



‘MISERY FARM’

It stood at the ‘bottom’ of the school yard and was referred to as “Misery Farm”. It was a ‘tree house’ built about 1929 or 1930 by some of the pupils at the Balnarring State School. The tree-house had a floor, walls and a roof and may have been built around an existing tree.

Hec Waldron, who attended the school from 1925 until 1931, mentioned it whilst writing of his schooldays. He described how the boys used to cut tea-tree that grew along the roadside and haul it to school to make the walls and roof. The saplings for the floor were cut in the school yard itself.

The boys were obviously proud of their finished edifice and gave it the name “Misery Farm”.

This name was the title of a song that was popular at the time. The tune was a foxtrot, in the style of the music of the Dance Bands and American jazz. The lyrics of the song began:

*We’ve got a farm, a barn of a farm,
Right in the middle of a swamp.
There ain’t any charm in our little farm
Right in the middle of the swamp.
Nothing’s grown since the day we came
Misery Farm is our farm’s name.*

...

This photo of the school shows the curious structure which must have given the children many hours of fun both while they were making it and later, when acting out their adventures in its shelter.

*Ilma Hackett
Balnarring & District Historical Society*

MISERY FARM

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THE MUSIC SHOP,
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by **C. JAY WALLIS**
Writer of "ALL BY YOURSELF IN THE MOONLIGHT"



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