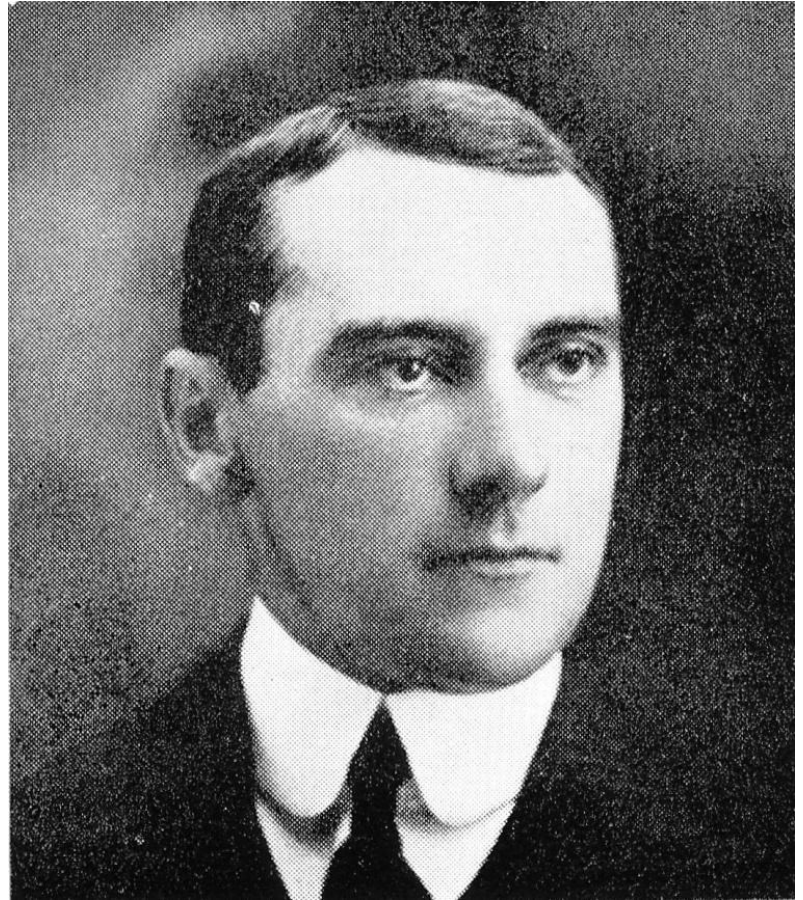


T H Kelly

One the liveliest of L. Herbert Beecroft's water colours of RSYS members is the vivid painting of Thomas Herbert (Bertie) Kelly. This is also one of the paintings which is undated. Mr. Kelly is depicted in a rain squall and southerly buster. The view of Pinchgut indicates he is heading northwards across the front of the Club and he is running late because the caption at the bottom left says "Hope I shan't be Late!" My guess is that Mr. Kelly, who was a prominent Committee man and politician, may have not had a reputation for punctuality. The painting is also unusual because Beecroft has signed in red.



Bertie Kelly was another Squadron member who was a man of many interests and he is listed in "**The Australian Dictionary of Biography**" as follows:

Thomas Herbert Kelly (1875-1948), metal merchant, was born on 17 May, 1875, in Sydney, the second son of Irish-born [Thomas Hussey Kelly](#) and his native-born wife Mary Ann, née Dick. Known to his friends as Bertie, he was educated at Sydney Grammar School and in England at Eton (1890-95) and Magdalen College, Oxford (B.A., 1898). Thomas returned to Sydney in 1898. On the death of his father in 1901, he became managing director of the family firm, the Sydney Smelting Co., and chairman of the Australian Alum Co. He was musical and had some lessons from Joachim. He played with the first violins in [Roberto Hazon](#)'s Sydney Amateur Orchestral Society, but preferred chamber music, playing the violin or viola in several quartets. He became very knowledgeable about music and its history.

Handsome, clean-shaven, with smoothly parted dark hair and large, wide-set eyes, with his brother Willie, he was a dashing young man about town. He belonged to the Australian and Royal Sydney Golf Clubs and the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron of which he was a committee-member. At Christ Church, Hawthorn, Melbourne, Thomas married a widow [Ethel Knight Moore](#), née Mollison, on 29 August 1903; they lived in the family home, Glenyarrah, Double Bay, until it was sold in 1913.

The brothers shared an interest in politics and defence matters. Thomas was defeated for the State seat of Hawkesbury in 1904, but represented Bourke ward on the Sydney Municipal Council in 1906-19. He had joined the Australian Field Artillery in 1905 and, commissioned in 1907, was promoted captain in May 1908; transferring to the Australian Intelligence Corps in October, he was appointed major in 1910. Stationed in Sydney, he commanded the A.I.C. (N.S.W.) from 27 May 1913 until 1919, as lieutenant-colonel from 1 July 1914.

From the 1920s Thomas Kelly was chairman of the Perpetual Trustee Co. and a director of [Tooth](#) & Co. Ltd and the Bank of New South Wales. He helped to establish Koala Park at Pennant Hills as a sanctuary and advocated the use of Australian plants and trees in town planning. A committee-member of the Royal Philharmonic Society of Sydney, he was a lavish host to visiting musicians and a friend of [Melba](#) and [Verbruggen](#). When he built a house at Darling Point in the 1930s he included a large music-room designed by his daughter Beatrice. A good linguist, he was a member of the Dante Alighieri Art and Literary Society. He had a ponderous and didactic manner of speaking at times, but also 'that rare determination to make the best of things'. His brother Frederick (with whom he was very good friends) found him 'a complete philistine about literature & especially poetry'.

Thomas died of cancer in St Vincent's Hospital on 12 May 1948 and was cremated with Anglican rites. He was survived by his wife, two sons and two daughters. His estate was valued for probate at £58,944: his wife presented his important musical reference library to the University of Sydney.

Mr. Kelly served as Rear Commodore from 1902 to 1904 and Vice Commodore from 1904 to 1906. Here is an interesting extract from “**Sydney Sails.**”

*“At the Squadron’s annual meeting in August 1902 T. A. Dibbs was re-elected commodore, with Dr. J. F. Elliott as vice-commodore, and **T. H. Kelly** as rear-commodore. The financial ability of Commodore Dibbs and Rear-Commodore T. H. Kelly, combined with the legal knowledge of Harold Cockshott, barrister, was chiefly responsible for bringing to a head the long-debated question of a suitable home for the Squadron. In all probability the suggestion of acquiring “Carabella” came initially from Alfred and Arthur Milson, since the locality had been their grandfather’s interest, and their father (James Milson II) was still living at a great age at “Elamang”, adjacent to “Carabella.” To the credit for a move that was to prove spectacularly successful should be added acknowledgment of the co-operation of Miss Fanny Tucker and the trustees of the Tucker Estate in facilitating the negotiations.....In order to put the transaction on a formal legal basis, since the Squadron did not have the power to hold land, a company named “Yacht Squadron Club House Limited” was incorporated on 19th November, 1902. The company was registered as non-profit-making and limited by guarantee “for social and general recreation, yachting, and all kinds of sport.” It had power to carry into effect a provisional agreement dated 14th November, 1902 with Fanny Louisa Tucker, and to purchase, lease, or otherwise acquire and hold land or any real or personal property; to construct, improve, repair, furnish and maintain a Clubhouse, refreshment rooms, billiard rooms, wharves, boats, boatsheds, and ships’ slips; to carry on business as caterers; to establish a capital guarantee fund; and to borrow or raise money by debentures.”*

*The first directors of the company were: J. F. Elliott, **T. H. Kelly**, W. M. Cameron, George Waley, T. W. Bremner, and H. M. Shelley, with Sydney T. Wilson as secretary. The first issue of debentures was for £1,100, in units of £10. With these funds in hand, the directors began the renovations without delay.”*

The following article is of interest. It highlights that the Carleton Cup, an event which is awarded still over 100 years later, was donated by Mr. Kelly’s father in memory of his brother Carleton who died at a young age.

Wednesday, 3rd August, 1904 - Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser
Sailing.

Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron held the annual contest for the Carleton Cup on Saturday. The cup was given by the late Mr. T. H. Kelly to perpetuate the memory of his son, and the conditions are that the race is to be sailed

over an outside course by yachts of 10 tons and over. The entries were: — *Iolanthe*, 10 tons (allowed 80 minutes); *Electra*, 29 tons; and *Oithona*, 19 tons. The course was from Neutral Bay round a mark off Botany Heads and back. The Club added a prize of £10. *Iolanthe* was not in good trim, and gave up after going a few miles past the South Reef. *Oithona* sailed very well and showed *Electra* the way for some distance, then the big boat drew away and eventually won by nearly 10 minutes. **Mr. T. H. Kelly**, son of the donor of the cup, is the owner of the winning yacht, and sailed her. Mr. A. J. Soutar sailed his own boat, the *Oithona*.

Wednesday, 3rd August, 1904 - Windsor and Richmond Gazette

An Earnest REFORMER

A Sketch of the Man.

There are doubtless still numbers of voters in the vast Hawkesbury Electoral District who have not yet seen or heard the selected Liberal & Reform candidate, **Mr. T. H. Kelly**. Electors living in remote spots have not been able to get to his meetings, and much as Mr. Kelly would have liked to meet every one of them, this has been rendered quite impossible with the time at his disposal. Since the campaign started Mr. Kelly has not been idle, and has spoken in several places two, three or four times, putting in spare time calling on electors. He, with the band of great Reformers who have helped him in his cause, has spoken eloquently through the press to the whole electorate, and we are sure that hundreds of men and women who have had to deny themselves the pleasure of listening to his oral efforts have derived profit and pleasure from reading his printed speeches, and those of such men as Mr. J. H. Carruthers, Mr. B. B. O'Connor, Mr. W. C. Oakes, Mr. J. Garland, Mr. T. Jessep, Mr. David Storey, Mr. J. J. Cohen, Sir William McMillan, and last, but not least, Mrs. Rhys Davies.

We would like to introduce Mr. Thomas Herbert Kelly for those who have neither seen nor heard him. He is a young Australian, imbued with an earnest and patriotic desire to do some good for his country. He is a man of wealth, and has no sordid ends to serve — no axe to grind — and would sooner be a member of Parliament without the £300 a year allowance than with it. He is modest, but ambitious — and a man without ambition is a sorry specimen of humanity — yet he was diffident at coming out into the glare of public life. A student of politics, and a firm believer in the great principles of Liberalism, he viewed with alarm the dissolute trend of our political life, and the decadence of our natural prosperity and credit. Strong counsels prevailed, and he resolved to sacrifice the cozy comfort of private life and contest a seat in the State Parliament — to make one of a band of patriots pledged to make the supremest efforts to restore our national credit. He is a man of culture and education, a methodical man in business, possesses a pleasing personality, and is approachable by the most humble and the most exalted. In fact, Mr. Kelly is one of nature's gentlemen. He is a delightful conversationalist, and as a public speaker is fluent, forcible, logical and convincing, has an extensive vocabulary, and is always happy in his choice of words, his construction of phrases, and the sequence of his matter. He speaks extemporaneously, and has a full and flexible voice. He is a man of good physique, robust health, and fairly revels in the work of an arduous campaign in wet or fine weather. Mr. Kelly is closely associated with one of our greatest industries, and, like his father before him, is devoting much time to the development of our iron mines. He lives at Double Bay, and has offices in O'Connell street, Sydney.

Most people like to see and hear the man for whom they desire to vote, but to all those who may not have had this pleasure by polling day, we can confidently commend Mr. T. H. Kelly as a man of irreproachable reputation, sound in politics, full of grit and resolution, and who has talents fit to win the highest and most honorable position his country can offer. He is a man who must come to the front, and not only would he grace and add to the store of wisdom in our legislative halls, but he is just the type of man likely to take a deep and kindly interest in any constituency which returned him, and give every attention to their local wants.

Mr. Kelly died on the 12th May, 1948.

April, 2015