



Miles Franklin's Goulburn

In 1889, at the age of 9, Stella Maria Sarah Miles Franklin, better known as author **Miles Franklin**, moved with her family to *Stillwater*, a property at Thornford in an area also known as Bangalore. It lies some 20 kilometres southeast of the city of Goulburn. She lived within the district for the next 13 years.

Her experience of the Goulburn district during the great drought of the 1890s seems to have provided the catalyst for Miles to write her first book *My Brilliant Career* at age 18. It was published in 1901. In 1902, she wrote *My Career Goes Bung* (not published until 1946), and in 1903, Miles penned her first draft of *Cockatoos* (published 1954 under the pseudonym Brent of Bin Bin). By the end of 1903, Miles had left Thornford, seeking work and new experiences in Sydney, Melbourne and ultimately America.

These three books reflect her real-life experiences in Goulburn and the surrounding districts. In addition to severe drought, it was a time of incredible social, economic and political change — the end of the prosperous and expansive 1880s, the harsh realities of severe economic depression during the 1890s, and political activism with the coming of Federation.

This Self-Guided Walking Tour commemorates Miles' years in the Goulburn district. It features many of the sites mentioned in relation to Miles, identifies places quoted in her books, and highlights others that she would have recognised in her numerous trips to the city.

"There will be no mistakes in geography, scenery or climate as I write from fact not fancy. The heroine, who tells the story, is a study from life and illustrates the misery of being born out of one's sphere."

Miles Franklin — from a letter accompanying the manuscript of *My Brilliant (?) Career*, sent to publishers Angus & Robertson in 1899. The book was subsequently rejected by them.



Sources

■ Paul Brunton (2004), *The Diaries of Miles Franklin* ■ Miles Franklin: *My Brilliant Career* (1979), *My Career Goes Bung* (1980), *Cockatoos* (1954) ■ *Goulburn Evening Penny Post* newspaper ■ *Goulburn Herald* newspaper ■ Jennifer Lamb (2001), *Miles Franklin's My Brilliant (?) Career: Goulburn and District References: A Compilation of Primary Source Material* ■ Marcelle Leicht (2001), *Miles Franklin's Life in the Goulburn District* ■ Mitchell Library's Miles Franklin Papers ■ Jill Roe (1993), *My Congenials: Miles Franklin and Friends in Letters, Vol. 1*. ■ P McShane (c.1900), *View of Goulburn NSW* [chart] ■ Cover image of Miles Franklin courtesy State Library of NSW — ML PX'D250 vol.1 no.9 ■ Head & shoulders image of Miles Franklin courtesy of National Archives of Australia — NAA:A1200/18, L32223.

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Acknowledgments

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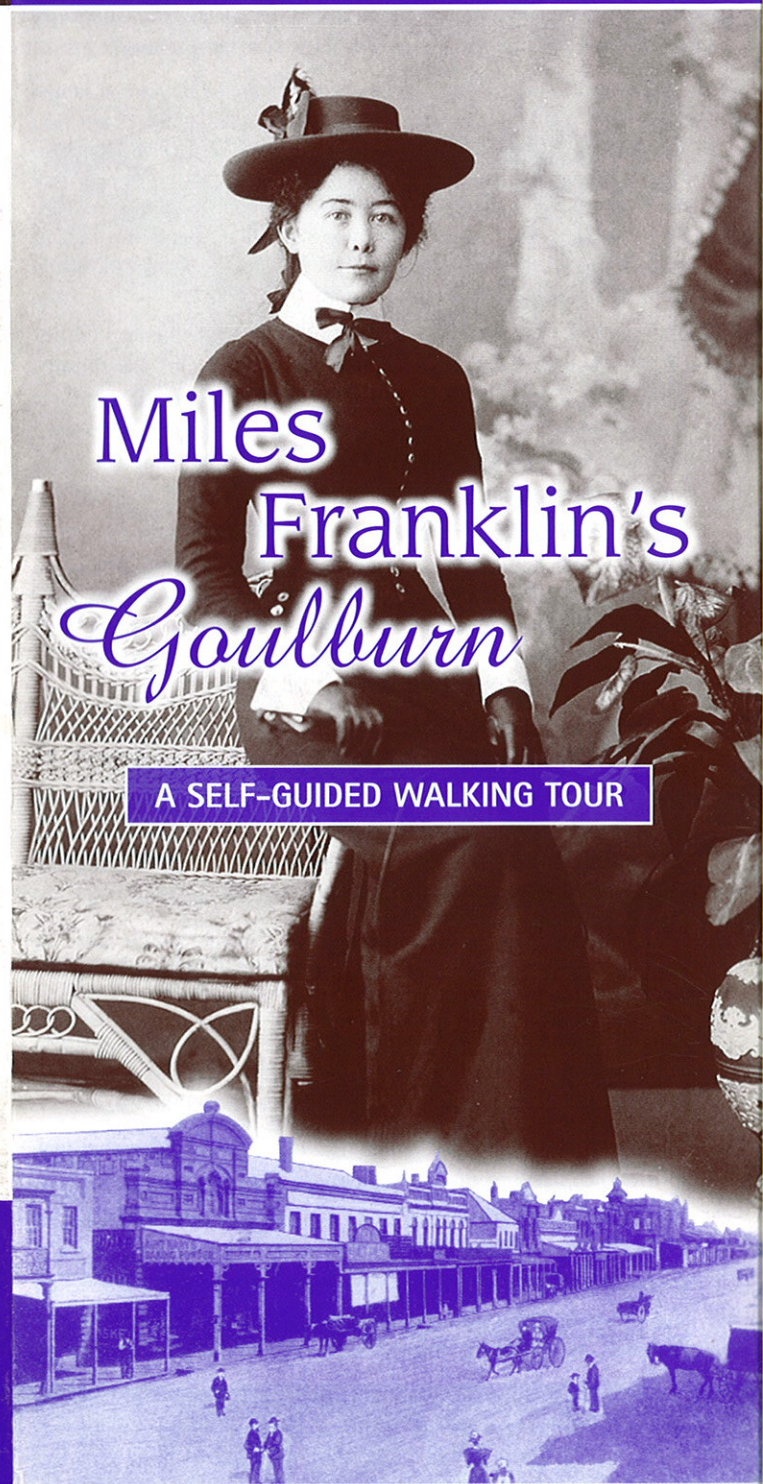
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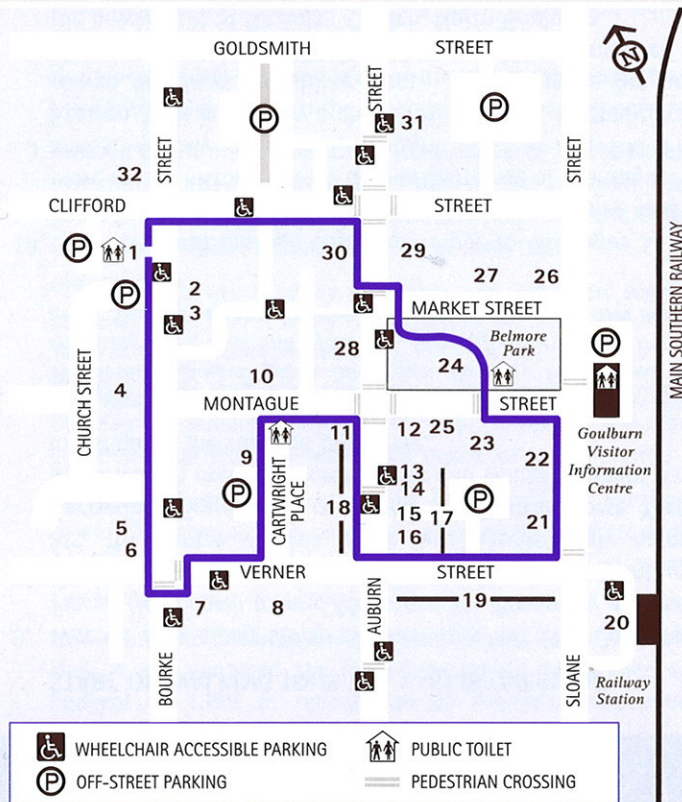
Miles Franklin's Goulburn

A SELF-GUIDED WALKING TOUR

Miles Franklin Self-Guided Walking Tour

Notes to walkers

- **Remember to look up** – many buildings include dates or impressive architectural features such as towers, interesting skylines, even intricate sculpting
- **Direction instructions** are in *italics*
- **Public amenities** are noted on the map
- Existing **pedestrian and wheelchair-friendly crossings and refuges** are noted on the map, however the route of the walk sometimes suggests that walkers cross where there is no designated crossing. Care should be taken at these points, or alternatively, take advantage of more suitable crossing points.
- The walk will take around 1–1½ hours.
This is a guide only – feel free to deviate from the walk to explore other sites of interest or to seek refreshment.



1. This Walking Tour begins and ends at Goulburn Branch Library, located in the Civic Centre, Bourke St, Goulburn. The Library holds a range of materials on and about author Miles Franklin as well as life in Goulburn around the 1890s.

"I arose from my bed next morning with ... a fixed determination to write a book. Nothing less than a book". (My Brilliant Career, Chap 7)

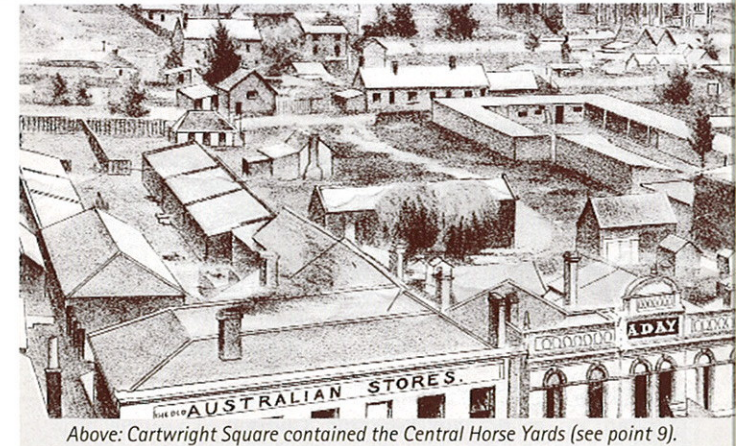
2. Proceed southwards, across Church St. Look back across Bourke St. The **Masonic Temple** was built in 1928 by local architect EC Manfred. It replaced an earlier Temple, which had also been built by Manfred, in 1890. As a keen musician and singer, Miles would have sat her music examinations in the earlier building.

"Sydney College of Music. The theoretical examinations of local candidates were held at the Masonic Hall, Bourke St, on Saturday ... the visiting committee were Mesdames Middleton and Ford, Miss Gillespie, and the local hon. secretary, Mr Percy Hollis." (Goulburn Evening Penny Post, 14 Oct 1901).

Miles was a student of both Miss Gillespie (at Thornford School) and later, Mr Percy Hollis, Professor of Music.

3. The compact building beside the Masonic Temple at Nos.119–117 Bourke St was both place of residence and business premises for plumber **James McNaught**. This family business was active during the period Miles Franklin lived near Goulburn.
4. Continue south down Bourke St. **St Saviour's Anglican Cathedral and Hall** were designed by noted colonial architect, Edmund Blacket. Construction of the cathedral commenced 1874, it was dedicated on 29 April 1884, and was consecrated on 24 Sept 1916. The tower was eventually added under a Bicentennial project in 1988. A spire was included on Blacket's plans but has never been built. **St Saviour's Hall**, located on the southern corner of this block, was originally designed as a school, but was never used for this purpose.

"... should it happen to be Sunday, I never fail to patronise one of the cathedrals. I love the organ music, and the hush which pervades the building; and there is much entertainment in various ways if one goes early and watches the well-dressed congregation filing in. The costumes and the women are pretty ... Regular attendants, of course, pay for and have reserved their seats, but it is in classing the visitors that the verger displays his talent. He can cull the commoners from the parvenu aristocrats, and put them in their respective places as skillfully as an expert horse-dealer can draft his stock at a sale." (My Brilliant Career, Chap 33).



Above: Cartwright Square contained the Central Horse Yards (see point 9).

5. Continue down Bourke St across Church St. The **Baptist Church** on your right was built in 1887 as the **Trinity Presbyterian Church**. It operated in this role until closed in 1898.
6. Continuing south, on the corner of the Bourke and Verner St intersection is the **Goulburn Technical College**. This building has been in continuous use as a Technical College since its opening in 1901.
"On the whole, the College buildings are of the very latest style, and much in advance of any other local structure". (Goulburn Evening Penny Post, 5 Dec 1901).
7. Continue south across Verner St, then turn immediately left and cross over Bourke St. **St Peter & Pauls' Old Cathedral**, built from distinctive local bluestone was officially opened 29 June 1890, and consecrated 24 April 1898. It is no longer the seat of the Bishop of the Canberra-Goulburn Archdiocese, hence the name "Old Cathedral", though it remains the parish church.
"Sweetheart [the horse] was so rampant that she had to be let out till they passed St Peter and St Paul's..." (Cockatoos, Chap VIII).
8. Cross back over Verner St to the northeastern corner, then look back across Verner St. Immediately behind the Cathedral is the **Catholic Presbytery**. Originally the **Bishop's House**, Miles would have recognised the turreted wing on the Cathedral side, though the eastern wing alterations and the second storey, were not added until 1907.

WALKING TOUR (No 9–32) IS CONTINUED OVERLEAF

Miles Franklin Self-Guided Walking Tour

START OF WALKING TOUR (No 1-8) IS OVERLEAF

9. Proceed east along Verner St then turn left into Cartwright Place. Head north toward Montague St. Previously enclosed, with rough access via lanes from Verner, Bourke and Montague Sts, the centre of this block was appropriately named **Cartwright Square**. It contained the **Central Horse Yards**. Miles was an excellent horsewoman and would no doubt have investigated the stock on offer here.

"He was a familiar figure at the Goulburn Sale-yards every Wednesday, always going into town the day before and not returning till a day, and often two days, afterwards. He was in great demand among drovers and auctioneers ..." (My Brilliant Career, Chap 4).

10. Continue north through Cartwright Place to Montague St but not across the street. Most buildings in this vicinity have a more recent history, but on the northern side of Montague St, almost directly opposite Cartwright Place is the **Old Fire Station**, built in 1890 by architect EC Manfred. Its traditional, curved doorways are still evident. The enormous fire bell, placed in the tower on 15 Dec 1890, was later transferred to the newly built St Nicholas' Church, North Goulburn.

"This building, in Montague St, is now sufficiently advanced to enable spectators to judge of its appearance, which is very pleasing and distinctive ... designed by and erected under the supervision of a local architect in private practice ..." (Goulburn Herald, 3 Nov 1890).



11. Turn right into Montague St. To your right is **Dimmeys Store**, which was originally built and operated by **Furner Brothers** as the **Premier Store** from 1878. Taking over in 1901, **Charles Rogers & Co** renovated and considerably extended the store, opening it in grand fashion as the **Great Southern Emporium** in 1901. You will have the opportunity to view the building's distinctive skyline and tower at a later point in this walk.

"There is an impression among certain people that he [Charles Rogers] is trying to concentrate all the business of Goulburn into his own hands; but Mr Rogers denies having any such intention. His business has grown and the old premises were entirely inconvenient for employees and the public. ... Moreover, Mr Rogers is a man of ideas, not bounded by the narrow confines of a small business, and time is not lost in listening to him outlining some of his schemes." (Goulburn Herald, 4 Oct 1901)

12. Turn right into Auburn St. On the opposite, southeastern corner of the Auburn/Montague St intersection is the **Mechanics Institute**. The Institute's first activities were to conduct lectures and provide a library. Later, classes of instruction were held and the 'public-style' subscription library became the focal point. Recreational activities were also added as a means of attracting and maintaining stable membership.

"The other day I called to the Goulburn [library] for your book to lend to a friend when I was informed that though 6 copies were stocked all were out so many people are reading a book (and many other books besides) at a paying rate of a shilling a month." (Letter from F Augustine to Miles Franklin, 2 Jan 1902).

During the 1890s, **Busbridge's hairdresser & tobacconist** and the **ES&A Bank** occupied the Mechanics Institute's shopfronts.

13. Proceed south along Auburn St (western side), taking time to investigate the existing buildings on the eastern side, particularly their upper portions and skylines. The **Post Office** was built in 1880 by colonial architect James Barnet.

"The two little towers of the post office rose like sentry boxes in the long main street, which ran empty in the moonlight to the south horizon." (Cockatoos, Chap XI).

14. The **Old Town Hall**, now the McDermott Centre, was another EC Manfred building. Opened in 1889, it housed the City's government offices and was also a venue for public events.

"... Grand Classical Concert, at the Town Hall, 13 February, to aid the forming of a company of blind musical students. Mr Knight will be assisted by 'Leading Local Ladies and Gentlemen'." (Goulburn Herald, 11 Feb 1901).

Now gone, the **Cricketers' Arms Hotel** stood beside the Town Hall. It was renamed the **Criterion** around 1890, then the **Federal** in 1898 in recognition of Australia's upcoming Federation.

15. No evidence remains of Charles Rogers' most impressive endeavour, **The Great Arcade**, now the site of the **Huntley Arcade**. This huge building, erected in 1889 was a

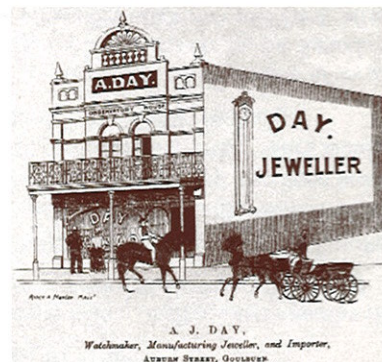
monument to Rogers' commercialism.

16. Further along the eastern side of Auburn St is the **Hibernian Hotel**. Originally opened in 1855, it became the consulting rooms of Dr William Foxley Hayley in 1870, then in 1880 was re-converted back to a hotel, re-opening once again as the Hibernian under licensee Angus McInnes. It has remained in continuous operation on this site since then.

"Pride forbade her appealing to her neighbours, so on me devolved the duty of tracking my father from one pub to another and bringing him home." (My Brilliant Career, Chap 4)

17. Interspersed between these identified buildings on the eastern side were a variety of additional business ventures, which no longer exist. Toward the Verner St end were saddleries, a blacksmith, and even an oyster dealer. The **Commercial Banking Co of Sydney** building still stands on the southern corner of this block.

18. Even less evidence remains of the businesses that lined the western side of Auburn St. Located here were the **Goulburn Herald** newspaper office, **Henty Hollis & Co** chemist, **A Day** jeweller, **Timothy O'Leary's Harp Hotel** and **The Old Australian Stores**. Between these were confectioners, milliners, tobacconists, hairdressers, tailors, fruiterers, drapers, cycle agents, boot stores, a butcher, a grocer, a fishmonger, a blacksmith and a baker. The **Bank of NSW** building completed the block on the Auburn/Verner St corner.



19. Turn left at the Verner St intersection, and proceed across Auburn St. Continue east along Verner St. On the southern side of Verner St some larger business operations were evident, including monumental stonemasons and coachbuilders, though no evidence now remains.

"... I bought a ticket at the Goulburn railway station, and at some time about 1am took my seat in a second class carriage of the mail-train on its way to Melbourne ... the motion of the train was a joy to me, and sleep never entered my head." (My Brilliant Career, Chap 8)

21. At Sloane St, turn left and proceed north. At No.248 is the **Alpine Lodge Motel**. These terraces were built by Charles Rogers around 1880, as "an appendage" to his **Great Arcade**. They are more widely remembered as the **Coffee House Palaces** or simply, the **Coffee Palaces**.

22. Proceed north along Sloane St. To your left is the former **Police Station**, built in 1885 by colonial architect James Barnet, and the old **Court House** (dated 1849), which served until 1885.

23. Turn left at Montague St and proceed west. The majestic **Goulburn Courthouse** on the left was designed by colonial architect, James Barnet, and opened in 1887. The Franklins were to experience its operation firsthand, for only a short while after their arrival in the area, their servant, James Hamilton, broke into the house at "Stillwater", stealing various items of jewellery, clothing, money and a revolver. Making his escape on a stolen horse, complete with saddle and bridle, he was ultimately caught at Marulan, where he had paused for refreshment. He was subsequently charged with horse-stealing and larceny.

"Prisoner pleaded guilty and elected to be dealt with summarily. Mr Franklin said the prisoner's character had been very good up to the time he left on January 27." (Goulburn Evening Penny Post, 6 March 1890).

24. Cross Montague St into historic **Belmore Park**. This park dates from the 1820s when it was originally the city's **Market Square**. It was renamed **Belmore Square** in honour of Lady Belmore, the Governor's wife, who attended the official opening of the Railway Station in May 1869. By the 1890s, it also contained the **Botanical Gardens**.

"There are others ... so shy that I know them only in letters in which they confess they have followed me all day, recording my least action, or have sat on the same seat in Belmore Square and have heard the sound of my voice." (My Career Goes Bung, Chap 8).

25. Look back across Montague St. At the rear of the **Mechanics Institute**, which was viewed from Auburn St earlier (12), is the original **Technological College** building, on the laneway beside the Court House. It operated prior the move to the new Technical College in Bourke St, which was also noted earlier (6). The Mechanics Institute housed a museum with some decidedly unusual local exhibits.

"The following donations were received:— one four-legged and four-winged duckling ... a blind snake ... a tappa cloth and seven vanilla pods from Fiji ... some clay from Boxers Creek district ... fossil coral from Shoalhaven River." (Goulburn Evening Penny Post, 7 Dec 1901)

Look across Auburn St to the former **Furner Bros** store seen earlier in this tour (11). The corner tower, designed by architect EC Manfred, was part of the original building prior to Charles Rogers' extensions in 1901.

26. Along the northern side of Belmore Park is Market Street. On the Market/Sloane St corner stands the **Goulburn Soldiers Club**, formerly the site of the **Commercial Hotel**.

"Thus I went from spoke to spoke till Goulburn, where I left the train and went to the Commercial for the remainder of the night." (My Career Goes Bung, Chap 20)

27. **Percy Hollis**, Professor of Music and Franklin's tutor, practiced out of premises immediately to the left of the **Goulburn Club** at 21 Market St.

"I longed for the arts. Music was a passion with me. I borrowed every book in the neighbourhood and stole hours from rest to read them ... I lived a dream-life with writers, artists, and musicians." (My Brilliant Career, Chap 5)

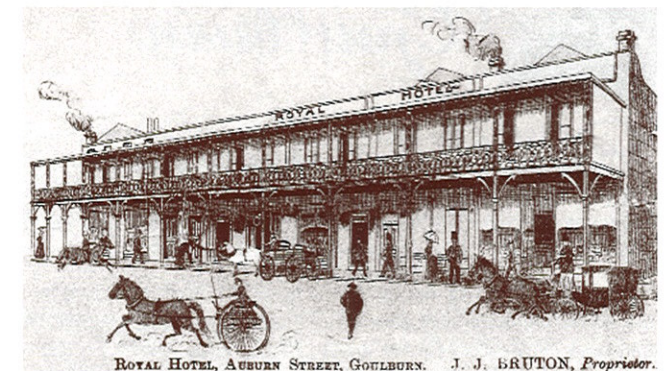
28. Look across Auburn St. The shop of **WS Foxall** was located in **Islington House**, which can still be readily identified by the distinctive statuary adorning the top of the building. Foxall's store was the sole outlet in Goulburn for *My Brilliant Career*.

"Old Foxall can't keep enough on hand. They must have printed dozens more than those you had ... all the old blokes despise you and laugh at the idea of you trying to write a book." (My Career Goes Bung, Chap 7)

29. Cross Market St, then Auburn St and continue north. On the eastern side is the striking **Goulburn Post** newspaper building. The original 'Post' building was erected here in 1870. Later alterations and extensions created the current appearance. Editor of the Goulburn Evening Penny Post during the 1890s was Thomas J Hebblewhite. He was to provide valuable advice and support to Miles, thus helping to launch her literary career.

"Every house in the district had the book, though hitherto the only reading had been the Penny Post and the bible or a circular from Tattersall's." (My Career Goes Bung, Chap 7)

30. Continue north along Auburn St. A landmark of the 1890s that has not survived was John J Bruton's **Royal Hotel**, now the site of the **Goulburn Workers Club**. Situated along much of the northern end of the block, the Royal was aptly named, being known far and wide for its hospitality.



31. At the Auburn/Clifford St corner, look north along Auburn St. In the next block, on the eastern side, is the **Centro Goulburn**. Located on this site during Miles' time was the **Oddfellows' Hall**, the prime venue for both local and visiting artistic entertainments.

"They put up at the Royal and then strolled to the Oddfellows Hall, a commodious place with a stage and gallery in which the town enjoyed many concerts and where some of the world's great singers, when sufficiently in decline, were occasionally heard, and sometimes a young Australian destined for fame ... the elite sat in the gallery, where they were able to demonstrate their superiority by paying an extra shilling, and overcame distance with opera glasses." (Cockatoos, Chap VIII)

32. Turn left and proceed west along Clifford St. At the Clifford/Bourke St intersection, look to the northwest corner, across the roundabout. **Bourke St School** is the oldest public school in Goulburn, established by private enterprise in 1858. During the 1890s it was known as **Goulburn Superior School**.

"You may attend a competitive examination of applicant pupil teachers on Sat 11 July at Goulburn Superior Public School at 8.45 am." (Memo from District Inspector to Miles Franklin, July 1896)

Miles was not accepted as a pupil teacher, though she was twice recommended for a teaching position by local member, Hon EW O'Sullivan.

The walking tour ends at the **Civic Centre** and **Goulburn Branch Library**. For further information on the sites mentioned in this tour, or on Miles Franklin herself, visit the Regional History Room of Goulburn Branch Library or Goulburn Regional Art Gallery.