



The Clarke Gang: Outlawed, Outcast and Forgotten

Peter C. Smith

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As a part of Australian history, who were the Clarke Gang? Ten years or more before Ned Kelly became famous, the Clarke brothers and their associates, from 1865 to 1867, were terrorizing an area stretching from present day Canberra to the coast. They intimidated, assaulted, robbed, and murdered police and civilians alike. They had no hesitation in killing any member of the gang suspected of being untrustworthy. The romantic appellation "bushranger" blurs their vicious anti-social behavior. They were able to escape what was then the rather short arm of the law by the vast network of relations and other harborers. This book examines the Clarke Gang's exploits and the terror they aroused in the population. It questions why the gang is hardly known, whereas Ned Kelly is regarded as an icon. The conclusion: the Clarke Gang operated in sparsely populated areas, serviced by bad roads and a poor telegraph system. Reports of their crimes were reported months after the event. By the time Ned Kelly began his career, technology had improved, which meant that Ned could use the media to publicize and romanticize his motives. The Clarke brothers were illiterate and lacked Ned's media skills. The book is illustrated with contemporary pictures, numerous maps, and other details. It reveals "bushranging" stripped of its romantic and rebellious cloak. *** Librarians: ebook available on ProQuest and EBSCO *** "A riveting saga of crime and punishment, "The Clark Gang" is enthusiastically recommended for public library world history and criminology shelves." - Midwest Book Review, Library Bookwatch: August 2015, The Criminology Shelf [Subject: History, Australian Studies]

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