock (1) (accidental)  (2)  (3) Magisterial Inquest held at Blackall on 29th day of October 1912 before G. B. Gibson Esquire Police Magistrate	Cornelius Devaney  Wheelwright  Mary Ann Neville	Certified in writing by Frederick Devaney Brother 112 Campbell Street St. Peters New South Wales and by G. B. Gibson Esquire Police Magistrate holding Inquest at Blackall.

*Got caught in stump of tree while bird nesting could not free himself & hung on till he died 212*

*Terrick Terrick Station Blackall District*

Extract from Alfred Devaney's Death Certificate

Peter: [24:58](#) Well, you know, I heard this story as a child and I remember thinking this is a load of bollocks to use one phrase. I thought it was what you would call nowadays an urban legend. So, I didn't want to perpetuate any fake news or anything like that. I had my great-grandfather's letters, but, I went and got the real source material. That is the coroner's inquest<sup>11</sup> that Harry mentions. I went to the state archives, got that and also got Alf's death certificate<sup>12</sup>. So everything we've said to date is verbatim from those who were at the event in 1912.

Greg: [25:37](#) Yeah. I think Harry's letter is the fantastic resource written by the man at the time. You mentioned about an urban legend. What are some of the stories you might have heard about it?

Inquest No. 583/12.

Alfred Devaney.

Deceased was employed as horse driver on Terrick Station, near Blackall. On the 21st of October 1912, he left the Station on horseback, but did not state where he intending going. As he did not return home by 11 p.m. his mate went to a fencer's camp about 8 miles away, and found he had not been there. A search was then made for deceased, and his dead body was found in the Woroolah Creek about 4 a.m. on the 22nd of October, 1912. Deceased's right forearm was missing and tracks of blood could be seen. The tracks were traced to the foot of a tree, and at the foot of the tree a horse's track was plainly visible. There were spur marks on the tree, and a bloodstained knife was found on the ground. Deceased's right forearm was found in a hollow in a branch of the tree. There were also three parrots in the hollow. Apparently deceased rode up to the tree, and stood on the back of the horse. He then placed his hand down the hollow to get the parrots when it became jammed and the horse moved away, and left him hanging. Finding he could not free himself and perhaps after hanging a couple a couple hours, and whilst in great pain, deceased decided to cut his arm off with the pocket knife at the shoulder, and failing succeeded in amputating it at the elbow. After walking a short distance deceased apparently died from loss of blood and shock. There were no suspicious circumstances and no post mortem examination was held.

Extract from Coroner's Inquest into the death of Alfred Devaney

Peter: [25:52](#) Well, like all stories like this, you know, it gets repeated time after time. I've seen it in one or two books. I mentioned it to a friend recently and said, you know, "Have you ever heard the story of the drover who sticks his arm in the tree?" And he said, "Oh yeah, yeah, I've heard it. The guy dies there hanging in the tree and the crows come and peck him to pieces". So, the story has morphed a bit over time. I also understand it was discussed once on Australia All Over, you know, that's Macka's radio show on Sunday mornings.

- Greg: [26:22](#) I'm not quite sure about the accuracy of that though.
- Peter: [26:27](#) Well, they weren't accurate because they concluded that the story wasn't true. Well, we know for sure that it is true. So, that's why it's sort of become a bit of an urban legend, the whole thing and I guess I'm also wondering a bit about whether anybody knows about the tree or where Alf's grave is.
- Greg: [26:47](#) Yeah, it's interesting you mentioned that because my connection to your story is that my brother actually worked for Australian Estates and he was out there, he lived on a different station, but as part of the overall complex with Terrick Terrick and he told me that, in his time, the tree was still there though he never went out to it, but people who had been said you could still see the marks on the tree where the spurs had been digging in, trying to get up - sort of scratch marks. So, you know, it was well known to the people who worked on the property.
- Peter: [27:21](#) Yeah. And it'd be great to know if his grave is somehow still available and the tree's still there.
- Greg: [27:28](#) My brother wasn't sure about that.
- Peter: [27:30](#) Anyhow.
- Greg: [27:32](#) So you'd have to question whether the good old days were all that good in this instance?
- Peter: [27:39](#) Yeah. Well that's one of the things we want to talk about in this podcast. Were the good old days so good and were people really any different then to today?
- Peter: [27:48](#) Yeah. Do you think that sort of accident would happen today?
- Peter: [27:52](#) Hm? Well, in terms of - are people any different? I don't think so. There's always the possibility that some fool will make a silly decision, but you know, our story is very, very similar to that US movie that we mentioned a little while ago, *127 Hours*, and in both cases, the key players make the same stupid mistake. Both of them go out to a remote area without telling anybody where they're going. One of the questions I've got though, and I don't know whether we can ever know the answer to this, is that in the movie, the guy waits 127 hours - that's about five days - before he decides to cut his arm off. Alf obviously decides to cut his arm off within a few hours. We are not sure how many and I wonder what the motivation was for Alf to make that decision more rapidly.
- Greg: [28:41](#) Yeah, it's quite interesting to speculate on that. I imagine that he went out in the morning. It's going to take him probably a couple of hours to get to the tree and then hang himself up on it him, sadly, and it's very hot. He's going to be in trouble just simply heat stroke, thirst.
- Peter: [29:02](#) So, yeah, and the American guy, he's not hanging by his arm, the rock lands on him. He's standing there.
- Greg: [29:07](#) He's been out hiking or something wasn't he so he'd have a pack on perhaps.

- Peter: [29:10](#) Yeah and he had a whole lot of stuff with him. But, yeah, look, we'll never know why Alf made that decision so quickly because making the decision quickly was the cause of his death because if he'd waited long enough, if he'd been able to wait long enough, somebody might have found him.
- Greg: [29:25](#) Yeah, but maybe if he'd been able to apply to a tourniquet, it would have been the right decision.
- Peter: [29:30](#) Indeed. Anyhow, when I look at Alf's death - looking at it from today's eyes, not historically - I look at Alf's untimely death as a workplace accident. And you know, I think in another podcast, we need to talk about accidents on rural areas and workplace health and safety in Australia in general.
- Greg: [29:55](#) Well you are right there. They are very common sadly. They are well over represented - rural deaths - in terms of workplace accidents. There will overrepresented in the statistics. There's something very dangerous about farming in some respects.
- Peter: [30:09](#) Indeed, Alf was the Terrick Tragedy and we'll leave all of that for another podcast.
- Greg: [30:14](#) Yeah, that should be very interesting.
- Greg: [30:16](#) We would like your views on this topic. Do you have a similar story in your family? If so, perhaps contact us on our email or comment on a Facebook page. The contact details are on our web page, which is [www.todaysstories.com.au](http://www.todaysstories.com.au). Full details of this story are available on our website and please remember to subscribe to our podcast and thank you for listening.

**Today's Stories from our Past**



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## **Citations**

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- <sup>1</sup> Blackall is a small town and rural locality in the Blackall-Tambo Region in Central West Queensland, Australia.
- <sup>2</sup> “Terrick Terrick” is derived from Aboriginal words for which several meanings have been surmised. The one most accepted is two sisters, referring to the two rises in the Mount Terrick Terrick Range in Victoria.
- <sup>3</sup> Terrick Terrick (1940, May 4). The Longreach Leader (Qld.: 1923 - 1954), p. 26. Retrieved January 6, 2019, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article126151352>
- <sup>4</sup> Mens. from Blackall. (1909, April 3). The Western Champion and General Advertiser for the Central-Western Districts (Barcaldine, Qld.: 1892 - 1922), p. 9. Retrieved January 6, 2019, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article77628526>
- <sup>5</sup> Queensland News (1922, September 13). Morning Bulletin (Rockhampton, Qld.: 1878 - 1954), p. 9. Retrieved January 6, 2019, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article54006578>

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- <sup>6</sup> Notes And Gleanings. (1918, April 5). Albury Banner and Wodonga Express (NSW: 1896 - 1938), p. 18. Retrieved January 9, 2019, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article101396151>
- <sup>7</sup> 200,000 Under The Shears (1921, August 20). Daily Herald (Adelaide, SA : 1910 - 1924), p. 4. Retrieved December 21, 2018, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article106618952>
- <sup>8</sup> Cooee! is a shout used in Australia, usually in the bush, to attract attention, find missing people, or indicate one's own location. When done correctly—loudly and shrilly—a call of "cooee" can carry over a considerable distance. The distance one's cooee call travels can be a matter of competitive pride. It is also known as a call of help, which can blend in with different natural sounds in the bush.
- <sup>9</sup> 127 Hours Movie - <http://www.foxsearchlight.com/127hours/>
- <sup>10</sup> The galah is one of the most abundant and widespread Australian cockatoo species. The galah is easily distinguished from other cockatoos by its distinctive grey and pink plumage and its short pink to white crest.
- <sup>11</sup> Alf Devaney Inquest IID 349105 No 583 (21 Oct 1912)
- <sup>12</sup> Death Certificate – Alfred Joseph Devaney (22 Oct 1912)