

THE STORY OF HIS CAPTURE.

(By E.O.C.)

The genesis of the name adopted by William Driscoll (Dido). It may be it was similar to that applied to a sailing vessel which anchored here in a night "as still as heaven," while the offshore wind breathed softly, "and the star dials hinted at morn," a race of waves came in before a south-east storm. We could not see the vessel for the clouds of spume banked up by the offshore wind, but the captain said she was "kicking up a pretty Dido." (She got to Meredith fishery under the Schoutens, so named by Tasman.

Years before road trusts were the colonists of those days, for the "wet marsh" became intolerable. It lay between the wheat-growing region and Swansea, the shipping port. The "wet marsh" is an extensive level of unmitigated yellow clay. I have seen the leaders affixed to a loaded cart and drawn through the clay, the loaded cart sinking till the axle touched the earth. It was drawn to sound land, and the leaders taken back to rescue another cart. (And motor-cars travel the roads now.) The "settlers" instituted a bee, and made a straight road, 1 1/2 miles long, which curtailed the "wet marsh," and passed over Dido's and Duffy's Hills (Duffy was killed under an overturned cart). The former road went nearer the Swan River, from which Swanport derived its name; and George Swanport Buxton, who was the first white boy in Glamorgan. The earlier road deflected east past the brick kilns, which bricks made the house and mill at Riversdale. The present road was made from a quarry on the top of what is now called Dido's Hill. Before telling of the goodly group Dido "bailed up" in that quarry, I will introduce those from Kelvedon (which I extract from Dr. George Fordyce's notes). "Friday" drew the gig (he was foaled on Friday); he also drew the meat for the Rocky Hill probation station every morning. The gig contained my mother, going to The Grange to see her first-born, who was in charge, and was driven by Dr. G. F. Story, Rachel (Mrs. Salmon), riding ahead, followed by a diminutive King Charles spaniel, the gift of the daughter of Edward Crockett, the manager of the Schouten Island coal mines. Rachel meeting "Paddy," a sheepdog that had gone with "Dido" from The Grange, rode to the gig, and said, "Dido is here," and they rode on. Dido came to meet them. He was riding the horse of the chief district constable (Thomas Watson). Watson, like George Fox, "ever loved a good horse." "Thou art never going to stick me up, Dido?" said my mother. "I am very sorry you came along, but I must. It's more than my life's worth to let you go," said Dido. She was imperious, and he was courtly. William Driscoll (Dido) was about 5ft. 7in. in height, a massive head, kind and good, and loved liberty. Straight he stood. He was cook in the house, and having much time to think (my brother was a bachelor), his love of liberty overcame him, and he "took to the bush again."

It was said of him that in earlier days when constables had taken three of his mates, he ran ahead to a jutting point which the boat containing his mates must pass, and stepping out from behind a tree ordered the constables to throw their carbines overboard, which they did. He then ordered the crew to bring the boat to the river side, and, having recovered his mates, cautiously said that was all he wanted, and wished the boats and crew a pleasant voyage. It was said this occurred on the Huon long before the days of sawmills. I now tell the tale as recorded in Dr. Story's "Journal of the Capture of Driscoll on Dido's Hill," and in that quarry.

"1855.—Dido and his mate left Redbanks (Edward Carr Shaw) about 5 p.m., with A. M. Cotton and myself in the gig, and Rachel on horseback. At the north end of the wet marsh, just as we were about to rise the hill, we observed some persons in the bush on the right side of the road, and some dogs with them. This seemed strange, but concluded they were shepherds, drinking or drunk. Rachel went first, and I was anxious to see her gallop past them, which, as we ascended the hill and drew nearer the spot where the men were, I looked to see her accomplish. She, however, turned back, and on coming up said, 'It's Dido,' for she had seen Henry's dog Paddy that we had blamed Dido for stealing. About this time Paddy and another dog, tied together, ran barking upon little Flora, on which I called out loudly to the dogs, and Dido, who was then close to us, also called them off, I mistaking Dido for a shepherd.

"Dido then accosted us, saying, 'I am Dido. Don't you know your old servant, Dido?' He said he must detain us, that he intended neither to rob nor hurt us, and that he would let us away at 7 o'clock. I said to the mother and Rachel we must therefore remain, and that they must keep quiet, and I turned the horse after Dido, who was mounted on Thomas Watson's mare. The mare being in front of Old Friday roused him, which Dido, not observing, I had again to call loudly and authoritatively to Dido to get out of the way, which he then did. He took the mare away, and returned to us on foot. There was Thomas Watson walking backwards and forwards with his head hung down, not seeming to notice us, and several men sitting at the butt of a tree, not 48ft. from the road, and two horses fastened to trees, besides the two that Dido and his companion rode.

"Dido having dismounted, came again to speak to us, whilst we were still sitting in the gig, and Rachel on her horse beside us, the mate being mounted, and a few yards off, keeping sentry over the party. Yet it seemed difficult to know at first. T. Watson was loose, walking backwards and forwards, and the men were sitting at ease around the trees, and the horses standing quietly near, tied to trees. It, as I said, seemed at first sight difficult to tell whether Watson was in charge of the bushranger, or they of him.

"Dido endeavoured to assure his mistress—his mother, Mrs. Cotton—that no hurt should befall her, and that he would not hurt one of the Cottons, but that he must keep us there until night for had been desirous of some advice to him

bushranger can do." Before this he had been capering about on his horse, spurring it, galloping it about, and saying, "I am a gallant cavalier—I am a troubadour." He accordingly essayed to go, and whilst capering about his double-barrelled gun fell from his hand, and the stock was separated from the barrels in the fall. His mate ran and picked it up, and Dido went on. As he met the vehicle at the bottom of the hill the carriage stopped, and the people alighted. Some scuffling seemed to take place which was, however, nothing more than Dido tumbling about, as he either fell or got off his horse, and could not remount. Seeing something was the matter, I went down. T. Watson essayed to go with me, but was ordered back by the mate, who also was going down, but as he saw things quiet, he remained. When I got there I told Sarah Fergusson and the girl (Marie Ellis) not to be alarmed, to walk up to the party, that no harm would happen to them, and went to Dido, who was with Fergusson. Fergusson was endeavouring to persuade Dido to give himself up, and appealed to me, saying we were both his true friends, and we would advise him to do nothing that was not for his good. Dido was now much inebriated, the liquor he had drunk affecting him more and more. We all three went up the hill to the party, Fergusson being a little ahead.

"Dido turned round and said to me, 'I am sure to be taken. I will destroy myself,' and, taking a revolver from his belt, put it up to his head. I begged him not to do so. I indicated to him to desist and give the pistol to me, which he did. But afterwards I returned it to him, he having acceded to my request not to shoot himself. When we were come to the party who had several times before when viewing the madlike manner in which Dido was going on, said in a weeping and despairing manner that they were sure to be taken. I told him his only chance was to leave Dido, and be off, but he said if Dido was taken, he would be taken, too; he would not leave him. As they would neither go away themselves nor allow us to leave, I again asked the mate what he was going to do, and he eventually determined to send the men away. By this time things were getting into confusion. The mate had relaxed his strict watch over those who were tied. They no longer remained under command, yet he was heavily armed, having his double-barrelled gun and two revolvers, and therefore no one could control him, or dared to face him. Dido was reeling about. They were both on foot, and whilst in this disorder I stood before the mate, Fergusson was on his left hand, urging him to give up, when all of a sudden Fergusson jumped behind him, seized both his arms, and by a violent effort threw him down, calling out at the same time for help. Those that were close by immediately fell upon him, and held him down, and I took away the weapons.

"All the men present came forward to assist, and handkerchiefs were in requisition to tie their hands and feet (for Dido was secured by Coil as he was tumbling about; these were furnished immediately). This was done in a few moments. It was done quickly, and the mate being worn down by anxiety and brought to the verge of despair, offered but little if any resistance. Dido was so much under the influence of liquor as to be incapable of doing any injury, although he struggled and called out. The arms were taken away from them at once, partly by myself and by those who came to assist. Dido struggled much, and called out, 'Oh, mother, don't let them tie me,' etc. The mate made no resistance, but allowed himself to be tied. But one thing was wrong; their hands were in front instead of at their backs.

"The carriage was brought up, and they were put in, Dido required lifting in, and still calling out 'Oh, mother! Oh, Mrs. Cotton don't let them tie me!'

"I collected all the arms that were lying about, with cartridges, etc., and gave them to Thomas Watson, telling him that it would be necessary to look after the men, as they might escape, and I would look after his horse, which, when Dido left it, was at first feeding by the roadside. I wished I had galloped home, but it seems to have started into the bush when Carpenter's son fired the shot at Dido's mate, whilst I was stooping over him taking off a belt, which the men said contained a spyglass in a leather case. The shot seemed to go past my right ear, as it stung for a long time afterwards, the smoke being about, and bits of wadding sticking to my chest and legs. This man had just before been re-proved for his brutality, for as soon as Dido was secured, and whilst he was lying on the ground, he went to him and kicked him in the ribs. Afterwards, about three or four days, I examined the side with Dr. Wills, for Dido complained much of it, and there was one of the ribs with a nodosity, which would have been produced by the healing of a fracture. But I doubt whether it would have been so large, and rounded, and firm in so short a time. It might have been an old injury which the kick had injured. Dido said he had spit blood.

"I was much annoyed when I found the bushrangers were in the district. The district constable who ought to have watched their movements, was himself taken by them. I had heard of their having robbed Jonas Thompson, about a fortnight before. The district constable had gone out after them one day; it after appeared that they had been hanging about the same quarter ever since the robbery, with the exception of going on to the St. Paul's Tier. I think the inhabitants ought to have been made aware of their presence in their neighbourhood."

The Doctor (who was an M.A. at twenty), and Fergusson—both came from England or Scotland. Fergusson bought the location, and kept an inn, the Bay View Hotel on Swansea, and Dido (who was a sawyer in the days of the pitsaws), was interceded for by Doctor Story and my father. Afterwards married and lived a peaceful life.

It has been suggested "lest we forget" that an obelisk should be set up in the old Quarry on the summit of "Dido's hill" where he bailed up sixteen of the inhabitants of Swanport, and was taken by two resolute men, one a master of English, and one who knew when Dido was helpless. That is incidental; Fergusson had many good qualities.

he must keep us there until night for his own safety. Then he came round to my side of the gig and spoke to me. I was glad to see him; and he had been desirous of falling in with him, that I might extend some advice to him; that I would always befriend him, and stand his friend. He was somewhat excited with liquor, and responded to these wishes in a jovial way. He next asked me for some medicine, saying he had wished to see me on that account; his mate also wanted some. I went from the gig, and spoke to his mate, who said

I returned to the gig for the medicine. The mate put the medicine carefully away in his pocket. I spoke to the mate of the folly of remaining here any longer; that they ought to go away and release the party. By this time they must have known that they had been at Waterloo Point, and that a party would most likely be soon after them. I then returned to the gig, and sat in it. Dido was determined to drink our health, and ordered one of the men to bring a square bottle of gin that was on the ground. I begged him not to drink too much. He took a good drink, wishing "Health to all the Cottons and their children that ever were or will be, and the Storrs," and handed the bottle to his mate, who drank but little. He had dismounted. I had got out of the gig, fearing lest the effect of the liquor should render them uncontrollable, and thus lead them to rash acts, which would endanger the lives of us all. I endeavoured to persuade them not to take any more, and advised the mate to break the bottle, which he did. Dido, seeing the bottle broken on the ground, told his mate, who acknowledged to doing it, "Never do such a thing again while with me;" he answered, "I will not"—seeming to pay respect to Dido through fear. But the advice I gave the mate about the liquor seemed to give me some hold on the mate.

"After this Dido became more under the effect of liquor, and, whilst endeavouring to mount his horse, his gun was first in one position, then in another. Then his mistress called out to him, "Take care of the gun; let the doctor have it." This call was repeated several times, and with great earnestness, so that he seemed unable to resist it, and, with my understood promise not to betray him, I took the gun, and a man helped him to mount. He rode about on the horse; ordered all the men to the side of the road; drew them up in a line, and asked them one by one if he had done them any harm, to which they all replied in the negative. Soon after this I a second time assisted him on to the horse, holding his gun. A short time after this a vehicle was seen coming from the way of Waterloo Point. Dido went down to meet it, saying, "I'll show you what a