

Provenance 2015

Issue 14, 2015 ISSN: 1832-2522

Whereas Thomas Drewery was
Quarter Sessions of the Peace holder
Wakefield in the West Riding of the County
of York in September 1845 convicted of
Horse Stealing, and sentenced to be Transported
seven Years for the same. - We in consideration
of some Circumstances humbly represented
unto Us, are Graciously pleased to extend
Our Grace and Mercy unto him, and to Grant
him Our Free Pardon for the Crime of
which he stands convicted. - Our Will
and Pleasure therefore is that you Cause
him the said Thomas Drewery to be
forthwith

a copy of
the 25th Dec
J. Browning on
the 25th Dec

Thomas Drewery
Free Pardon.

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Editorial

Provenance 2015

In the midst of the centenary of World War I commemorations, *Provenance* this year features a fascinating range of articles exploring different dimensions of Australia's participation in the war and its aftermath.

Pat Grimshaw and Hannah Loney in 'Doing their bit helping make Australia free' explore the predicament of Victorian Aboriginal servicemen and their families. The mothers of Aboriginal sons fighting for Australia in Europe had to engage in their own battle on the home front to retain control of their son's military pay. The letters written by the mothers of Aboriginal servicemen reveal women who were proud and astute advocates for justice and equality in the face of government policy as administered by the Board for the Protection of Aborigines. Meanwhile in the Forum section, Jennifer McNeice's article 'Military exemption courts in 1916' reminds us of the often-overlooked reluctance of many men to leave behind their families and economic livelihood despite the growing official and social pressures to follow their patriotic duty. Examining the records of the military exemption courts that were established in 1916 to assess applications for exemption from military service, Lynch's article reveals the resistance to moves by the Australian Federal government to enforce some kind of compulsory military service and the perils of patriotic jingoism.

A number of other articles in the issue explore the aftermath of the war. In his revisiting of the debate about the outcomes of the Soldier Settlement Scheme, James Kirby in 'Beyond failure and success' urges historians to take a more nuanced approach to assessing the communities that grew up around soldier settlement blocks across Victoria. Kirby achieves this through a consideration of the qualitative aspects of life in soldier settlement communities, in particular looking at the lived experience of families of the Ercildoune Road estate through government records and oral history. Cassie May in 'Lithium and lost souls' looks at the grim aftermath of war, the damaged servicemen, many of whom experienced debilitating mental health conditions. May celebrates the role of places like the Bundoora Homestead which provided these men with effective treatment and a participatory community. Janet Lynch's article in the Forum section, 'The families of World War I veterans ...' presents a similar story

of resilience despite the awful psychological trauma inflicted by the war, as servicemen and their families lobbied the government for appropriate treatment and care.

Also in this year's issue are two articles that demonstrate the way that researching government records can be used to explore the history and workings of public institutions such as welfare and school systems. Cate O'Neill's article 'She had always been a difficult case' revisits the case of 'Jill', a state ward in her teens, brutalised by the Victorian child welfare system once she became categorised as a 'female delinquent'. The article examines how Jill became a political football as her case became fodder for a sensationalised media circus and the machinations of the political cycle. The changes introduced in the aftermath of Jill's tragic death by suicide were meant to address the failings of the child welfare system. O'Neill's article, despite its focus on the political cycles of the 1950s, is a timely contribution to the discussion about current inquiries into institutionalised child abuse, a reminder that previous public controversies over these issues have not necessarily overcome institutional failings. Amber Evangelista explores Melbourne's Ragged School system in her article '... From squalor and vice to virtue and knowledge ...'; particularly the contribution of Hester Hornbrook, a vehement Evangelical crusader who late in life established eight Ragged Schools in Melbourne during the late 1850s and early 1860s. Under the influence of the Evangelical movement in England, Hornbrook established schools that would cater to the children of the poorest families, primarily out of an austere conviction that the cause of their poverty was an underlying spiritual corruption that could only be addressed via religious education.

Also in this year's issue of the journal, three articles demonstrate the ways in which records can be used to research the history of places and communities. Barbara Minchinton's article 'Reading the papers' follows up her article published in *Provenance* in 2011, 'The trouble with Otway maps', which demonstrated the inadequacy of the survey maps of the Otway Ranges for the purposes of administering land holdings in that area owing to the difficult terrain. In this year's article Minchinton's close reading of land administration files shows the various ways in which officials in the Victorian Government compensated for the difficult terrain and the unreliable survey maps by developing working criteria that reflected the reality of conditions in the Otways, to thereby promote the original intent of the land Acts to facilitate small land holdings across Victoria. In 'Historical maps, geographic information systems (GIS) and complex mining landscapes on the Victorian goldfields', co-authors Peter Davies, Susan Lawrence and Jodi Turnbull present an innovative re-use of survey and mapping data about water networks created for mining purposes that can be extracted from the wide range of maps held by PROV. As an example of the kind of exciting possibilities opened up by Digital Humanities projects, the article shows how historical maps and digital technology can be combined to produce tools to better understand histories of place, in this case, the relationships between competing water users and the way they shaped the mining landscapes during the colonial era. David Evans's article, 'John Jones', primarily utilises the City of Melbourne's early records relating to intentions to build homes to paint a portrait of a prolific builder in the West Melbourne area, the built landscape to which he contributed, and his local community.

Finally, this year's issue features two articles based on the unexpected pleasures that arise from undertaking family history research based on government records. Jacqui Browne in 'Who says "you can't change history"?', presents her remarkable research journey, which she and her mother began back in the 1970s, and which led her to eventually uncover surprising family secrets and an extensive network of family connections in Melbourne and its surrounds. During her family history research,

Dorothy Small stumbled across the case of Thomas Drewery, a man wrongly convicted of theft in England who was transported to Melbourne in 1847, which she narrates in her article 'An innocent Pentonvillain'. The article shows the lengths that Drewery went to clear his name and reunite himself with his family, as well as the hardships and opportunities that awaited him and his family in Victoria.

Sebastian Gurciullo & Lauren Bourke
Co-editors

Refereed articles



‘Doing their bit helping make Australia free’

Mothers of Aboriginal diggers and the assertion of Indigenous rights

Patricia Grimshaw and Hannah Loney

“‘Doing their bit helping make Australia free’”: mothers of Aboriginal diggers and the assertion of Indigenous rights’, *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria*, issue no. 14, 2015. ISSN 1832-2522. Copyright © Patricia Grimshaw and Hannah Loney.

This is a peer reviewed article.

Patricia Grimshaw is a Professor Emeritus and Professorial Research Fellow in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne where she taught Australian history and gender studies for many years. She was co-editor with Elizabeth Nelson and Sandra Smith of *Letters from Aboriginal Women of Victoria, 1867–1926*, a collection of Aboriginal women’s letters held in the archives of Public Record Office Victoria and the National Archives of Australia that was published in 2002. She has written a number of chapters and articles that draw on the letters, including most recently (with Joanna Cruickshank), ‘Women, Authority and Power on Ramahyuck Mission, Victoria, 1880–1910’ in Leigh Boucher and Lynette Russell (eds), *Settler Colonial Governance in Nineteenth-Century Victoria*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 2015. She is a Chief Investigator on the ARC Linkage project, ‘Minutes of Evidence’, that focuses on the Coranderrk Reserve.

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Abstract

The article examines letters written by mothers of Victorian Aboriginal diggers protesting efforts by the Board for the Protection of Aborigines (BPA) to restrict their access to their sons’ military allotments. The women objected to the BPA’s interventions to persuade the Federal Department of Defence, which paid the funds, to cease payments on the grounds that the Aboriginal mothers were recipients of Victorian state funding as residents of reserves. The interchanges of the women with BPA officials afford further evidence of their continuing forceful defence of their rights despite the power imbalances in their relations with the state.

In 1918 Ada Austin, a Victorian Aboriginal woman living on the Framlingham Reserve in western Victoria, contacted members of the Board for the Protection of Aborigines (BPA) in Victoria with an urgent request concerning her niece, 14 year-old Winnie Austin.[1] Ada requested in no uncertain terms that it was more than time that the BPA returned Winnie to her family at Framlingham from her isolated situation at the Lake Condah Mission in south-western Victoria. It was two years since Winnie had gone to Lake Condah on a visit, and thereafter had been prevented by orders of the BPA from returning home. It seemed, Ada wrote, that ‘because we are black people they can do what they like with us; they ought to treat us all alike as we got relations fighting at the front and they shouldn’t treat our children like this’.[2] The BPA’s exercise of power over this Aboriginal child had persisted despite the fact that, as Ada pointed out, Winnie had two friends who had been killed in World War I ‘doing th[eir] bit helping make Australia free’.[3]

Ada Austin understood the sacrifices that the Aboriginal community of Victoria had made by sending so many young men to war – a loyal gesture to the Australian nation – and expected their loyalty to be reciprocated by the recognition of citizenship rights at home. Her protest was a further step in a tradition of Aboriginal people expressing their right to proper recognition. The focus of this paper is the negotiations of diggers' mothers when the BPA curtailed their access to their sons' Commonwealth-funded military allotments or denied the recipients usual state assistance.[4] We draw on these mothers' letters held at Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) and the National Archives of Victoria (NAA). They are also included in the collection, *Letters from Aboriginal Women of Victoria, 1867–1926* that was edited in 2002 by Elizabeth Nelson, Sandra Smith and the co-writer of this paper, Patricia Grimshaw. The collection's editors, after consultation with families and community elders, included almost all the letters Aboriginal women wrote across the 50-year period that were preserved in these archives. References to the published letters are included alongside the archival references in the endnotes. The co-editor, Sandra Smith, a prominent Aboriginal oral historian who worked at the time in the Bunjilaka Centre at Museum Victoria, drew on her personally-held archive to write biographical notes on the 80 women whose letters we included.[5]

Aboriginal women, like Aboriginal men, lived in a state where the government through the BPA had exercised far-reaching control over their personal and communities' lives from the creation of the missions and reserves in the 1860s, and their letters need to be read in the light of this oppressive context. Legal scholars such as Mark McMillan and Cosima McRae, and historians such as Richard Broome, John Chesterman, Brian Galligan and Samuel Furphy, are among those who have described their deprivation and provided details of the relevant Victorian legislation, and shown how these pressures were intensified with the passage in 1886 of the so-called 'Half Caste Act'. [6] This Act forced already impoverished adult residents of mixed descent under thirty-five years of age to leave the missions, and removed any material support that they received beyond it. [7] These historians have also traced the difficulties people of mixed descent faced in their attempts to survive away from the missions and reserves, separated from family support and facing hostility from many settlers. [8] Patricia Grimshaw, co-author of this article, has contributed to this debate through an examination of the ways Aboriginal women, on and off missions, persistently reminded Victorian officials of the state's rightful course of action, showing how the women's mission education and Christian beliefs served to reinforce their identification of systemic injustice and emboldened them to combat it. [9]

There was a sharp divide between official settler and Aboriginal women's understandings of their relative rights and obligations, as the exchange that follows illustrates. Officials who dealt with the allocation of resources to people on missions and reserves regarded them as akin to recipients of charity, expected to understand that reliance on state assistance imposed limitations on their freedom. Reverend Friedrich Hagenauer, the Moravian missionary who was now Secretary of the BPA, spelt out officialdom's views when in May 1891 he wrote to Framlingham resident Bessie Rawlings. [10] She had just summoned home her teenage daughter from domestic service in Melbourne to help in a domestic crisis caused by illness. Swiftly, Reverend Hagenauer put pen to paper to spell out patiently the reality of her situation under Victorian legislation:

You seem to ignore the fact that your daughter is and must be under the Regulations of the Law and that if you try to get the girl away, she will have to go before the Court. The fact is, it cannot be done at all, as long as you enjoy the receipt of Government support. White people can have their children, except they belong to the Department of the Industrial Schools. Half Castes, by earning their money and living without Government aid are considered white people and no one does interfere then, but if you wish to have Government support, you cannot do so. The moment you do so, rations and all other support as well as living on a reserve must stop and I shall have to inform Mr Weir to this effect. My advice to you [is] to consider what you do ... The Board cannot break the law of the country. [11]

Authoritative though Hagenauer assumed this explanation to be, Bessie Rawlings continued to press the BPA to allow her older children onto the reserve and provide supplies to support them there. Neither she, nor other Aboriginal women of Victoria, accepted meekly this version of what the state owed their families. [12] The women believed the new settler state was bound to treat them and their communities equally as Victorian citizens and fellow Christians, together with the particular obligations owed to them as displaced Indigenous people.

.....

Bessie Rawlings' resistance was characteristic of other Aboriginal women's persistent assertion of their rights despite being rejected by the governing authorities right up to the crisis of World War I. Aboriginal women suffered fear and anxiety as their young men put their lives at risk, and terrible grief when deaths inevitably occurred, and in addition faced another challenge. Upon enlisting unmarried soldiers commonly nominated their mothers as next of kin, knowing that the Department of Defence of the Australian Government would pay them their military allotments, as they did non-Indigenous mothers.[13] Due to restrictions under state laws, even amidst this time of terrible pressure, the BPA sometimes interfered with or withheld from the mothers the service entitlements for sons that were their due. We examine the reactions to this injustice of four women: Eliza Saunders and Agnes Carter of Lake Condah Mission, Jemima Dunolly of the Coranderrk Reserve, and finally, Bessie Rawlings who became engaged in yet another spirited engagement with the BPA.

The concern of BPA members that women residents of missions and reserves were receiving sons' military allotments first arose explicitly when the BPA considered Eliza Saunders' use of the allotment to which she herself in all innocence drew attention. Eliza (Elizabeth) Saunders of Lake Condah Mission had been born in Mount Gambier, South Australia, in the 1850s but moved to Lake Condah Mission when she married a Victorian Aboriginal man, Henry Saunders, in the 1870s. By 1917 she was a widow with two surviving adult children.[14] Both children are of interest. Her son, Walter Christopher George Saunders, known as Chris, described in enlistment records as a groom, was serving in France with the 10th Machine Gun Company.[15] Eliza was listed as his next of kin.[16] Eliza also had two grandsons at the front: the sons of her daughter, Lizzie, who was married to Joseph Crough. The older son, Joseph, was a twenty-two-year-old horse breaker, who enlisted on 8 September 1915.[17] His younger brother Kenneth, a nineteen-year-old horse breaker, enlisted before him on 23 March 1915 and saw action at Gallipoli before being deployed to France.[18] Both brothers listed their father, Joseph, as next of kin on their attestation papers. Joseph senior and Lizzie had raised a large family of ten children on the BPA reserve at Elliminyt, near Colac in western Victoria. They received no systematic support and had made a poor living, with Joe taking work as a horse breaker as he could, even though he suffered greatly from tuberculosis in his later years.



Private Walter Christopher (Chris) Saunders, son of Eliza Saunders, circa 1916. AWM P00889.012.

We first encounter Eliza Saunders when we hear of her presence assisting the family through Lizzie Crough's numerous letters to the BPA. Lizzie made clear their urgent need of assistance as they endured terrible struggles through cold winters, illnesses, confinements, and near destitution. In a letter to the Chief Secretary on 18 May 1904, Lizzie explained: 'my children's clothes is threadbare [sic] and they have to go to school half freezed[;] when the board placed us here at first they gave us nothing that would help us[;] we had to struggle and it has made it so hard for us[;] now we want cows or wires for fencing that we can either milk or grow something but everything my husband earns he has to buy food'. [19] Lizzie mentioned frequently in her letters that Eliza was staying and helping her daughter as best she could. [20]

Eliza Saunders first communicated with the BPA about her son Chris's military allotment in August 1917 writing from Lake Condah Mission, describing to their obvious consternation, her careful saving of the money in a savings account. She now wanted to use the money to buy a house in the vicinity of Lake Condah: '[m]y only son has been serving his countrys [sic] good since May 1915', she wrote to the BPA, 'and I have received £1-8-0 weekly and have saved it for my long looked for wish [for] a home of our own if he is spared'. Eliza was negotiating for a nice two-roomed cottage with a three-quarter acre of land, for which the asking price was £50; added benefits were a paling fence, a 'new large tank and lovely stove'. The land was lovely, too, for growing vegetables and she also planned to keep fowls. She felt some sadness leaving the station, 'but a woman does love her own little home and [the] gentleman in Heywood says I have a great bargain and I have the money ready'. She emphasised that she needed a swift reply because the deeds were already waiting to be signed. She wrote not to ask for permission to buy the house, which she clearly saw as her own business and right, but to request support for a helper. All she needed was one ration for a young girl from the community, who could come and live with her until her son came home. 'So I must close hoping to hear from you soon your most humble servant Eliza Saunders'.[21]

The mission manager backed Eliza Saunders' story that her son Chris wanted his mother to buy a house with his pay, but officials expressed consternation that Eliza had been receiving army pay as well as mission rations. [22] Should they confiscate the money in compensation? Was her health good enough for independent living anyway? How could a situation come about that a woman living on charity saved the cash to buy a house? As the realisation dawned that these Aboriginal women were receiving army income through the Australian Government, and that in this case the mother had been able to save, members of the BPA were clearly put out. One might suspect that apart from their supposed attachment to the ideal of 'fairness', the men of the BPA feared that these women would enjoy a small degree of independence through access to a little money free from BPA control. Their official line with the Department of Defence would be to insist that the mothers were wasting the money.[23] In January 1918, the BPA asked the Department of Defence to suspend payment of Aboriginal servicemen's allotments to female relatives who received state assistance and, instead, to keep the funds in trust pending the men's return from the front. The women were, the BPA alleged, squandering the money.[24]

To return to the story of Eliza Saunders: while the BPA deliberated and came to the decision to refuse Eliza's request, the house was snapped up by another buyer. [25] Eliza wrote again. How could they have denied her this request? Was she not a good Christian woman? Did she not deserve it? 'I am well read, I [am] so intelligent, I longed for a home and [am] weeping bitterly now', she wrote. Her son, she said, had so wanted a house if he was spared to return.[26] Regardless, in January 1918, the BPA informed the manager at Lake Condah that Eliza's rations were to cease at the end of the month, in view of the fact that she was receiving military pay. [27] Doubtless as a result of their experience of Eliza having proved her capacity to save enough money for a house, the BPA took this particular step in punishment. Given the Department of Defence declined to stop Eliza's allotment, the BPA restricted her access to state resources.

Unbowed, though by July 1918 burdened with rheumatism, Eliza reiterated her aim to buy a block of land near Lake Condah, Eliza was not aware that the Lake Condah land was scheduled to be broken up for non-Aboriginal returning servicemen. When the BPA referred the matter to the manager of Lake Condah, he recommended against supporting Eliza, as she was receiving her son's military pay and making arrangements to receive the old age pension; her request was duly refused.[28] Sadly, Eliza lived to know that her son Chris had survived the war, but not long enough to welcome him back home. In December 1918, before his return, Eliza died in the township of Dunmore, near Lake Condah.[29] In January 1919, Lizzie Crough contacted the Department of Defence to ask whether the Female Relatives' Badge for her brother's service, that normally would have gone to Eliza, should now go to her as Chris's closest living female relative.[30] It was agreed that she should, indeed, receive the badge.

Two brief letters provide further insight into a situation that provided a similar predicament for the BPA, in which another Lake Condah woman, Agnes Carter, insisted that the Victorian state should honor its obligations to female relatives of servicemen. Agnes was born in 1857 and married William Carter at Lake Condah in 1878; she became the mother of twelve children. [31] During the war Agnes received payments for her nephew Robert Taylor, the son of her sister, Margaret, and brother-in-law Tommy Taylor. Robert enlisted and embarked for the front on HMAT *Anchises* that left Melbourne on 14 March 1916; he served as a private in the 31st Infantry Battalion and survived the war.[32]

On 1 June 1918, Agnes wrote from Lake Condah to a Mr Collins of the Department of Defence, informing him that she was desperate to keep the allotment because the BPA had stopped supplying her with rations and clothing.[33] A long-term resident of Lake Condah, she had recently moved off the mission to live in Allandale, in country Victoria. In May 1919, she further explained her situation in a letter to the BPA. When the question arose of advising the termination of allotments, the BPA took the alternative path with Agnes, as they had eventually with Eliza Saunders. Rather than fighting the Department of Defence, the BPA reduced Agnes's material assistance, a measure which lay within its power. Agnes acknowledged that she received some rations and clothing through the BPA, but maintained that when she left Lake Condah she understood that the full range of possible assistance would be due to her 'under the Act of Aborigines [1886]', for the rest of her life. Although, she continued, 'I am receiving a military allotment from a nephew of mine who went away to the front to fight for King and Empire; I only receive £1-per week; and I cannot call that my own; I am only my nephew's trustee for his money which I am receiving just now; and out of it my nephew has allowed me 10/- per week ...' This amount was quite insufficient for her to live on. She concluded with customary civility: 'I am, yrs obidently [sic], Mrs A Carter'.[34] With the cessation of the war and the imminent return of her nephew, and therefore the ending of the allotment, this BPA decision threatened to leave Agnes nearly destitute. As such, the BPA decided to restore her support, as indeed was her rightful due.[35]

Two other mothers had their allotments cut and wrote in protest, with differing outcomes. One of the most prominent women affected by the BPA decision to recommend termination was Jemima Dunolly of Coranderrk, a reserve near Healesville, north-east of Melbourne. Born Jemima Burns in the mid-1850s in the Echuca district on the Murray River, Jemima was brought to Coranderrk upon its foundation as a young girl in the 1860s.[36] In 1875 she married Robert Wandin (also spelt 'Wandon'). They had ten children: Nina, who died as a baby, Robert, Ellen, Mary, Joseph, Frank, William, Jemima, James, and Martha Louisa. The couple became strongly involved in the furtherance of the reserve's fortunes as a viable Aboriginal community.[37] Notably, Jemima and Robert were key players in the protest about the dismissal of their respected manager, John Green, and signatories to the community petition to the Premier of Victoria that precipitated the parliamentary inquiry in 1881.[38] Jemima Wandin was a devout church member and parish worker, leading gatherings of women and girls in reading and prayer in her own home. She was 'a sincere, quiet and wise adviser to her own race',

the manager of Coranderrk reported, his right hand helper among the women. Her young daughters Martha and Mary helped her in her pastoral responsibilities, while her eldest son was a teacher in the Victorian state system.[39] Her husband Robert was also a valued church stalwart.



Group of Aboriginal residents at Coranderrk, 1903. Photographer: Stephens. Accession no. H141215. State Library of Victoria. Reproduced with the permission of the Wurundjeri Tribe Land and Compensation Cultural Heritage Council Incorporated.

In 1910, two years after Robert died, Jemima married the widower Thomas Dunolly, another highly regarded supporter of Aboriginal rights at Coranderrk.[40] That year, Jemima came to the conviction that the family needed to move off the reserve. As her children reached adolescence they were obliged to leave for work elsewhere, away from the care of their parents. In a letter to the BPA, Jemima revealed clearly her conviction that as an Aboriginal person she deserved an allocation of land, as many other Aboriginal Victorians similarly believed.[41] 'I am of the opinion now that I would like a home of my own with the help of the Board for Protection of Aborigines for which I think I am now justly entitled to', she wrote in a remarkably forthright letter.

I have daughters rising into womanhood now and these I would like to be a little more under my control for when they go out to service it is the last control of mothers lost, for as you know that they are rarely allowed back again even for a holiday. For the sake of my girls I would like a home of my own and if the government would see their way clear to giving me a home I would feel greatly indebted for the favour and 3 years rations and clothing[.] Thanking you in anticipation, I am, yours respectfully, Mrs T Dunolly

[ps] I would like 50 acres to make a living as well.[42]

.....

The manager could only explain to the BPA that the 'half caste parents' did not like their children having to leave the reserves.[43] Jemima was sharply reminded by the BPA that the state's notion of 'charity' did not include such largesse. She remained at Coranderrk, but did not cede her campaign for her right to have her children stay with her.

Two of Jemima's sons, Joseph Wandin and her second youngest, James Henry Wandin, enlisted in the Australian Imperial Forces (AIF). Joseph enlisted as a twenty-nine-year-old school teacher on 18 August 1914, but was discharged less than two months later for undisclosed reasons. James, a twenty-one-year-old labourer at the time of enlistment in 1917, noted his mother Jemima as his next of kin on his attestation paper. Although he had previously been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service on the grounds of 'bad teeth', James embarked from Melbourne on the HMAT *Themistocles* A32 on 4 August 1917.[44] His earlier rejection may have been because it was discovered that Joseph was Aboriginal and as such, not substantially of European origin or descent, considering the early reluctance to accept Aboriginal people into the army. [45] Indeed, policies on enlistment became more flexible later in the conflict – particularly after the failure of the conscription referenda. For instance, from 1917 a national level Aboriginal people of mixed descent were allowed to enlist, though clearly many had enlisted before that date in Victoria. Subsequently, Jemima began to receive James's military allotment. [46] When in January 1918 she was notified by the BPA that the payment would cease, she immediately lodged a complaint directly with the Department of Defence. Jemima defended herself against the BPA charge of recipients wasting their money: she was using the money prudently, she affirmed, by sending her son parcels regularly and keeping the balance for her personal upkeep.[47] The Department of Defence consulted with the BPA, and swiftly reinstated her payments.[48] James survived the war, and Jemima Dunolly herself remained on the reserve to the end of her life, refusing to leave Coranderrk when it was officially shut down in 1924. Her grandson, another James Wandin, was the last Aboriginal child born at Coranderrk. He was born in 1933 in his grandmother's cottage. Jemima died in 1944, leaving many descendants as significant members of the Coranderrk community, including Auntie Joy Murphy Wandin, to carry on her advocacy.[49]

Bessie Rawlings, whom Reverend Hagenauer tried to put in her place in the 1890s, was still living in the Framlingham community in 1918 when her less successful exchange began with the BPA. Born Elizabeth Gorrie at Lake Condah around 1850, in 1870

Bessie married James Lancaster, with whom she had five children, four of whom survived childhood: George James, Walter Henry, Christina Rachel and Mary Elizabeth. After James's death Bessie married fellow Lake Condah resident, William Rawlings. They settled on the Framlingham Reserve, and raised three more children: William, Diana and Isabella.[50] Deeply concerned with the sustenance, employment and residence of her children and with rights to land, Bessie established a name for insisting on what she believed were her lawful entitlements. So much so that in 1898, the BPA went so far as to obtain an Order-in-Council to remove Bessie and her husband from Framlingham to Lake Condah, where they were confined for two years before they bravely declared that they would earn their own living off the mission.[51] They set up house in the vicinity of Framlingham, the condition of their release being the total severance of the help mediated through the mission. In 1904, Bessie nevertheless requested assistance when her husband became ill: 'he came home quite broken down after seeing our darling child how thin she looked[:] he can't get over it ...' The BPA should know, she wrote, that they had left the reserve only for their children's sake.[52]

Bessie Rawlings, unlike Jemima Dunolly, enjoyed no such ready reinstatement of her son's military allotment when she challenged the curtailment of her funds in early 1918. Her son, William (Bill) Reginald Rawlings, enlisted in the AIF in Warrnambool in March 1916, giving horse-breaking as his trade.[53] He joined the 29th Infantry Battalion and served in France.[54] Whatever Bessie's standing with the BPA might have been, she had white neighbours who supported her appeal for restitution. The local guardian, Mr William Johnstone, praised her in a letter to the Minister of Defence on 5 May 1918. Having known Bessie Rawlings for over forty years, he wrote: 'she never spends one shilling foolishly. She is a good living and respectable woman. [...] Mr Hall our Purnim Justice of the Peace will also testify to her good character and her economy in spending the money. ... I am sure if her son hears of it he will be very very sorry'. [55]

The letter had the desired effect: the BPA Secretary replied that they had recommended that the Department of Defence resume the payments. However, by 27 June, Bessie Rawlings had still not seen a single payment. She took up the cudgels once again in a letter to the Secretary of the BPA, all the more striking for her sturdy practical suggestions: 'To Mr Parker', she began:

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This is just a few lines to let you know that I haven't received my military pay yet. Mr Johnstone read me the letter he wrote you saying that the pay master should forward my pay to me but it has not come yet. So I wrote to the pay master and I told him to send my pay on to Purnim instead of banking it, for I can do that much myself as I have my own pass book. You know sir what little rations I get from the Board is not the worth of my dear only son's life of which he has gone to give up for king and freedom. So dear Mr Parker do please see that I get my pay, for you know sir that every mother's heart is with her son; my thoughts are always with my own. God bless our boys at the front.

Kindly oblige your humble servant,

Bessie Rawlings

Please excuse bad writing and a scanty bit of paper. [56]

Six weeks later, on 9 August 1918 at the Somme, twenty-seven-year-old William was killed in action, winning a Military Medal for exceptional bravery in battle. The citation read:

During the attack on enemy systems this soldier had the responsible position of first bayonet man in a bombing team which worked down the enemy C.T. [communication trench] , routed the enemy and established a block in the trenches. Private Rawlings displayed rare bravery in the performance of his duty, killing many of the enemy, brushing aside all opposition and cleared the way effectively for the bombers of his team. His irresistible dash and courage set a wonderful example to the remainder of the team.[57]

The Rawlings clung to Framlingham in the face of relentless efforts to dislodge them. After a school building burned down in 1919, taking also an attached shed in which the Rawlings lived, the BPA ordered them to leave Framlingham for permanent residence at Lake Tyers Mission Station in Gippsland. Bessie was the first signatory to a petition to the Victorian parliament, requesting that a new school building be erected on the site: 'the Aborigines are very desirous to remain at Framlingham and altogether opposed to removing to Lake Tyers Station,' the petition ran.[58] A good number of white neighbours and the local constable endorsed their wish. 'Mrs Rawlings, who is a very nice woman, and whose son Charlie [William] after gaining the MM., was killed in the war, has been to see me', Walter Ward wrote to the BPA Secretary. 'I would like to request the Board to give some sympathetic consideration to these matters'.[59] The following day Constable Harvey sent a similar plea: 'These people were born on the Camp and no doubt feel the position very keen... Perhaps they may be able to remain here'.[60]

Bessie Rawlings lived more than twenty years after her son, dying in June 1939 near the reserve at Framlingham at an advanced age, just before the outbreak of another world war.[61] The Warrnambool branch of the Returned Soldiers and Sailors Association paid for a burial in

the Framlingham Reserve cemetery that befitted the mother of a decorated Australian soldier.[62] Bessie's son was remembered through the life of another Aboriginal soldier in World War II. Eliza Saunders' son, Chris Saunders, had married soon after he returned from the front in 1919 and he and his wife Mabel named their first son 'Reginald' after his lost friend, William Reginald Rawlings. Chris's son, Lieutenant Reginald Walter Saunders, distinguished himself in the World War II as the first Aboriginal serviceman to be commissioned in the Australian Army.[63] His younger brother, Harry Saunders, served with the 2/14th Australian Infantry Battalion before being killed in New Guinea on 29 November 1942.[64] The legacies of men such as William, and the women behind them, attest to the activism and advocacy of Aboriginal peoples in Australia's war efforts, as well as the additional pressures and obstacles that Aboriginal Australians faced by nature of their origins.



Private William Reginald Rawlings, son of Bessie Rawlings, circa 1916. AWM P01695.001.

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This paper has highlighted the subordinate position of various Aboriginal people under Victorian legislation, by drawing upon letters outlining a number of women's perceptions of the rights due to them as Aboriginal inhabitants of the land. There is, in this special year of the centenary of Gallipoli, an abundance of commemorations associated with soldiers' contributions and activities in past and in recent conflicts. Amid these events there have been increasing efforts to recognise the contributions of Aboriginal servicemen.[65] However, what remains missing from this revised narrative is a similar attentiveness to the many Aboriginal women who, at home, were courageously fighting for their rights and for the rights of their families.[66] We have traced just a few of these women's assertions of these rights in the face of, for the most part, the careless disregard of the authorities.

Particularly because these Aboriginal women had sacrificed their sons and grandsons to fight for the nation, they believed that they deserved to be treated with dignity and respect. Aboriginal women's letters to the BPA provide rare insight into some of their negotiations with the authorities, and add a personal and emotive element to studies of conflict and of race in Australia's past. Young Winnie Austin's Aboriginal friends died, as they believed, protecting Australia's freedom abroad, while their mothers lived to assert the freedom of their families and communities back home. The women aligned themselves with Australia's war effort, but also played their part in insisting that the country stood beside its own standards of lawful relations. Their efforts were similarly as brave and deserving of commemoration as were their sons' service and sacrifice.

Endnotes

[1] This paper was presented as part of a seminar held at Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) on 11 March 2015 to commemorate International Women's Day, organised by PROV in conjunction with the Victorian Committee of the Australian Women's Archives Project. We thank Elizabeth Nelson (University of Melbourne), Sandra Smith, Fiona Davis and Noah Riseman (Australian Catholic University), Samuel Furphy (Australian National University), and the two anonymous referees for their advice on this paper. Hannah Loney's research for the article was supported by funding from the ARC Linkage project, 'Minutes of Evidence'.

The archival sources referenced in this article are held in two archival collections. The National Archives of Australia (Victorian collection) holds the following records: CA 2013 Central Board for the Protection of Aborigines: B313/1 Correspondence files; B314 Minutes of meetings, single number series; B329 'Letter books' comprising: (1) outward correspondence (2) nominal index to outward correspondence, single number series; B337/1 Aboriginal case files, lexicographical series; B356/0 Lake Tyers correspondence files; B2010 newspaper cuttings; CA 2791 Lake Tyers Aboriginal Station: B354/Lake Tyers Manager's files relating to administrative matters and record of personal details of aboriginal residents. Public Record Office Victoria holds the following records: VA 515 Board for Protection of Aborigines: VPRS 1694/P0 Correspondence Files; VPRS 926 Letter Book, Coranderrk; VA 475 Chief Secretary's Department: VPRS 3991/P0 Inward Registered Correspondence II; VPRS 3992/P0 Inward Registered Correspondence III. Other records were held by the State Library of Victoria, including: Bessie Flower, Letters, MS 12117, La Trobe Australian Manuscripts Collection. For invaluable information on the above archives see: Australian Archives and Public Record Office of Victoria, *'My Heart is Breaking': A Joint Guide to Records about Aboriginal People in the Public Record Office of Victoria and the Australian Archives*, Victorian Regional Office, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1993 and the recently published follow-up guide, *walata tyamateetj: A guide to government records about Aboriginal people in Victoria*, Public Record Office Victoria and National Archives of Australia, North Melbourne, 2014, which can be accessed online as a PDF at <http://prov.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/walata-tyamateetj_web_final.pdf>, accessed 24 August 2015. The endnotes indicate not only the archival source but also page numbers in their publication in Elizabeth Nelson, Sandra Smith and Patricia Grimshaw (eds), *Letters from Aboriginal Women of Victoria, 1867–1926*, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, 2002. This collection is now available online at <minerva-access.unimelb.edu.au/handle/11343/42073>, accessed 24 August 2015.

[2] Ada Austin, Purnim, letter to Mr Bailey, MLA, Port Fairy, 1918, in Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 106 (italics inserted); PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.

[3] Ada Austin, Purnim, letter to Mr Parker, Secretary BPA, December 1918, in Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 107; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 8.

[4] For discussion of restrictions to accessing veterans' benefits, see Noah Riseman, 'Enduring Silences, Enduring Prejudices: Australian Aboriginal Participation in the First World War', in David Monger, Katie Pickles and Sarah Murray (eds), *Endurance and the First World War: Experience and Legacies in New Zealand and Australia*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2014, pp. 188–191.

[5] See Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, pp. 315–329.

[6] See Mark McMillan and Cosima McRae, 'Law, Land and Dispossession – the Half-Caste Act of 1886 and Contemporary Legal Definitions of Indigeneity in Australia', in Zoe Laidlaw and Alan Lester (eds), *Indigenous Communities and Settler Colonialism: Land Holding, Loss and Survival in an Interconnected World*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, UK, 2015, pp. 233–244. See also: Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians: A History Since 1800*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 2005; John Chesterman and Brian Galligan, *Citizens Without Rights: Aborigines and Australian Citizenship*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 2005; and Samuel Furphy, *Edward M Curr and the Tide of History*, ANU Press, Canberra, 2013.

[7] The formal title of the original Act was: *An Act to Provide for the Protection and Management of the Aboriginal Natives of Victoria*, 11 November 1869. The full title of the 1886 Act was: *An Act to amend an Act entitled "An Act to Provide for the Protection and Management of the Aboriginal Natives of Victoria"*. It was an extension and expansion of the Aboriginal Protection Act giving extensive powers to the Board for the Protection of Aborigines over residence, employment and marriage.

[8] For collaborative efforts to capture the history of these transactions, see: Jennifer Balint et al., 'The "Minutes of Evidence" Project: Creating Collaborative Fields of Engagement with the Past, Present and Future', in Leigh Boucher and Lynette Russell (eds), *Settler Colonial Governance in Nineteenth-Century Victoria*, ANU Press, Canberra, 2015, pp. 203–224. For an international consideration, see Laidlaw and Lester (eds), *Indigenous Communities and Settler Colonialism*.

[9] For discussions of Victorian Aboriginal women's assertion of rights, see: Patricia Grimshaw, 'Colonising Motherhood: Evangelical Reformers and Koorie Women in Victoria, Australia, 1880s to the Early 1900s', *Women's History Review*, Vol. 8, No. 2, June 1999, pp. 329–346; Patricia Grimshaw and Elizabeth Nelson, 'Empire, the "Civilising Mission" and Indigenous Christian Women in Colonial Victoria', *Australian Feminist Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 36, 2001, pp. 295–309; Patricia Grimshaw, 'Federation as a Turning Point in Australian History', *Australian Historical Studies*, special edition, 'Challenging Histories', No. 118, 2002, pp. 25–41; Patricia Grimshaw, "'That we may obtain our religious liberty": Aboriginal Women, Faith and Rights in Early Twentieth Century Victoria', *eJournal of the Canadian Historical Association*, Vol. 2, May 2009, pp. 24–42; Patricia Grimshaw, 'Rethinking Approaches to Women and Missions: The Case of Colonial Australia', *History Australia*, Vol. 8, No. 3, December 2011, pp. 7–24; Joanna Cruickshank and Patricia Grimshaw, 'Women, Authority and Power on Ramahyuck Mission, Victoria, 1880–1910', in Russell and Boucher (eds), *Settler Colonial Governance in Nineteenth-Century Victoria*, pp. 165–182.

[10] For Friedrich Hagenauer, see: Felicity Jensz, *Collecting Cultures for God; German Moravian Missionaries and the British Colony of Victoria, Australia, 1848–1908*, Brill, Leiden, 2010; and Bain Attwood, *The Making of the Aborigines*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1989.

[11] Friedrich Hagenauer, letter to Bessie Rawlings, 9 May 1891, in Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 40; NAA: B329, 5, p. 422.

[12] For discussions of jurisprudence and 'lawful relations' see Christine Black, Sean McVeigh and Richard Johnstone, 'Of the South', *Griffith Law Review*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 2007, pp. 299–309. For an international consideration, see: Laidlaw and Alan (eds), *Indigenous Communities and Settler Colonialism*. For details of the major study of the assertion of lawful relations by members of the Coranderrk community, see: the 'Minutes of Evidence Project', available online at <<http://minutesofevidence.com>>, accessed 11 May 2015.

[13] For a list and details of Aboriginal and Torres Strait soldiers, see Philippa Scarlett, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Volunteers for the AIF: the Indigenous Response to World War One*, Indigenous Histories, Canberra, revised edition, 2012. See also: Simon Flagg and Sebastian Gurciullo, *Footprints: The Journey of Lucy and Percy Pepper*, Public Record Office Victoria, North Melbourne and National Archives of Australia, Canberra, 2008.

[14] Hannah Loney, Biographical Notes in *Minutes of Evidence* [online] forthcoming 2015.

[15] Walter Christopher Saunders, Australian War Memorial, available online at <www.awm.gov.au/education/walter-christopher-saunders/>, accessed 11 May 2015.

[16] Walter Christopher George Saunders, Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad, Australian Imperial Force, National Archives of Australia, available online at <<http://discoveringanzacs.naa.gov.au/browse/records/322160>>, accessed 11 May 2015.

[17] Joseph Crough, Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad, Australian Imperial Force, National Archives of Australia, available online at <<http://discoveringanzacs.naa.gov.au/browse/records/139183>>, accessed 11 May 2015.

[18] Kenneth Crough, Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad, Australian Imperial Force, National Archives of Australia, available online at <<http://discoveringanzacs.naa.gov.au/browse/records/142386>>, accessed 11 May 2015.

[19] Lizzie Crough to Mr Murray, Chief Secretary, 18 May 1904, in Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, pp. 259–260; NAA: B337/1, 196.

[20] For a selection of letters written to the BPA by Lizzie Crough see Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, pp. 116, 259–269; NAA: B337/1, 196; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, units 12, 4, 2, 6.

[21] Eliza Saunders to Secretary of BPA, 29 August 1917, in Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, pp. 139–140; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.

[22] Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 141.

[23] W Johnstone, local guardian, Framlingham, to Minister of Defence, 5 May 1918, in Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 252; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

[24] Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 252; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

[25] Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 140; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.

[26] Eliza Saunders to Secretary of BPA, 1 September 1917, in Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, pp. 140–141; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.

[27] Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 140; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.

[28] Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 141; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 5.

[29] Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 328.

[30] Walter Christopher Saunders, Australian War Memorial, available online at <www.awm.gov.au/education/walter-christopher-saunders/>, accessed 11 May 2015.

[31] Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 318.

[32] Robert Edward Taylor, RSL Virtual War Memorial, available at <<http://www.rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/explore/people/346051>>, accessed 13 May 2015.

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[34] Agnes Carter to Mr Campbell, MLA, BPA, 1 May 1919, in Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 304; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

[35] Agnes Carter, Lake Condah, to Mr Parker, Secretary, BPA, 1919, in Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 304; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

[36] Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 320.

[37] See Giordano Nanni and Andrea James, *Coranderrk: We Will Show the Country*, Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra, 2013; Julie Evans and Giordano Nanni, 'Re-imagining Settler Sovereignty: The Call to Law at the Coranderrk Aboriginal Reserve, Victoria 1881 (and Beyond)', in Laidlaw and Lester (eds), *Indigenous Communities and Settler Colonialism*, pp. 24–44.

[38] See Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 320. See also: Nanni and James, *Coranderrk: We Will Show the Country*.

[39] Janet Matthews, *The Story of the Manunka Aborigines' Mission Home, Forster, Murray River, South Australia, From January 1st, 1908, to October 31st, 1909*, cited in Patricia Grimshaw, 'Rethinking Approaches to Women and Missions: The Case of Colonial Australia', *History Australia*, Vol. 8, No. 3, December 2011, pp. 7–24.

[40] *Forty-Sixth Report of the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines*, 1910, Victoria, p. 5, available online at <http://aiatsis.gov.au/archive_digitised_collections/_files/archive/removeprotect/25367.pdf>, accessed 11 May 2015.

[41] See Joanna Cruickshank and Patricia Grimshaw, 'Indigenous Land Loss, Justice and Race: Ann Bon and the Contradictions of Settler Humanitarianism', in Laidlaw and Lester (eds), *Indigenous Communities and Settler Colonialism*, pp. 45–61.

[42] Jemima Dunolly to Secretary of BPA, January 1912, in Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 136; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 3.

[43] Mr Robarts, manager, Coranderrk, to Mr Callaway, Vice Chairman, BPA, 27 February, 1911, in Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 60.

[44] James Henry Wandin, Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad, Australian Imperial Force, National Archives of Australia, available online at <<http://discoveringanzacs.naa.gov.au/browse/records/172608>>, accessed 11 May 2015; and James Henry Wandin, First World War Embarkation Rolls, Australian War Memorial, available online at <www.awm.gov.au/people/rolls/R1800458/>, accessed 11 May 2015.

[45] Joseph Wandin, Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad, Australian Imperial Force, National Archives of Australia, available online at <<http://discoveringanzacs.naa.gov.au/browse/records/397052>>, accessed 11 May 2015; and Private Joseph Wandin, People Profiles, Australian War Memorial, available online at <www.awm.gov.au/people/P10677992/#timeline>, accessed 11 May 2015.

[46] Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 61.

[47] Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 61–2; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

[48] Ibid.

[49] For further details of the history of Coranderrk told by William Barak's descendant, Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin, see the Culture Victoria webpage on her available at <<http://cv.vic.gov.au/stories/aboriginal-culture/contemporary-artists-honour-barak/aunty-joy-murphy-wandin-coranderrk/>>, accessed 20 August 2015; Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 320.

[50] Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 327.

[51] Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 128; PROV, VPRS 3992/P0, unit 944, item T700.

[52] Bessie Rawlings to Mr Murray, Chief Secretary, 26 January 1904, in Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 45; PROV, VPRS 3992/P0, unit 944, item T700.

[53] William Reginald Rawlings, Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad, Australian Imperial Force, National Archives of Australia, available online at <<http://discoveringanzacs.naa.gov.au/browse/records/179819>>, accessed 11 May 2015.

[54] Private William Reginald Rawlings, Australian War Memorial, available online at <www.awm.gov.au/people/P10677085/>, accessed 11 May 2015.

[55] William Johnston to Minister of Defence, 5 May 1918, in Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 252; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

[56] Bessie Rawlings to Secretary BPA, 27 June 1918, in Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 252; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 6.

[57] *Commonwealth Gazette*, No. 36, 14 March 1919, in P01695, Australian War Memorial, available online at <www.awm.gov.au/collection/P01695.001>, accessed 11 May 2015.

[58] Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 129; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

[59] Walter Ward to Secretary BPA, 9 October 1919, in Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 129; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

[60] Constable Harvey, local guardian, Framlingham, to Secretary BPA, 10 October 1919, in Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw (eds), *Letters*, p. 129; PROV, VPRS 1694/P0, unit 7.

[61] 'Death of a Centenarian', *Advocate*, 3 July 1939, p. 7.

[62] Jan Critchett, 'Rawlings, William Reginald (1890–1918)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, available online at <<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/rawlings-william-reginald-8161>>, first published in hardcopy 1988, accessed online 11 May 2015.

[63] This point has been contested after Andrea Gerard discovered an Aboriginal commissioned officer from World War I named Hearps. However, the Australian War Memorial refused to officially recognise him; hence, Captain Reg Saunders is still attributed as the first commissioned officer. See Riseman, 'Enduring Silences', pp. 187–188. Captain Reginald Walter 'Reg' Saunders, Australian War Memorial, available online at <www.awm.gov.au/people/P302/>, accessed 11 May 2015.

[64] Harry Saunders, Roll of Honour, Australian War Memorial, available online at <www.awm.gov.au/people/rolls/R1697924/>, accessed 11 May 2015.

[65] See, for example, Noah Riseman, 'Serving Their Country: A Short History of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Service in the Australian Army', *Australian Army Journal*, Cultural edition, Vol. x, No. 3, 2013, pp. 11–22.

[66] One of the only other sources to adopt this approach focuses on World War II: see Elizabeth Osborne, *Torres Strait Islander Women and the Pacific War*, Aboriginal Studies Press for Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra, 1997.

Beyond failure and success

The soldier settlement on Ercildoune Road

James Kirby

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'Beyond failure and success: the soldier settlement on Ercildoune Road', *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria*, issue no. 14, 2015. ISSN 1832-2522. Copyright © James Kirby.

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Abstract

This article will contribute to the wider academic debate on the uses of 'failure' and 'success' to describe soldier settlement in Victoria after World War I. The wider historiography emphasises the common factors that brought about a failure to live up to wider national ideals, economic objectives, and social expectations. However, most scholars neglect an investigation into the other aspects of the lives of soldier settlers which could be described as a success. Through the case study of the Ercildoune Road soldier settlement in Burrumbeet, Victoria, it will be shown how the farmers could be described as a success from both a personal and local perspective. The evidence for this contention is largely based on archival sources found at Public Record Office Victoria. Given the importance of context, a case will be made for caution in the use of 'failure' and 'success' as evaluative tools for constructing narratives on soldier settlement.

Soldier settlement in Victoria after World War I is often presented by the historiography as a story of lost hopes and unfulfilled expectations. Many were unable to live up to the idealistic images of the yeoman farmer and the ANZAC legend, to make a good profit, or to consistently provide as the breadwinner of the family. These points are well appreciated in the scholarship, demonstrating at least some sense of failure in the lives of soldier settlers. However, as will be shown in the case study of Ercildoune Road, such forms of assessment provide a narrow lens for examination, and do not formulate a comprehensive understanding of the lived experience of individuals or the community. In addition to reviewing the 'tenor ... of failure' that pervades much of the literature, this article will observe the call of Michael Roche, whereby 'the qualitative as well as quantitative dimensions of "failure" and "success" for soldier settlement need to be carefully reworked'. [1] The aim of this article is not to demonstrate how the government scheme was a success by rewriting a history of soldier settlement or presenting a 'complete' history of Ercildoune Road. Instead, the purpose here is, firstly, to show how some areas of soldier settlement could be defined as a success and, secondly, to contribute to the wider academic debate on the uses of 'failure' and 'success' as evaluative tools for constructing narratives of the past.

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The concern with the historiography raised in this article is related more to the methods of analysis than an outright disagreement with the applied notion of failure. The few contrasting viewpoints depicting overall success across the state hold a similar shortcoming to those of failure in terms of their framework. The total experience of soldier settlement cannot be fully grasped by a simple label of either success or failure. The criteria for achievement can be clearly defined by scholars according to national, economic, and social expectations. Yet the enormous and complex process of soldier settlement featured multiple experiences and outcomes across diverse regions, personalities, and circumstances. The meso-level images of failure, for instance, must locate a means for conciliating with micro-level findings of success, whereby the differing observations bring clarity and understanding, and not necessarily contradiction. This article will utilise two key micro-level perspectives, showcasing the personalities of the settlement and the strength of the local community. Firstly, at the personal level, stories of individual triumph are found in those who persevered on the land for several decades in adverse conditions. Secondly, at the local level, one of the most important achievements for any soldier settlement is revealed to be the establishment of a strong sense of togetherness. Such an approach will reflect the nuanced reality of life in these communities and the ability of the soldier settlers to perhaps fulfil their own definitions of success.

The evidence for this article is based primarily on records gathered from Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), with significant supporting material from non-archival sources. The closer and soldier settlement files held at PROV are essential for tracing the basic development of individual blocks and the community as a whole. As noted by Charles Fahey, there is a need 'to look at the complete range of soldier settlement files'.^[2] In regard to just one settlement, substantial detail is found in correspondence between the farmers and government officials, statements of accounts, and expert appraisals of the land and the local area. A larger chronicle of soldier settlement in Victoria can easily omit a full study of a farmer's settlement, advances, and revaluation files. The focus on a specific case study therefore allows room to consider a more comprehensive examination at the local level. Finer details can be found in separate files related to the individual blocks, the community, and individual projects, including the establishment of a local school. One main limitation of the PROV collection is the emphasis of the documents on matters strictly of concern to government officials, whereby the productive utility of the farmers is formally assessed rather than their entire lived experience. A broader picture is therefore found in

combining these records with Jean McCartney's local history of the settlement. As a descendent of Thomas McCartney, one of the original soldier settlers, Jean's account contains an oral history with contributions from others who grew up on the farms as children. In regard to their family history on the land, the emotions and memories of the authors is a vital contrast to the more clinical overview contained in the files held by PROV. Nonetheless, the sobering assessment of the government records is required to obtain a balanced perspective, as oral histories can be subject to selective memory, nostalgia for an ideal past, and exaggerated childhood memories. Further information was gathered from historical newspapers made available online by the National Library of Australia, as well as the publications of local historical societies located at the State Library of Victoria. In tracing a local history of the settlement, both an objective and subjective portrait is provided by combining the sources at PROV and the record of Jean McCartney.

World War I was a major turning point in the history of the 20,000 acres (8093 hectares) Ercildoune Estate. Situated roughly 14 miles north-west of Ballarat, Thomas and Somerville Learmonth bought the land for £75,000 in the 1850s, later selling it on to Sir Samuel Wilson in 1873 for £236,000.^[3] After the death of Wilson, the land was taken over by his sons Wilfred and Clarence on 19 June 1895. The estate was up for sale again at the end of World War I, following the death of Wilson's sons in combat.^[4] War veteran Major Alan Currie purchased 7,000 to 8,000 acres (2832 to 3237 hectares) in 1920. Another 3,735 acres (1511 hectares) were bought by the crown and opened to applications for closer and soldier settlement on 24 May 1921.^[5] This study will focus on eleven of those blocks situated along Ercildoune Road, consisting of 1,793 acres (725 hectares) specifically for returned soldiers.

W. W. J. Dobson. 12/1/20

P.H. 90. THE DISCHARGED SOLDIERS' SETTLEMENT ACTS.
Separate Valuation
 4,230 a.c.s.

Acquisition of Land for the Purpose of Settlement of Discharged Soldiers.

Report on Ercildoun Estate, offered by not Lady San Wilson
about 4.23 Acres, being allotments as per Section 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100
 and coloured plan on accompanying plan.

Date of inspection	From March 10 to March 16 th
Distance from nearest market town	1 1/2 Miles
Distance from nearest railway station	6 Miles
Distance from seaboard	100 Miles
Distance from metropolis	
Description of roads leading to property	Good metal roads
Are adjoining lands occupied?	Open
Is district agricultural, pastoral, or fruit-growing?	Agricultural and Pastoral
Rating price of similar land in the locality	
Date of latest sale and price obtained	Five sold.
Is land level, hilly, or undulating?	Level country
Is any portion liable to flooding or in need of drainage?	Swampy portion liable to flooding
Depth and character of soil	Good grey soil suitable for cultivation
Character of subsoil	Clay

Notes 19.3.20

An example of the forms used by inspectors to assess the suitability of the land for soldier settlement, WJ Dobson, 'Acquisition of Land for the Purpose of Settlement of Discharged Soldiers', March 1920, PROV, VPRS 5714/P0, Unit 1155, Estate 13819, H Allan Currie, Ercildoun Burrumbeet.

The quality of the blocks on Ercildoune Road varied extensively, yet there were strong advantages to the location. After surveying the land in February and March 1920, the inspectors claimed that 'all the very best and most valuable land [on the estate] has been sold'. [6] While the area was portrayed in the *Argus* as 'rich agricultural land and the remainder excellent grazing country', the land evaluators strongly disapproved of the estate's 'numerous and extreme variation in description and quality'. [7] The earth ranged from 'rich chocolate-volcanic soil' and 'good red soil' for oats and crops; medium quality 'light plain mixed farming and grazing land'; and a 'large portion of poor lagoon land' with 'clay soil'. [8]

VALUATIONS TO BE ON FREEHOLD BASIS.

If the property is of uneven quality, state area and value of the different portions	2000 acres unimproved 3000 acres @ 52.10/- 600 acres @ 5.15 2000 acres @ 5.12 2400 acres @ 5.10/-
If an orchard property state separately	Orchard 5/11 Garden etc
(a) Value of orchard	
(b) Value of unplanted area	
(c) Value of all improvements	
Opportunities for outside employment in neighbourhood	Fair
Do you recommend the purchase for the settlement of returned soldiers?	No
Freehold value of the property as a whole, including all improvements, and at per acre. Value of crop or fallow not to be included	56
Value of crop (if any)—to be separately stated and not included in value of land	Nil
Value of fallow (if any)—not to be included in value of land	130 acres @ 7/6
Indicate any special features and particulars which may be of value	Only one course allowed in Burrumbeet remains & all chocolate land on north frontage is sold.

GENERAL REMARKS— This land is well situated but all the very best and most valuable has been sold, while the remaining portion is so broken in configuration and so to be more difficult to deal with than is also a large portion in the centre of water mounsin from which it is impossible to exclude the rabbits with which it is infested and which is a continuous nuisance and source of expense, while a large portion of the grazing land is so low as to be under water in wet weather and the complete drainage is most difficult. I consider this estate is unfit for Soldier Settlement. B. Kemmings
 3 7 20

Please sign Report and Parish Plan and return Plan.

The district inspector concluded the estate was unfit for soldier settlement, K Pennmen, 'Acquisition of Land for the Purpose of Settlement of Discharged Soldiers', 3 March 1920, PROV, VPRS 5714/P0, Unit 1155, Estate 13819, H Allan Currie, Ercildoun Burrumbeet.

With patches of 'large swamps' in the winter, the worst parts were dismissed as 'practically useless' and 'so low as to be under water in wet weather'. [9] While one inspector concluded 'the factors favouring suitability outnumber those against it', and a second strongly favoured the land, a further two strongly declared it as 'unfit for [s] oldier settlement'. [10] The lack of consensus brought considerable doubt over the suitability of the terrain, and the Closer Settlement Office did not accept applications for settlement for another fifteen months.

However, in May 1920, a forceful appeal was sent to the office to declare that ‘the bulk of the estate’ should be reconsidered. Sent by a referee to the land evaluation, the letter implored them to take into account the recent heavy rainfalls, making much of ‘the country look the worst I have ever seen it’.[11] This plea was vital in persuading the board to re-examine the area again in September and October. While some continued to have serious concerns upon returning to the estate, all of the inspectors recommended the land for subdivision, further elaborating on the important advantages of the location. The settlement was close to the markets in Ballarat, the sheep and cattle yards were 12 miles (19.3 kms) away, and 2 chaff mills were within ‘easy distance’.[12] Survival on the land was not guaranteed for the returned soldiers who settled on Ercildoune Road, yet they were far from being situated on a hopeless prospect.



PROV, VPRS 16171/P2 Regional Land Office Parish and Township Plans Digitised Reference Set, Plans, Ercildoune Estate – Currie’s (Soldier Settlement), Imperial measure (detail).

Narratives of failure: the historiography of soldier settlement

The literature contains three predominant narratives depicting failure in the history of soldier settlement, using the benchmarks of broader national ideals, economic objectives, and social expectations. The first measure emphasises the ‘sufferings of returned soldiers’ to show how they could not live up to the images of the yeoman farmer and the ANZAC legend.[13] Kent Fedorowich observed how the soldier settlers were expected ‘to become a symbol of post-war stability’

in a ‘cross fertilisation of the outback yeoman and ANZAC traditions’.[14] Within the rationale behind the scheme, Stephen Garton locates the ‘triumph of romantic fantasy over sober reality’.[15] Identified by Garton as a ‘flawed vision’, the concept of the self-sufficient yeoman farmer was believed to be the key to Australia’s rural development and future prosperity. This caused policy-makers, according to Marilyn Lake, to be misled into believing ‘that hard work and good intentions would guarantee success on the land’.[16] As a ‘wartime version of the bushman’, the ANZAC legend is also pinpointed by Fedorowich as leading to ‘romantic illusions ... and misplaced assumptions of the potential of the returned man’.[17] Not only did these sentimental aspirations lead to failed policies, the soldier settlers were also destined to be seen as failures in their inability to live up to such unrealistic standards. However, according to McCartney, the soldier settlers on Ercildoune Road successfully lived up to both the yeoman and the ANZAC ideals. He argues the hardships ‘probably felt minimal to them’ due to their experience in war, except this time they were fighting for ‘their family’s sake and for their own piece of ground’.[18] However, pointing out either the failure or success of soldier settlers, on the basis of national dreams and myths, can only provide a limited framework for analysing their lived experience on the land. What can be overlooked is how the settlers saw themselves as individual farmers and collectively as a community, in accordance with their own beliefs and values.

The second historical narrative of failure stresses the inability of the farmers to pay off their debts and become profitable on the land. The soldier settlers were ‘bound to “fail”’, according to Joe Powell, as they were ‘increasingly required to give the country a worthwhile return on its investment’. In an era when ‘cost was rather dramatically underlined’, the Ercildoune Road soldier settlers would not be considered as a success under such terms.[19] By the start of World War II in 1939, all of the farmers on the settlement were in debt by at least £1,000 each, with a total cost of approximately £12,000. Monica Keneley provides an alternative economic approach in her study of the Western District between 1918 and 1930. She asserts the examples of ‘both alarming failures ... [and] some very successful settlements’ demonstrate that ‘the policy was not a universal failure’.[20] ‘[T]he scheme on the whole appears comparatively successful’, according to Keneley, when ‘the level of forfeiture is taken as the measure of success and failure’.[21]

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Keneley, in strong contrast to Powell, may regard the entire Ercildoune Road settlement as a success simply because all farmers remained on the land until 1934. Yet, at that stage, the settlement could not be regarded in strict terms as either a success or failure. Some were forced off the land in coming years, while others would have to struggle for many decades before claiming their block under a freehold agreement. Furthermore, a resort to forfeiture was not necessarily a satisfactory marker of failure, particularly in a scenario where it was considered to be a sensible financial decision, avoiding further costs in the long-term.

The third historical narrative of failure underscores the inability of male soldier settlers to live up to their expectations as the breadwinners of the family. For Marilyn Lake, the goal to attain a 'living wage' was the standard all men had to achieve in order to 'fulfil their family responsibilities'.^[22] Given the 'pitiful returns' of soldier settlers, Lake contends that 'these men were striving for the unattainable' and were fated to regard themselves as failures.^[23] On the basis of Lake's interpretation of 'personal failure', the Ercildoune Road soldier settlers would not be regarded as a success.^[24] During the 1920s, many families did not receive a consistent living wage, and often relied on their own stock to provide rations such as milk and cream.^[25] Margaret, the daughter of John Moodie, acknowledged how 'life was very labour intensive with few amenities'. She was aware of the hardships of the drought, the depression, and how the soldier settlers 'strived long hours for just the basic necessities'.^[26] This is confirmed by Shirley Boyle, the daughter of Jim Henderson, who recalls how 'rabbits were in plague proportions' and that 'many families survived on them for food'.^[27] However, the descendants still maintain a buoyant outlook toward their upbringing on the farm. Lionel Henderson, the son of Charles, reminisces about how they 'were always very well looked after'.^[28] This perspective is affirmed by Boyle who recollects how their parents did all they could to make sure they 'never went to bed cold, hungry or dirty'.^[29] Much like the other narratives of failure, an emphasis on broader social expectations reveals little on how soldier settlers could shape their own personal experiences.

Ill health, unfavourable markets, and poor land

The broader histories often describe the elements that led to failure, including ill health, unfavourable markets, and the poor quality of the land. However, many examples from Ercildoune Road show how these factors did not always result in a failure to survive on their block. Sergeant AE Loveride informed the Duke

of Gloucester, during a visit to the district, that many settlers on Ercildoune Road had to survive despite being 'handicapped often by physical disabilities'.^[30] Those known to have suffered serious injuries during World War I include: Henry Lange who was wounded twice; James Henderson who was struck by shrapnel in his left thigh in France; and Edwin Eric Coulter, William David Newton, and John Thomas Moodie, who were all discharged as 'medically unfit'.^[31] As a result of the war, many farmers were physically disadvantaged on the land. Both the Williams brothers, Arthur and Henry, were noted in 1937 to have suffered ill health due to their war service; in 1941 Edwin Eric Coulter was said to have died 'as a result of a war related illness'; and Lionel Henderson writes that his father, Charles, died in 1931 at the early age of 34 'as a result of the war'.^[32] However, while war injuries had a debilitating effect on the settlers, this did not necessarily lead to an outright failure to live on the land. Many who physically suffered from the war survived for many decades before leaving the settlement, including Henry Williams who remained until 1944, Lange who held his block until 1950, and Newton who persevered until his death in 1967. Those who died as a result of their war experience were all survived on the land by their widows and descendants, such as Charles Henderson, Coulter, and Moodie. Therefore, the narratives of failure accurately specify the problems related to war injuries and illnesses. Yet they do not explain how the returned soldiers could survive on the land despite their physical disadvantages, and how this could be celebrated as an accomplishment on its own terms.

Within the historiography, the unfavourable markets are also often rendered as a prevalent source of affliction on the path to failure, yet this factor did not always correlate with financial ruin.^[33] Like virtually all soldier settlers, the Ercildoune Road farmers struggled with low market prices for hay, wool, and sheep. As Lionel Henderson recalls, 'times were very hard going' when the 'depression struck in 1929'.^[34] Margaret Moodie also mentions how there was 'little money for working long hours on the farm' during the depression.^[35] After surviving the economic downturn, many found extreme difficulty yet again during the late 1930s and early 1940s. In 1942, Norm Pollock insisted he was unable to make his instalment because the 'chaff mill here has ... stopped buying for some time', thereby making it hard for him to make an adequate sale from his hay.^[36]

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To make payments, quite often the settlers relied on the sale of their lambs during tough periods on the market. However, even the sale of sheep could suffer from a fall in prices. For at least a year, Moodie could not pay his instalments due to an 'unfavourable season and low prices' for sheep.[37] However, while all of the farmers on Ercildoune Road mostly relied on hay, wool, and sheep for their returns, not all were forced off the land. Many of the settlers could find other means to survive and make money during bad periods. Moodie worked as a carpenter, James Henderson became a Clydesdale breeder, Arthur Williams raised thoroughbred horses, and Tom Coulter's wife, Mary, was a teacher at Brewster and Burrumbeet.[38] The unfavourable markets led to difficulty on the land, yet the broader narratives cannot account for how soldier settlers could confront and even overcome their various challenges.

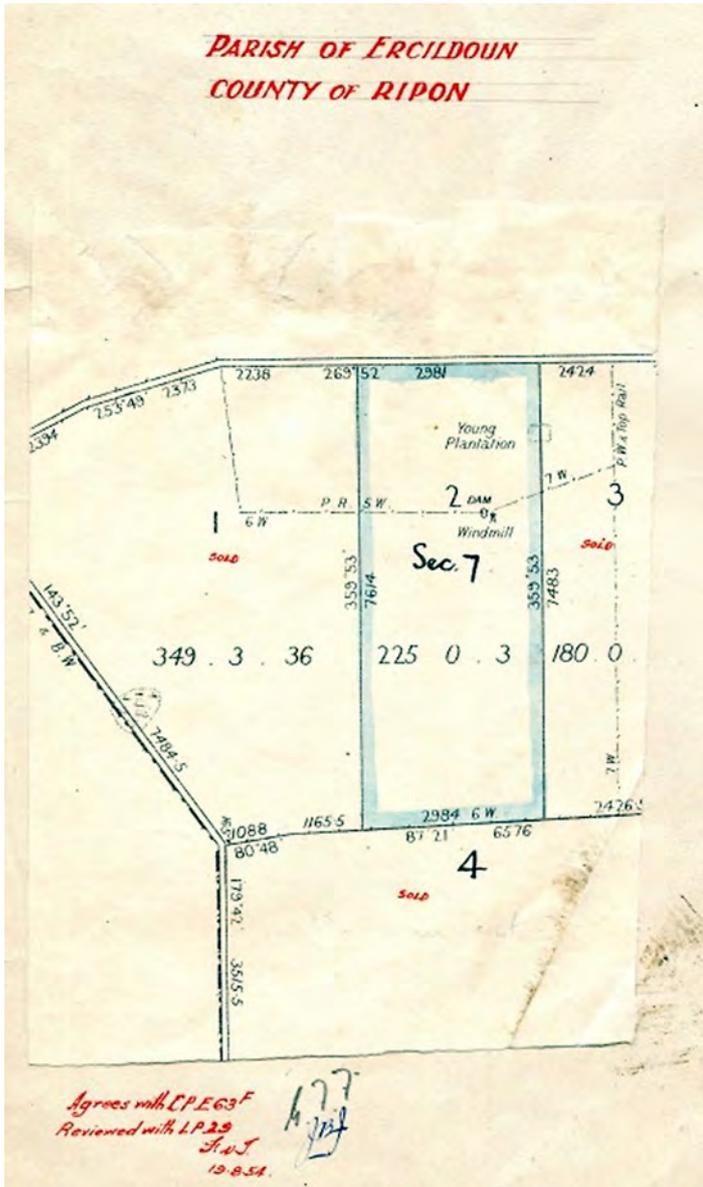
The wider scholarship depicts the poor quality of land as another leading cause of failure yet, once again, this adversity did not bring about a universal incapacity to make a living on the farm. Many of the farms on Ercildoune Road suffered from small block size, flooding, and drought.[39] During the initial inquiries into the area, the District Inspector strictly recommended the land only if the blocks would be subdivided into '300 acre lots'.[40] Yet the eventual average size of the allotments was much lower at 163 acres (65 hectares), almost half the recommended size. The District Inspector also raised concerns over the quality of the land whereby, out of Thomas McCartney's 180 acres (72 hectares), 60 acres (24 hectares) were designated as 'low lying swamp of little value'. With just 153 acres (62 hectares), Norm Pollock's block suffered from a '[d]epression running through the block which carries a lot of water in winter, mak[ing] the block rather a wet property'.[41] On William Newton's farm, it was deemed 'there would not be more than 5 or 6 acres of first class Ercildoune Rd country' with the potential for growing crops, and 'buildings and yards are erected' on that portion.[42] However, out of all those known to have held a poor block of land, Newton, McCartney, Moodie, and Charles and Mary Henderson still found a way to survive for several decades. To make payments and maximise their crop yields, many settlers began share-farming on each other's blocks, as well as outside of Ercildoune. [43] The narratives of failure highlight the genuine challenges that often forced soldier settlers off the land, yet they are unable to explain how many could survive on the land despite their predicaments. Their ability to persist marks an important limitation for the use of the term failure to chronicle the lives of soldier settlers. The incidence of perseverance may be inadequate as an indicator of overall success, yet such examples of vigorous personal endeavour complicate any attempt to craft a sweeping image of failure.

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Two personal histories: the stories of Mary Henderson and John Moodie

Mary Henderson's story is an example of how those on the farm could survive despite ill health, unfavourable markets, and poor land quality; all factors cited within the scholarship as common causes of failure. After his return from wartime service in France, Charles Henderson, Mary's husband, seemed to occupy a relatively favourable position to become a success as a soldier settler. He had prior experience working on his father's 550 acre (222 hectare) farm in Weatherboard, and satisfactorily paid his instalments through to the late 1920s. Furthermore, he had been distinguished for his bravery and accomplishments in the war. Charles, appearing to meet the ideal of the ANZAC legend, was awarded the Star, the British War Medal, and Victory Medal.[44] However, upon his early death in 1931 as a result of war injuries, despite all of his prior efforts, there was a great risk his family would fail and be required to leave the land. Yet the experience and outcome of any soldier settlement block expanded beyond merely the actions of returned servicemen themselves, particularly in regard to their spouses and descendants. In the event of such an untimely passing, the remaining tasks could be passed on to any family members that persisted on the farm, whose capacity, circumstances, and efforts would thereby determine the overall failure or success of the soldier settlement block.

Not only did Mary Henderson have to fulfil the economic obligations of the farm, as required by any male soldier settler, but also to counter the negative social expectations of women performing such work. As her son Lionel explained, 'it was not seen to be possible in those days that a woman' could manage a farm on her own. Left with only the occasional help of her three children and a hired hand, Lionel recognises the 'times were hard' and she was 'nearly forced off' the block. [45] For almost every six monthly instalment during the 1940s, she had to pen letters to the District Inspector, promising that while '[i]t seems I am scheming ... such is not the case' and that 'you will get your money I hope soon'.[46] She started off the decade in bad health having 'been ill in hospital'.[47] When she returned to the land, she soon found difficulty in selling her farm produce. This was shown on 17 May 1941 when she wrote that she could not make her instalment of £35 due to 'the price of everything I have to sell at the present time [being] so low'.[48] Both flooding and drought were also a significant problem, as seen on 6 October 1941 when she 'only had 3 tons of hay to sell' due to flooding, and on 11 June 1943 when she wrote that 'I am losing my sheep' as a result of a very wet season.[49]



A sketch of the Henderson block, PROV, VPRS 5714/ PO, Unit 201, Item 496/12, Charles Thomas Henderson the Younger, Deceased Estate Ercildoun.

"Rolleston"
Barnumbeat.
17th May 41

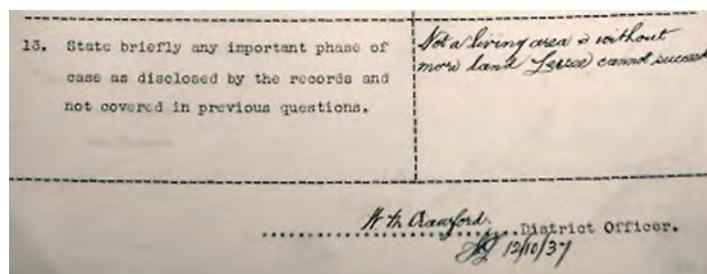
Mr Crawford, Dear Sir, I am in receipt of your letter dated 5th 5th 41. I have not been able to make your payment of £35.10.9. as the price of everything I have to sell at the present time is so low. However I hope to be able to pay the amount shortly as I will sell some lambs, I cannot sell any hay at present as I only have a few tons and I may have to feed my cows but you will get your money I hope soon.

Hoping this statement is satisfactory. I am,
Yours faithfully,
Mary Henderson.

Mary Henderson, letter to Crawford, 17 May 1941. An example of the letters Mary sent to the District Inspector to explain her inability to pay her required instalments on time, PROV, VPRS 5714/PO, Unit 201, Item 496/12, Charles Thomas Henderson the Younger, Deceased Estate Ercildoun.

By November 1945, her sheep numbers had dropped from over 500 to just 90 'owing to the drought'. In what was thought to be a good turn of fortune, by 10 November 1945 she had managed to cultivate 60 acres (24 hectares) of good harvest for selling hay.[50] However, she had to delay making her payment again on 19 February 1946 because, as she laments, 'there is not any market at the present time for hay'. [51] Despite the multiple challenges, Mary Henderson persisted long enough to be able to obtain the land under a freehold agreement in March 1954. As of September 1997, the land of Charles and Mary Henderson remained under the ownership of their son Lionel and his wife Joyce.[52] Mary did not fully live up to the high hopes for soldier settlement. However, she had proven her ability to survive on the land, to meet the economic requirements normally demanded of returned soldiers, and to overcome the gendered perceptions of the time period. In bringing to completion the work begun by her husband as a soldier settler, Mary's experience may be seen as a personal success story when evaluated on its own merits.

The ability of soldier settlers to prevail over the obstacles of ill health, unfavourable markets, and poor land quality is also manifested in the story of John Moodie. In a 1937 report to the Closer and Soldier Settlement Commission in Ballarat, the District Inspector found, in regard to Moodie's block, that 'without more land [the] Lessee cannot succeed'.^[53] When writing to have his liability reduced further, Moodie expressed further doubts about his state of affairs. He specified his problems with a 'light harvest', the need to 'provide for 5 dependents', and his small level of income.^[54] Much like Mary Henderson's situation, Moodie struggled to make his instalments on time, causing him to be in regular correspondence with the Department of Crown Lands. On 17 May 1940, the Pro-Secretary wrote to Moodie demanding to know why he had not paid his regular instalment of £31 on time, adding that his 'failure to reply' would be 'viewed seriously'.^[55] In a letter sent just over a week later, Moodie explained his delay was due to a substantial 'loss in flooding' and the poor market price for hay.^[56] The government's response was unforgiving, notifying Moodie that 'no further extension of time will be granted' unless he paid by the end of June.^[57] Unable to make the payment by such time, Moodie was told on 11 July that if he could not transfer the required amount within ten days, the Pro-Secretary would 'recommend that the question of cancelling your lease be considered'.^[58] It was not until the District Inspector interviewed Moodie and reported he was 'not in a position to pay at the present time', due to being 'flooded and also loss of sheep', that the Department of Crown Lands officials accepted Moodie's request for extra time.^[59] Similar to Mary Henderson's story, John's wife, Lillian, continued on the farm after his death on 1 November 1953. Despite the land being 'neglected owing to 5 years [of] illness of the late Mr J. Moodie', she successfully maintained the farm with the help of her son John.^[60] Lillian Moodie was also able to attain a freehold agreement in 1957, and eventually passed on the land to her son and his wife Elaine. Like the Hendersons, the family is confirmed to have stayed there until at least September 1997.^[61] The Moodie story reveals the contextual nature of failure and success, whereby the family would not have met the wider expectations of soldier settlement, yet they far exceeded the forecast of the District Inspector.



In an evaluation of John Moodie's farm, the district inspector strongly doubted his chances of success, PROV, VPRS 5714/P0, Unit 682, Crawford, 'Re-Assessment of Liability', 12 October 1937.

A local history: the founding of a community on Ercildoune Road

The settlement on Ercildoune Road may not have developed into a prosperous enterprise, yet it evolved into a cohesive social community. Gwen Rendell, daughter of Jim Henderson, reflects on their sense of togetherness in a verse from her poem 'The Soldier Settlers of Ercildoune'. As she writes, 'The comradeship they made over there / They brought home with them again / ... But friends they made along that road / It stayed with them for good / A helping hand to one another / Whenever each one could'.^[62] The sentiment of Rendell's verse is consonant with McCartney's recollection that 'there did appear to be an aura of friendliness' and 'a unity of defence of one another'. In the earlier years, often the '[n]eighbours would help' when threshing the 'grain from the oaten hay'.^[63] Lionel Henderson also recalls how the soldier settlers 'were all pretty good mates and seemed to help one another'.^[64] Away from the farms, the Ercildoune Road settlers regularly attended dances and events together at the Burrumbeet Hall.^[65] Even closer to home, Rendell remembered 'there was plenty of entertainment' and dancing at the school hall.^[66] The farmers would often play cards on Saturday nights and would gather 'for a sing song around the piano', particularly on 'birthdays or other celebrations'.^[67] With such a strong sense of togetherness, whenever a family left the settlement it was seen as a significant loss to the community. Alexander Dowler's son, Len, recalled the time when their family was given a clock as a going away present. He states that he still has it in his possession and 'it still goes'.^[68] The establishment of such social cohesion and harmony is a success story that is rarely accounted for in the broader narratives of failure. The government may have founded the settlement, but it was the settlers who founded the community.

Ercildoune
Burrumbett.
3rd Sept. 1927

The undersigned agree to a school site in the North-Eastern corner of H. Williams paddock.

H. Williams.
A. Williams
George.
W. Newton
M. Benders

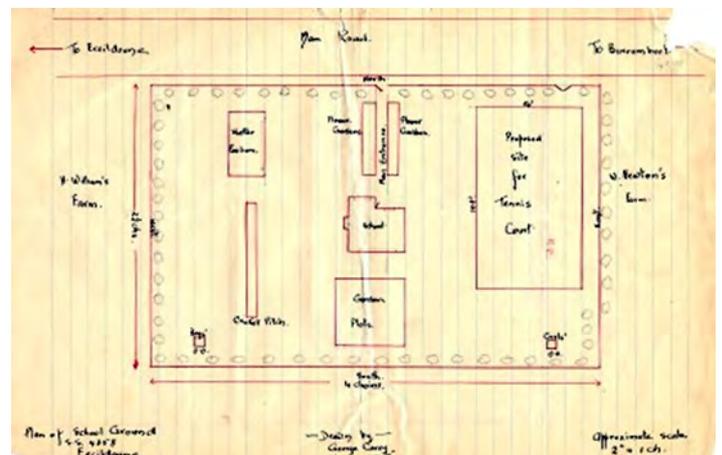
Geo Henderson
E. E. Coulter

W. Hobson
Geo. Conway
H. Woodie
Thomas W. Carberry
of R. Walker
to Henderson
E. Coulter

PROV, VPRS 795/P0, Unit 3037, Ercildoune school no. 4358, Harry Gill, letter to the Director of the Education Department, 10 September 1927. Gill attached a list of signatures by local farmers, dated 3 September 1927, who approved the location of the school site.

The construction of the Ercildoune Road Primary School was a definitive movement in the establishment of the community. Alexander Peacock, the Minister for Education at the time, was approached by a spokeswoman for the Ercildoune Road soldier settlers in April 1924.[69] She pointed out that '[t]he Settlement is rapidly growing and further settlement will take place if a school is provided'. By the mid-1920s, almost all of the settlers were starting a family. Nine children were ready to attend school in 1924, with fifteen expected to be ready by 1927.[70] After having their request denied, the parents confronted the minister again three years later while he was attending a function at Ercildoune House on 20 January 1927. Following a strong recommendation from the District Inspector, remarking that he had 'every confidence that the school will gradually increase in numbers', the school was approved in February.[71] However, they were delivered a heavy setback when Major Currie demanded £100 from the Victorian Government to allow a school to be established on an acre of his property. The Government Valuer protested that this was 'much in excess of

surrounding values' and made it clear that they could not pay such a large amount for a school.[72] To rescue the community's hopes, Henry Williams offered up an acre of his land for a meagre £30. This was a considerable sacrifice because, as argued by the District Inspector, the 'area is rather small' and 'these soldier settlers state that they require all the land they have'. [73] McCartney underlines the school's opening on 11 August 1928 as 'one of the best days of the parents' lives'. This included an opening ceremony with over 200 people in attendance. Lady Peacock, in her speech at the school, 'eulogised the parents for the deep interest they were taking' in the welfare of their children. The settlers also worked together to build a shelter shed in 1929, largely drawing on their own money and the 'voluntary labour of the parents and school committee'. [74] At around this time, many of the settlers were paying off high levels of debt, putting in long hours on their farms, and struggling through the depression. While they encountered difficulty on their individual blocks, they remained committed to the long-term needs of the community. Small success stories such as these are often disregarded by scholars who attempt to build a more extensive narrative, yet within a local context they play a crucial role in the overall lived experience of those on the land.



PROV, VPRS 795/P0, Unit 3037, Ercildoune school no. 4358, George Carey, letter to the district inspector, 27 November 1936. A sketch of the school grounds drawn by the head teacher, featuring a proposed site for a tennis court.

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The fond memories of the children on Ercildoune Road further expose the need for more intricate accounts of the lives of soldier settlers. In another verse of Gwen Rendell's poem, she suggests all the descendants should 'think of the wonderful times we had / When each one of them was here'.^[75] In reaffirming this sentiment, McCartney declares the descendants should not look back on the earlier days with horror or a sense of failure. Alternatively, they should think of their parents' 'courage, hard work, kindness and enjoyment'.^[76] The descendants recognise the struggles and the hardships, yet they also proudly discuss their more enjoyable experiences. Lionel Henderson remembers the end of year school concerts, and both Lionel and Shirley Boyle recall the fun of chasing and shooting rabbits.^[77] A further tribute is paid by Margaret Moodie to her early years of education and the school's sporting activities. Amidst the drought of the 1940s, Val Lange humorously recounts the time when their 'cows ate the curtains' after the window of the house dairy was left open.^[78] After Alexander Dowler left the land in 1939, his son Len referred to it as 'the saddest time of my life'.^[79] Beyond the positive memories, Gwen Rendell appreciates how their parents left them with a strong sense of community. As she writes, 'Now along that road of Ercildoune / Where we all grew up so proud / Our friendships never faltered / Because of our soldier Dads'.^[80] McCartney concludes, accordantly, that with 'dedication to the life their parents taught them in', a number of blocks are still owned by the descendants of the soldier settlers.^[81] A feeling of community spirit may be characterised as merely a necessary component of survival. However, the ability to find collective ways to enjoy life on the land, build shared memories, and develop inter-generational bonds between families, are a meaningful set of accomplishments that would not be possible without such social unity. The strong legacy of togetherness on Ercildoune Road indicates that there is much more to the history of soldier settlement than a story of failure.

Conclusion

These examples of relentless personal endeavour, and the evidence of a long-standing sense of community, demonstrate some important limitations when identifying failure in the lives of soldier settlers. The matter of context is crucial for determining success or failure, as well as the boundaries for such labels. The broader narratives provide insights into the misleading ideals of the yeoman farmer and the ANZAC legend, the shortcomings of soldier settlers in making a profit, and their inability to meet their social expectations as the 'breadwinner' of the family. Yet given their

broad viewpoints, these descriptions can neglect an investigation into the other aspects of their lives which can be described as a success. The wider narratives can be profound in illustrating the problems faced by soldier settlers; including their ill health, unfavourable markets, and the poor quality of the land. However, they lack a full explanation as to how the farmers could survive despite their unfavourable conditions. By investigating two personal histories, it was uncovered that Mary Henderson and John Moodie found success individually in their ability to persevere on the land. They did so for many decades in a dispiriting position and eventually passed on the land to their children. Through a localised history, it was revealed the settlers found success collectively in their ability to enjoy life together on the land and to establish an enduring sense of community. A great degree of caution is therefore warranted in the use of both 'failure' and 'success' in crafting narratives of the past on soldier settlements and soldier settlers. Histories of this topic in future demand a more fine-grained approach, unearthing the complex reality of life on the land, and outcropping the simplistic narratives. The soldier settlers were worth far more than the sum of their so-called failures and successes.

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Lithium and lost souls

The role of Bundoora Homestead as a repatriation mental hospital 1920–1993

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‘Lithium and lost souls: the role of Bundoora Homestead as a repatriation mental hospital 1920–1993’,
Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria, issue no. 14, 2015. ISSN 1832-2522.
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Abstract

Bundoora Homestead is an ornate Queen Anne style Federation mansion used today as the public art gallery for the City of Darebin. Surrounded by a manicured lawn, River Red Gums and a residential housing estate, it is one of only three remaining buildings of the Bundoora Repatriation Mental Hospital that accommodated patients suffering from psychological trauma resulting from the theatre of war.

Since its closure in 1993, knowledge of the hospital period had largely faded from living memory. Patient records were transferred to Victorian government departments and the Urban Land Authority cleared the site, and only with fast action by the Preston Historical Society, City of Darebin and La Trobe University, was the homestead saved from demolition. In the year 2000, a grant from the Commonwealth Government Federation Fund allowed for restoration of the building to its pristine condition as it was in the Smith family era (1899–1920), and in 2001, Bundoora Homestead Art Centre opened to the public.

This paper reveals the significant role of Bundoora Repatriation Mental Hospital in the care and management of ex-servicemen who returned to Australia initially after World War I (1914–1918) in 1920, World War II (1939–1945) and later conflicts. It will outline how the homestead became a mental health facility; it will discuss case studies of some of its patients, and will note the impact of the discovery and application of lithium by Dr John Cade at the hospital in the late 1930s.

Introduction

The Anzac Centenary marked 100 years since Australia’s involvement in World War I. It provided a poignant opportunity to question why little was known about Bundoora Repatriation Mental Hospital, and of the patients who were housed there for over seventy years. The exhibition *Coming Home*[1] was staged in late 2014 to help address this enquiry, and drew its content from public archives and the generous contributions of family members of ex-patients, retired hospital staff and the staff of the Department of Veterans’ Affairs.

There is a large body of existing research regarding war-related mental illness emerging from World War I, alongside broader understandings of Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD).[2] Personal perspectives about the impact of mental illness on returned soldiers has been explored in depth in Marina Larsson’s *Shattered Anzacs: Living with the Scars of War*. [3] Themes of family, loss and mental illness were the focus of Tanja Luckins in *Australia in Madness in Australia: Histories, Heritage and the Asylum*. [4] Iliya Bircanin and Alex Short have provided an informative historical survey of the immediate area of psychiatric facilities of Mont Park, Larundel and Plenty in the twentieth century in their publication *Glimpses of the Past: Mont Park, Larundel, Plenty*. [5] The following analysis of the history of Bundoora Repatriation Mental Hospital provides a window into the operations of a government institution that provided psychiatric and social support to a particular set of patients across the twentieth century.

Bundoora Park

Bundoora Homestead was built in 1899 for JMV Smith, a prominent identity in the horse breeding and racing industry. The 606 acre (245.2 hectare) property known as Bundoora Park, operated as a horse and cattle stud and was home to successful race horses and breeders including *Wallace*, *Challenger*, and *Pilgrim's Progress*.^[6] As a fourteen room mansion and family home for Smith and his wife Helen and their four children, the building was the centrepiece of the large estate. It comprised of an entrance hall, grand stair hall with oval stained glass ceiling, a drawing room (probably converted to a billiard room by 1910), parlour, dining room and service wing. Upstairs, eight bedrooms and three bathrooms were situated off wide balconies, where the city of Melbourne could be seen in the distance; along with sweeping vistas towards the Dandenong Ranges in the south-east, and across to Mount Macedon to the north-west.

In the years before the outbreak of World War I, the Smith children married and moved away to other properties in Victoria and England. By then, JMV Smith was a senior gentleman and his health had begun to deteriorate. With no options for the continuation of the business and estate within the family, in 1920, Bundoora Park was offered for sale for the considerable sum of £29,000.^[7] A report to cabinet, signed by Edward Millen, Australia's first Minister for Repatriation and Minister for Defence (1913–14), identified Bundoora Park as a prime location for the establishment of a convalescent farm.

It has become necessary to make some immediate provision in Victoria for discharged soldiers who are temporarily unemployable through disabilities due to or aggravated by war service and whom out-door occupation under suitable conditions would benefit.

By the statistics in the possession of the Department a need exists whereby epileptics, neurasthenics, heart, gas and other cases should be provided with accommodation in an institution providing out-door facilities for no less than two hundred cases at a time.^[8]

The *Mental Treatment Act 1915* was introduced to protect returned soldiers who became mentally ill as the result of war service from the stigma of being certified as 'lunatics';^[9] and defined the category of military patients as those suffering from a mental disorder of recent origin arising from wounds, shock, disease, stress, exhaustion or any other cause.^[10] The advantage of Bundoora Park was that it provided a dedicated place to convalesce and had open air activities including dairying, and fruit, flower and vegetable growing. It had close proximity to the services of Mont Park Hospital for the Insane in the neighbouring suburb of Macleod, and had accessibility to nearby facilities for patients, visitors and departmental officers. In May 1922, the *Argus* newspaper reported:

Among the thousands of cases which have been dealt with by the Repatriation department, none have presented greater difficulty than those of men who, as a result of the strain of war, have been classified on their return to civil life as neurasthenics. These men might have been shell shocked, gassed, or weakened by trench fever, and they have returned to Australia bundles of nerves, shattered and debilitated. Realising that this class of war derelict was unfitted to be turned on to the labour market to compete with normal healthy workmen, the department [is] determined to give them an opportunity of recovering their strength of body and mind.^[11]



Bundoora Repatriation Mental Hospital circa 1924. Australian War Memorial: H19366.

Bundoora Convalescent Farm opened in 1920 and was initially adapted for use as residential accommodation, while a number of surrounding farm buildings were converted for various hospital purposes. Six additional light-weight structures were transported from Broadmeadows Military Camp to provide a kitchen, canteen, butcher's shop, offices and storage for groceries. As the *Argus* article explained,

When a man whose only difficulty is his inability to pull himself together enters Bundoora he is graded, according to his disability by Dr James, and is then given light work, such as hoeing and weeding by the overseer. At first he might be inclined to be lazy and apathetic, but gradually, as his interest is awakened, he settles down to work, and graduates through the varying stages of farm labour. Payment for work is made on a sliding scale, and each man can earn £2/10 a week, including his pension, in addition to his keep. Dr James says that the average man requires four months at Bundoora. At the end of that period the listless, nerve wracked 'digger' has learned how to work once again, and has been transformed into a healthy, industrious labourer, ready to take his proper place in civil life.^[12]

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In April 1919, a dedicated 'military mental block' was built at Mont Park Hospital for the Insane. The Victorian Government had purchased the Mont Park land prior to 1909 to build a self-supporting asylum as a replacement for the Yarra Bend Asylum. At the time of the purchase, an eastern part of the original Bundoora Park estate was named the Mont Park estate.[13] As the number of transfers from this ward to Bundoora continued to rise, various internal alterations were made to the homestead to alleviate the growing need for accommodation, including the enclosure of the verandahs with wire mesh and canvas blinds for extra wards.[14] On 1 May 1924, Bundoora became a dedicated Repatriation Mental Hospital for the reception of twenty-seven [15] quiet, convalescent, and manageable cases.[16] Known as A Ward, the homestead operated as an open ward, where patients were allowed to move around freely.[17]

The Australian Red Cross Society played an integral role in accommodating the practical needs of the patients at Bundoora as well as fostering their social well-being. It initially responded to a request for assistance from the Australian Government's Repatriation Department to provide recreational equipment to the hospital, and immediately supplied a full-sized billiard table. Supplementary food items were also distributed from the society such as fresh fruit, eggs, tinned fish, and cakes. In addition, welfare packages of eiderdowns, cardigans, bed socks, scarves, caps and hot water-bags were provided in the colder months. Cricket matches, chess and card games, bingo, concerts, recitals, afternoon teas, film screenings, trips to the theatre and motor outings were frequently organised by Red Cross representatives. These events, together with the annual Christmas party and associated festivities were a constant source of enjoyment for the Bundoora veterans.

The 1930s saw a phase of expansion of the hospital; in 1933, B and C wards were built to accommodate chronic and acute cases and were later fitted with padded rooms.[18] New female nursing and domestic staff quarters[19] were constructed in 1937, along with the addition of the dining room annex to the homestead.[20] In 1938, a large double-storey D Ward, which comprised 50 beds, was opened. By the end of the decade, patient numbers totalled 238.



Upstairs Ward, Bundoora Convalescent Farm circa 1920. Australian War Memorial: H12897. Gift of Repatriation Commission, Melbourne.

Wilfred Collinson

The types of disorders patients at Bundoora were diagnosed with included dementia, recurrent mania, general paralysis of the insane, insanity with epilepsy, delusional insanity, obsessional psychosis, paranoia, psychasthenia, alcoholic insanity, confusional insanity, melancholia, mania, neurasthenia and manic depression. Many were treated for extended periods of time, or became permanent residents who never regained the ability to function in society.

Wilfred Collinson entered Bundoora in 1937 where he remained institutionalised until his death in 1972. Signing up to the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) at the age of 19, he arrived at Gallipoli in 1914, a week after the 25 April landing at Anzac Cove. He was exposed to heavy shelling at Shrapnel Gully and was hospitalised with extreme dysentery. Under the severe conditions he became affected in mind and body by the privations and rigours of the campaign. In June 1916, Collinson was posted to the 5th Division Artillery and left for France and the Western Front. During the Battle of Passchendaele, a campaign that took place between July and November 1917, he was gassed three times. Upon his return to Australia in 1919, Collinson was classified as an invalid. He was officially discharged from service, yet his medical and physical condition was recorded as fit with no incapacity or disability.

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In September 1919, Collinson commenced a vocational training course and in 1920, married Carline Aminde. They went on to have four children: Richard (Dick), Albert, Patricia and June. In 1921 he gained employment with the Victorian Railways, where he worked as a fitter and turner for 15 years, during which time his physical and mental health continued to decline. In 1927 he applied to the Repatriation Commission for disability benefits in relation to his war service. He suffered from rheumatoid arthritis, coughed blood, had shortness of breath and was unable to sleep. The claim was refused and he appealed the decision, making an additional claim that his chest trouble and 'disordered action of the heart' was a result of exposure to weather conditions and being gassed at the Western Front. Three years later in 1930, the Repatriation Department accepted that his medical conditions were due to his war service.

By June 1936, Wilfred's wife Carline held grave reservations regarding her husband's state of mind. He suffered from delusions of persecution and believed that men were wandering about the house and interfering with his belongings. On 18 July 1936 he was taken by plain clothes police to Royal Park Receiving House. His mental state was assessed and as a result, Collinson was admitted to Mont Park Hospital for the Insane. The Repatriation Department refused Mrs Collinson's request to transfer her husband to Bundoora on the grounds that his mental afflictions, unlike his physical disabilities, were not due to his war service.

Carline was a dedicated and resilient advocate for her husband. She firmly believed that with the best medical attention he would get better. She lodged an appeal against the Repatriation Department decision, for which additional testimony was provided by a family member who stated that since 1922 Collinson had behaved oddly and was moody. Long-time friend and fellow soldier Eric Brymer also submitted a detailed account of Collinson's decline during their war service. After consideration of the lengthy evidence, the department refused the claim. The State Repatriation Board even recommended that the appeal be disallowed and referred the matter to the Repatriation Commission. On 17 November 1936, the commission upheld the decision of the Victorian Repatriation Board and the appeal was again disallowed.



Wilfred and Albert Collinson at Bundoora Repatriation Hospital 1970. City of Darebin Art and History Collection. Digital Gift of Mrs June Dalglish.

Mrs Collinson's campaign to have her husband's illness recognised as being the consequence of his war service and for the family to gain access to a full war pension finally proved successful on 28 September 1937. After a further appeal, the War Pensions Entitlement Appeal Tribunal overturned the Repatriation Commission decision and Collinson's mental condition was finally accepted as being due to his war service. As a result, he was transferred to Bundoora Repatriation Mental Hospital on 22 October 1937, and he remained there until the time of his death, aged 77, on 4 July 1972.

Dr John Frederick Joseph Cade AO

Dr Cade began his tenure at Bundoora Repatriation Mental Hospital in 1939 as a medical officer. Having served in the Militia [the equivalent of today's Army Reserve] from 1935, Cade was appointed captain of the Australian Army Medical Corps, AIF, on 1 July 1940 and posted to the 2nd/9th Field Ambulance. He arrived in Singapore in February 1941 and was promoted to the rank of major in September. From February 1942 to September 1945 he suffered the privations of a prisoner of war in the Changi camp. Demobilised on 2 January 1946, Cade returned to the mental hygiene branch becoming medical superintendent and psychiatrist at the Bundoora Repatriation Mental Hospital.[21]



Dr John FJ Cade and his Dog Peter at Bundoora Repatriation Hospital, 1948. Medical History Museum Collection, University of Melbourne. Gift of Mrs JFJ Cade, 1981.

In 1947, Dr Cade pursued his suspicion that some mental illnesses were caused by metabolic disturbance. In a research laboratory in a kitchen in the unoccupied E Ward at Bundoora, he experimented with lithium carbonate as a mood stabiliser, initially on guinea pigs and himself, before administering it to a selection of unstable patients. Ten case studies demonstrating successful treatment of 'mania', what is now referred to as bipolar psychosis, were presented in the *Medical Journal of Australia* in a 1949 paper entitled: 'Lithium Salts in the Treatment of Psychotic Excitement.'^[22]

CASE II. – E.A., a male, aged forty-six years, had been in a chronic manic state for five years. He commenced taking lithium citrate, 20 grains three times a day, on May 5, 1948. In a fortnight he had settled down, was transferred to the convalescent ward in another week, and a month later, having continued well, was permitted to go on indefinite trial leave whilst taking lithium citrate 10 grains three times a day. This was reduced in one month to 10 grains twice a day, and two months later to 10 grains once a day. Seen on February 13, 1949, he remained well and had been in full employment for three months.^[23]



The kitchen at Bundoora Repatriation Mental Hospital, now demolished, where Dr JFJ Cade experimented with lithium carbonate, circa 1993. City of Darebin Art and History Collection. Digital Gift of Professor Jack Cade.

At a time when the standard treatment for mental disorder at Bundoora was full and sub-coma insulin therapy, electro-convulsive therapy (ECT) with anaesthesia and relaxants, and pre-frontal leucotomy,^[24] Dr Cade's discovery was a major breakthrough in psychiatric medicine. The methods he pioneered were later substituted by pharmacological agents, primarily the administration of lithium carbonate, chlorpromazine and Ritalin. In the following decades, lithium revolutionised the management of psychosis around the world. Cade was formally recognised for his work in the 1970s, when he was invited to be a Distinguished Fellow of the American College of Psychiatrists (1970) and received the highest honour in psychiatry, the prestigious International Scientific Kittay Foundation Award (1974). In 1976 he became an Officer of the Order of Australia.

Dr Cade was a strong advocate of the benefits of occupational therapy and supervised an expansion of the program at Bundoora when he was promoted to the inaugural position of Medical Superintendent and Psychiatrist in 1950. Until then, the hospital had been under the administrative authority of Mont Park Hospital for the Insane.^[25] The expansion of the program included the construction of two occupational therapy blocks for soft handicrafts, wood and wicker work, and a vegetable garden in the enclosure of B and C wards.^[26] In 1952, Dr Cade left Bundoora to take up the role of Psychiatrist Superintendent and Dean of the Clinical School at Royal Park Psychiatric Hospital in Parkville. After an active and distinguished career, he retired in 1977.

Henry 'Lofty' Cannon

Along with Dr Cade, Henry 'Lofty' Cannon enlisted in the Australian Army Medical Corps, AIF, in 1940. As a 'surgical dresser', he was posted to the same 2nd/9th Field Ambulance Unit and was known as 'Harry' to his family and 'Lofty' to his army mates (he was 198 cm tall). Prior to his departure in 1941, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and married Peg, whose birth-name was Mary Warwick Brown. He boarded the RMS *Queen Mary* in February 1941, destined for Singapore. Stationed at Port Dickson on the Malay Peninsula in September 1941, 'Lofty' was assigned to B company at Mersing, in support of the 22nd Australian Infantry Brigade. With the advancement of the Imperial Japanese Army, the Australian and British forces withdrew their position. Singapore fell to the Japanese on 15 February 1942. 'Lofty' and Dr Cade along with 15,000 other Australians, became prisoners of war (POWs) in Changi for the duration of World War II.

As a POW, 'Lofty' endured frequent bouts of malaria and dysentery as well as tropical ulcers and rheumatism. In August 1943, he was sent to Kanchanaburi camp in Thailand, as part of a medical party with 'L' Force, to nurse survivors of the Thai–Burma Railway working parties. One of his patients was the British artist and satirical cartoonist, Ronald Searle. Though fortunate to survive these ordeals and make it back to Australia in 1945, 'Lofty' was classified as medically unfit. He was officially discharged from the AIF on 5 July 1946, at which time the psychological trauma of his war experience began to manifest. He suffered residual symptoms of anxiety and constant headaches. At Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital in Melbourne, he was treated with ECT and sub-coma insulin therapy.[27] At this time, Searle wrote to 'Lofty' from England saying: 'I don't really think I ever properly thanked you for your great kindness to me "up country"[28] in that stinking hospital. I know, as you do, that you helped to save my life and made my existence under that [mosquito] net almost bearable. Believe me Lofty I've praised the stars that brought you to that ward many times!'[29]

By 1949, 'Lofty' and his wife Peg were living on a soldier settlement farm at Tresco, near Swan Hill in Victoria, and had adopted their son David. Within a few years, 'Lofty' Cannon's health deteriorated. He became addicted to painkillers and alcohol, and his increasingly anti-social behaviour strained his relationship with his wife. The family left Tresco; Peg and David moved to the Melbourne suburb of East Malvern and 'Lofty' was admitted to Bundoora Repatriation Mental Hospital. In 1960, his psychiatric assessment concluded with a diagnosis of psychopathic personality and alcoholism.[30]



Pen and ink sketch by Ronald Searle depicting 'Lofty' Cannon (wearing a Red Cross armband) reaching out to Searle emerging from mosquito netting in 'Ward 5', Kanchanaburi camp hospital, Thai–Burma Railway. State Library of Victoria, Lofty Cannon collection: H2003.92/8. Gift of Mrs Jillian Parkes, 2003.

In a 1966 letter to Searle, 'Lofty' wrote: 'My eyesight is going fast and I keep thinking I am chained again to the Burma Railway and so to set my mind at rest my own people have locked me up again.'[31] In subsequent correspondence 'Lofty' stated his return address as 'Ward 6, Bundoora Repatriation Hospital'. Known also as C Ward, it operated as a closed, chronic, non-liberty ward, for patients who required constant supervision due to the severity of their psychiatric disorders.[32]

Although deeply troubled, 'Lofty' managed to function rationally for periods of time. It was during the late 1960s that he revived and edited the hospital newsletter. Renaming it *Outlook*, he wrote of the difficulties of fitting back into family life in a poem entitled 'So You Want "Out"!':

Unfortunately, in some cases, it doesn't matter how – trial leave or the dream called discharge – as long as [you] get either and go to that vague place called HOME.

Be warned, be prepared for some rude shocks, for even if you have had weekend leave for years, when you come home to stop permanently you will soon find you are a stranger in a strange new place.[33]

In recognition of his military service, 'Lofty' was awarded the 1939–45 Star, Pacific Star, Australian Defence Medal, War Medal 1939–45 and Australian Service Medal 1939–45. He remained at Bundoora until his death in 1980, aged 65.

In 1960 Bundoora accommodated 332 patients comprised of 43% World War I veterans (average age 68), 54% World War II veterans (average age 44) and 3% Korean War veterans (average age 31). By 1963, patient numbers climbed to 408.[34] In contrast to previous eras, patients organised themselves into ward groups with weekly meetings conducted by elected committees. They arranged their own social and recreational activities and took greater responsibility for their conduct in the hospital. This model of group organisation by patients for patients promoted a more relaxed atmosphere, even among the less socially competent ward groups. Additional benefits were reduced incidents of anti-social behaviour and greater participation in recreation and therapeutic programs. The number of patients granted freedom of the grounds and weekend leave, enabling them to visit their homes and relatives, also increased.

A significant change in operations occurred at Bundoora during 1961 with a division of C Ward being created to accommodate the specific treatment of mental disorders caused by alcoholism. This enabled intensive work to take place with the younger men in their rehabilitation to the extent that the ward functioned at an open ward level. This improved performance of the ward included the ability of its patients to participate in ward and garden work and simple occupational therapy projects. Additional recreational facilities were also constructed including a nine hole golf course, a bowling rink and a swimming pool for the closed wards.

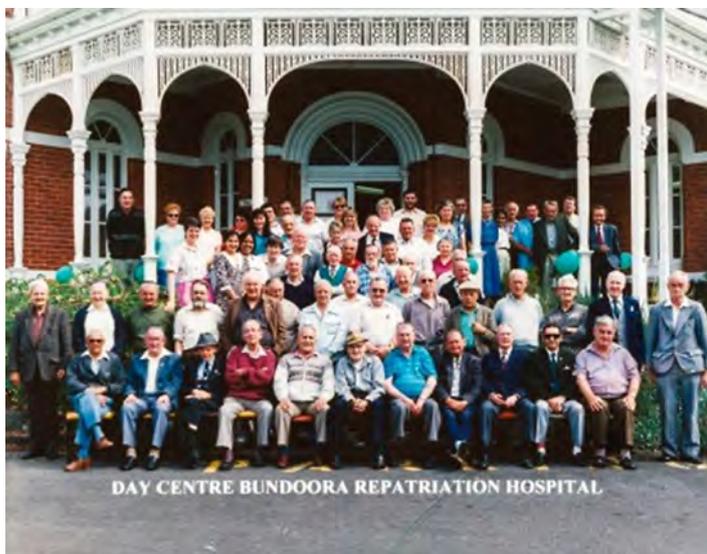
In the mid-1960s, Bundoora Repatriation Mental Hospital was re-named Bundoora Repatriation Hospital and the Repatriation Commission formally authorised the admission of voluntary patients. Of the 209 admissions in 1967, over 60% had problems with alcoholism, while 30% of the hospital's total population at this time was afflicted with alcoholism.[35] With the significant increase in admissions, wards 2 and 8 were the last two structures built on site.[36] The homestead was adapted for use as a day centre where patients could access medical services and occupational therapy classes. Staff, including social workers, psychologists and case managers, moved into offices upstairs, while the downstairs areas, along with a dining room, became a place for patients to sit and chat.

In 1967 a group of four long-term patients, most likely including 'Lofty', developed a project in conjunction with the hospital psychologist, Mr BJ Healey, called the Book Exchange. Designed to assist in the rehabilitation and work motivation for long-term psychiatric patients, the aim was to operate a commercial enterprise in the community that could create voluntary or paid occupations outside of the hospital, and reduce the patient's fear of contact with members of the general public.[37]

During the period 1970–1972, thirty-eight patients participated in the Book Exchange. Most had been hospitalised for a minimum of five years, ranging up to twenty-three years. Operating a shop in the Caulfield market in suburban Melbourne, the Book Exchange required substantial social skills and reasonable managerial competence. The patients travelled by public transport from Bundoora to Caulfield and back to staff the shop, Mondays to Saturdays. They categorised the books, built shelving and served customers, with nominal assistance from a group of women volunteers. An unintended outcome of the project was the generation of a consistent financial profit. These monies were paid into a special fund which assisted those in need, with preference given to families of ex-servicemen. Other gains reported by patients included: gradual reduction of anxiety about everyday life encounters, acceptance by the public (particularly young people), unexpected treatment as equals or ordinary citizens, and increased confidence, enthusiasm and self-esteem. [38] Dr Healy noted that: 'the aimless and demoralised became more purposeful and organised in their thinking, and the depressed became more confident and less morose. Pride was taken in work and dress. Behaviour became purposeful, and regressive traits seemed to lose strength.'[39]

By the mid-1970s, very few patients under the age of fifty were accommodated at Bundoora. Voluntary admissions and discharges dominated, with annual numbers constant at approximately 300 patients, including those on trial leave. Due to the largely ageing hospital population, in 1984 the number of veterans at Bundoora fell to 154. Chaired by Dr Ian Brand, the Review Committee of the Repatriation Hospital System foreshadowed considerable changes needed in the delivery of care for ex-servicemen.[40] With declining patient numbers and the increased need to provide psychogeriatric care, the shift towards decentralisation and the integration of these services into existing regional and community facilities gained momentum.

By December 1991, 105 patients resided at Bundoora. The Department of Veterans' Affairs mirrored the views of the earlier Brand report, and it identified that long-term psychiatric care for veterans could be more effectively served through the provision of mainstream psychiatric and nursing home services, rather than a dedicated single hospital. The Repatriation Commission and the Returned Services League of Australia agreed, and endorsed the move to specialised facilities in locations closer to patients' homes and families.



Day Centre Bundoora Repatriation Hospital. Patients and staff last group photograph at Bundoora Homestead, 1993. Published in the *DVA News*, 1993. City of Darebin Art and History Collection.

With large operational costs and the decentralisation of psychiatric services, the closure of Bundoora and the replacement of services were announced. The remaining patients, many of whom had resided at the hospital for decades, were transferred to alternative accommodation. Senior Social Worker, Arnold Wheeler, commented that: 'the day centre developed a very friendly club-like atmosphere over the years, and when it closed on April 1 [this year], it was a sad day for all fifty veterans and staff alike.'[41] After providing over 70 years of care to veterans, Bundoora Repatriation Hospital was formally decommissioned in October 1993.

In the redevelopment of the site, the Urban Land Authority planned to demolish all of the hospital infrastructure, including the homestead. Its appearance had suffered a steady decline since the Smith Family era. The interior was painted peach and aqua, the verandahs were enclosed, period features were missing, and an extensive concrete fire escape protruded from the second storey. Through the combined efforts of Darebin City Council, La Trobe University and the Preston Historical Society, Bundoora Homestead was heritage listed and saved from destruction. In 2001, Bundoora Homestead Art Centre opened as a cultural and heritage facility for the community, funded and managed by the City of Darebin.



Bundoora Homestead, circa 1993. City of Darebin Art and History Collection. Digital Gift of Rosemary Barnes.

Bundoora Repatriation Mental Hospital was established to provide long-term psychiatric care and rehabilitation for ex-servicemen with mental disorders officially recognised as resulting from war service. Due to its location, size and unique character, the homestead was identified as an ideal place for a convalescent farm. Over decades, the facility grew to accommodate hundreds of patients who suffered from the harrowing experience of war.

The analysis and interpretation of public records, alongside the compelling stories of Wilfred Collinson, 'Lofty' Cannon and Dr Cade, has enabled us to create a vivid account of Bundoora Homestead as a place that was dedicated to the shelter and psychological well-being of veterans. The outstanding discovery and application of lithium carbonate in the late 1930s by Dr Cade, which can now be further understood in relation to the harrowing circumstance of patients who though they had returned from war service, due to their diminished mental health, remained lost to their families. Delving into the homestead's past, despite the initial trepidation for the sorrow that lay there, has proven to be a rewarding and enlightening experience. What has become truly evident, is a broader picture of the tragic ramifications of war.



Bundoora Homestead Art Centre, 2015. Photograph by Cassie May.

Endnotes

[1] Bundoora Homestead Art Centre, 3 October – 7 December, 2014. Donna Mann who was the Exhibition Coordinator and Researcher for the exhibition *Coming Home*, contributed invaluable research to the preparation of this article.

[2] Further reading regarding PTSD can be found in Stephen Garton, *The Cost of War: Australians Return*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1996, John Rafferty, *Marks of War: War Neurosis and the Legacy of Kokoda*, Lythrum Press, Adelaide, 2003.

[3] Marina Larsson, *Shattered Anzacs: Living with the Scars of War*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, 2009.

[4] Tanja Luckins, "Crazed with Grief?" The Asylum and the Great War in Australia, in Catharine Coleborne and Dolly Mackinnon (eds), *Madness in Australia: Histories, Heritage and the Asylum*, Queensland University Press, St Lucia, Qld, 2003.

[5] Iliya Bircanin and Alex Short, *Glimpses of the Past: Mont Park, Larundel, Plenty*, [Iliya Bircanin and Alex Short, Melbourne], 1995.

[6] Wallace, who was sired by the 1890 Melbourne Cup winner Carbine, was at stud at Bundoora Park from 1901 to 1917 and earned a fortune for the Smith family via successful progeny including the champion racehorse, Trafalgar. See Andrew Lemon, 'Wallace of Bundoora: The Greatest Sire in Australia', in Dr Jacqueline Healy (ed.), *Bundoora Homestead: The Smith Family Era 1899–1920*, Bundoora Homestead Art Centre, Fitzroy, 2007, pp. 29–37.

[7] NAA: A6006, 1920/4/13, Bundoora Stud Farm – Acquisition, Repatriation Department, Correspondence Files: Bundoora Convalescent Farm – Part 1 1920–1921, April 1920, p. 1.

[8] *ibid.*

[9] PROV, VPRS 7527/P1 Military Mental Hospital Correspondence Files, Unit 1, letter from the Deputy Commissioner, Repatriation Commission, Victorian Branch, to the Lunacy Department, Old Treasury Buildings, Melbourne, 8 November 1927.

[10] *The Mental Treatment Act 1915*, No 2600 [Repatriation], Victoria, 1915, available online at <<http://www.ahpi.esrc.unimelb.edu.au/legislation-state.html>>, accessed 19 April 2015.

[11] *Argus*, 20 May 1922, p. 20.

[12] *ibid.*

[13] Bircanin and Alex, *Glimpses*, p. 1.

[14] AWM: H19366. Bundoora Convalescent Farm, circa 1924, photographer unknown, silver gelatin print.

[15] PROV, VPRS 7453/P1 Trial Leave Registers, Military Mental Hospital Annual Examination Register, Unit 2.

[16] Dr David Cade, Department of Mental Hygiene, Hospitals for the Insane. Report of the Inspector-General of the Insane for the year ended 31 December 1925, Victoria, *Victorian Parliamentary Papers*, No. 11, 1927, p. 23.

[17] Dr David Cade, Department of Mental Hygiene, Hospitals for the Insane. Report of the Inspector-General of the Insane for the year ended 31 December 1933, Victoria, *Victorian Parliamentary Papers*, No. 6, 1935, p. 17.

[18] NAA: B3712, Drawer 174, Folder 10. 'Bundoora Mental Hospital Padded Room in B Ward', architectural plan 4, Commonwealth of Australia Department of the Interior, Works and Service Branch, Victoria, 5 July 1946.

[19] Now a residential building on the corner of Oakden Drive and Prospect Hill Drive, opposite the Bundoora Homestead Art Centre car park.

[20] Dr John Charles Catarinich, Department of Mental Hygiene, Report of the Director of Mental Hygiene for the Year ended 31 December 1938, *Victorian Parliamentary Papers*, No. 9, 1939, p. 17.

[21] Wallace Ironside, 'Cade, John Frederick Joseph (1912–1980)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, published first in hardcopy 1993, available online at <<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/cade-john-frederick-joseph-9657/text17037>>, accessed 2 August 2015.

[22] Dr John FJ Cade, 'Lithium Salts in the Treatment of Psychotic Excitement', *Medical Journal of Australia*, Vol. 2, No. 10, September 1949, pp. 349–351.

[23] *ibid.*, p. 350.

[24] Patients were transferred for this procedure to the Repatriation General Hospital, Heidelberg.

[25] JF Cade, Lithium Salts', p. 350.

[26] Dr John FJ Cade, Department of Mental Hygiene, Report of the Director of Mental Hygiene for the year ended 31 December 1949, Victoria, *Victorian Parliamentary Papers*, No. 1, 1951–52, p. 26.

[27] Rachel Buchanan, 'Remembering A Forgotten Survivor', *Griffith Review*, No. 18, Summer 2007–08, available online at <griffithreview.com/articles/remembering-a-forgotten-survivor/>, accessed 18 April 2015.

[28] A reference to *Kanchanaburi*, the POW base camp in Thailand, where allied troops including 'Lofty' Cannon and Searle were forced to work on the Thai–Burma Railway. Known as the 'Death Railway', it was a 415 km line between Ban Pong, Thailand, and Thanbyuzayat, Burma.

[29] Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria, letter from Ronald Searle to Henry 'Lofty' Cannon, 30 August 1946.

[30] Buchanan, 'Remembering A Forgotten Survivor'.

[31] Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria, letter from Henry 'Lofty' Cannon to Ronald Searle, 28 January 1966.

[32] Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria, letter from Henry 'Lofty' Cannon to Ronald Searle, 31 October 1966.

[33] City of Darebin Art and History Collection. Henry 'Lofty' Cannon, 'So You Want "OUT"?'', *Outlook*, Bundoora, c.1968–1970, p. 22.

[34] Dr Thomas Retallick, Department of Mental Hygiene, Report of the Mental Hygiene Authority for the year ended 31 December 1960, *Victorian Parliamentary Papers*, No. 31, 1961–62, p. 44.

[35] Dr Harold Stone, Mental Health Authority, Report of the Mental Health Authority for the year ended 31 December 1968, Victoria, *Victorian Parliamentary Papers*, No. 35, 1969–70, p. 74.

[36] *ibid.*

[37] BJ Healey, 'The Veterans' Book Exchange', *The Homesteader* (Bundoora Repatriation Hospital magazine), Bundoora, 1973, p. 5.

[38] *ibid.*

[39] BJ Healey, 'Rehabilitation and Work Motivation for Long Term Psychiatric Patients', *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 1973, pp. 32–35.

[40] Ian Brand (Chairman), Review of the Repatriation Hospital System (Australia), Final Report, Melbourne, 1985.

[41] *DVA News*, Melbourne, November 1993, p. 4.

‘She had always been a difficult case ...’

Jill’s short, tragic life in Victoria’s institutions, 1952–1955

Dr Cate O’Neill

“‘She had always been a difficult case ...’: Jill’s short, tragic life in Victoria’s institutions, 1952–1955’, *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria*, issue no. 14, 2015. ISSN 1832-2522. Copyright © Cate O’Neill.

This is a peer reviewed article.

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Abstract

This article uses a range of sources in the public domain to tell the story of ‘Jill’, a state ward in Victoria whose experiences in institutions attracted an enormous amount of public attention between 1952 and 1955. Jill’s story became a vehicle for heated debates about the child welfare system, during a period of considerable tension and conflict that preceded significant reform in Victoria. The representations of Jill in the media, and the consequent public interest in her case, led to the creation of records that illuminate how ‘female delinquents’ were regarded, and dealt with, by authorities in the 1950s. Jill’s story demonstrates the difficult transition from a child welfare system that heavily relied on the church and charitable sector, towards a new system with more involvement and oversight from government departments, and the input of ‘professionals’ from the social work, psychology and criminology sectors. There have been many scandals and inquiries in the history of child welfare in Australia, however the ‘Jill’ story is unique in its focus on this young woman, rather than general policy issues or conditions within a particular institution. Ultimately, this tragic story demonstrates that the system in Victoria failed to help Jill, and the public interest in her plight was limited.

Introduction

On 3 September 1955, a 16-year-old state ward broke into a staff room at Beechworth Mental Hospital and deliberately took an overdose of barbiturates. She died a few days later in Wangaratta Base Hospital. The coronial inquest into her death was held in December that year. [1] The young woman’s death, and the subsequent inquest, were prominently reported in Melbourne’s newspapers. Indeed, the experiences of this young woman in the ‘care’ of the State of Victoria attracted an extraordinary amount of public attention between 1952 and 1955. By the time of her tragic death in September, ‘Jill’ (the pseudonym used by journalists from 1955) was well-known to the Victorian public.[2]

The Victorian Government’s treatment of ‘delinquent girls’, particularly the inadequacy of the child welfare system to accommodate, let alone rehabilitate, them, was an issue that received media coverage from time to time in the 1950s.[3] In early September 1952, the issue became front-page news when it was revealed that a number of ‘uncontrollable and incorrigible girls’ aged 17 and under had spent brief terms at Pentridge Prison, a prison established for the detention of adults, in the preceding 18 months.[4] Responding to the public outcry, the Child Welfare Department (CWD) claimed that Pentridge ‘was the only place’ to send these girls.[5] The CWD made a statement: ‘We know this is scandalous, but there is no alternative. Such incorrigible girls have to be corrected and there is not a corrective institution for them in Victoria.’[6] One of these girls was Jill, then aged 13.

Over the next three years or so, Jill became something of a *cause célèbre* in Victoria. She was a vehicle for heated public debates about the state's child welfare system, during a period of considerable tension and conflict that preceded significant reform. Between 1952 and 1955, Jill's story was constructed and imagined by various people, for different purposes – to score political points, to sway public opinion, to push for reform, to sell newspapers. The many representations of Jill in archival records, newspaper articles and parliamentary debates illuminate aspects of Victoria's treatment of 'female delinquents' that might otherwise have remained unrecorded, or at least, unknown to the broader public.

With the amount of attention currently being given to the issue of the abuse of children in institutions, abuse that is both 'historic' and much more recent, it can seem that the Australian public only recently became aware of the severe shortcomings of its child welfare system and the devastating impact it has had on so many people. [7] In fact, the history of institutional 'care' has been marked by regular inquiries (and media storms) dating back to the earliest days of government provision of child welfare. Periodically, public attention was directed at the conditions in children's institutions, usually after allegations of abuse, mistreatment or mismanagement. A 2014 report by Shurlee Swain documents just how many inquiries there have been into children's institutions in Australia.[8] Her report concludes that, despite the high number, these inquiries rarely resulted in any fundamental change; rather, they were about damage control.[9]

This article explores one such period of scrutiny in Victoria in the 1950s. The public attention, focused on Jill and her tragic experiences, has left behind records that shed light on systems and institutions that were ordinarily out of sight and out of the public consciousness.

From Royal Park Depot to Pentridge Prison

From the earliest days of the colony, the child welfare system in Victoria relied heavily on church and charitable organisations to deliver services for neglected children.[10] Another feature of the Victorian system was the lack of a strong, centralised children's welfare department (unlike, for example, Queensland), or a representative body like the Children's Councils that existed in South Australia and New South Wales and enabled communication between bureaucrats, policy makers and the philanthropic sector.[11] Nor was there much supervision or oversight of children's institutions by Victorian government departments before the 1950s. [12] In fact, until 1956, the only institution for neglected children run by the state government was the Royal Park Depot, which had been established in 1880 as Victoria's sole 'clearing house' for boys and girls. The idea was that children would stay briefly at the depot until they were boarded out, placed in an orphanage, sent out to service, or committed to a reformatory.[13] In actuality, many children ended up staying at Royal Park for long periods of time.

In 1922, the Medical Officer and Superintendent at Royal Park reported that the depot 'has become a permanent or semi-permanent home for mentally and physically defective children ... who are unfit for "boarding out" or "service"'. [14] Overcrowding was nearly always a problem at the Royal Park Depot, and at several times throughout its history the institution was pushed far beyond its capacity. For example, following the passage of the *Infant Life Protection Act* in 1909, the Secretary of the Department for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools reported a large influx of infants at Royal Park, for whom adequate nursery facilities were not built until late 1913.[15] The depot also experienced severe overcrowding during the years of the Great Depression, with the collapse of the boarding-out system in Victoria. [16] 'Criminal' children also stayed at the depot when they were on remand from the courts.

Swain writes that Royal Park Depot was the focus of 'a series of inconclusive inquiries into allegations of ill-treatment' in the first half of the twentieth-century.[17] Claims of a 'shocking state of affairs' at Royal Park were aired in Melbourne newspapers in 1911, 1920 and 1922. [18] The severe overcrowding at Royal Park was a regular criticism, as well as the failure to segregate 'normal, healthy children' from other 'types'.

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In the early 1950s, more stories began to appear in the papers about conditions at the 'crowded depot', emphasising Royal Park's lack of facilities for 'delinquent girls'. At that time, apart from a section within Royal Park Depot, there was no government-run reformatory institution for girls in Victoria, and only a small number of denominational institutions for delinquent girls. Although a Government Reformatory for Girls (also known as the Protestant Girls' Reformatory) existed from 1864 until 1893, the Victorian Government favoured juvenile correction for girls being 'in private rather than official hands'. The Royal Commission into Reformatory and Industrial Schools in 1872 commended the work of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd with its inmates at the reformatory in Abbotsford (established in 1864) and recommended the establishment of a similar private institution for Protestant girls.[19] The 1887 *Juvenile Offenders Act* allowed for the establishment of private reformatories, the first of which was the Brookside Private Reformatory for Protestant Girls, established in December 1887 near the town of Scarsdale.[20] As well as being privately-run, Brookside was favoured by the Department of Reformatory School for its rural location, allowing for the girls' 'absolute separation from disreputable friends and relatives'. [21] (The Department for Reformatory Schools also provided funding to denominational institutions for boys, such as the Salvation Army's Bayswater Boys' Homes (1897–1986) and the Morning Star Boys' Home (1936–1975), run by the Franciscan Friars.)

Despite the existence of these private institutions, delinquent children were still required to spend periods of time at Royal Park, the state government's 'clearing house'. The accommodation of children on remand in close proximity with neglected children was a concern commonly raised about Royal Park.[22] An article in the *Argus* in 1951 described the conditions at Royal Park for delinquent girls:

Many of the delinquents are girls who had been distributed to other homes or placed in jobs from which they ran away. On return these 'absconders' are dressed in shapeless prison garb and denied most recreational facilities. The embittering effect of this treatment can be imagined, and the girls naturally spread their discontent to the others.[23]

At this time, the Victorian Government had very few options for institutional placement of 'unruly girls', particularly if they were not Catholic.[24] The CWD was dependent on the goodwill of those in charge of private institutions like Abbotsford Convent or the Elizabeth Fry Retreat in South Yarra.[25] When girls misbehaved or absconded, it was becoming common for these institutions to send them back to the care of the CWD, and the 'blocked sink' of Royal Park.[26]

In 1952, the discontent of delinquent girls at Royal Park became a highly prominent issue – it was at this time that the public first became aware of 'Jill'. The papers reported that, following a series of escapes from Royal Park, and a 'riot' on 1 September, several girls had been sent to Pentridge Prison. Jill, 'a barefooted, 13 year old girl', was the second child in four days to be remanded to Pentridge, having been charged with criminal damage at the North Melbourne Children's Court.[27] The scandal worsened when it became clear that this was not an isolated occurrence, and that a number of girls had been sent from Royal Park to Pentridge in the previous 18 months.[28] To make matters worse, a report had just been tabled in the Victorian Parliament, harshly criticising the state's penal administration, singling out Pentridge's female division, where the teenagers were incarcerated, as 'hopelessly inadequate'. [29]

It is now clear that the detention or imprisonment of young women in adult prisons and mental institutions was not an uncommon occurrence at this time. The Australian Senate's 'Forgotten Australians' report (2004) discussed the practice of detaining girls and young women in adult prisons and mental institutions. [30] In 1953, South Australian newspapers reported on the imprisonment in Adelaide Gaol of two 'girl delinquents', the ringleaders in an escape from Vaughan House Reformatory.[31] In New South Wales in October 1942, it was reported that 45 girls from the Parramatta Girls' Training Home had been committed to Long Bay Gaol, following a series of riots and mass escapes (and criticism of the administration in the New South Wales Parliament and the press).[32] In 1944, Mary Tenison Woods, Chairman of the Delinquency Committee of the NSW Child Welfare Advisory Council denounced the practice of imprisoning girls, citing one case where a Parramatta girl with a mental age of eight was sentenced to Long Bay for 3 months, for 'gross insubordination'. [33] From 1944, following the widespread concern over the number of children being sent to gaol, there was a period of significant reform in New South Wales. A new Director of Child Welfare, RH Hicks, was appointed in 1944, and the Child Welfare Department (of NSW) worked closely with its Advisory Council to implement changes including the recruitment of trained social workers, and a new approach to discipline and rehabilitation of juvenile offenders at institutions like Parramatta and Gosford Boys' Home.[34]

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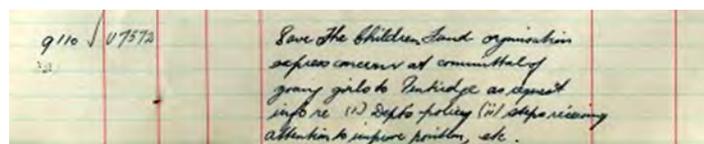
In Queensland, it was common for ‘uncontrollable’ girls to be sent to adult mental institutions if the denominational institutions would not take them. The report of Queensland’s Forde Inquiry (1999) describes a system in the 1950s similar to Victoria’s, dependent on private institutions to accommodate delinquent girls:

The system worked satisfactorily (at least as far as the [Queensland] government was concerned) as long as the girls admitted to the homes were compliant enough not to cause a significant drain on resources. The situation was more complex for those girls who resisted institutionalisation and were labelled ‘uncontrollable’. None of the denominational homes were equipped to accommodate especially troublesome girls, and often they exercised their right to refuse to admit those they considered too difficult to handle or to discharge those who had become unmanageable after admission.[35]

Absconding and damaging institutional property were common reasons for female wards of the state to be placed in the reformatory section of Royal Park, or committed to prison. But the definition of female delinquent behaviour also had a moral element, with girls being punished for non-criminal acts like running away from home, being ‘uncontrollable’ or sexually active. Fielding writes that courts have tended to see the detention of young women, not as punishment, but as a necessary measure to protect the young woman from herself or from her environment.[36] The legislation in force at the time of these girls’ imprisonment at Pentridge in 1952, the *Children’s Welfare Act 1933*, contained definitions that applied specifically to girls of what constituted a ‘neglected child’. While boys and girls could be charged with ‘living under such conditions as indicate that the child is lapsing or likely to lapse into a career of vice or crime’ (this was abbreviated in ward files as ‘Likely to lapse’), the 1933 legislation also referred to two new categories: girls ‘found soliciting men for prostitution, or otherwise behaving in an indecent manner’, or ‘habitually wandering about a public place at night’.[37] These amendments resulted in an increasing number of girls becoming state wards from 1933. From 1954, girls in Victoria could also be charged with being ‘exposed to moral danger’,[38] described by Hamilton as a ‘nebulous term ... a catch-all justification for incarcerating children engaged in any actual or potential sexual activity, and was applied almost exclusively to adolescent girls’.[39] By the 1980s, it was becoming clear that the vast majority of girls and young women in juvenile justice facilities were ‘status offenders’ who had not committed a crime; in fact, they were often victims or potential victims of crime.[40]

The different treatment of delinquent boys and girls was one of the issues raised in the public debates sparked by the news of Victoria’s ‘Pentridge girls’ in 1952. One member of the Labor Opposition remarked: ‘Boys break

windows ... and it is generally said that “Boys will be boys”. However, when a girl commits a misdemeanour, society wants to wreak vengeance upon her’.[41] On 3 September, another Labor politician facetiously blamed the Royal Park Depot for the predicament of the girls: ‘The institution is a disgrace, and people should not be housed there. It is no wonder the poor little kid smashed a window to get away. Probably, she did so because of the rats.’[42] Members of the public and various organisations (including Save the Children, the Howard League for Penal Reform, the Union of Australian Women, and the League of Women Voters in Victoria) made representations to the Chief Secretary of the Victorian Government, demanding to know what the government planned to do about the situation.[43]



An entry in the Chief Secretary’s Register of Inward Correspondence, 4 September 1952, ‘Save the Children Fund organisation express concern at committal of young girls to Pentridge and request info re (1) dept’s policy (ii) steps receiving attention to improve position, etc’, detail from PROV, VPRS 3994/P0, Unit 139, Folio 286, Entry no. 9110 (detail).

Throughout September 1952, members of the Labor Opposition repeatedly took the opportunity to use the ‘Pentridge girls’ issue to score political points. On 9 September 1952, the Victorian Parliament debated a motion raised by the Opposition: ‘the administration of the Children’s Welfare Department which resulted in the incarceration of two children in gaol’.[44] During this debate, detailed information about the girls’ personal circumstances and case histories were aired, even though their cases were at the time *sub judice*. Premier McDonald blamed this breach of the girls’ privacy on the Opposition, for submitting its motion to discuss the issue, ‘with the object of making public, for political purposes, the unfortunate circumstances of these girls’. The Chief Secretary, Mr Dodgshun, justified his disclosure of confidential information as necessary for him to prove that the girls were ‘persistent absconders’, and thus legally incarcerated under section 19 of the *Children’s Court Act*.

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Labor Opposition member for Carlton, William Barry, criticised the Chief Secretary for 'bringing into Parliament the records of a number of little girls, although I know he can find nothing in them to be ashamed of. He could find nothing that would justify bringing a little girl into court, taking her boots off and standing her barefooted in the court room because, it was claimed, she would kick the life out of a policeman ...'[45] Dodgshun said that he had 'tried to refrain' from revealing personal details of the girls in Parliament, but the Opposition had 'forced the issue'. The Chief Secretary claimed that 'incorrigible' was a 'mild expression to use' when describing these girls. He stated that one girl currently in prison had come to the Royal Park Depot on a charge of 'likely to lapse' and the court had heard evidence of her sexual promiscuity, keeping late hours and other uncontrollable behaviour. Dodgshun said that 'these girls and others of their ilk' had been refused admittance into the denominational institutions in Victoria for 'wayward girls'; and argued that, with no government-run reformatory for girls, there was nowhere else to put them but Pentridge.[46]

At times during this debate, it is unclear when the Chief Secretary was referring to actual cases of state wards, and when he was speaking more generally, 'to illustrate the type of girl with whom the Department must deal'.[47] Rather than helping us to understand anything about the lives of these female state wards, the representations of the 'Pentridge girls', by politicians on both sides of the house, clearly illuminate how child welfare became a political football in Victoria in late 1952. The Labor Opposition members' comments about 'the little girls' were designed to capitalise on the public outrage and land blows on a government already experiencing difficulties. The Victorian Government painted its own pictures of these girls in an attempt to justify the actions of the bureaucracy and the courts. Yet more representations of the 'Pentridge girls' appeared in Melbourne's newspapers, as they became the focus of calls for reform in Victoria's child welfare system.

Editorials condemned the girls' detention, and expressed despair about the inadequacy of Victoria's child welfare system. 'Has anybody an old dungeon to let?' asked the *Argus* on 12 September 1952. It called on the McDonald Government to act, now that 'this scandalous business has been dragged into the daylight'. The *Argus* reported that it had received many letters demanding action – one group of citizens from the suburbs of Malvern and Toorak wrote to the paper urging it to launch an appeal to raise funds 'for the building of an establishment which will provide such girls with proper guidance and training' (they also enclosed cheques amounting to over 30 pounds).[48] One Melbourne grandmother was also moved by the press coverage to make a donation of five

pounds to help the 13-year-old girl at Pentridge, via the *Herald* newspaper, which forwarded the money to the Chief Secretary.[49] Various commentators began to argue that the State of Victoria was a 'neglectful parent', and through its reliance on churches and charities, was shirking its responsibilities to vulnerable children.[50]

The shift towards a 'professional' system

The thinking around the care of children was shifting significantly in the middle of the twentieth century. This period saw the landmark 'Care of Children Report' in the United Kingdom in 1946, the growing influence of psychologists like Dr Edward John Mostyn Bowlby (pioneer of 'attachment theory'), and an increasing emphasis on professional, specialised training for those working in child welfare.[51] By the early 1950s, this shift was beginning to be seen in the Victorian child welfare system. As Musgrove writes, 'the clerks, philanthropists and religious personnel who had established welfare networks in the nineteenth century were replaced by professionals with increasingly specialised fields of training. The transition was not an easy one.'[52] In mid-1952, the Child Welfare Department's first professionally trained social worker, Teresa Wardell, clashed with its Secretary (Mr EJ Pittard, who had been in the role since the late 1930s), when it became clear that Wardell's approach to 'therapeutic casework' with the teenage girls at the Royal Park Depot 'did not fit easily with the approach of existing staff'. [53] In October 1952, after several of these teenage girls had been sent to Pentridge, Wardell again protested to the Secretary about the conditions at Royal Park and the punitive treatment of delinquent girls, which she dismissed as belonging 'to an era of at least half a century ago'.[54]

Calls for reform and criticism of Victoria's social welfare institutions, focusing on the plight of the Pentridge girls, came from the emerging profession of social work, as well as from various 'experts' from the fields of psychology, sociology and criminology. Visiting Fulbright scholar, criminologist Professor Albert Morris of Boston University, weighed in on the debate in 1952. In his public lectures, Morris urged Victorians to listen to the social sciences and support their 'constant research for truth'. It was time, he claimed, for an 'earnest stocktaking of present methods' in Victoria.[55] In October 1952, Morris argued that Victoria's religious and charitable institutions were not equipped to handle 'difficult kinds of cases' like Jill's: problem children needed 'modern professional treatment', and institutions needed 'modern professional standards'. [56]

Dr Norval Morris from the recently-established Department of Criminology at Melbourne University was another expert prominently offering his advice to the authorities about the 'Pentridge girls'. On 4 September 1952, Morris claimed that 'a little bit of political courage' would solve Victoria's delinquent girl problem almost overnight. He urged the government to take over one of the 'many big homes around Melbourne' and establish a home where female state wards would have 'a civilised chance of rehabilitating themselves'.^[57] This advice was not welcomed by the Victorian Government, with one politician ridiculing Morris in parliament on 9 September: 'Why does not the doctor accept the responsibility of taking action? Why does not this great genius, with all the solutions at his fingertips, have these girls at the university to determine whether the quiet, cultural, intellectual calm there under his benign, all-powerful influence, will not solve this situation?'^[58]

Norval Morris's claims that Victoria was 'stingy', particularly in contrast with New South Wales, got particularly good traction in the media.^[59] At a meeting of the Victorian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children at the end of September 1952, Morris described the reforms that had taken place in New South Wales since 1944, pointing out that it had 28 institutions run by the state and 96 fully trained professional child welfare workers. A glowing account of the government-run 'training schools' for girls in NSW followed (these same institutions were the subject of the Royal Commission's Case Study No 7, released in November 2014). An article by John Boland in October 1952 painted Victoria as being behind the times compared with New South Wales: while its system 'may not be perfect', he wrote, the gaoling of girls 'went out years ago'.^[60]

All of the major newspapers in Melbourne covered the 'Pentridge girls' story in late 1952. In September, the *Herald* ran a series of articles about the child welfare system in general ('Victoria's Unwanted Children' by Lawrence Turner), adding to the growing sense of crisis. The media attention would seem to have led the Child Welfare Department to change its approach to dealing with female state wards who caused property damage. The *Argus* reported on 1 October that a 17-year-old who had broken a window at Royal Park was 'saved from gaol', when the CWD elected to pay a fine to the Children's Court (a carpenter who was present at her hearing offered to repair the damage free of charge, the *Argus* reported).^[61]



Discussing this particular article by Lawrence Turner in the Victorian Parliament, Mr Barry said he 'could easily recognise' the two girls incarcerated at Pentridge in September 1952 from the photographs. Is the young woman posing here 'Jill'? Detail from the *Herald*, 25 October 1952, p. 13.

The politics of child welfare

Throughout September 1952, Victorian Labor politicians carved out their position on child welfare, firmly on the side of reform and modernisation. The Labor Opposition capitalised on the public dismay and got right behind the cause of the 'Pentridge girls', wasting no opportunities to score political points. William Barry, the member for Carlton, and Bill Galvin, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, were particularly prominent – leading a delegation of 14 Labor politicians to Pentridge to inspect the conditions under which the teenagers were held, attending hearings at the Children's Court and regularly commenting on the case in the papers.^[62] When the girls were released, Mr Barry took credit, claiming to the press, 'That's how to get things done. It's more than the government would do.'^[63]

This advocacy by Labor politicians took place during a time of considerable disarray in Victorian politics. Their support for the girls was one of several manoeuvres designed to destabilise and attack the Country Party government. On the same September day that the girls were released from Pentridge (with four Labor members in attendance at the Children's Court, two of them taking part in the legal proceedings), Premier McDonald barely survived a no-confidence motion in the Victorian Parliament. Next month, he was forced to resign as Premier after Labor supported Thomas Hollway to block supply, and Hollway became the '70 hour Premier'. On 31 October, the Governor of Victoria ordered Hollway to resign and reinstated McDonald as Premier, calling an election for 6 December 1952, which saw the election of the Cain Labor government (the first majority Labor government in Victoria's history).

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In January 1953, the new Chief Secretary, Bill Galvin, stated that he would soon report to Cabinet on his plans to reform child welfare in Victoria, and again appealed to interstate rivalry to help get his point across ('NSW leads us on child care' proclaimed the *Argus* on 21 January).

[64] In April 1953, Galvin flagged 'a great increase in scope of child welfare work done by the State and comparable improvements in its methods'. [65]

Unfortunately, the changing political climate did not improve the situation for Jill. In July 1953, she was back in the papers, after another escape from Royal Park Depot. [66] Then, on 3 August, the *Argus* reported that Jill was again in Pentridge Prison – it was her third time there. She had been involved in 'another wild scene' at Royal Park, and was charged with having caused malicious damage estimated at 30 pounds. [67]

William Barry, the prominent critic of the government during the previous year's 'Pentridge girls' storm, was now the Health Minister. In a statement, Barry said he still had faith in Jill, and he refused to believe that nothing could be done to rehabilitate her. [68] In line with the Cain government's child welfare reform agenda, Barry told the *Argus* of his intention that Dr Cunningham Dax, Chairman of the Mental Hygiene Authority, would examine and report on Jill. Dax was another expert who had gotten involved in public debates in September 1952, stating that what Victoria needed was an institution where persons could be committed from the courts for psychiatric treatment. [69] Mental health was another area undergoing change and reform in the early 1950s – the establishment of the Mental Hygiene Authority in February 1952, and the recruitment of Dr Dax to Victoria, demonstrated the growing emphasis on mental illness prevention, and the view of 'mental hygiene' as 'intimately concerned' with the provision of social services. [70]

At this time, juvenile delinquency increasingly began to be seen as an issue, not just for the CWD, but also for the Mental Hygiene Authority (MHA). From 1952, the MHA's Children's Court Clinic began to see more state wards, referred from the CWD. In 1953, the clinic reported that it had examined 25% more children than the year before (and that four of these children came from Pentridge Prison). [71] By 1954, the clinic reported that the demands from the CWD for its services to state wards were greater than could be met. The annual report of the MHA urged the appointment of at least one more psychologist, so that it could continue to help disturbed children as 'an insurance against future maladjustment'. [72]

The Chief Secretary's records at PROV show that Dr Dax examined Jill at Pentridge in August 1953. They also show that members of the public again took a great interest in Jill's plight, some even contacting the Chief Secretary and offering to adopt her. [73] On 16 September, the Children's Court ordered that Jill be released from Pentridge and returned to Royal Park. She escaped from the depot that same day, was captured by police in Footscray and sent back to prison – once again 'the Pentridge girl' was in the papers.

In parliament on 16 September 1953, Keith Dodgshun, the former Chief Secretary, asked what the Labor government intended to do about Jill this time. He made the point that 'it is extremely easy for members, in Opposition ... to criticise the actions of the Administration ... the Chief Secretary is now confronted with the same problem as that which faced the Government of which I was a member with regard to keeping a minor at Pentridge'. [74] Other members of the Opposition seemed to enjoy reminding the new Chief Secretary, Mr Galvin, of his stance during the 'Pentridge girls' crisis of 1952 and his lack of options this time around. Country Party member for Benambra, Thomas Mitchell, taunted the Chief Secretary about 'his "hell" girl' during a debate about an unrelated matter: 'she was a thoroughly bad lot, and you promised to let her out. You betrayed her ...' [75]

The media stories about Jill continued, and the news got even worse. While Jill was in Pentridge in September 1953, the *Sun News-Pictorial* published a series of articles (under the title 'Cheating Children') criticising Victoria's child welfare institutions. On 22 September, Mr Galvin denied allegations (made by released female prisoners) that Jill was being kept manacled in a darkened cell at Pentridge. The same article reported that she had been admitted to Royal Melbourne Hospital on Sunday 20 September 'unconscious with head injuries'. [76] When news of Jill's hospitalisation became public, Mr Galvin was forced to admit that Jill was injured after having jumped from the roof of a 25 foot-high building at Pentridge. [77] On 22 September, the *Age* reported that Mr Galvin was willing to allow 'any responsible person' to take care of the girl, who had since been returned to Pentridge from the hospital. [78] As the *Argus* editorial made clear on 24 September, despite the change of government and the talk of reform, Victoria's penal, child welfare and mental hygiene systems were still not able to cope with cases like Jill's. [79] (In October 1953, it was reported that Jill had been placed in a private home with 'good Christian people'. [80])

The government attempted to recover from this spate of bad publicity by announcing its plans for sweeping reforms to child welfare in Victoria. Part of the 'new deal' was the appointment of a new secretary of the Children's Welfare Department in November 1953 (Mr JV Nelson, replacing EJ Pittard) and the drafting of new child welfare legislation.[81]

'Why have I been forsaken?'

On 1 December 1954, the day when Victoria's new *Children's Welfare Act* received Royal Assent, the *Argus* was reporting on the inquiry by the federal executive of the Australian Labor Party into its Victorian branch, which would culminate in the Labor Split of 1955. [82] The internal conflict within Labor provides some explanation for the slow progress in child welfare reform during 1954 and 1955 under the government of John Cain. In the course of this unrest, Mr Barry was expelled from the party in April 1955, and was replaced as Health Minister by 'Val' Doube.[83]

It was in April 1955 that the 'Jill' pseudonym was first used to refer to the young woman whose story was already so familiar to the Victorian public. She was named Jill by Osmar White, in his article in the *Herald Week-end Magazine* on 30 April. White would have been well-known to readers for his dispatches during World War II from Papua New Guinea and later, from the final days of the war in Germany.[84] White's article revealed to the public the latest sensational episode in Jill's story – on 23 April 1955, she had been certified insane and admitted to Beechworth Mental Hospital.[85]

White's double-page article (headlined 'To find this girl shelter State brands her INSANE!') was illustrated with an artist's impression of Jill in a cell, and photographs of Messrs Galvin, Barry and Doube with the caption '... And these men know the truth.' In this article, White presented a detailed account of Jill's 'cruel case-history' as a state ward. It included the opinions of various anonymous 'experts' to argue that Jill was not insane – rather, White asserted that:

Jill has been put in a mental hospital because she has been a hopeless nuisance to the Children's Welfare Department, the police, the Penal Department and the Mental Hygiene Authority.

And isn't it true that she has been a hopeless nuisance simply because this State has failed to provide proper care of its orphans or neglected children – because we haven't provided proper homes and clinics for children who have, through no fault of their own, become social misfits? Where do we go from here?[86]



The first use of the 'Jill' pseudonym. Detail from Osmar White's article in the *Herald*, 30 April 1955.

This first Jill article by Osmar White shares features with the sensationalist journalism about juvenile delinquency that was popular in the early 1950s – shock-value headlines, pulpy illustrations and dramatic language ('Then came the blow that destroyed her world. Jill's grandmother fell ill and was sent to hospital ... They were remanded to Pentridge – with the prostitutes, thieves and murderesses in that deplorable, stinking Women's Block ...'). These popular representations of delinquency were designed to titillate and generate 'moral panic' in equal measure.[87] White's article about Jill capitalised on the public's hunger for these stories, which can be seen as part of the 'well established discourse about delinquency' that existed in Victoria in the 1950s. This discourse, according to Bessant, comprised the sensationalist images and accounts in the press, together with the scientific explanations of delinquency from a network of educationists, researchers, social workers and psychologists.[88]

White was clearly in close contact with a number of these professionals – the article quotes various anonymous insiders, criticising the CWD’s treatment of Jill, and the assessment of her mental health. The article begins: ‘We will call her Jill. That is not her real name. Her real name should never, in common decency, be divulged’. Despite White’s claim to the moral high ground, it is clear that the detailed case history he presents in this article was provided to him by at least one of these professionals in a violation of trust and privacy. In another ‘Jill’ article published in May 1955, White reveals that he had indeed seen Jill’s case files – one could speculate that his source was perhaps the ‘qualified social worker who has done everything possible to prevent the girl’s certification’ referred to in the 30 April piece. White’s articles were produced in collaboration with professionals who were desperately advocating on behalf of Jill, at the same time as they were campaigning for broader change within a system that still did not pay sufficient attention to their expert views.

When White’s article was published in April 1955, a state election was looming and the Cain government was in crisis. The article was certainly successful in mobilising public support – the *Herald* was flooded with letters from readers, including numerous offers from members of the public to take Jill into their homes.[89] Other letter-writers criticised the government: ‘Perhaps if we had not committed ourselves to the [Melbourne 1956] Olympic Games we would have money, men and materials to help with such cases as Jill’s’, wrote the Balwyn Women’s Club. Leaders of Church organisations in Victoria called for immediate action to help the state’s ‘forgotten children’.[90] Norval Morris warned that ‘unless the State spends more money on the reformatory side of child welfare, another series of “Jill” articles will have to be written five years’ hence’.[91] The *Herald* published numerous ‘Jill’ articles throughout May 1955, and got behind White’s call for an independent review of Jill’s case, offering to bear any associated expenses.[92]

The *Herald*’s coverage of this issue also included increasingly defensive statements from the Health Minister, Val Doube, and Chief Secretary Bill Galvin. The ministers’ initial response to the sensational Jill article said while it was ‘useful’ that the public learned of social tragedies like Jill’s, White’s article unjustifiably hurt the feelings of patients in Victoria’s mental hospitals, not to mention the feelings of ‘children and adults who have made a success of life through the efforts of the Children’s Welfare Department’. The politicians urged Victorians to see ‘the problem of the Jills’ from the perspective of the authorities, and imagine what Jill’s care and welfare had meant in man-hours and money.

‘In this one case, about 250 pages of letters and reports have been written from the CWD, all for the patient’s benefit and welfare’.[93]

Osmar White responded angrily in the *Herald* on 4 May, saying that the ministers had ‘shockingly smeared’ Jill with their talk of sexual promiscuity, thieving and drugs and alcohol. White wrote, ‘They have introduced the history of other “Jills” into their illustration of the difficulties they face, to try to cloud the issue about THE Jill I wrote about’.[94] Galvin countered that he was not smearing Jill, but ‘referring to the “Jills of the State” ... We said we had several “Jills” to deal with’.[95] Indeed there are several Jills that emerge in the newspaper articles: different Jills were constructed for different purposes. In these public representations, there is constant tension about whose account is the story of the ‘real Jill’.

The denunciation of the government continued – Mr Barry, now a free agent, added his voice to the widespread criticism of his former colleagues.[96] On 17 May 1955, a joint statement from Mr Doube and Dr Dax announced that Jill’s certification had been annulled. They reported that she had ‘settled down’ at Beechworth and because of the improvement in her condition, Jill was now a ‘voluntary boarder’.[97] The *Herald* and its readers were not reassured by the announcement that Jill was no longer ‘insane’. On 18 May, the *Herald* editorial urged the state not to ‘close its file on “Jill”’:

‘Jill’s’ drift from unsuitable foster homes to the Royal Park depot, to gaol, and then to a mental hospital points to a scandalously wide gap in the social therapy side of the CWD ... For the sake of other children, our makeshift services must be quickly overhauled. Teams of qualified social workers and Children’s Court clinics are an urgent part of the need. The story of ‘Jill’ is the strongest argument for action.[98]

Sadly, from this point in the story, Jill’s file would continue to expand. It was soon revealed that five days after her certificate was annulled, Jill had attacked three nurses at Beechworth Mental Hospital in a ‘sudden outburst of aggression’. Jill had also taken tablets, barricaded herself in a dorm, smashed glass and smeared blood on the walls. Dr Herbert Bower, the superintendent at Beechworth, decided to ‘ignore the episode’ and proceed with Jill’s ‘social therapy’, inviting her to stay at his home that night. However, Dr Dax soon ordered her removal to the Royal Melbourne Hospital, when fragments of glass showed up in Jill’s stomach.[99]

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In early June, the *Herald* reported that Jill was 'out of danger', her 'physical condition ... not causing anxiety'. It stated: 'Interest in the Jill case is now focused on the reactions of the new State Government', Labor having lost government to Henry Bolte's conservatives at the end of May 1955.[100] In July, Norval Morris challenged the new government to commit adequate funding to the child welfare system, describing the new *Children's Welfare Act* as 'promising', but warning that 'its promise will only be fulfilled if the public and politicians ... are prepared to pay for it'.[101]

It would seem that the Bolte government continued down the same path with Jill, who was recertified in late June and again committed to Beechworth.[102] Then, in September 1955, Osmar White announced in the *Herald* that 'the story of "Jill" is finished'.[103] Jill's death following her deliberate overdose was front page news in the *Argus* on 10 September.[104] These articles revealed her real name, and more details of her tragic life, to the public. White wrote:

No one could have prevented the tragedy of her birth. But I believe – and experts know – that the tragedy of her death could most probably have been prevented if the State of Victoria had done its duty ... Remember Jill, the bright-haired little girl, whom nobody could save, because nobody cared about her soon enough to save her ... Remember Jill, people of Victoria, and be too ashamed ever to let it happen again.[105]

The final instalments in Jill's story were published at the time of the inquest in December 1955. The inquest deposition files at PROV contain one page of testimony from social worker Marjorie McDonald, who said she first met Jill at the Children's Court in Melbourne in 1952. The official inquest records do not contain details of further evidence McDonald gave at the inquest, apparently from the public gallery. According to the *Argus* on 6 December:

A slim young woman in a grey costume provided a sensation in the last minutes of an inquest here today ... After nearly five hours, when the Court had heard 11 witnesses, Mr JC Bell, SM leaned forward and formally asked: 'Is there anyone else present who can give evidence to this inquest?' From the public gallery, Marjorie McDonald, social worker employed by the Mental Hygiene Authority, stepped forward to state views she had travelled 145 miles by car to give.[106]

She stated that after Jill was admitted to Beechworth Mental Hospital, McDonald had tried to continue their relationship, but that Dr Bower had refused her access. 'Three weeks before Jill died, I received a letter she had smuggled out of Beechworth. She asked had I forgotten her, why I had not kept in touch. It was obvious Jill never received parcels and letters that we sent her.'

In the *Argus*, McDonald claimed that 'Jill need not have died. She was used as a guinea pig for mental hygiene in Victoria'.[107] On 12 December, the *Age* reported that McDonald had resigned from her position at the Mental Hygiene Authority to be free to reveal 'circumstances' about Jill's treatment and death.[108] The social worker Teresa Wardell, who had also known Jill at Royal Park Depot, wrote a letter which was published in at least two Melbourne newspapers just before Christmas in 1955. Wardell wrote:

I feel compelled to write in defence of ... 'Jill', who was persistently represented to the public by Government departments as a problem child, for whom everything was done that could have been done. That is very far from the truth. The final ignominy and cruelty to which she was subjected has shocked us all, and no assurances from the Minister for Health will make any difference. The Children's Welfare Department must take full responsibility for the tragic life of [Jill] as a ward of the State.[109]

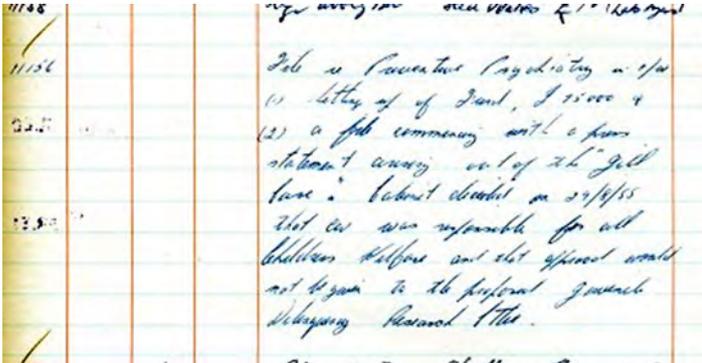
As well as defending the 'real Jill' against false representations, Wardell's letter to the *Herald* complained about the treatment she had received while employed by the CWD in 1952: 'I was there as a social worker whose job it was to study and make recommendations for the future care of adolescent girls. I was given no authority in spite of my long experience in the field of child welfare, and I was refused all opportunities to carry out a proper programme of care and rehabilitation'.[110]

By the end of 1955, the Bolte Government had begun to implement the long-awaited reform of Victoria's child welfare system. On 1 September, Chief Secretary Arthur Rylah announced the appointment of a new Child Welfare Advisory Council for Victoria, a key provision of the 1954 *Children's Welfare Act*. Some of the council's earliest work was to abolish the 'bread and water' punishment for children in institutions, and to recommend the establishment of a training scheme for staff in orphanages and other children's institutions. [111]

Child welfare continued to be a source of political conflict in Victoria. In December 1955, former Health Minister Mr Doube criticised the provisions in the new legislation that allowed 'temporary isolation up to 24 hours' as punishment for children in institutions.[112] Jill's case was again discussed in the parliament, during a debate about the Bolte Government's approach to juvenile delinquency. The Member for Camberwell Robert Whateley reflected:

Over the years of that girl's life, people who were paid to deal with her made a hopeless mess of it. She reached the stage where the whole world seemed to be against her. She became so much of a rebel that she died ... That was a life thrown away. It does not matter which Government was in power at the time. The main thing is to ensure that the people obtain some insight into these matters.[113]

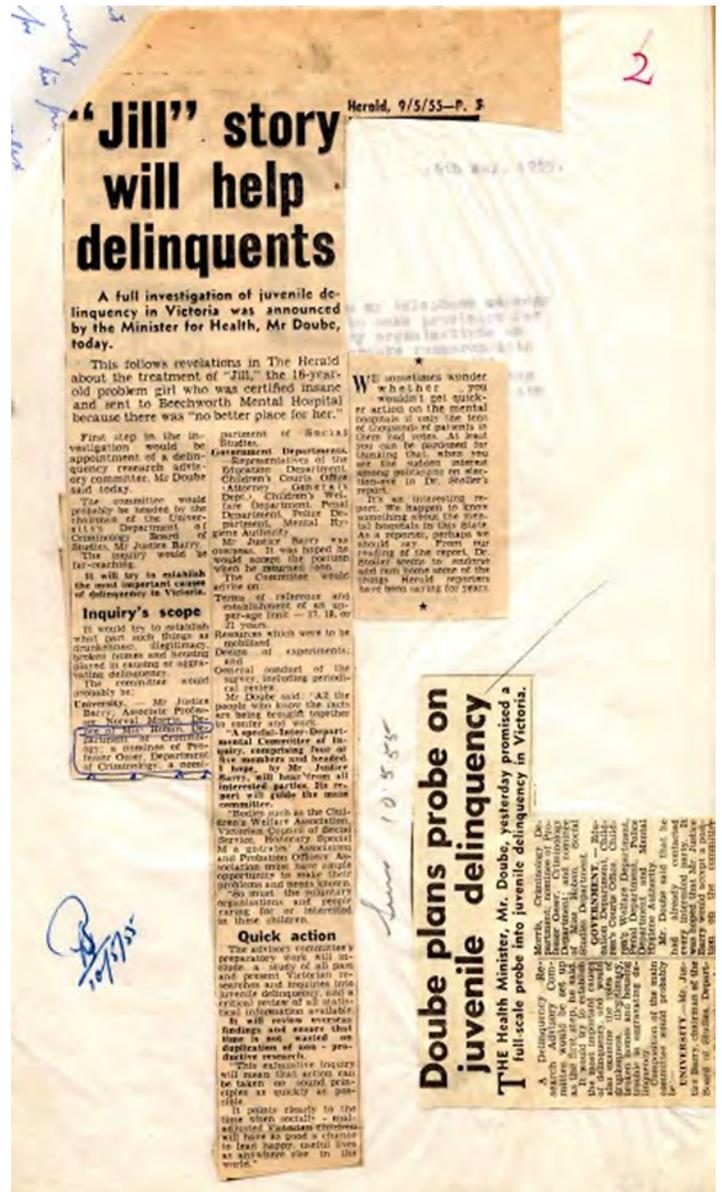
The Labor Opposition chastised the Victorian Government for not putting into action the plans of the previous administration to address juvenile delinquency. Mr Doube claimed that Premier Bolte was acting out of 'sheer political spite' in his refusal to support the proposed research committee into juvenile delinquency. [114] An entry in the Index to the Chief Secretary's Correspondence at PROV suggests that a Cabinet decision in August 1955 not to fund this committee was indeed connected to the 'Jill case'. [115]



Detail from VPRS 3994/P0 Register of Inward Correspondence, Unit 146, Item 11156, November 1955. The entry in the register refers to the 'Jill case' together with a Cabinet decision from August 1955 not to fund a proposed research committee into juvenile delinquency.

Although the Bolte Government failed to establish a research committee, it did set up a Juvenile Delinquency Advisory Committee, which reported in 1956. The Barry Report (named after the Committee Chairman John Vincent Barry) validated many of the criticisms made during the 'Pentridge girls' and 'Jill' crises. The report stated that Victoria's institutions needed additional help from psychiatrists, psychologists and trained social workers.[116] On the topic of 'so-called Reformatory Schools', the committee called for the state government

to have full administrative control of these institutions. Furthermore, the committee declared, 'We consider that it is not desirable that persons under seventeen should be committed to institutions under the control of the Penal Department'. [117]



A page from the files relating to the Juvenile Delinquency Advisory Committee, PROV, VPRS 4723/P0, Unit 310, Item B12692.

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The Barry Report also drew attention to the urgent need for Victoria to provide suitable accommodation for 'children and juveniles suffering from grave mental disorders ... so that it may be possible to avoid sending emotionally mal-adjusted, delinquent young persons to security sections of mental hospitals where, at present, they may be accommodated with chronic, disturbed, adult mental patients'.^[118] The committee called for the expansion of the Children's Courts Clinic and recommended that juveniles undergo 'proper pre-sentence diagnostic appraisal'. The Barry Report resulted in the passage of a new *Children's Court Act* in 1956 which made significant changes to sentencing procedures including the abolition of whipping.^[119] In another suggestion of the influence Jill's story had on policy development in Victoria in the 1950s, the files at PROV relating to the Juvenile Delinquency Advisory Committee's work contain numerous press clippings relating to her case.^[120]

On 31 December 1955, on the eve of a new year, the *Argus* carried an optimistic, if cautionary, piece by Melbourne University Professor of Psychology Oscar Oeser. He reflected that the new *Children's Welfare Act*, while 'not the best that could be passed' was 'better than the previous jumble of acts'. Oeser predicted that this legislation would begin to have an effect on children and on public opinion in 1956. His article concluded: 'I believe that in 1956 Victoria's repute in the vast field of education and social science generally will grow ... IF WE DON'T CHEESEPARRE AND DON'T STAND STILL DURING THAT YEAR AND THE NEXT 10 YEARS'.^[121]

Reflecting on Jill, sixty years later ...

Sixty years later in Victoria, much has changed, but the inquiries continue, as do the media reports, the public concern and the claims that governments are not sufficiently resourcing the child protection system. ^[122] At the time of writing this article, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse is preparing to come to Victoria for hearings into the management of the government-run youth training and reception centres that were established after the passage of the *Children's Welfare Act 1954*, including Winlaton (1956 to 1991), the government-run institution for girls. In 1955, when Osmar White's articles about Jill were causing a political storm, the Chief Secretary Mr Galvin said, 'I know the deficiencies of the Department. That is precisely why we have started on a new place, Winlaton at Nunawading'.^[123] Testimony from former inmates of Winlaton about their demeaning and degrading experiences in 'care' are a stark demonstration that the changes introduced in Victoria from 1955 failed

to address many of the systemic issues in the child welfare system.^[124] This story about how the system let down one vulnerable child and failed in its duty of care is but one of many in the history of Australia's children institutions. The story is unusual in the amount of interest focused on one person, over a number of years. Ultimately though, the attention given to Jill's plight was short-lived and her story had little impact on the system.

Endnotes

[1] PROV, VPRS 24/P0 Inquest Deposition Files, Unit 1810, Item 1955/1616 (name on file withheld to protect privacy). The quote in the main title of this article is from Victorian Health Minister Mr Cameron, commenting on the inquest into Jill's death. 'Beechworth chief "tried all he knew to save Jill from herself"; *Argus*, 16 December 1955, p. 6, available at <<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/71786822>> accessed 1 September 2015. Special thanks to Dr Natasha Story for her research assistance in 2012 and 2013 which was tremendously helpful to me in writing this article.

[2] Throughout this article, out of respect for the privacy of this young woman and her family, I have chosen to use the Jill pseudonym. To write this article, I have only drawn on sources that are available in the public domain. Presumably, there are many more records about Jill within PROV's collection and the records at the Department of Human Services Archives, records which are closed to the public under section 9 of the *Public Records Act 1973*. During my research, I obtained access to a case file relating to Jill that is part of the Teresa Wardell Collection at the University of Melbourne Archives. In this article I have not disclosed any information from this file that was not already in the public domain.

[3] See for example Pamela Ruskin, 'State's neglected children: danger abounds in crowded depot', *Argus*, 8 February 1951, p. 2, available at <<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/23036282>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[4] 'Gaul had other girls too', *Argus*, 4 September 1952, p. 1, available at <<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/23213196>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[5] Ibid.

[6] 'Girl, 13, now in Vic. Gaul', *News (Adelaide)*, 6 September 1952, p. 10, available at <<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/130863929>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[7] See chapter 5, 'Why abuse occurred and was able to continue' in the Australian Senate's Community Affairs References Committee, *Forgotten Australians: a report on Australians who experienced institutional or out-of-home care as children*, Commonwealth Government, Canberra, 2004, available online at <http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/Completed_inquiries/2004-07/inst_care/report/index>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[8] See appendix 1: Australian inquiries into institutions accommodating those under the age of 18, 1852–2013, Shurlee Swain, *History of Australian inquiries reviewing institutions providing care for children*, Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, Sydney, 2014, available at: <<http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/documents/published-research/historical-perspectives-report-3-history-of-inquir.pdf>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

[10] The earliest organisations providing help to ‘orphans’ in Victoria were the Dorcas Society and the St James’ Visiting Society, which led to the establishment of the Melbourne Orphan Asylum in 1853. See Rosemary Francis, ‘Melbourne Orphan Asylum’, *The Australian Women’s Register*, 2003, available at <<http://www.womenaustralia.info/biogs/AWE0611b.htm>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[11] Swain, ‘History of Australian inquiries’, p. 5.

[12] This fact was acknowledged in the ‘Submission by the Government of Victoria to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care’, submission no. 173, July 2003, p. 5, available at <http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/Completed_inquiries/2004-07/inst_care/submissions/sublist>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[13] Cate O’Neill, ‘Royal Park Depot (c.1880 – 1955)’, *Find & Connect web resource*, available at <<http://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/vic/biogs/E000118b.htm>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[14] Department for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools, *Report of the Secretary and Inspector for the year 1922*, Victorian Government Printer, Melbourne, 1922, p. 4.

[15] Department for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools, *Report of the Secretary and Inspector for the year 1910*, Victorian Government Printer, Melbourne, 1910, p. 4.

[16] O’Neill, ‘Royal Park Depot’.

[17] Swain, ‘History of Australian inquiries’, p. 8.

[18] See for example: ‘Royal Park Depot. Treatment of State Wards. Very Unsatisfactory Position’, *Argus*, 20 October 1911, p. 7, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article11625448>>, accessed 1 September 2015; ‘Neglected Children’s Home. Filth, Vermin and Disease. Appalling Death Rate’, *Argus*, 26 March 1920, p. 6, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article1685944>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[19] George Guillaume and Edward C Connor, *The Development and Working of the Reformatory and Preventive Systems in the Colony of Victoria, Australia, 1864–1890*, Government Printer, Melbourne, 1891, pp. 22–23, available at <<http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/243591>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[20] Cate O’Neill, ‘Brookside Private Reformatory for Girls (1887–c.1900)’, *Find & Connect web resource*, available at <<http://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/vic/biogs/E000316b.htm>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[21] Guillaume & Connor, *The Development and Working of the Reformatory*, p. 23.

[22] ‘Delinquent Boys. Evils of Remand Depot. Lack of Accommodation.’, *Argus*, 18 August 1928, available at <<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/3951026>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[23] Ruskin, ‘State’s neglected children’, p. 2, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23036282>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[24] In August 1940, the CWD had ceased funding two private reformatories (Riddells Creek Girls’ Home, run by the Salvation Army and the Roman Catholic Reformatory at the Convent of the Good Shepherd in Oakleigh). Children’s Welfare Department and Department for Reformatory Schools, *Report of the Secretary for the years 1939 to 1943*, Victorian Government Printer, Melbourne, 1944, p. 7.

[25] The Chief Secretary, Mr Dodgshun, pointed out that the system in 1952 was dependent on the goodwill of those in charge of these denominational institutions. *Victoria Parliamentary Debates* (VPD), Session 1951–52, Vol. 239, 9 September 1952, p. 1805. Digitised copies of Hansard are available for download at <<http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/hansard/>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[26] ‘State “stingy to children”’, *Argus*, 1 October 1952, p. 5, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23207814>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[27] See ‘Girl, 13, now in Vic. Gaol’.

[28] See ‘Gaol had other girls too’.

[29] *Report of the Inspector-General of Penal Establishments on Developments in Penal Science in the United Kingdom, Europe and the United States of America; together with Recommendations relating to Victorian Penal Administration*, Victorian Government Printer, Melbourne, 1951–1952, p. 96.

[30] *Forgotten Australians*, p. 120.

[31] ‘Two Reformatory Escapees in Gaol’, *Mail* (Adelaide), 19 December 1953, p. 3, available at <<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/58874390>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[32] ‘Grave charges against Minister’, *Daily Examiner* (Grafton), 14 October 1942, p. 2, available at <<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/194061854>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[33] ‘State and the Child’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 February 1944, p. 4, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article17872003>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[34] ‘Child welfare changes’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 July 1944, p. 5, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article17913566>>, accessed 1 September 2015; ‘The new approach to child welfare’, *Advertiser*, 1 October 1948, p. 7, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article43785301>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[35] Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions, Department of Families, Youth and Community Care, Brisbane, 1999, p. 142.

[36] June Fielding, 'Female delinquency', in Paul R Wilson (ed.), *Delinquency in Australia: a critical appraisal*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 1977, pp. 153 and 172.

[37] See section 2 (b) of the *Children's Welfare Act 1933* (Vic.), available at <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/hist_act/cwa1933167/>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[38] See part 3, section 16 (j) of the *Children's Welfare Act 1954* (Vic.), available at <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/hist_act/cwa1954167.pdf>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[39] Madeleine Hamilton, 'A process of survival', *Overland*, No. 215, Winter 2014, available at <overland.org.au/previous-issues/issue-215/feature-madeleine-hamilton/>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[40] See *Forgotten Australians*, p. 66; 'Submission by the Government of Victoria', 2003, p. 10; Christine Alder, 'Theories of Female Delinquency', in Allan Borowski and I O'Connor (eds), *Juvenile crime, justice and corrections*, Addison Wesley Longman, South Melbourne, 1997; Kerry Carrington, *Offending girls: sex, youth and justice*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonard's, NSW, 1993, pp. 16–17.

[41] VPD, 9 September 1952, p. 1801.

[42] VPD, 3 September 1952, p. 1701.

[43] There are a number of entries in the registers to the Chief Secretary's correspondence relating to public concern about the 'Pentridge girls'. See for example PROV, VPRS 3994/P0 Register of Inward Correspondence, Unit 139, Items 7961 and 9110, and Unit 140, Items 7358, U7572 and 7689. Unfortunately, the corresponding files are not in VPRS 3992/P0 Inward Registered Correspondence III, which contains minimal records from the period 1952 to 1955. The Chief Secretary's Department was a key element of the Victorian public service until 1979. The Chief Secretary was the position with ultimate responsibility for neglected children and juvenile offenders until 1970, when the Social Welfare Department assumed full responsibility for child and family welfare in Victoria. The Chief Secretary's administrative involvement in child welfare in Victoria means that the records of this department can be a rich source of information about children and families' interactions with the child welfare system.

[44] VPD, 9 September 1952, pp. 1799–1820.

[45] *Ibid.*, p. 1816.

[46] *Ibid.*, p. 1805.

[47] *Ibid.*, pp. 1809–1810.

[48] 'Has anybody an old dungeon to let?', *Argus*, 12 September 1953, p. 2, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23203458>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[49] PROV, VPRS 3994/P0, Unit 139, 22 September 1952, register entry 7961.

[50] Pamela Ruskin wrote in the *Argus* in 1951: 'It is not the children who should be charged as neglected, but the rest of the population as being neglectful!', see 'State's neglected children'; in October 1952, criminologist Norval Morris, also writing in the *Argus*, declared, 'If Victoria could be prosecuted for being a neglectful parent, it would be found guilty', see 'State "stingy to children"':

[51] Cate O'Neill, 'Care of Children Committee (1946)', *Find & Connect web resource*, available at <<http://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/vic/biogs/E000347b.htm>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[52] Nell Musgrove, 'Teresa Wardell: Gender, Catholicism and Social Welfare in Melbourne', in *Founders, Firsts and Feminists*, eScholarship Research Centre, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, 2011, p. 130.

[53] Musgrove argues that perceptions of social work as a 'feminised field' hampered its acceptance as a 'profession', *ibid.*, p. 138. Former social worker in the Children's Welfare Department, Donna Jaggs, offers another perspective of the gender aspects of the CWD's reluctance to recognise the authority of social workers like Teresa Wardell. In an oral history interview, Jaggs recalled that the CWD was 'mainly manned, quite literally, by men in the administrative division of the public service'. Donella Jaggs interviewed by Jill Barnard in the *Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants oral history project*, available online at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.oh-vn5079534>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[54] Musgrove, 'Teresa Wardell', p. 139. Correspondence between Wardell and the Child Welfare Department from 1952, as well as a case file relating to 'Jill' (on restricted access) is in the Teresa Wardell Collection, accession number 1981.0123, University of Melbourne Archives.

[55] 'Delinquency Control. Must Recognise Shortcomings', *Age*, 5 August 1952. All articles from the *Age* cited in this article were accessed from the Google News Archive, available at <news.google.com/newspapers?nid=MDQ-90e3GGUC>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[56] 'Reforming Victoria's Penal System', 31 October 1952, transcript of speech by Albert Morris in Series 7/10, 'Howard League for Penal Reform [1955]', Teresa Wardell Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.

[57] 'Pentridge isn't only place, expert says', *Argus*, 4 September 1952, p. 14, available at <<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/23211817>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

[58] VPD, 9 September 1952, p. 1814.

[59] See 'State "stingy to children"':

[60] John Boland, 'They don't gaol girls in NSW', *Argus*, 7 October 1952, p. 2, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23202185>>, accessed 1 September 2015.

- [61] 'Girl saved from gaol', *Argus*, 1 October 1952, p. 3, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23207720>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [62] 'Labor MPs visit prison', *News* (Adelaide), 15 September 1952, p. 2, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article130864464>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [63] 'Girls moved from gaol', *Argus*, 17 September 1952, p. 1, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23216694>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [64] 'NSW leads us on child care', *Argus*, 21 January 1953, p. 5, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23223306>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [65] 'Our obligation', *Argus*, 9 April 1953, p. 2, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23237689>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [66] 'Girl in escape from Vic home', *Barrier Miner* (Broken Hill), 27 July 1953, p. 2, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article49272204>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [67] 'Girl in gaol again', *Argus*, 3 August 1953, p. 5, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23259485>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [68] 'He has faith in girl', *Argus*, 4 August 1953, p. 7, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23259722>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [69] 'Laborites to visit Gaol', *Age*, 13 September 1952, p. 5.
- [70] Victoria, *Report of the Mental Hygiene Authority, for the year ended 30 June 1952*, p. 6. For more information, see Belinda Robson, 'From mental hygiene to community health: psychiatrists and Victorian public administration from the 1940s to 1990s', *Provenance: the journal of Public Record Office Victoria*, Issue no. 7, 2008, available at <<http://prov.vic.gov.au/explore-collection/provenance-journal/provenance-2008/mental-hygiene-community-mental-health>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [71] Victoria, *Report of the Mental Hygiene Authority, for the year ended 30 June 1953*, p. 40.
- [72] Victoria, *Report of the Mental Hygiene Authority, for the year ended 30 June 1954*, p. 285.
- [73] PROV, VPRS 1411/P0 Index to Inward Registered Correspondence, Unit 109, and VPRS 3994/P0, Units 141 and 142. No correspondence files were located for the index and register entries relating to this issue.
- [74] VPD, Session 1952–1953, Vol. 241, 16 September 1953, pp. 934 and 935.
- [75] *Ibid.*, pp. 945 and 946.
- [76] 'Girl "not in manacles"', *Argus*, 22 September 1953, p. 3, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23323204>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [77] He added that Jill's injuries were 'in no way related to mistreatment by the gaol staff'; see 'How the girl was injured', *Argus*, 23 September 1955, p. 1, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23315450>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [78] 'Problem girl back in gaol', *Age*, 23 September 1953, p. 4.
- [79] 'Something on our conscience', *Argus*, 24 September 1953, p. 2, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23319979>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [80] 'Family takes Pentridge girl', 12 October 1953, *Argus*, p. 5, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23309475>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [81] 'Big scheme for child welfare', *Argus*, 1 October 1953, p. 4, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23322783>>, accessed 1 September 2015; 'New secretary of child welfare', *Argus*, 6 November 1953, p. 4, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23309884>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [82] 'Inquiry on Victorian ALP may end on Friday night', *Argus*, 1 December 1954, p. 5, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article23441888>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [83] 'New ALP calling 37 to fight state seats', *Argus*, 9 April 1955, p. 5, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article71875403>>, accessed 1 September 2015. At the state election in May 1955, Barry led the new ALP (Anti-Communist) Party against Cain – child welfare was not a prominent part of its campaign policies, although Barry did promise to provide finance 'to abolish the worst features of Pentridge gaol'; see 'What he promised', *Argus*, 7 May 1955, p. 1, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article71880976>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [84] Osmar White enlisted in the AIF in 1941 but was 'man-powered out' by Sir Keith Murdoch to become a war correspondent, according to Garrie Hutchinson. See the blog post 'Osmar White', 19 March 2013, in *Remember Them*, available at <<http://garriehutchinson.com/2013/03/19/osmar-white/>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [85] Beechworth Mental Hospital was criticised as a 'dumping ground' in the Stoller Report on mental health facilities and needs of Australia, released in May 1955. 'Dr Stoller shocked by mental hospitals: Victoria best-equipped, but still short of desirable standards', *Age*, 9 May 1955, p. 5.
- [86] Osmar White, 'To find this girl shelter State brands her INSANE', *Herald*, 30 April 1955, p. 17. All articles from the *Herald* in 1955 cited in this article were accessed as newspaper cuttings in Series 4/10 of the Teresa Wardell Collection at University of Melbourne Archives.
- [87] On 'moral panic', see Judith Bessant, 'Described, measured and labelled: Eugenics, youth policy and moral panic in Victoria in the 1950s', *Journal of Australian Studies*, Issue 31, 1991, pp. 8–28.
- [88] *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- [89] Osmar White, 'Jill, the certified girl, gets home offers', *Herald*, 2 May 1955.

- [90] 'Tragic story stirs social workers: Church heads call for action on "Jill"', *Herald*, 5 May 1955.
- [91] Norval Morris, 'Jill's story HAD to be told', *Herald*, 8 July 1955.
- [92] Osmar White, 'New outburst means ... Jill inquiry must go further', *Herald*, 25 May 1955.
- [93] 'Girl who was branded insane: Ministers issue statement on "Jill"', *Herald*, 3 May 1955.
- [94] 'Osmar White answers ministers: Inquiry urged into Jill's plight', *Herald*, 4 May 1955, p. 7.
- [95] "'I did all I could": Galvin', *Herald*, 6 May 1955.
- [96] 'Ex-minister says: Change to mental law needed', *Herald*, 4 May 1955, p. 3.
- [97] "'Jill doing well at Beechworth" – says official statement', *Herald*, 17 May 1955.
- [98] 'The "Jills" need help', *Herald*, 18 May 1955.
- [99] 'Doctor says: Jill is charming, worth saving', *Herald*, 28 May 1955.
- [100] "'Jill" is out of danger', *Herald*, 3 June 1955.
- [101] 'Jill's story HAD to be told', *Herald*, 8 July 1955.
- [102] 'Jill back in Beechworth', *Herald*, 7 July 1955.
- [103] Osmar White, 'Life began and ended in tragedy', *Herald*, 10 September 1955.
- [104] 'Jill, the girl of tragedy, is dead', *Argus*, 10 September 1955, p. 1, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article71694486>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [105] 'Life began and ended in tragedy'.
- [106] 'Jill asked: "Why have I been forsaken?"', *Argus*, 6 December 1955, p. 1, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article71784380>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [107] 'She'll keep up Jill fight', *Argus*, 12 December 1955, p. 5, available at <<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/71785803>>, accessed 1 September 2015. My research in the print media, the Chief Secretary's correspondence or in VPRS 8787 – Alphabetical Subject Index to General Correspondence Files (Mental Health) has found no evidence of any inquiry instigated by Marjorie McDonald in 1956.
- [108] 'Incompetence, brutality alleged. Social worker assails ward's handling, death', *Age*, 12 December 1955, p. 3.
- [109] 'What was Jill's problem?', *Argus*, 24 December 1955, p. 4, available at <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article71788274>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
- [110] 'To the editor: social worker defends "Jill"', *Herald*, 19 December 1955.
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‘... From squalor and vice to virtue and knowledge ...’

The rise of Melbourne’s Ragged School system

Amber Graciana Evangelista

“... From squalor and vice to virtue and knowledge ...”: the rise of Melbourne’s Ragged School system;
Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria, issue no. 14, 2015. ISSN 1832-2522.
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Abstract

The responses of Melbourne’s philanthropists to increasing levels of poverty and illiteracy among the urban poor in the late Nineteenth Century are well documented. However, studies of Melbourne’s early charity movements often view the movements through a local and secular lens, and the links between charity movements in Melbourne and Britain are yet to be thoroughly explored. Similarly, most histories of Melburnian charities give little attention to their religious roots, although as in Britain these were extensive. One important Melbourne charity, the Hornbrook Ragged School Association, has not received any significant attention and its international and religious roots have not yet been explored. My article examines the motivations and nature of this association, which provided free schooling to Melbourne’s destitute children, from as early as 1859. It does so in order to demonstrate how strongly British Evangelical charity movements influenced those in Melbourne. Specifically, through an in-depth study of the Hornbrook Ragged Schools I aim to demonstrate how British Evangelical charity movements directly influenced the establishment and management of Melbourne’s charity movements. Drawing attention to new sources including school registration files and annual reports, this article provides a short history of the Hornbrook Ragged School Association, and case studies of Hornbrook Ragged Schools in the ‘Little Lon’ district, Collingwood and Prahran. In doing so it documents the influence the British Evangelical charity

movement exerted over one of Melbourne’s most popular charities and aims to situate Melbourne’s own unique Ragged School movement in an international and ideological context.

In 1859, Hester Hornbrook, an elderly Evangelical philanthropist, established Melbourne’s first Ragged School on Cambridge Street, Collingwood. At first glance, Hester was an unlikely founder for what was perhaps Australia’s most focused and tightly organised Ragged School system. She was an aged woman ‘without riches, without position, without influence, without a party’, yet strong, determined devotion to her religion motivated her to establish Melbourne’s Ragged School system. Hornbrook was elderly; at the time of the establishment of her first school she was 74 years-of-age, and was considered to have ‘attained an age far beyond that ordinarily allotted to mankind’.[1] She was also not particularly wealthy. A woman of ‘slender means’,[2] Hornbrook’s total estate did not exceed £500.[3] Although this appears to make her an unlikely philanthropist, as a devout Anglican and disciple of Melbourne’s Evangelical movement, Hester’s zealous involvement in Melbourne’s voluntary charity movement was to be expected.



Portrait of Hester Hornbrook, date Unknown, Colonel Percival Dale, *Loving Service in Our Community: 1855–1862*, Melbourne City Mission, Carlton, Vic., circa 1963. Courtesy Melbourne City Mission.

Very little else is known about Hornbrook. Although she founded Melbourne's Ragged School movement and played a central role in the establishment of several significant charities, as well as in the development of Melbourne's education system, Hester Hornbrook is noticeably absent in most histories of Melbourne, particularly accounts of Melburnian philanthropy and education. She is also absent from the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Roslyn Otzen, one of the very few to acknowledge her, notes 'there is scarcely a trace of her left for the historian to find'.^[4] Perhaps due to her modesty – though more likely, due to her gender – the only remaining references to Hornbrook are found in annual reports, pamphlets, and in the obituaries published after her death. Charity work was considered a worthy and acceptable activity for middle class and wealthy women to undertake. Understandings of gender at the time cast women as motherly and caring; as a result women were viewed as the ideal candidates to carry out ennobling welfare work.^[5]

Before establishing the schools that bore her name, Hornbrook devoted her time to voluntary work as a member of Melbourne's Evangelical movement. The movement placed particular emphasis on the importance of conversion and 'evangelistic activism', which was undertaken with fervour through charity work.^[6] For Evangelicals, charity work was viewed as a means to fulfil one's Christian duty of compassion and unconditional love for others, while simultaneously fulfilling the duty to guide others from sinfulness

and condemnation towards a path of forgiveness and ascension.^[7] Following the lead of London Evangelicals, Melbourne's Evangelicals placed particular significance on the use of charity to improve the lives of the social underclass through spiritual revival.^[8] It was believed that bringing individuals under 'kindly Christian instruction' could in turn bring about social and moral change.^[9] For Hornbrook, this culminated in her establishment of eight Ragged Schools in Collingwood, Prahran and Melbourne's CBD.

To British Evangelicals, Melbourne represented a modern-day Gomorrah in need of salvation^[10] Poverty and destitution were, in the eyes of Nineteenth-Century Evangelical philanthropists, the consequence of personal moral deficiencies. Melbourne's inhabitants were seen to be threatened by 'the temptations, the depravity, the suffering, the crime, the vile associations of a great city'.^[11] According to Davison and Dunstan's study of early Melburnian outcasts, these attitudes stemmed from the moralistic assumption that one was responsible for one's own fate. Swain supports this notion, observing that attitudes were 'socially regressive', and the poor were seen as being somehow 'responsible for their own fate'.^[12]

The poverty that affected many Melburnian families was then considered largely the consequence of poor decisions and moral depravity.^[13] It was perceived as a potentially contagious plague of the body, soul and mind; a foul 'condition' synonymous with disease and ill health.^[14] Contemporaneous writings explained that poverty was the condition of those '... living in unwholesome ways, hatching crimes, breeding vice, propagating disease and creating a foul atmosphere ...'^[15] From the view point of Evangelicals, if individuals were brought to God and transformed, many of the 'symptoms' of destitution and poverty could be treated.^[16] It was believed that 'ignorance, vice, and poverty go hand in hand'.^[17] This attitude towards poverty, which O'Brien and Dickey portray as rooted in judgement and condescending in nature, fuelled the belief that education in the word of God could attend to the 'temporal and eternal welfare' of the lowest classes.^[18] Dickey and O'Brien both conclude that these attitudes failed to address poverty's structural causes.^[19] Instead, reflective of a dogmatic confidence in their theology, Evangelicals believed that if they could simply return Melbourne's lost sheep to the flock, so to speak, poverty and vice would be drastically reduced. As a devout Anglican and prominent member of the Melbourne Evangelical movement, it is not surprising then that Hester Hornbrook saw it as her Christian duty to provide relief to Melbourne's destitute by bringing them under so-called 'kindly Christian care' and instruction.

The Hornbrook Ragged Schools

Hornbrook's motivations for establishing her Ragged Schools provides valuable insight into what drove philanthropists in her time. Although very little is known about Hester Hornbrook, records attesting to her devotion to Evangelical theology are numerous. As a strict Evangelical, Hornbrook could be considered a typical mid-Nineteenth-Century Melburnian philanthropist. Since 1850 Melbourne's charity movement had followed the lead of those in London, where Evangelicalism dominated.[20] Between 1850 and 1860 small numbers of local Evangelical colonists began to recruit ordained Evangelical clergy from Britain, through the assistance of Charles Perry, Bishop of Victoria. At the same time, newly-arrived British immigrants brought with them the evangelical traditions of home.[21] This dual pressure, exerted from below through local colonists, and from above from members of authority such as Perry, resulted in a strong Evangelical culture among Melbourne Anglicans. [22] As was the case in London, this centred around a heavy emphasis on charity.

As a devoted Evangelical, Hornbrook conducted regular relief work among Melbourne's urban poor. According to newspaper accounts, by 1854 this work inspired in her a deep concern for what she perceived as increasing destitution and declining religious knowledge. In response, accompanied by other Evangelical philanthropists, including renowned Scottish Evangelical and temperance movement leader Dr John Singleton and his wife Isabella Singleton, Hornbrook drew further inspiration from a key British Evangelical institution – the London City Mission. Catherine Waterhouse, in a commissioned history of the Melbourne City Mission (MCM), notes that together, these Evangelical philanthropists agreed that a mission was 'much required'. [23] In early July 1854, at a meeting of six hundred Melbourne philanthropists, Dr Perry and Henry Langlands described to the audience the ways in which Melbourne could take inspiration from the workings of the London City Mission and the British City Mission model. [24] At these meetings the Melbourne City Mission, based on the London City Mission model, was established, with Hornbrook heading the Ladies Melbourne and Suburban Mission. [25] In their discussion of the MCM, Singleton and Hornbrook regularly referenced the London City Mission model. It seems that even across vast distances and without any direct means of communication, London's Evangelical movement had continued to exert a direct influence on the charitable endeavours of Australia's philanthropists.

At this time, philanthropic endeavours drew almost entirely from English models; indeed it was from another British charity that Hester Hornbrook drew inspiration

for a solution to the proliferation of poor children without religious education. Since 1845, concerned London missionaries, middle-class well-doers and members of the charitable aristocracy, had tackled the same issue through the introduction of a network of free 'Ragged Schools', a term coined by RS Starey, who became the Ragged School Union treasurer, because it 'forcibly and tritely expressed the low character and condition of the pupils, so thoroughly depraved in mind and ragged in apparel'. [26] Members of the London City Mission had established several day schools for 'the lowest poor' to provide '... gratuitous instruction to children of the poor who have no other way of learning to read the word of God ...' [27] The establishment of these schools demonstrate Dickey and O'Brien's conclusions that Evangelical charities' 'essential aim was religious', and therefore failed to greatly challenge social or structural causes of poverty. [28] Although the London Ragged Schools aimed to provide a place of education for those children who 'from their poverty or ragged condition, are prevented attending any other place of religious instruction', their primary purpose was to convert and elevate those poor who lacked religious education. [29] Driven by their fervent belief in the importance of this work, over the course of thirteen years 352 schools – including Sunday schools, day schools and evening schools – were established, and provided basic and scriptural education to over 21,500 scholars. [30] The cause was enthusiastically sponsored by numerous influential public figures including the Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Charles Dickens. [31] It is perhaps not surprising then that such a well-known and well-loved Evangelical movement influenced Evangelical philanthropists in Australian colonies.

Victoria was not the only place in Australia to follow the example of Britain's Ragged School Union (RSU), nor was it the first. Hobart Town in Van Dieman's Land was in fact the first place to adopt a Ragged School network of its own, just under a decade after Britain's RSU was established. Founded in 1854, the Hobart Town Ragged School Association provided free schooling for over 4000 children by the end of the 1860s. [32] Melbourne was the next Australian city to adopt the Ragged Schools model in 1859, followed closely by Sydney, where in 1862 a Ragged School system was established in The Rocks. [33] Although the Australian movements all indirectly grew from the British RSU within less than a decade, none of the Australian movements were alike. The movements of Hobart, Sydney and Melbourne were entirely independent. Each were organised by separate organisations and did not communicate or collectively organise. Each of these three Australian Ragged Schools movements, then, has its own unique story that deserves its own telling.

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To return to Melbourne, the history of the Victorian Ragged School Network begins with Hester Hornbrook's work with the Melbourne City Mission. The origins of Victoria's Ragged Schools can tell us much about what motivated philanthropists, and in what values their actions were rooted. The Hornbrook Ragged Schools were profoundly religious in their motivation, and their direction was driven by British Evangelicalism. Demonstrating how the schools arose from Evangelicalism allows for a broader view of Melbourne's Ragged School system, and places the system in an international and religious context. The manner in which Hornbrook established the first school is testament to this. Deeply involved in the workings of the new Melbourne City Mission, it was from one of the MCM missionaries, newly-arrived Joseph Greathead, that Hornbrook drew inspiration to introduce the Ragged School system to Melbourne.[34] As an Evangelical missionary, Greathead meticulously recorded his daily work visiting local homes, and quickly began to lament to his peers about the lack of religious knowledge among the city's younger generations.[35] He perceived tragedy in the laneways and streets of Collingwood, children ran about poorly fed and poorly clothed, uneducated in the word of God and with little prospect of a decent life ahead of them. However, to Greathead, worse still was the fact that the children of Collingwood lacked any means to better their spiritual situation: 'They cannot read, have no idea of the way of Salvation'.[36] In true Evangelical manner, Greathead was more struck by the children's godlessness than by their material poverty.

Greathead's emphasis on the children's lack of religious schooling over their physical wellbeing is demonstrative of an attitude commonly adopted by Melburnian philanthropists. Typically, philanthropists positioned moral deficiencies over physical hardship or material deprivations as issues of concern. Although these attitudes have been extensively investigated in relation to other charities by historians such as Swain, Otzen and O'Brien, there has not yet been any exploration of the role they played in the establishment of what was potentially Australia's largest and most organised Ragged School network, a system that played an important role in the development of Victoria's education system. For Greathead, his Evangelical perception of poverty led him to seek help in providing impoverished children with what he viewed as a solution to their condition – an education in scripture. As president of the mission that employed him, Hornbrook was regularly exposed to Greathead's concern for the children of Collingwood and took it upon herself to find a remedy. [37] It is important to note here that rather than assist these children through the provision of practical skills and education, in accordance with Evangelical tradition

and the beliefs of the MCM, both Greathead and Hornbrook viewed religious education as the best, and only, complete solution to poverty.

It is difficult to pinpoint exactly when the term 'Ragged School' was first adopted by Hornbrook and her assisting philanthropists. However, as a prominent Melbourne City Mission member and founder who demonstrated close knowledge of the London City Mission model, it is very likely that Hornbrook was aware of the name of the school system that was so closely linked to the London City Mission.[38] Thomas A'Beckett, a patron of the schools and registrar of the Melbourne Anglican Diocese, remarked several years later at a general meeting that the term 'Ragged' was simply 'one of those good things ... borrowed from England'.[39] This adoption of the British name provides another important clue as to the close links between the Melbourne and British movements, while the presence of influential Anglican Church members in the movement points to the movement's clear Evangelical links. At the time of the establishment of the Hornbrook schools, which occurred under the direction of Bishop Perry, the Melbourne Anglican church was distinctly Evangelical.[40]

However, although profoundly religious in their motivations, the schools did provide an important service. Prior to the introduction of Ragged Schools poor children had few means to secure an education. Students were required to pay a weekly fee for their schooling, an expense that many families could simply not afford. Those who could afford a small fee were often shunned from local schools due to their shabby appearance, lack of suitable clothes and shoes, lice and illness. It is important to bear in mind though, that although such children were the beneficiaries of the Hornbrook schools, relieving their material poverty was not the main concern of the Hornbrook system. Hornbrook, reflective of contemporary Evangelical attitudes, was more concerned with destitute children's lack of religious schooling. In the minds of Hornbrook and her contemporary philanthropists, poverty bred poverty. Immorality would spread, if religious teachings were not imparted upon the poor. Ragged Schools, then, must be viewed within the context of religious trends and attitudes to poverty. Previous studies of Australia's, and in particular Melbourne's, Ragged Schools tend to praise the inclusive nature of the schools and little attention has yet been drawn to their motivations. Far from being simple schools aimed to offer poor children a basic education and a future, the schools were far more concerned with the children's spiritual wellbeing.

Prior to the establishment of the Hornbrook system, children were sometimes able to attend Sunday school classes run by missionaries but otherwise lacked any thorough education. More concerning to Hornbrook, they completely lacked religious teachings. In response, annual reports of the organisation show that in November 1859, Hester Hornbrook, utilising her connections and fundraising abilities, opened the first Melbourne Ragged School on Smith St, Collingwood.[41] The school aimed to 'reclaim' those '... children of the very lowest class among the population – those who, from extreme poverty – the result, too often, although not always, of intemperance and vice – were unable to take advantage of the ordinary existing schools'.[42] The aim then, was to provide otherwise uneducated and godless children with a religious education, in order to prevent their further descent into poverty and depravity. Rather than provide practical skills to children who faced future unemployment and a life of poverty, the schools aimed to assist the moral and social ascendance of these children, and the protection of their souls.

was the belief in the importance of conversion. For Hornbrook and her followers, reaching the greatest possible number of potential converts was of utmost importance. As a result, the Collingwood school was an important test case which once proven provided a model that Hornbrook quickly repeated.

An analysis of how the first schools were established provides insight into the functioning of the organisation, their priorities, and their ideology. First, Hornbrook recruited local children to the Collingwood school through the assistance of Collingwood missionaries and then gained funding for the teachers' salary, books, slate and building rent by appealing for donations among the ladies of the Melbourne City Mission. The first organised financial reports of the school, dating from 1863, note that the Smith Street school cost roughly 90 pounds per year to run. Roughly 40 donors and subscribers covered these costs. The school, taught by Mrs Boyd, later relocated to Cambridge Street, and was attended by 30 to 40 students.[43] Newspaper records indicate that Hornbrook was 'speedily relieved' of the care of the Smith Street school by 'a few friends who undertook its management immediately', thus allowing Hornbrook to scout for a location for her next school. [44] Hornbrook then gathered about her a dependable committee of donors and missionaries that began meeting regularly, and was thereby able to establish eight schools before her death in 1862, several of which she played a direct role in managing.[45] As in London, missionaries played a particularly strong role in the establishment of the schools, and were recruited by Hornbrook 'to enquire into every new case of admission ...'[46] This relationship was formalised in the creation of the Hornbrook Ragged School Association (HRSA) rules which provided guidance for the committee. Rule seven noted that all 'inquiries shall be made into every new case of admission by a Member of Committee or a City Missionary ...'[47] Both the annual reports and the rulebook demonstrate the centrality of Evangelism to the organisation, and the close ties between Hornbrook's Ragged Schools and the MCM. The relationship between the two organisations was strong; the central committee of the HRSA often noted that 'the city missionaries in the various districts proved valuable assistants, seeking out and sending to the schools many poor neglected children'.[48] With the help of the MCM, Hornbrook was quickly able to fill new school rooms with more pupils.



A view of a Hornbrook Ragged School, 'Dossing it out, a picnic, interior view of classroom situated off Little Lonsdale St, Melbourne', David Syme and Co, 1884.

Schooling the 'Little pariahs' of Collingwood, Prahran and 'Little Lon'

As the first of the Hornbrook Ragged Schools, the one in Collingwood provided a proving ground for Hornbrook to refine the process of establishing and managing such a school. It was vital to Hornbrook's Evangelicalism that the system be geographically spread so that the number of children 'converted' within Ragged Schools could be maximised. Central to this branch of Evangelicalism

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Hornbrook focused specifically on areas of the city identified by missionaries and other Evangelical philanthropists as hotbeds of sin and depravity – areas where gambling houses, brothels and hotels were plentiful and where inhabitants suffered severe impoverishment.[49] The locations of her schools were both practically and ideologically motivated. They corresponded directly with areas where the MCM conducted its work. Schools were established in Collingwood, Prahran and the blocks surrounding Little Bourke Street and Little Lonsdale Street – areas seen as dens of sin and vice, the product of Melburnian mammon.[50] By locating her schools within missionary districts, Hornbrook could utilise home visits conducted by missionaries as a means to recruit children for the schools. According to the HRSA's central committee, Hornbrook's schools were as 'intimately concerned with the welfare of the state' as they were with its citizens. Governor of Victoria Sir Henry Barkley noted in his speech at the first annual meeting of the Hornbrook Society that it was through 'training the young in the paths of rectitude' that the moral condition of the 'lower classes' could hopefully be raised, as 'it would be a thousand pities that such a class should be allowed to establish themselves here'.[51]

Under the watch of the HRSA, by late 1863 nine Hornbrook Ragged Schools were in operation. Five were located in Collingwood, the area to which Hornbrook was originally drawn. Two more functioned in Prahran, in working-class zones that were the focus of significant attention from missionaries due to the vast numbers of poor factory workers and labourers who resided in over-crowded pockets of the otherwise affluent area. [52] A further two were opened in east and west Little Bourke Street, an area well known for its slums and high crime rates. Another was established near Little Lonsdale Street, an area of the city Hornbrook, like many other philanthropists, had turned her eye to before her death. Hornbrook identified the area as a particular threat to Melbourne's morality. The home of gambling dens, brothels, hotels and immigrant housing, the neighbourhood was seen by Evangelicals as overflowing with vice and sin. Gamblers, bachelors, prostitutes and immigrants provided the Evangelicals with what they perceived as a depraved populous in need of salvation. Seen as an area in which much 'improvement' could be made, 'Little Lon' was the subject of enormous attention from Evangelicals, including Hester Hornbrook.

Following the official creation of the Hornbrook Ragged School Association, the Hornbrook schools were run according to central rules and structures strictly regulated by the association. As a result, the first accurate roll counts from the schools were collected.

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These tell us that by 1863 over 300 students were enrolled in the Hornbrook Ragged Schools and were subject to the organisation's 'efforts to reclaim and instruct the little Arabs of the streets and lanes'. An analysis of the actual numbers of enrolments provides a new insight into the success of the organisation. So far, total enrolment numbers have not been analysed or compiled. Between 1860 and 1863, enrolment numbers on the Smith Street school rolls doubled. By 1865 the total number of children attending Hornbrook Ragged Schools surpassed 800.[53] By 1870, the schools were teaching over 1000 children.[54] As a point of comparison, local state schools sharing the same district as the inner-city Hornbrook Ragged Schools were capable of providing for 1500 children.[55] The exact number of students taught at the Ragged Schools is difficult to determine, however, a rough estimation based on class enrolments gathered from records held by Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) and the HRSA's annual reports, puts the total number of children taught by the Ragged Schools between 1859 and 1872 at close to 2100.[56] This figure is calculated cautiously and errs on the conservative side. As noted at the organisation's first annual meeting, the number of enrolments did not necessarily match the number of children attending the schools. In 1863, 558 children were enrolled with the HRSA, however the organisation noted the attendance of around 900 students.[57] In light of this, the number of children who received schooling at the Hornbrook Ragged Schools could in fact be double this initial estimate. Despite these reservations and concerns, it is clear that the total number of children taught at Hornbrook Ragged Schools is significant. In the decade between 1860 and 1870, the number of destitute children in Melbourne averaged around 10,000.[58] Of these, 15% received an education provided by the Victorian Government.[59] The estimate demonstrates that during its most successful years, the Hornbrook schools provided education for at least a further 10% of the Victorian population of destitute children. This increases the estimated percentage of destitute children in schools to at least 25%. [60] Apart from demonstrating the rapid expansion of the Hornbrook schools, this informs us of the nature of the organisation and the ideology that drove it. For Evangelicals, increasing the number of conversions to the faith was of primary importance, to save as many souls from the spiritual corruption that manifested itself as poverty.

Additionally, these important numbers demonstrate that at this time the state education system for destitute children was inadequate. In areas such as Collingwood, Little Lon and Prahran, the number of uneducated children was far higher than other localities. It was in these areas that the HRSA focused with great fervour. That the HRSA were able to reach such high levels of enrolment can tell us two things. Firstly, that need for free schools was real; wherever a school was opened there was no shortage of attending students. Secondly, it could also simply demonstrate the intense dedication Evangelicals had to their work. Perhaps rather than being the result of extreme need, high enrolment levels may be indicative of the fact that missionaries and HRSA volunteers were intensely devoted and effective recruiters. We do know that because of their devotion to their creed – which emphasises conversion and recruitment – HRSA and MCM volunteers did not work simply because they were driven by compassion, but because such work was considered their Christian duty.

Prahran and Cumberland Place

The brief previous studies of Melbourne Ragged Schools that were conducted in the 1980s did not analyse the Prahran school, nor did they make use of the wealth of information stored in the records of closed government schools held by PROV. These records, which have previously received scant historical attention, allow an in-depth case study of a Ragged School, and provide an insight beyond that of the HRSA records. Extensive records about the Prahran Ragged School can be found among these files. One of the earlier and more successful schools, the Prahran Ragged School is a good example of how Evangelical ideology governed the running of the school. It first opened its doors in 1862, in a pocket of the suburb identified by MCM missionaries as an area of concern, and maintained strong links to the MCM. Ties to the MCM were vital to the maintenance of the HRSA's Evangelical vision; the schools relied heavily on local missionaries, not only to source new students, but to assist with the imparting of Evangelical ideology upon their enrolled students. This is particularly noticeable in the case of the Prahran Ragged School. Within a year of its opening, a local mission was established nearby, and its missionary Mr Smith took an active role recruiting local children to the school.[61] By the end of the year, the Hornbrook Ragged School Association reported that at this school '13 of the children can read the Bible; 20 are in the Second Sequel; 8 are writing in copy books; 20 on slates;

14 can sew pretty well; 4 are learning to darn'.[62] The children were 'greatly attached to their teacher'.[63] School registration documents held by PROV reveal that the school's teacher, Ms Brown, remained in the school for over 40 years.[64] Ms Brown supplemented the school's Evangelical teachings in a manner that was not typical of the other Hornbrook schools. Alongside strict scriptural teachings, she worked to establish a library for the students and their parents and often sourced toys such as balls, bats and on one occasion a rocking horse.[65]

According to documents held at PROV the school moved location several times in its early years, and is listed at various times in Earl Street, Duke Street and Eastbourne Street, all of which are in the same block between Hornby and Chapel streets. One of its last relocations placed it in a cold and draughty 24 by 36 ft brick hall at 45 Eastbourne Street. Unlike the other Hornbrook schools, until its closure in 1910 it bore the name 'Hornbrook Scripture Reading School' in reflection of its religious objectives, and continued to teach scripture classes.[66] It abided strictly by the Ragged School's primary objective: 'the gearing in, and instructing in the Word of God'.[67] The PROV records indicate that the school retained its religious teachings until its closure in 1910, demonstrating the endurance of the HRSA's Evangelical motivation. Although the Prahran school's purported aim was to provide education to children, its primary goal was religious. School registration documents indicate that it operated until 1910 for an average of 40 pupils per day, making it one of the longest enduring Hornbrook Ragged Schools. Significantly, it is the only one of the Hornbrook Ragged Schools that has a direct link to the present; in reference to local history a childcare centre located on one of the original sites on Earl Street continues to bear the name 'Hornbrook'.

PROV also holds records relating to another of the early schools, situated near Lonsdale Street, which provides another excellent insight into how Evangelical attitudes towards charity and poverty were put to use in the establishment of the Hornbrook schools. School registration documents show that Hornbrook Scripture School no. 815 was established soon after Hester Hornbrook's death in late 1862, and quickly gained particular praise and attention due to its 'good work' in one of Melbourne's most notorious slums. Located at 37 Cumberland Place in a small timber building, behind Little Lonsdale Street and near McCormack Place in the infamous Little Lon district, the school was a favourite example of how the 'good influence' of religion and charity could be exercised in what was perceived as a lowly area. The Hornbrook Ragged School Association regularly reported the 'good influence the school has been found to exercise in the neighbourhood'. To the HRSA, if the work of the school was spilling into the local neighbourhood, their goal to elevate the lower classes was being achieved. However, HRSA documents fail to note that there were a total of five state schools functioning in the same area, many of which offered programs for destitute children. After 1872, all of these schools were officially opened to destitute children and provided free education to members of all classes. Regardless of this, the HRSA city school continued to operate, citing a lack of religious teachings in local state schools as the reason for their continuance.

The HRSA's Evangelical concern over the moral standing of the citizens of the city 'slums' made the city schools popular among proponents of the organisation. Located near Chinatown, the area was home to children from a wide variety of backgrounds, including Chinese, Italian and 'Syrian' – a term once used to describe any Arabic-speaking person or community. The Hornbrook Ragged School Association saw the locality as a dangerous one, full of gambling dens, brothels and hotels. Establishing a school there was seen as an excellent opportunity to elevate the moral and religious character of some of inner Melbourne's lowest inhabitants. These attitudes demonstrate the fundamental ideology behind the HRSA; that poverty is the result of moral depravity, and if morally elevated through schooling in scripture, symptoms of poverty could be drastically reduced. Poverty was perceived by the HRSA as a dirty, immoral condition, and education was viewed as a tool for salvation. Religious education was a means to elevate the lower classes; the HRSA's charity was not primarily the result of kind-hearted compassion, but of a dogmatic Evangelical belief system.

Located in the midst of the city's 'slum' district, the HRSA were particularly enthusiastic about the Cumberland Place school. A large portion of the organisation's funds and attention were directed at this school, which was located near a brothel and a local pub. Due to the HRSA's concern for the locality, the school was one of the longest lasting and remained operational until 1907. [68] The school continued to function even after the advent of the *Education Act 1872*, which introduced free, compulsory education for all children in Victoria. This was due to the HRSA's strong belief in the locality's need for a pillar of moral strength to ensure at least some local children received religious schooling. However, conditions at the school were poor. The 1877 Royal Commission of Enquiry into the State of Public Education in Victoria described the school as situated 'in an alley, and the children are often taught in the road for want of room inside'. [69] Worse still, '[n]ot long ago two Chinese brothels were opened hard by, and the children could watch the customers going in and out during the class-work'. [70] It is not surprising then, that in the years following the wide-spread introduction of local state schools, enrolments at the HRSA school dwindled as parents began to favour state-run schools over the religious teachings of the Hornbrook school. As a result of poor enrolments, at the turn of the century the school had passed into the hands of the sisters of the Church of England Mission to Streets and Lanes, and reportedly had only nine scholars in attendance. [71] Although its official name became the 'St George Mission Hall' the school continued to be commonly known as 'the Hornbrook School'. [72] PROV school records show that in February 1912 an inspection by the Public Health Department deemed the original building 'quite unsuited for day school purposes' due to 'unsatisfactory lighting, the total want of ventilation and other defects'. [73] As a result the building was demolished and a brick school was built in its place. This had further impact upon the school's popularity. The HRSA gave up management of the school and it was re-registered under the name 'St George's Day School' upon re-opening in August 1912. The school continued to operate with approximately twenty students until its final closure in 1925.

Little Lonsdale St.,
Melbourne.

to the Registrar of the
Education Department.

Dear Sir,

School No. 815 has at present
been registered under the name
of the Hornbrook Free Scripture School.
The Hornbrook Association gave
the building a land to this Mission
a year or so ago; we have pulled
down the old building, built a
new one; and should be obliged
if you will change the name to
St. George's Day School, and add
as the proprietor "The Sister Superior
of this Mission -
Hoping that this can be accomplished
without trouble I am, yours faithfully,
Sister Superior
Aug: 19th 1912.

Letter dated 19 August 1912 requesting the Department of Education change the name of school no. 815, from Hornbrook Free Scripture School to St George's Day School, PROV, VPRS 10300/P0, Unit 14, School No. 815, St George's Mission Hall, Spring St.

'A Ragged School without the name'

As well as establishing a network of free schools, the Hornbrook Ragged School system exerted significant influence on the workings of other charities. Several organisations adopted the model and ideology imported by Hornbrook, and established their own 'Ragged Schools', although they did not enjoy the success and repute of the Hornbrook schools, mainly because they failed to gather donations and subscriptions, as the main benefactors were already supporting the Hornbrook schools. However, the model was replicated several times in the late Nineteenth Century. Fashioned in a similar manner as the Hornbrook schools, the 'Latrobe St Ragged School Mission' and 'Ragged Boy's Home' opened

in 1895.[74] After changing hands to the St Johns Church on Lonsdale Street, and again in 1907, this time to the Sisters of the Church of England Mission to Streets and Lanes, the school operated for another 15 years under the sort of model popularised by the Hornbrook Ragged School Association. Students came from 'hard-working' poor families, and were taught commercial skills and assisted in finding employment upon completion of their studies.[75] As Victorian state education became more accessible, the need for schools such as these diminished. Those who did attend these schools were often orphans, or the children of parents who failed to send their children to local state schools. However, by 1922 the benefactors of St Johns were struggling with the upkeep of the school and it was referred to the Public Health Department for demolition due to its 'unsatisfactory ... general sanitary state'.[76] Due to the presence of more efficient state schools nearby, rather than rebuilding, St Johns was struck from the registers and the thirty children attending were dismissed.[77]

Latrobe Street Ragged School Mission
And Ragged Boys' Home, No. 161,
MELBOURNE, Near Exhibition St.

7th December 1895.

To the Town Clerk
Melbourne

Dear Sir,

Will you kindly oblige us by granting us permission to have flags suspended across Latrobe Street on Monday 9th December 1895 on the occasion of the Official Opening of the Ragged Boys' Home by Lady Brassey.

Sincerely thanking you in expectation
I remain
Yours sincerely
W. Minton
Hon. Superintendent

7-12-95
Ragged School Mission
Melbourne

Letter from William Minton, Hon. Superintendent, Latrobe Street Ragged School Mission, to the City of Melbourne Town Clerk dated 7 December 1895, regarding the opening of the Ragged Boy's Home PROV, VPRS 3181/P0 Town Clerk's Files, Series I, Unit 862, Item 1895/4057.

The success enjoyed by Hornbrook Ragged School Association also influenced several other church groups and charities beside the Lonsdale Street Ragged School Mission to adapt the model. The earliest non-Hornbrook Ragged School was established on Little Bourke Street – quite close to a Hornbrook school – in 1860. [78] The ‘Gospel Mission Hall’ School, taught by James Ellis worked on the same model as the first of the Hornbrook schools, and was established one year after the first Hornbrook Ragged School. A ‘Ragged School without the name’, children at Gospel Hall received daily free meals and school hours were flexible, in order to provide for students who were required to work or beg. [79] Soon after its establishment the school was taken over by the Department of Education and became known as the local government-run Ragged School. That the Department of Education saw the merit of a free school system for destitute children goes some way to demonstrate that at some point there was a need for the Hornbrook schools, and that the provision of free schooling was considered a noble and necessary cause. However a published critique of the school noted that although celebrated with ‘a great flourish of trumpets’ and self congratulation, the model it was based upon was ‘clumsy and very expensive’.[80]

The case of the Gospel Hall School has not yet been included in studies of Ragged Schools, however it does demonstrate how the ideas behind the HRSA permeated popular society and even into the state government. The HRSA model was considered effective and necessary enough to be replicated by the Victorian Department of Education. School records held by PROV provide fascinating details into the day-to-day running of the school, which functioned in a similar manner to the Hornbrook schools, yet without its central organisation and large support network. Regardless of this, the school was well attended, and by 1872 the school’s daily attendance averaged 130 students. Although Gospel Hall did not provide religious teaching like Hornbrook, Ellis was motivated by a desire to elevate the children of the destitute.[81] He viewed his work as able to ‘mark [sic] them respectable and make them victorious in the afterlife’.[82] Like members of the HRSA, he was rather judgmental of the character of his students and their families. In 1878 James Ellis wrote to the Department of Education to report that several of his students were residing in a house that was ‘a resort for low women’.[83]

Roll No. 1192 Dated 18 July 1878.
Registered 21 July 1878.
78 | 2363
H.O. Little Bourke St 1192
States that certain children live in a brothel.
Recommend that action be taken —
Refer this to the Chief Commissioner of Police & inform the teacher — W.M. 21.7.78.

ough to let the authorities know the particulars of the case these two children I have then requested you would confer a boon to them & perhaps be the means of making them respectable & independent in their after life.
I have been to the Court four or five times but the present P.N.'s are not nearly so effectual as the late C.P. Stuart Esq. I refuse to allow the case to come on
I am
Yours
James Ellis.
Rev Mr Chase has also been to the house & can give an acc of what he heard. He was quite shocked at their conversation

James Ellis informing the Department of Education about the living arrangements of students (in brothels), PROV, VPRS 640/PO Central Inward Primary Schools Correspondence, Unit 766, School No. 1192, file cover above, letter below.

Upon reporting the matter to the police, Ellis was dismayed that the officers 'did not go to the house for the purpose of assessing the children, but any women that they should happen to know'.^[84] Ellis, in letters to the Department of Education also described students' parents as 'generally drunk', 'well known loafers' and 'well known prostitutes', and registered his concern that several of his students resided in a stable only '12ft by 10ft' and were in the habit of 'running about naked'.^[85] Ellis stood firm in the belief that the students and their parents were lesser individuals, occasionally writing to the Department of Education to urge legal action upon families and for the removal of children who he deemed 'not fit subjects for the school'.^[86] Ellis's descriptions of his students mirror the attitudes towards the poor adopted by many of early Melbourne's philanthropists. Poverty was the result of depravity and vice, consequently those who did not seek to better themselves were to be looked down upon.

A slow decline

After two decades of successful operations, changes in Victoria's education and welfare systems in the late Nineteenth Century reduced Melbourne's need for a Ragged School system. In 1872 Victoria's Education Act introduced a new system of free, compulsory and secular education for all children. Theoretically, this meant that destitute children were no longer barred from state schools and now had equal access to state education. As a result, members of the public who had so passionately supported the Hornbrook Ragged Schools soon began to withdraw their support. After the introduction of the Education Act, destitute families were now – at least in theory – able to send their children to local state schools. All state schools now provided free education and were open to children of all classes and backgrounds. As a result many practically-minded supporters of the HRSA no longer saw the need for the Hornbrook schools and withdrew their financial support. Within a year of the introduction of the 1872 Act, subscription numbers and donations had noticeably declined from over 1000 pounds to just under 300.^[87] The HRSA also began to see a slow decline in enrolments. Families who had enrolled their children at Hornbrook schools were now able to send their children to larger state schools. This proved a challenge for the Hornbrook schools. In an analysis of the Hornbrook schools, John Stanley James, better known by his pen name 'Vagabond', astutely noted that when a state schoolhouse was built, 'the higher education given there caused parents to remove their children from institutions where the boys, at least, learnt

little else but texts'.^[88] However, members of the HRSA were alarmed by the increase of secular schooling. In their eyes, education in literacy and numeracy only addressed half the problem. To them, religious education was the element that would save the poor. Secular in nature, state school education was therefore considered inadequate. At a general meeting to address the issue, HRSA member Reverend Vanoe declared that 'to accept a national system without religion would be to welcome a moral death'.^[89] James astutely noted that 'the Hornbrook Association is worked on the idea that, without a certain amount of Scripture teaching, education is of no avail'.^[90] To the HRSA, the need for Ragged Schools was just as great, without them the moral deterioration of the lower classes would continue. Unfortunately for the HRSA, public sentiment did not agree, and public support for the organisation quickly dwindled.

The economic depression experienced in Melbourne in the early 1890s briefly delayed the decline of the Hornbrook Ragged School Association, but for the most part, the Melbourne Ragged School system did not endure into the Twentieth Century. The depression of the early 1890s resulted in increased urban poverty. In this climate, faced with terrible deprivation and suffering, the Hornbrook schools adjusted their model and began to provide basic welfare, including the provision of daily meals. The schools also worked with the MCM to link student families with other charities, and provided students with clothing and boots. As a result, local families withdrew their children from state schools, which offered no comparable services. In times of desperate need, families were willing to sacrifice the quality of their children's education for a good meal. As a result, the Hornbrook schools enjoyed a brief return to popularity, matched by increased funding from those in a position to donate. However, when Melbourne's economy began to recover, parents once again withdrew their children from Hornbrook schools and re-enrolled them in state schools, which provided more thorough education.

Over the first decade of the Twentieth Century, the Hornbrook Ragged School Association dwindled in size as the majority of the schools closed. The organisation struggled to retain enrolments and funding, and eventually broke one of their central rules and began to charge fees. By 1906 only three schools remained. The organisation's most successful schools – Prahran and Cumberland Place – remained operational until 1910.

By that time, the other schools had either closed, or been handed over to local churches or the Church of England Diocese Mission of Streets and Lanes. The name of the Hornbrook Ragged School Association endured until 1912, when the group handed over ownership of their properties to the Mission of Streets and Lanes, the Free Kindergarten Union, and Melbourne City Mission. After that, only the Prahran school endured in any lasting form – the name ‘Hornbrook’ has remained attached to the Prahran school, which converted to a free kindergarten in 1910.



The Hornbrook Children's Centre and Kindergarten,
Photograph: Amber Evangelista.

The achievements of the Hornbrook Ragged School Association could be viewed as being motivated by sincere concern for the poor. However the role of religious motivation needs to be further explored. The Hornbrook Ragged Association perceived a link between poverty, sin and a lack of religious knowledge. Hornbrook schools did not seek to simply provide children with a free education in order to better their job prospects and living conditions; their primary objective was to acquaint children and families with God. Hornbrook Ragged Schools were viewed as institutions through which young souls could be saved through ‘enobling’ education. [91] It was intended that children be ‘... dragged from squalor and vice into contact with the influences of virtue’, not only to improve their future prospects, but in order to elevate their moral character.[92] The HRSA saw poverty as a disease of the soul, and worked steadily to cure children of its symptoms and to guide them from temptation. This work was conducted zealously by members of the association, who were driven by the belief that ‘training the young in the paths of rectitude’ was part of their Christian ‘duty’.[93] The first regulation listed in the Hornbrook Ragged School Association list of rules insists that in all schools the ‘primary object of

these schools shall be, the gearing in, and instructing in the Word of God’. It is also important to note that although thus motivated, the Hornbrook Ragged School Association were often very sincere in their compassion. The children of the schools received regular provisions. Aside from bibles and scripture training, on several occasions the children received clothing, boots, blankets and weekly bread.[94] Several of the HRSA teachers also sought to re-introduce play into the lives of children who often adopted adult roles in their households. The association threw annual parties and picnics, Christmas concerts and other play-dates, which were reportedly the source of great pleasure.[95] It is important to note, however, that accounts of these kindnesses were only given by the HRSA itself – there exists no record of these acts of welfare from the perspective of students or families.

While religious education was first and foremost, the Hornbrook Ragged Schools played an important role in improving the lives of their students, and their families. More significantly, the Hornbrook schools exerted considerable influence in Melbourne’s charity and education movements. However, it is important to bear in mind that the schools were the result of Evangelical beliefs. The members of the HRSA were not motivated primarily by kindness or compassion as we understand these concepts today, but by an unwavering belief in their Christian duty to provide religious education in order to relieve the symptoms of poverty and address an underlying spiritual corruption. Although ragged schools have been explored in the past, studies have failed to examine this element of the movement. This case study of the Hornbrook schools therefore seeks to introduce the schools in a new context. It is the first extensive exploration of the schools, and the first to extensively analyse the links between the organisation and Evangelicalism. It is not intended as the final word on the Hornbrook movement, but as a first, provisional exploration into the significance of Melbourne’s Ragged School system. I have drawn attention to the important role the schools played in the maintenance of contemporaneous attitudes towards poverty and changing ideas about education and philanthropy. The HRSA can serve as a useful thermometer with which to gauge the social climate surrounding poverty and education in Melbourne throughout the mid-to-late Nineteenth Century. Further research into the individual schools, the organisation, their founder, and the role of Evangelicalism is needed in order to properly situate the Melbourne Ragged School system within Melbourne’s unique history.

Endnotes

[1] 'News of the Day', *Age*, 7 January 1863, p. 4.

[2] 'Hornbrook Ragged Schools of Melbourne: To the Editor of the *Argus*', *Argus*, 24 March 1863, p. 4.

[3] Will of Hester Hornbrook, 1863, PROV, VPRS 7591/P1 Wills, Unit 15. By 1880, a shop-keeper could expect to earn roughly £400 pounds a year, while doctors, professionals and merchants earned from £600 to £2000 annually. This placed Mrs Hornbrook in the respectable middle class. Graeme Davison, *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1978, p. 191.

[4] Roslyn Otzen, 'Charity and evangelisation: the Melbourne City Mission 1854–1914', PhD Thesis, University of Melbourne, 1986, pp. 22–25, available at <<http://hdl.handle.net/11343/35580>>, accessed 10 October 2015.

[5] See Shurlee Swain, 'Negotiating Poverty: women and charity in nineteenth-century Melbourne', *Women's History Review*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 2007.

[6] Darrel Paproth, 'Evangelical Movement', entry on *eMelbourne: the city past & present*, University of Melbourne, 2008, available at <<http://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM00538b.htm>>, accessed 9 September 2015.

[7] Graham Bowpitt, 'Evangelical Christianity, Secular Humanism, and the Genesis of British Social Work', *British Journal of Social Work*, Vol. 28, No. 5, 1998, pp. 679–670; Anne O'Brien, *Poverty's Prison: Poverty in New South Wales*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1988, p. 194; Brian Fletcher, 'The Anglican Ascendancy 1788–1835', in Bruce Kaye (ed.), *Anglicanism in Australia*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2002, p. 7; Shurlee Swain, 'Do You Want Religion with That? Welfare History in a Secular Age', *History Australia*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 2005, p. 79.4;

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] Anne O'Brien, 'Charity and Philanthropy', *Sydney Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 2008, pp. 18–20.

[10] Brian Dickey, 'Secular Advance and Diocesan Response 1861–1900', in Bruce Kaye (ed.) *Anglicanism in Australia*, p. 52.

[11] 'State of the day', *Argus*, 14 September 1864, p. 4.

[12] Swain, 'Do You Want Religion With That?', p. 79.4; Swain, 'Negotiating Poverty', pp. 101–105.

[13] Attitudes such as this were closely tied with ideas about race and eugenics. Poverty and depravity was therefore also seen to be a condition afflicting those deemed to be racially inferior. As a result, Indigenous and Chinese populations attracted the intense interest of Evangelicals. Missionaries sought to 'save' their souls and re-educate them through often-extreme measures, the consequences of which Australian society is still coming to terms with. Stuart Piggin notes that the dedication of missionaries was 'not always matched by their wisdom... Massacres continued... [and] missions and government co-operated in "smoothing the dying pillow"' of Indigenous people, while Chinese were treated as heathens, contributing to 'another sad chapter of Australian racism'. See Stuart Piggin, *Spirit, Word and World: Evangelical Christianity in Australia*, third edition, Acorn Press, Brunswick, Victoria, 2012.

[14] Graeme Davison, 'Introduction', in Graeme Davison, David Dunstand and Chris McConville (eds), *The Outcasts of Melbourne: Essays in Social History*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1985, pp. 3–4.

[15] 'Our City Poor', *Southern Cross*, 16 October 1891, p. 5.

[16] O'Brien, 'Charity and Philanthropy', pp. 18–20.

[17] 'News of the Day', *Age*, 7 January 1863, p. 4.

[18] *Ibid.*

[19] Anne O'Brien, *Philanthropy and Settler Colonialism*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2015, p. 3; Dickey, 'Secular Advance and Diocesan Response 1861–1900', p. 52; Swain, 'Negotiating Poverty', p. 101.

[20] Stuart Piggin, 'Australian Anglicanism in a World Wide Context', in Bruce Kaye (ed.), *Anglicanism in Australia*, pp. 203–207.

[21] Piggin, *Spirit, Word and World*, pp. 14–16.

[22] *Ibid.*

[23] Catherine Waterhouse, *Going Forward in Faith: a History of Melbourne City Mission*, Melbourne City Mission, North Fitzroy, 1999, p. 25.

[24] Otzen, 'Charity', p. 22.

[25] 'Ladies' City Mission', *Age*, 12 July 1859; Waterhouse, *Going Forward in Faith*, p. 22.

[26] *Ragged School Union Magazine*, Vol. 1, Partridge & Oakley, London, 1849, pp. 55–56.

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] O'Brien, *Philanthropy and Settler Colonialism*, pp. 2–9; Brian Dickey, *No Charity There: A Short History of Social Welfare in Australia*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1987, pp. 80–81.

[29] EAG Clarke, 'The Early Ragged Schools and the Foundation of the Ragged School Union', *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1969, p. 23.

- [30] *Annual Report of the Ragged School Union*, no 13, 1857, p. 6.
- [31] Clarke, 'Early Ragged Schools', p. 16; HW Schupf, 'Education for the Neglected: Ragged Schools in Nineteenth-Century England', *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 12, No. 2, Summer 1972, p. 163.
- [32] Chris Murray, 'The Ragged School Movement in New South Wales 1860–1924', MA thesis, Macquarie University, Sydney, 1979, pp. 150–154.
- [33] *Ibid.*
- [34] Otzen, 'Charity', p. 42.
- [35] *Ibid.*
- [36] Journal of Joseph Greathead, 10 October 1854, pp. 55–57, State Library of Victoria, Manuscripts Collection, MS 9851.
- [37] Otzen, 'Charity', p. 93.
- [38] *Ibid.*
- [39] 'The Hornbrook Ragged School Association', *Age*, 9 September 1864.
- [40] Stuart Pigginn, 'Australian Anglicanism in a World Wide Context', pp. 203–207.
- [41] Technically, the school sat on the eastern boundary of Collingwood and Fitzroy. Karen Cummings refers to the school as being located in what is now Fitzroy, however Hornbrook and her ladies committee at the time defined the schools location as Collingwood. See Karen Cummings, *Bitter roots, sweet fruit: a history of schools in Collingwood, Abbotsford and Clifton Hill*, Collingwood Historical Society, Abbotsford, Victoria, 2008, p. 193.
- [42] *Annual report of the Hornbrook Ragged School Association*, Melbourne, No. 1, 1863, p. 4. This and other volumes of the HRSA annual reports cited below can be found in the State Library of Victoria, Rare Book Collection.
- [43] *Ibid.*
- [44] 'News of the Day', *Age*, 4 March 1863, p. 4.
- [45] 'News of the Day', *Age*, 7 January 1863, p. 4.
- [46] *Annual report of the Hornbrook Ragged School Association*, No. 1, 1863, p. 12.
- [47] 'Rules', in *Annual report of the Hornbrook Ragged School Association*, No. 3, 1865, p. 6.
- [48] *Annual report of the Hornbrook Ragged School Association*, No. 1, 1863, p. 10.
- [49] Otzen, 'Charity', p. 93.
- [50] Roslyn Otzen, 'The Door-Step Evangelist', in Davison, Dunstand and McConville (eds), *The Outcasts of Melbourne*, p. 115.
- [51] *Annual report of the Hornbrook Ragged School Association*, No. 1, 1863, p. 4.
- [52] Otzen, 'The Door-Step Evangelist', pp. 115–118.
- [53] *Annual report of the Hornbrook Ragged School Association*, Nos 1–3, 1863–1865, pp. 1–5 in each report.
- [54] *Ibid.*
- [55] LJ Blake (ed.), *Vision and Realisation: A Centenary History of State Education in Victoria*, Vol. 1, Education Department of Victoria, Melbourne, 1973, p. 155.
- [56] Amber Evangelista, 'Schooling Melbourne's "wretched Little outcasts": Evangelicalism and the Hornbrook Ragged Schools', Honours thesis, Monash University, 2015.
- [57] *Ibid.*
- [58] *Ibid.*
- [59] *Ibid.*
- [60] *Ibid.*
- [61] *Annual report of the Hornbrook Ragged School Association*, No. 1, 1863, p. 19.
- [62] *Ibid.*, Nos 1–2, 1863–1864, pp. 19–20 in both reports.
- [63] *Ibid.*
- [64] PROV, VPRS 10300/P1 School Files (Non-Government schools), Unit 2, School No. 86.
- [65] *Ibid.*
- [66] *Ibid.*
- [67] 'The Hornbrook Ragged Schools', *Argus*, 1 September 1863.
- [68] PROV, VPRS 10300/P1, Unit 14, School No. 815.
- [69] PROV, VPRS 1183/P0, Reports of Royal Commissions, Select Committees and Boards of Inquiry, Unit 11, Report of Royal Commission on Public Education with Appendices 1877–1878, p. 10.
- [70] *Ibid.*
- [71] 'Hornbrook Mission School', *Argus*, 29 March 1912, p. 6; Community of the Holy Name (Melbourne, Vic.), *Esther, Mother Foundress of the Community of the Holy Name*, Community of the Holy Name, Melbourne, 1949, p. 76.
- [72] PROV, VPRS 10300/P1, Unit 14, School No. 815.
- [73] *Ibid.*
- [74] PROV, VPRS 3181/P0 Town Clerk's Files, Series I, Unit 862, Item 1895/4057.
- [75] *Esther, Mother Foundress of the Community of the Holy Name*, p. 76.

[76] PROV, VPRS 10300/P0, Unit 13, School No. 748.

[77] Ibid.

[78] PROV, VPRS 640/P0 Central Inward Primary Schools Correspondence, Unit 766, School No. 1192.

[79] 'The Gospel Hall State School', *Argus*, 25 August 1876, p. 7.

[80] John Carmichael, *The Working of the Education Act*, in the *Young Victoria* series, No. 2, George Robertson Press, Melbourne, 1875, pp. 3–10.

[81] 'Ragged Schools: By a Vagabond', *Argus*, 23 January 1876, p. 4.

[82] PROV, VPRS 640/P0, Unit 766, School No. 1192.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Ibid.

[87] 'News of the Day', *Argus*, 14 September 1869, p. 4; Evangelista, 'Schooling Melbourne's "wretched Little outcasts"', pp. 29–33.

[88] John Stanley James, *The Vagabond Papers*, George Robertson Press, Melbourne, 1877, p. 158.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Ibid.

[91] 'News of the Day', *Age*, 7 January 1863.

[92] Ibid.

[93] *Annual report of the Hornbrook Ragged School Association*, No. 2, 1864, p. 3.

[94] Ibid., No. 3, 1865, p. 2.

[95] Ibid., No. 2, 1864, p. 3.

Reading the papers

The Victorian Lands Department's influence on the occupation of the Otways under the nineteenth century land Acts

Barbara Minchinton

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'Reading the Papers: the Victorian Lands Department's influence on the occupation of the Otways under the nineteenth century land Acts', *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria*, issue no. 14, 2015. ISSN 1832-2522. Copyright © Barbara Minchinton.

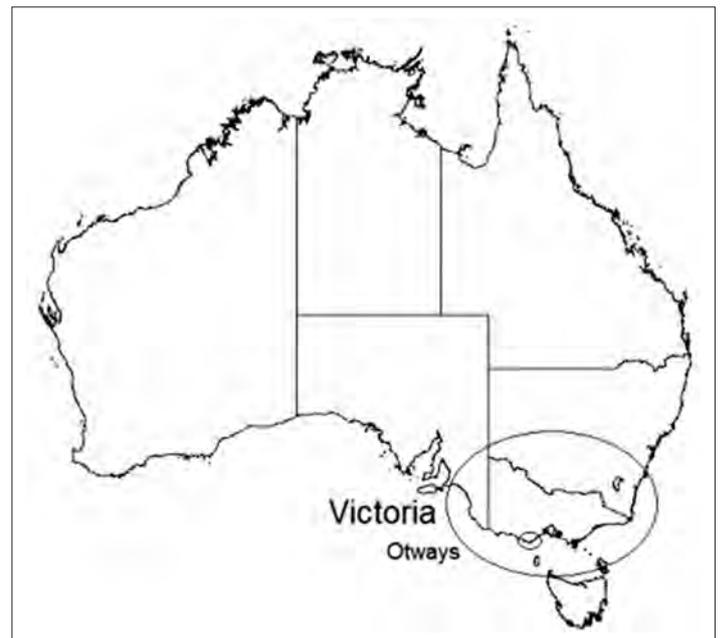
This is a peer reviewed article.

Barbara Minchinton completed her PhD on nineteenth century land selection in the Otways, Victoria, at the University of Melbourne in 2011. She is an independent researcher and a volunteer at Public Record Office Victoria, and has worked on numerous paid and unpaid projects from the archaeology of Little Lon to the transcription of nineteenth-century shipping lists and the digitisation of soldier settler records.

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Abstract

By the time Victoria's Cape Otway Forest was opened up for settlement under the land selection Acts of the late nineteenth century, the Department of Crown Lands and Survey (colloquially known as 'the Lands Department') had had administrative control over land selection in the colony for about twenty years. Even though numerous land Acts had been enacted and amended by the Victorian parliament since 1860, and a Royal Commission in 1878–79 had examined the flawed outcomes of the 1869 Act, the land Acts of 1884 and 1890 proved to be a disaster for those who took up forest land in the Otways. Research on the nineteenth-century land Acts has largely focussed on the politics surrounding the legislation and the struggles of the selectors in poor country, rather than examining the role that the Lands Department's administration played in the success or failure of the people on the land. How did the Lands Department respond to the mess unfolding in the Otways? A close examination of the department's records shows that in the beginning it clung tightly to the letter of the legislation before gradually revising its decision-making to take account of the conditions encountered on the land. The papers held by Public Record Office Victoria reveal how and why the Lands Department came to ignore some central tenets of the legislation; they also expose the mechanisms used by the department's officers to support those it regarded as bona fide land selectors.



Location of the State of Victoria and Otways in Australia.
Created by Barbara Minchinton.

Introduction

Arguments over the proper distribution of its Crown Lands began many years before the Colony of Victoria was created in 1851, and over the following decades the interests of wealthy squatters wanting to increase their pastoral holdings were pitted fiercely against those of the ex-miners and working men keen to make a home on a farm. The Nicholson Act of 1860[1] allowed the squatters to claim most of the available land. The Duffy Act of 1862 made things worse for the small-scale farmers, but even after the Grant Acts of 1865 and 1869 had effectively closed the legislative loopholes, it was common for bona fide land selectors to sell or abandon their allotments, allowing squatters to increase their already vast freehold pastoral estates, and a class of 'boss cockies' to arise among the selectors.[2] The results of the 1869 legislation were unsatisfactory enough to warrant a Royal Commission in 1878,[3] but still the push continued to make more land available for the yeomanry.[4] Unmapped forest country like that in the County of Polwarth south of Colac, however, was largely ignored; the terrain was too difficult and the forest cover too heavy for it to be attractive to selectors when easier land was still available. The *Land Act 1884* was the last of the nineteenth-century land selection Acts to make large tracts of unallocated land available for small-scale farming, and it included what previously had been the Cape Otway State Forest. A substantial area of heavily timbered country (initially about 157,000 acres, or 63,535 hectares) was made available there before survey, without infrastructure (not even access tracks), and with inevitably high set-up costs given the need for extensive clearing. About a thousand selectors took up blocks of this Otway forest land in the last two decades of the nineteenth century.

Victoria's Department of Crown Lands and Survey (known locally as 'the Lands Department') had been created in 1857, and was responsible for administering the land selection Acts; most of the Lands Department's officers were located in Melbourne, over one hundred and sixty kilometres away from the Otways. The Local Land Board met at Colac to hear applications and matters relating to forfeiture, and initial enquiries and most follow-up questions could be dealt with by the Land Officer in Geelong (half-way between Melbourne and Colac), but neither the Land Officer in Geelong nor the members of the Land Board ever went to the forest.



Location guide for the State of Victoria.
Created by Barbara Minchinton.

The fundamental goal of the administrators in Melbourne was to facilitate 'proper settlement', as Assistant Surveyor JM Reed said in 1897.[5] 'Proper settlement', however, was a matter of judgement, not legislation, and most Lands Department decisions were judged on evidence supplied to its officers in writing on pre-printed forms. In this context, the archived records of the Lands Department resemble the Dutch colonial archives as described by Ann Laura Stoler, as being,

records of uncertainty and doubt in how people imagined they could and might make the rubrics of rule correspond to a changing imperial world. Not least they record anxious efforts to 'catch up' with what was emergent and 'becoming' in new colonial situations.[6]

Events in the Otway forest took place within a colonial setting, but the 'emergent' and 'becoming' elements in the forest situation had more to do with the natural environment than the political one. The *Land Act 1884* was framed hard on the heels of the *Mallee Pastoral Leases Act 1883*,[7] and the landscape in the minds of the legislators and the bureaucrats appears to have been that of the dry, flat, red Mallee-rooted country, not the steep rainforests and deep brown mud of the Otways. When things started to go awry for the Otway selectors, it was no wonder the administrators struggled to understand – the picture in their heads did not match the ground the selectors were standing on.

Research on Victoria's nineteenth-century land Acts has largely focussed on the politics surrounding the legislation and the disjunction between the yeoman ideal (which pervaded the debates surrounding land selection) and the reality of the selectors' lives on the land.[8] While it has long been known that many selectors under the early Acts were allowed to carry arrears and aggregate family holdings in contravention of the legislation,[9] the extent to which the Lands Department actively supported the presence of resident selectors through deliberately lenient and flexible administration has not been explored. Regional histories, in fact, are far more likely to accuse the Lands Department of incompetence than to thank it for its assistance to selectors,[10] and tend to report the selectors' trials and the letters they wrote begging government officials without including the supportive response.[11] Unfortunately in this respect Raymond Wright's superb study of the Lands Department does not help to achieve balance; it was limited to the administration of public reserves, and did not include dealings between the Occupation Branch and the selectors.[12] The Occupation Branch's archived records relating to the allocation of Crown land in the Otways, however, offer an opportunity (beginning in 1879) to trace changes to administrative practices, as the administrators slowly began to acknowledge the mistakes and misapprehensions built into both the land selection legislation and their procedures. Rather than recording a logical, linear progression of improvement via well-considered strategies, these records reveal a gradual seepage of evidence into the Lands Department, and a variety of responses to the rising tide of failure.[13] Denial and inflexibility were slowly replaced by helpless awareness and haphazard adjustments, as the selectors learned to employ the battering ram of petitions and deputations to the Minister of Lands to demand change and break down his department's inertia. Administrative change, when it did come, was neither uniform nor clearly regulated. As a researcher it is not always possible to detect the point in time when changes began, or to locate the source of altered schemes of judgement. However, by surveying a great number of files and observing the patterns and timing within the file notes, and especially by unpacking the sometimes terse exchanges between the office and the field, and the Lands Department and its minister (often in the form of initialled marginalia), it is possible to piece together the Lands Department's struggle to obtain 'proper settlement'. This article shows how the administrators responded to the Otway challenge.

The papers

Each of Victoria's land Acts were accompanied by a set of regulations which provided the framework for the Lands Department's administration of the process of allocating land for occupation. These regulations had schedules appended which laid out the wording and format of the various prescribed documents and blank forms (such as applications). In addition, the Lands Department developed forms to standardise, for example, reports by Crown Lands Bailiffs, and applications for permission to ringbark.[14] The regulations, schedules and various forms relating to each land Act were applicable to all areas available for selection in Victoria, but under the *Land Act 1884* land was divided into different classes with different rules (and paperwork) for each class; the vast majority of selectors applying for Otway forest land applied first for grazing leases under section 32 (henceforth, s32) of the *Land Act 1884*. [15] An s32 lease had no residence or cultivation requirements, it only required that the lessee enclose the land with a fence within three years and keep it free of 'vermin'. At the same time, it demanded that the selectors *not* ringbark, destroy or cut down any timber upon the land without written approval from the Board of Land and Works. The Conservator of Forests (whose task was to conserve timber for commercial use, not for wilderness) ensured that such approval would not be forthcoming in the Otway forest for anything but 'crooked or unsound timber'. [16] All 'straight and sound' timber was to remain untouched, despite it being impossible to make use of the timber commercially until railway transport became available in 1903. This combination of conditions rendered a lease useless to s32 selectors in most of the Otway forest, first because land could not be used for grazing without clearing the timber, and second because fencing was impracticable. The following sections will show how the Lands Department adapted the paperwork and decisions regarding these covenants in order to support those selectors it deemed to be bona fide.



Pasture was to be created by clearing, but all 'straight and sound' timber was to remain untouched. Photograph by Barbara Minchinton.

Grazing Leases – ‘Permission to ring’

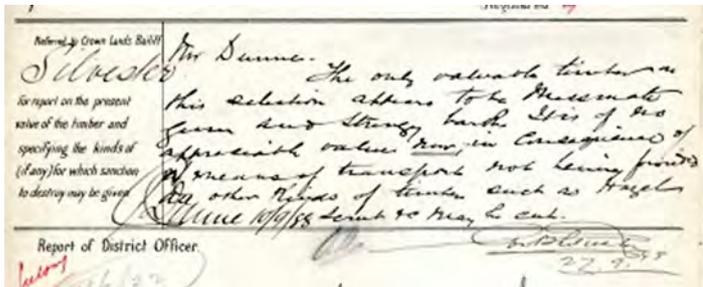
Numerous selectors wrote to the Lands Department pointing out the impossibility of grazing without clearing timber, and offering a solution:

The land is thickly covered with timber and scrub and quite destitute of grass and therefore unfit for grazing; in fact the land in its present state is quite useless. Under these circumstances therefore I would earnestly request that I may be allowed to clear fifty acres of the land ... If permission is granted I would most zealously protect the most valuable timber and would not destroy the same indiscriminately.[17]

The Crown Lands Bailiff, who travelled around the forest and knew the conditions the selectors were encountering, agreed with them and told the Lands Department so:

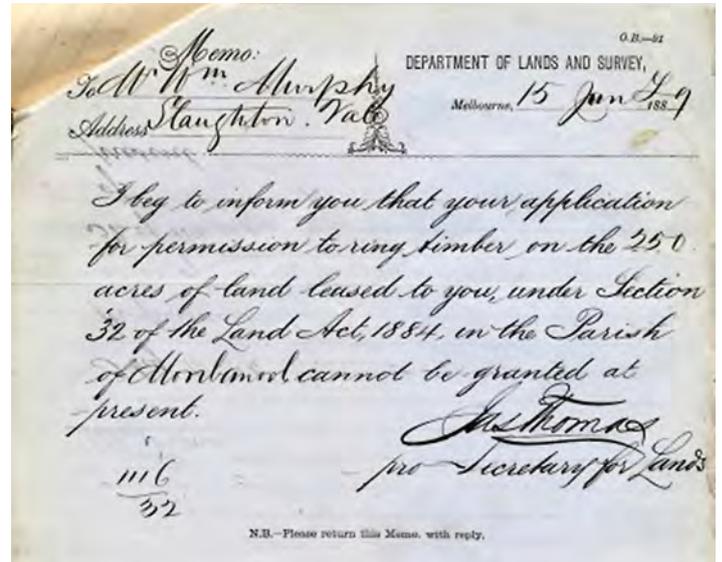
The only valuable timber on this selection appears to be Messmate Gum & Stringy bark. It is of no appreciable value now, in consequence of means of transport not being provided – all other kinds of timber such as Hazel scrub &c may be cut.[18]

The underlining of the word ‘now’, however, was not the work of the bailiff. It was added later, apparently as justification for the Lands Department ignoring the bailiff’s recommendation and refusing permission to ring timber on William Murphy’s selection.



Crown Lands Bailiff’s report, 27 September 1888 on ‘Application to destroy timber’, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5851, 2554/42 Moorbanool. This and all subsequent images of PROV collection items reproduced with the permission of the Keeper of Public Records, Public Record Office Victoria, Australia.

Requests for ‘permission to ring’ like the one from William Murphy were being received so often that the Department pre-printed a memo for the purpose of refusing them.



William Murphy, ‘Refusal of permission to ring’, 15 June 1889, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5851, 2554/42 Moorbanool.

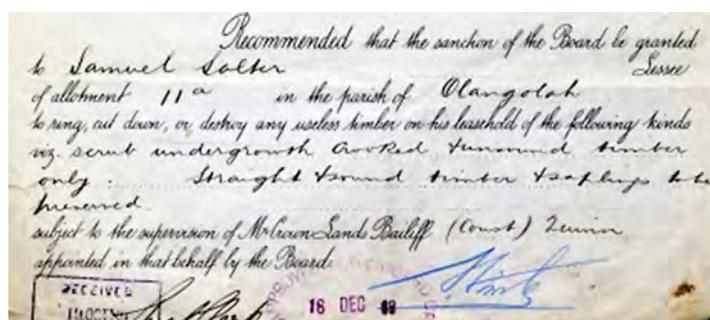
However when William Murphy received this refusal he, like many other selectors, became irate:

I beg to bring under your notice the following facts 1st that there is no timber of any commercial value on my selection, 2nd that before the land can be improved all useless timber & scrub must be cut down and burnt, 3rd that in its present natural state the land is useless for any purpose. 4th that unless you give me permission to improve the land I can neither fence it nor reside on it. [19]

At this stage, though, the Lands Department was intransigent: rules were rules, and they stuck by them regardless of advice from their own bailiffs. An uncomprehending clerk in the Occupation Branch, James Thomas, responded to Murphy that ‘there is no objection to him cutting down the scrub, but the timber must not be ringed, or otherwise destroyed’.[20] He was presumably not familiar with the density of the timber cover frequently found in the Otways.

Later, when the sanction of the Board of Land and Works to ring timber was given, it was often still of very little benefit to the selectors. Charles Finlayson, for example, was offered permission ‘to ring, cut down, or destroy’ useless timber on his selection at Weeaprounah between 3 May and 21 July 1892 – some of the wettest months in a year which had about 2000 mm of rainfall. [21] It was impossible to work in the forest under those conditions. Many of the sanctions that were offered by the Board of Land and Works during this period were of this type involving inappropriate brevity and timing. The major problem, however, was the definition of the timber that the selectors were given permission to ring.

The process was controlled by a form that the Lands Department had printed in accordance with the Act. The sanction of the Board of Land and Works was granted 'to ring, cut down, or destroy any useless timber ... of the following kinds viz ...', with the blank to be completed by the Chief Clerk. He used a set of standard terms to specify exactly what was considered 'useless': 'scrub undergrowth crooked & unsound timber only. Straight & sound timber & saplings to be preserved.' At this point he did not recognise the uselessness of such 'permission' to the Otway selectors.



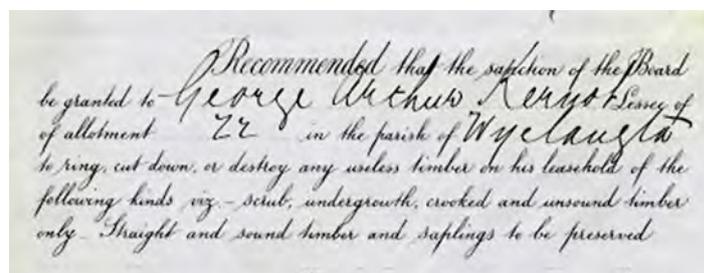
Samuel Salter, 'Permission to ring', 18 December 1889, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5552, 2233/42.44 Olangolah.

Selectors, however, knew it was nonsense. Many blocks were nothing but 'Straight & sound timber & saplings'. Some selectors reluctantly accepted the ruling and abandoned their selections in disgust,[22] while others ignored it and ringbarked anyway.[23] The majority of them simply waited for some resolution to the stalemate to appear, but a small number decided to fight it. A deputation met with the Secretary for Lands to point out the obvious difficulty, but also introduced another argument in favour of allowing lessees to ring and clear:

The present instruction as regards ringing is completely blocking the progress of settlement, and is also a great hardship to a number of Selectors who require to work a part of the year for others while clearing their own blocks. By removing the embargo against ringing, Capital would at once flow into the forest, and those Selectors whose labor is their only Capital, would be able to earn sufficient to enable them to improve their own holdings also.[24]

In terms of promoting the occupation of the land by small land holders it all made perfect sense, but the Lands Department did not choose to rethink its policy before the *Land Act 1890* was published in July,[25] and the new Act continued the ban on ringing and clearing on s32 leaseholds. It also introduced a regulation which required selectors to report on their compliance with the covenants of their lease after three years.[26] For the earliest group of *Land Act 1884* selectors in the Otways, the first of these reports was due to be submitted to the Lands Department in 1891.

Nehemiah Wimble had taken up the position of Secretary for Lands in April 1890,[27] but it was not until January 1891 that he acted on the selectors' concerns. Rather than re-thinking the policy, Wimble chose instead to ask the bailiff to report on the compliance of the particular lessees involved in the deputation.[28] The selectors responded by putting together another deputation, no doubt aware that the new Minister of Lands, Allan McLean, had a Gippsland farming background and was likely to be sympathetic to their plight.[29] However much he turned out to be sympathetic, he was still unable to shift the secretary's thinking. Wimble did recommend that the selectors be granted new leases with 'permission to ring' on the condition that they applied for agricultural allotments (that is, committed themselves to residence) within six months[30] – but the 'permission to ring' still only encompassed 'useless' timber, and usually for a limited time. Not only did the definitions of what could be cut or not cut remain the same, but the form was modified to save the Chief Clerk the trouble of writing out the same stock phrases (see image below).



George Kernot, 'Permission to ring', 9 February 1892, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 340, 2049/42.44 Wyelangta.

But while the secretary evidently still did not understand, the clerk in the Occupation Branch who was responsible for the Otway selections, James Thomas, was beginning to do so. In January 1892, three years after he blithely told William Murphy that 'the timber must not be ringed, or otherwise destroyed', he was considerably more sympathetic to Charles Finlayson's request for more time to complete his improvements: 'I think the time asked for might under the circumstances and difficulties in dealing with this country, be allowed.'[31] Over the intervening years James Thomas had become a staunch supporter of those deemed bona fide selectors in the Otways, and had begun to stretch the rules to accommodate them. The issue of ringing was soon side-stepped by the selectors' transfer to section 42 (residential) conditions, and then by the government's acceptance of ringing on s32 leaseholds, but the Lands Department continued to help the selectors in relation to the fencing covenant.

Grazing Leases – fencing

The requirement to enclose the land with a fence within three years was continued under the *Land Act 1890*,^[32] but as one surveyor described the Otways, ‘the country is covered with dense undergrowth of willow scrub & wire grass through which it is impossible to see or move a yard without cutting your way’.^[33] In other places there was ‘not a blade of grass growing – nothing but a dense undergrowth of Ferns’^[34] to the point where some selectors ‘could not even get around the boundary [sic]’;^[35] while on Charles Finlayson’s block, there were ‘not 3 trees crooked or unsound to the acre, while there is say 40 sound ones good straight ones’.^[36] There were also precipices, gullies and the occasional ‘small rock bound mountain torrent shut in by almost vertical walls of rock’^[37] to contend with, making it

the height of absurdity to enclose the land in question with a fence... No person, except the surveyor, has ever been right round the land. It is three miles from a road, and the only means of access thereto is a bridle-track through dense scrub, and there has never been any trouble to keep cattle from coming out.^[38]

One of the surveyors, in complaining of such problems when he tried to re-mark a previously surveyed block, also pointed out the solution:

Owing to the thick covering of wire grass which had overgrown the ground to a depth of several feet only a few of the ten chain pegs and trenches could be found... The others ... will be found when the scrub is burned.^[39]

In order to clear what was generally known as ‘scrub’, which could be anything from tree ferns and bracken to under-storey plants such as hazel and musk or dense blackwood regrowth, selectors slashed and burned it. This certainly cleared the scrub, and enabled fences to be aligned and built, but the fires also often destroyed existing fences.



Blackwood regrowth along a gully, Dehnert’s Track February 2004. Photograph by Barbara Minchinton.

Selectors were caught in a cleft stick: they could not build fences unless the scrub was burned, but if the scrub was burned the chances were good that existing fences and other improvements would be lost in the process. Adding these difficulties together, it is not surprising that very few holdings were fully enclosed with a fence as required by the conditions of the s32 lease, in fact many of them had no fencing at all. But when selectors were required to report on their improvements, they were asked: ‘If the fencing covenant has not been complied with, by enclosing the land within the leasehold boundaries, state the reason why’.

Is the land heavily timbered, covered wholly or in part with scrub, wild briar, gorse, Bathurst burr, or undergrowth, or open plain country? ...	
Is the land infested with vermin? If so, state of what kinds ...	
If the fencing covenant has not been complied with, by enclosing the land according to the leasehold boundaries, state the reason why ...	
If the covenant for the destruction of vermin has not been performed, state the reason why ...	
If the covenant for the destruction of Bathurst burr, wild briar, and gorse has not been complied with, state the reason why ...	

Detail from Schedule X ‘Statement of Lessee under Section 32 of the ‘Land Act 1890’ as to the Performance of the Covenants of his Lease’, *Victoria Government Gazette*, No. 77, 5 September 1890, p. 3584.

Selectors gave their reasons in varied terms: ‘Subject to Bush Fires by Burning Scrub’;^[40] ‘Impossible to fence until cleared’;^[41] ‘Fencing has been Erected but burnt. No use erecting New until country more opened up’.^[42] And most telling of all: ‘scrub forms a sufficient fence’.^[43] Yet despite the almost universal lack of compliance with the fencing covenant – or perhaps because of it – few of the selectors (if any) had their leases revoked over not meeting these requirements. Instead the Lands Department developed a standard they called ‘substantial compliance’. The term first appeared in the Otway paperwork on the Lands Department’s cover sheet for the ‘Statement of Lessee under Section 32 of the *Land Act 1890* as to the Performance of the Covenants of his Lease’. The cover sheet provided a summary of the lessee’s improvements and expenditure, and a number of standard options for the Lands Department’s recommendation regarding the lease. The options included ‘full compliance’, ‘further inquiry’ and referral to the ‘Local Land Board to show cause’, each of which had a defined set of procedures to be followed, relating to issuing a lease, requesting a bailiff’s report or listing at a Local Land Board hearing.

However, there was also the option of 'substantial compliance', which meant that the selector was known not to have fully complied with the conditions, but nevertheless the officer recommended continuation of the lease. It was effectively the same recommendation as 'full compliance', but it required an element of personal judgment from the Lands Department clerk who made the recommendation, because there were no set rules about what comprised 'substantial' as opposed to 'full' or 'non' compliance.

RECOMMENDATION.

Full compliance: _____

Substantial compliance: *W. Womersley 27/4/91*

That further inquiry be made _____

That Crown Lands Bullif's Report be obtained _____

That Lessee be called before a Local Land Board to show cause _____

Pending the above action, no further rent to be received _____

Detail from cover sheet for Schedule X 'Statement of Lessee under Section 32 of the Land Act 1890 as to the Performance of the Covenants of his Lease', 22 April 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5553, 2041/42.44 Wylangta.

The cover sheet came into use in 1891 at the same time as the first selectors with s32 leases under the *Land Act 1884* were required to report. In the early months of that year the officers of the Lands Department seemed uncertain about how to judge 'substantial compliance', and frequently referred files to the Secretary for Lands for a decision. The secretary tended to be strict, and inclined to 'Inform that covenants must be complied with' (see example below).[44]

"Beich Forest case"
 Lease dated 1/1/89
 6/4/91 J. W. Thomas

See, In view that improvements
 must be complied with

J. W. Thomas
 6/4/91

Done
 9/4/91

9/4

Detail of file note, N Wimble, 6 April 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5547, 5481/47 Moorbanool.

The clerks, however, tended to be more lenient: SR Smith, for example, recommended 'substantial compliance' in February 1891 when there were no fences on John Mulcahey's land at all (see example below).[45]

417 acres — roods — perches.

STATEMENT AS TO THE PERFORMANCE OF THE COVENANTS OF HIS LEASE DURING THE FIRST THREE YEARS THEREOF.

	Fully.	If not fully complied with, report particulars here.
1. Payment of rent	<i>yes</i>	<i>upto 1-1-91</i>
2. Fencing		<i>No fencing as land is too heavily timbered</i>
3. Destruction of Yewels		
4. Destruction of Backward Bars		
5. Destruction of Wild Geese		
Other Improvements		
6. Buildings attached to the soil		
7. Water storage		
8. All other improvements		
Total expenditure	£ <i>120</i>	

RECOMMENDATION.

Full compliance: _____

Substantial compliance: *S. R. Smith 20/2/91*

That further inquiry be made _____

That Crown Lands Bullif's Report be obtained _____

That Lessee be called before a Local Land Board to show cause _____

Pending the above action, no further rent to be received _____

Detail of Statement of Performance cover sheet, 20 February 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5545, 2798/42.44 Weeaprounah.

Mulcahey's case illustrates a number of the principles on which 'substantial compliance' was judged: first, his rents were paid up; second, his other improvements were substantial for that time (£120), and third, the clerk understood something about the country – it was he who added the explanation that there was 'no fencing as land is too heavily timbered'. [46]

Gradually the other clerks, too, gained the confidence to accept minimal fencing when rent was paid up and other improvements were reasonable. A standard 320 acre block (half a square mile) would require 240 chains of fencing, but in June 1891 George Watson accepted only 10 chains of fencing because the land was 'scrubby & subject to fires'.^[47] By the middle of the year clerks working on the Otway selections were annotating cover sheets with 'scrub land' or 'scrub country' as explanation for insufficient or non-existent fencing (see example below).^[48]

STATEMENT AS TO THE PERFORMANCE OF THE COVENANTS OF HIS LEASE DURING THE FIRST THREE YEARS THEREOF.		
	Fully.	If not fully complied with, report particulars here.
1. Payment of rent	6 rents to 7.1.91	
2. Fencing	£10.0.0	60 chains scrub land
3. Destruction of Weeds		None on land
4. Destruction of Barkent Trees		
5. Destruction of Wild Geese		
Other Improvements		
6. Buildings attached to the soil	10.0.0	Paling hut
7. Water storage		None
8. All other improvements	250.0.0	Clearing &c.
Total expenditure	£270.0.0	

Detail from cover sheet for Schedule X 'Statement of Lessee under Section 32 of the Land Act 1890 as to the Performance of the Covenants of his Lease', 22 April 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5553, 2041/42.44 Wyelangta.

The term 'substantial compliance' gradually began appearing on other documents as well as the summary sheet (see examples below).

"Substantial Compliance"
Sent Carex.
12/5/92
J. Thomas
Chiefs. sent.
J. M. Whit

Detail of file note, 12 May 1892, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 301, 2057/42.44 Olangolah.

Substantial compliance
12/11/92
J. Yewers

Detail from Crown Lands Bailiff report, 21 November 1892, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5555, 2645/42.44 Weeaprounah.

Secretary for Lands
10
3
Substantial Compliance
Plin. & S. R. Kelly
9/2/93
J. Smith

Detail from Crown Lands Bailiff report, March 1893, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 238, 3126/47.49 Wyelangta.

The category of 'substantial compliance' gave the Lands Department sufficient leeway to reward those selectors it deemed to be bona fide, but to weed out those who it believed were not. This, of course, carried the risk of favouritism and inconsistency. In August 1891, for example, the clerk JH Yewers called for a bailiff's report for £125 of improvements without fencing,^[49] yet in October recommended 'substantial compliance' for Alexander McDonald's £80 of improvements with no fencing.^[50] Clerks certainly had the capacity to act unfairly in this context, but the greater weight of evidence suggests that they used the category broadly to the advantage of most selectors.

Eventually the use of the category fundamentally scrapped one of the major covenants of the s32 lease (the requirement for fencing), but the terms of its use were under negotiation for some time. In October 1891, for example, the Chief Clerk recommended 'substantial compliance' for a lease which was part of a group family holding where the improvements were all on the other blocks, but the Minister of Lands over-ruled him.^[51] In November 1892, however, when James Thomas asked the Chief Clerk: 'Can we accept ringing only as substantial compliance?'^[52] the Chief Clerk replied in the affirmative without reference to the minister at all.^[53] By 1893 when the clerk WH Gregson informed the Chief Clerk that 'There are no fences. Land is reported as scrubby' on Thomas McMahon's selection, the lack of fences was accepted without demur and the issue of his lease proceeded.^[54] The Lands Department no longer adhered strictly to the legislation.

The Crown Lands Bailiffs^[55]

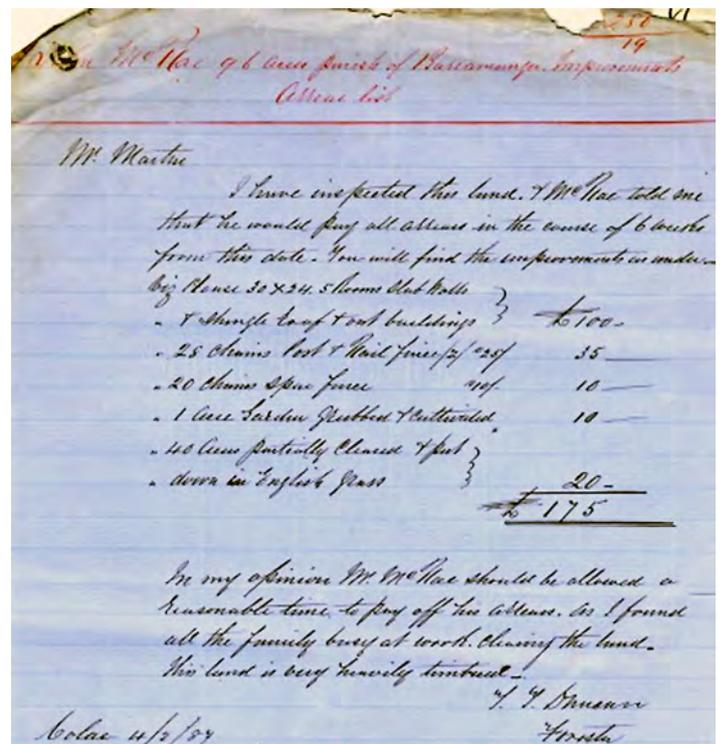
In the early years of land allocation the Crown Lands Bailiffs had to find their way between the Lands Department's legislative rock and the selectors' hard place. The following section describes their efforts to help the selectors and facilitate the process of occupying the land.

Under the land Acts a bailiff's report and valuation of improvements was required whenever a selector with a grazing lease applied for an agricultural allotment licence, or proceeded to an agricultural lease. They were also obtained if the Lands Department suspected non-compliance for any reason, or if a selector applied to transfer a holding, or wished to obtain a licence lien (a mortgage). Before the introduction of the regulation under the *Land Act 1890* requiring s32 selectors to report on their improvements, bailiff reports were rare, but the new regulation resulted in a kind of stock-take for the Crown Lands Bailiff GB Silvester. In May 1892 he had over seventy-five selections to check and report on 'in the Beech Forest', with more 'coming to hand almost daily'. He was based at Morrison's, south-east of Ballarat, and not especially familiar with the Otway forest, but his main concern initially was not the risk of getting lost:

In consequence of the late heavy rains the roads or rather tracks (for there are no roads) are in such a state as to be almost impassable. Mr Duncan who also has business in the forest advises papers to be held over until the roads improve ... Immediately the roads are in a condition to travel on Mr Duncan and I have arranged for a simultaneous start.^[56]

TT Duncan was the forester based at Colac, and before and after this stock-take period he conducted most of the bailiff's work in the area – his 'simultaneous start' with Silvester was probably in order to show him where to go. Despite the dense forest and appalling tracks, Duncan knew his way about, although he was not infallible: 'I beg to inform you,' he wrote to the Lands Department on 21 October 1892, 'that I inspected the wrong land on 4/8/92.'^[57] This was a rare mistake for Duncan, unlike the Mounted Constables who reluctantly acted as Crown Lands Bailiffs. They frequently mistook one (unfenced) allotment for another: 'The cause of the error in my previous report was owing to having no plans of district and my including the improvements of the adjoining block ... there being no dividing fence.'^[58]

Duncan became one of the few Lands Department officers to have direct knowledge of the selectors and their situations. In his work he often struggled with the same conditions: 'I am sorry to inform you,' he reported to the Lands Department in August 1891, 'that I was unable to cross the Gellibrand River until yesterday on account of the floods.'^[59] From the beginning, his reports showed an understanding and sympathy for the selectors that was not initially found in the Melbourne office of the Lands Department. His early bailiff reports were written freehand, and inclined to be direct about his view that the selectors who were working hard should be shown leniency: 'In my opinion Mr McRae should be allowed a reasonable time to pay off his arrears as I found all the family busily at work clearing the land. This land is very heavily timbered.'^[60] But prior to 1891 the Lands Department's response was usually cool: 'Inform if portion of arrears is not paid in 21 days the Dept will have no alternative but to take steps to revoke the license and resume possession of the land'.^[61]



Detail from freehand Crown Lands Bailiff's report, 4 February 1892, PROV, VPRS 626/P0, Unit 958, 2286/19.20 Barramunga.

By 1891, though, the Lands Department had printed a standard form for the bailiffs to fill in. It had no space allocated for such comments, only for valuation of fences, destruction of vermin, value of buildings, water storage, cultivation and 'all other improvements'. Rather than conforming to the shape of the form's requirements, however, Duncan developed the habit of using the last two sections – 'Cultivation' and 'All other improvements' – as catch-alls for his comments, thereby continuing to give the Lands Department's officers in Melbourne additional information on which to base their decisions about compliance. In this format he was less inclined to offer his opinion directly, but still likely to make statements which supported a selector's bona fides: 'Balance of improvements will be completed soon. He lost a lot of fencing with the last bush fires ... This man is living on the land with his brothers & all busy clearing' (see report below).[62]

Particulars, Nature, and Cost.	
CULTIVATION.	Nil
ALL OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.	<p>The Chief Clerk the only improvements on this land at present are 16 acres cleared & sown with grass seed. The man is living on the land with his brothers & all busy clearing.</p>

Detail from Crown Lands Bailiff's report, 12 May 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5856, 2624/49.50 Weeaprounah.

'I found McDonald and all his family residing on this selection & all busy building & clearing the land but cannot possibly do much work at present on account of the land being so very wet' (see report below).[63]

Particulars, Nature, and Cost.	
CULTIVATION.	Nil
ALL OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.	<p>The Chief Clerk agrees in last valuation of this land on 27.7.89 you will find further improvements have been made & amount to £16 in all and all has been cleared by this date and all being purchased through the land & all cleared possibly the much work at present on account of the land being so very wet.</p>
	<p>11 Acres partially cleared & sown with grass seed 20/4 45 Acres through the land seed 2/7</p>
Total Cost of Improvements ... £ 118 15 0	

Detail from Crown Lands Bailiff's report, 20 July 1892, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5856, 2623/42.44 Moorbanool.

These later, more covert, pleas for leniency had a reasonable likelihood of success, as they fed and played into the Lands Department's growing awareness of conditions in the forest under s32, and the clerks' increasing use of the category 'substantial compliance'.

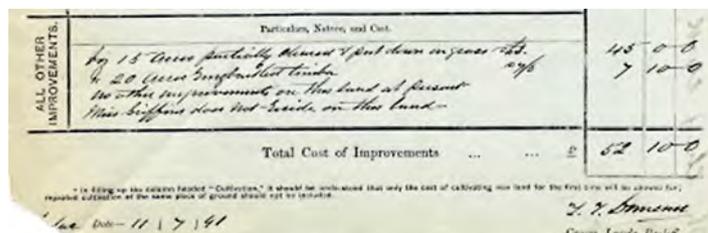
For example, Margaret McRae had done virtually nothing on her selection, and under ordinary circumstances would have been called upon to 'show cause' why her lease should not be forfeited, but Duncan added to his report 'I found a man on the land cutting more scrub & he informed me that Mrs McRae intends to complete her improvements as soon as possible.'[64] She was not called upon to 'show cause'.

Particulars, Nature, and Cost.	
ALL OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.	<p>The only improvements on this land at present are 10 Acres scrub cut down 0 2/6 I found a man on the land cutting more scrub & he informed me that Mrs McRae intends to complete her improvements as soon as possible.</p>
Total Cost of Improvements ... £ 10 0 0	

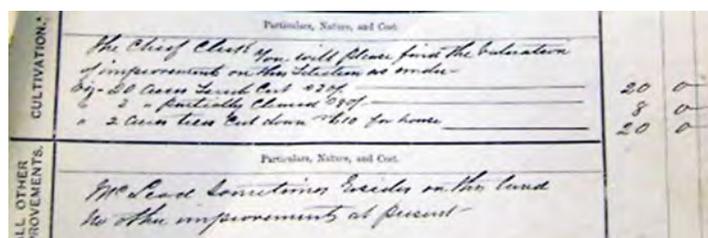
Detail from Crown Lands Bailiff's report, 2 November 1892, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5557, 2302/42 Weeaprounah.

The samples given above illustrate a common problem with the Crown Lands Bailiff's report form. In Otway forest country the majority of the early work done on the land was clearing. Duncan recognised that there were many different phases of clearing, each associated with different time, labour and money costs, but the form did not acknowledge that complexity – clearing was not 'fencing', 'building' or 'cultivation', but at this stage it was more than simply an 'other improvement'. Again, Duncan made the form suit his own purpose, which was to fairly represent the efforts of the selectors. First, he developed his own system of categorising the work done: for example 'ringbarking', 'scrub cutting' (or 'scrubbing'), 'partial clearing', 'tree cutting', 'grubbing', 'picking up', 'cultivation' and 'sowing grass seed' were all listed independently. Then he developed a method for valuing each of the many combinations, according to the particular land being valued. So, for example, land 'partially cleared & put down to grass' might be worth £3 an acre or £4 depending on its location and type of vegetation cover; ringbarking might be 7/- or 7/6 or even up to 10/- per acre depending on the size and density of tree growth. 'Scrub cut but not burned' might be £1 per acre, but scrub 'cleared, burned and picked up' might be £3/10/- per acre.

All of these categories he squeezed into the spaces for 'Cultivation' and 'All other improvements,' along with any comments he wished to make (see examples below).



Detail from Crown Lands Bailiff's report, 11 July 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5860, 2795/42.44 Moorbanool.



Detail from Crown Lands Bailiff's report, 31 October 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5794, 5606/47.49 Moorbanool.

Duncan was not the only bailiff to use these classifications, of course, but he was the only bailiff in the Otways to develop such a detailed and consistent scheme, and adjust the paperwork to match. The Mounted Constables conducted far fewer inspections, and varied far more widely in their valuations,[65] which also tended to be less specific about stages of clearing. As one selector put it in the early 1900s, the mounted police were 'not too particular about going out of their way to do this extra work,'[66] probably because they already had plenty to do without travelling through rough country on an unwelcome and unfamiliar clerical errand. [67]

The difference between one bailiff's valuations and another (there was no set scale) is one aspect of a larger problem with the Crown Lands Bailiffs' reports which was both caused by and disguised by the forms themselves. The forms merely asked for 'cost' – of fences, of buildings, of cultivation and all other improvements – but it was never clear whether the 'cost' of improvements was to be based on the amount that the selector actually spent on them – the direct cost to the selector, including hours of labour – or on what they would have cost if they had been done at the time of valuation (in other words, whether it should be purchase or replacement cost). Some selectors clearly believed that the value of their improvements was determined by

the receipts they held.[68] Others, like Charles Tucker (a resident selector), were clear that 'value' was not the same thing as 'expenditure': 'I am well aware,' he wrote to Joseph Pettett (a non-resident selector), 'that you have laid out a great deal more money on your selection than what I have valued your improvements at.'[69]

In practice the 'cost' given on the Crown Lands Bailiffs' reports depended on the purpose of the form. If the report was to support the current lessee's application for an agricultural licence or lease, and the bailiff believed the selector to be bona fide, the bailiff was inclined to value high (to help the selector). If it was post-forfeit then the bailiff might value low (to help the incoming selector who had to pay for them)[70] or high (to help the failed selector), or somewhere in between. There is some evidence of all of these scenarios, and also of valuations being somewhat haphazard. Adjustments were not uncommon; the Lands Department rarely refused a selector's request for revaluation, and the result was usually an increase in the selector's favour, not a reduction.[71]

The whole idea of the 'cost' of improvements was therefore somewhat fluid, especially since (as many selectors discovered) contracts cost more at some times of the year than others – 'no one would undertake work in the forest during winter'[72] – but also less as the years went by and the country became more accessible. As William Jackson argued in 1897: 'The scrub was cut on the ten acres referred to but that was five or six years ago ... if I wanted that sort of work done today I could get it done for half the money that the last occupier paid for it.'[73] The discrepancy showed up most often – as it did for Jackson – when an incoming selector was asked to pay for improvements done by the previous lessee: should the bailiff value the improvements at the price the previous selector paid for them, or at the price the incoming selector could currently do them for? The Lands Department does not seem to have offered the bailiffs any guidance on the matter, leaving them to negotiate their own path through local obligations and the meaning of the forms, but after the early, strict demands made by Wimble as Secretary for Lands, his officials gradually became more and more lenient on those judged to be bona fide, at times going to extraordinary lengths to assist a selector to remain on the land.[74]

By 1894 the Lands Department had begun to actively seek the advice and assistance of Crown Lands Bailiff TT Duncan: 'Are Lessees circumstances such that portion at least can not be paid now[?]', a clerk asked.[75] Duncan's reply, after consulting the selector, was that 'he will try & pay the whole amount in about 4 months'. Duncan's implied advice to accept the selector's offer was heeded, and an extension of time to pay rents was given.[76] Duncan was probably trusted by the Lands Department officers at least partly because he was not an uncritical supporter of the selectors. A month after the previous note he advised the Land Officer of a number of lessees who he believed had not complied, saying 'I am of opinion that these selectors should be challenged by the Dept as I think the most of them are merely holding on to their land for speculative purposes'.[77] His support was for the hard-working selectors, not the speculators, and the quality of his advice encouraged the officers in Melbourne to feel confident about doing likewise, thus bolstering the Lands Department's promotion of small land holders at the expense of complying with the legislation.

Reading the paper trail

Sitting in the archives and picking up, for example, a selector's application for a grazing lease in the Otway forest, it would be natural to read the document as part of a fixed system of administration, one element of the monolithic structure of nineteenth-century bureaucracy which underpinned colonial government. But the form itself, and the way the officers of the Lands Department chose to use it, can also provide insights into what Ann Laura Stoler has called the archive's 'restless realignments and readjustments of people and the beliefs to which they were tethered'.[78] The archives of the Lands Department provide evidence of a developing process being driven as much by attitudes as by the law. The Crown Lands Bailiff, for example, who ignored the structure of the report form in order to provide information supporting the hard-working selectors, was responding to his own belief in the superior value of hard work over capital. He asked for leniency for those who worked the land, not for the speculative investors. He did not judge the efficacy of the work done, or the appropriateness of the forest destruction wrought by the selectors. He judged the effort and intentions of the selectors, and made his judgement on the basis of their physical labour and that of their families. He believed that hard work should be rewarded.

The Lands Department officers, too, tended to support the selectors they judged to be bona fide, but they had a larger goal in mind: to spread farmers and their

families right across the colony. The unaccommodating environment of the Otways provided a challenge to their belief that it was both desirable and possible to turn most of the colony's land into small holdings for agriculture, so, while the bailiffs were encouraging the Lands Department to side-step the legislation for the sake of the individual selectors, the Lands Department wanted to reduce the failure rate and keep bona fide selectors on the land in order to maintain some semblance of what it regarded as 'proper settlement'. The Lands Department clerks therefore used the information provided by the bailiffs, combined with their own category of 'substantial compliance', to determine which selectors to support in the face of almost total non-compliance with the covenants of the land Acts.

The Lands Department's unspoken but absolute support for bona fide selectors – judged by the selectors' intentions and hard labour – runs like bedrock beneath all of the archival records, and the influence of this attitude was far greater than that of the legislation itself. It was the willingness of the Lands Department officers to bend the rules, stretch the time limits and ignore the unworkable aspects of the legislation that enabled any of the nineteenth-century selectors to become owners of Otway land.

Endnotes

[1] For background and detailed information on Victoria's Acts, see P Nelson and L Alves, *Lands Guide: A guide to finding records of Crown land at Public Record Office Victoria*, Public Record Office Victoria, North Melbourne, Vic., 2009.

[2] For a detailed summary of nineteenth-century land selection in Victoria up to the Acts of the 1880s, see JM Powell, *The Public Lands of Australia Felix: Settlement and Land Appraisal in Victoria 1834–91 with Special Reference to the Western Plains*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1970.

[3] JM Powell (ed.), *Yeomen and Bureaucrats: The Victorian Crown Lands Commission 1878–79*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1973.

[4] Regarding the driving ideal of the yeoman, see JM Powell, *Mirrors of the New World: Images and Image-Makers in the Settlement Process*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1978, and Marilyn Lake, *The Limits of Hope: Soldier settlement in Victoria 1915–38*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1987, pp. 11–24.

[5] JM Reed, 2 June 1897, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0 Land Selection And Correspondence Files, Unit 225, 1251/42.44 Weeaprounah.

[6] Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2009, p. 4.

[7] The change to land leasing is discussed in JM Powell 'The Land debates in Victoria, 1872–1884: Leases versus freeholds: A preparation for Henry George', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, Vol. 56, No. 4, 1970, pp. 263–80.

[8] See especially the works of JM Powell.

[9] See P Grimshaw, C Fahey, S Janson and T Griffiths, 'Families and selection in colonial Horsham', in P Grimshaw, C McConville and E McEwen (eds), *Families in Colonial Australia*, George Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1985, pp. 118–137.

[10] For example, B Collett, *Wednesdays closest to the full moon: A history of South Gippsland*, Fernbank Publication Pty Ltd, Fish Creek, Victoria, 2009, p. 144.

[11] For example, J Murphy, *On the Ridge: The Shire of Mirboo 1894–1994*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW, 1994, pp. 21–38.

[12] R Wright, *The bureaucrats' domain: Space and the public interest in Victoria 1836–1884*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1989.

[13] For statistics and analysis of the failure rates in Otway land selection, see B Minchinton, "'That place": Nineteenth century land selection in the Otways, Victoria, Australia', PhD, University of Melbourne, 2011.

[14] 'Ringbarking' was the process by which large trees were killed in preparation for burning to clear the land.

[15] B Minchinton, 'The Trouble with Otway Maps: Taking up a selection under *Land Act 1884*', *Provenance*, 10, 2011, available at <<http://prov.vic.gov.au/explore-collection/provenance-journal/provenance-2011/trouble-otway-maps>>, accessed 20 August 2015.

[16] N Wimble summary for Minister, 30 October 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5839, 2399/50.51 Olangolah.

[17] *Ibid.*, 10 October 1889.

[18] GB Silvester, 27 September 1888, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5851, 2554/42 Moorbanool.

[19] William Murphy, 22 January 1889, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5851, 2554/42 Moorbanool.

[20] James Thomas, 25 January 1889, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5851, 2554/42 Moorbanool.

[21] 'Application for Permission to destroy timber', 3 May 1892, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5854, 2752/42.44 Weeaprounah; Royal Commission on state forests and timber reserves, Fifth Progress Report, Appendix 1, 1899–1900, p. 15.

[22] James Hendy, 7 December 1891, PROV, VPRS 440/P0 Land Selection and Occupation Files, Unit 1208, 761/32 Wyelangta.

[23] Crown Lands Bailiff report, 14 August 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5841, 2613/42.44 Moorbanool.

[24] Charles Craike, 23 August 1890, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5839, 2399/50.51 Olangolah.

[25] *Victoria Government Gazette*, No. 59, 11 July 1890, p. 2836.

[26] *Victoria Government Gazette*, No. 77, 5 September 1890, p. 3561, Regulation V (s8) Schedule X: 'Statement of lessee under Section 32 of the *Land Act 1890* as to the performance of the covenants of his lease'.

[27] *Victoria Government Gazette*, No. 39, 2 May 1890, p. 1595.

[28] Memo N Wimble, 29 January 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5839, 2399/50.51 Olangolah.

[29] Allan McLean (1839–1911), biography available at <<http://www.maffra.net.au/heritage/hisfed.htm>>, accessed 14 June 2010.

[30] Memo N Wimble, 30 October 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5839, 2399/50.51 Olangolah, marked 'Approved AML 30/10/91'.

[31] James Thomas, 20 January 1892, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5854, 2752/42.44 Weeaprounah.

[32] Section 38 (7) *Land Act 1884* and Section 38 (7) *Land Act 1890*.

[33] G Cornthwaite, 1 December 1903, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 298, 248/44 Barwongemoong.

[34] Charles Craike, 23 August 1890, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5839, 2399/50.51 Olangolah.

[35] Samuel Salter, 2 January 1892, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5552, 2233/42.44 Olangolah.

[36] Charles Finlayson, 5 August 1892, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5854, 2752/42.44 Weeaprounah.

[37] James Short, 9 June 1900, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 247, 259/47 Barwongemoong.

[38] Richard Griffiths, 20 April 1903, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 292, 212/47 Olangolah.

[39] James Short, 10 December 1894, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 212, 1432/42.44 Olangolah.

[40] Thomas Butler, PROV, VPRS 440/P0, Unit 1219, 117/42 Weeaprounah.

[41] Ann Briers, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 275, 1952/J Weeaprounah.

[42] Edward Hall, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 297, 155/13 Olangolah.

[43] William Thompson, 9 July 1897, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5587, 1802/42.44 Olangolah.

[44] N Wimble, 6 April 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5547, 5481/47 Moorbanool; see also N Wimble, 4 April 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 374, 1683/42.44 Barramunga.

[45] Statement of Performance cover sheet, 20 February 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5545, 2798/42.44 Weeaprounah.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Statement of Performance cover sheet, 5 June 1891, PROV, VPRS 5714/P0 Land Selection Files, Section 12 Closer Settlement Act 1938 [including obsolete and top numbered Closer Settlement and WW1 Discharged Soldier Settlement files], Unit 218, 417/12 Weeaprounah.

[48] They continued to do so: 9 July 1897, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5587, 1802/42.44 Olangolah; 13 April 1899, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 231, 1086/42.44 Weeaprounah.

[49] JH Yewers, 11 August 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5554, 2774/42.44 Wyelangta.

[50] Statement of Performance cover sheet, 13 October 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5894, 227/50 Weeaprounah.

[51] N Wimble to JJ Blundell, 27 November 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5555, 2645/42.44 Weeaprounah.

[52] James Thomas, 11 November 1892, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 360, 2017/49.50 Wyelangta.

[53] Chief Clerk, 11 November 1892, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 360, 2017/49.50 Wyelangta.

[54] File note WH Gregson, 19 September 1893, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5851, 2565/42 Moorbanool.

[55] For the first ten years of land administration the Crown Lands Bailiff for the area was located at Morrison's, south-east of Ballarat, but the forester located at Colac fulfilled most of the bailiff's duties, supplemented by Mounted Police located at Krambruk (Apollo Bay), Colac and Port Campbell.

[56] Crown Lands Bailiff, 16 May 1892, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5567, 2481/49.50 Olangolah.

[57] TT Duncan, 21 October 1892, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5869, 510/46.81 Moorbanool.

[58] Constable J McCallum, 19 October 1897, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5562, 2139/42.44 Aire.

[59] TT Duncan, 26 August 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 303, 1262/42.44 Barramunga.

[60] TT Duncan, 4 February 1887, PROV, VPRS 626/P0 Land Selection Files by Land District, Sections 19 and 20 Land Act 1869, Unit 958, 2286/19.20 Barramunga.

[61] N Wimble, 16 February 1887, PROV, VPRS 626/P0, Unit 958, 2286/19.20 Barramunga.

[62] TT Duncan, 12 May 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5856, 2624/49.50 Weeaprounah.

[63] TT Duncan, 20 July 1892, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5856, 2623/42.44 Moorbanool.

[64] TT Duncan, 2 November 1892, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5557, 2302/42 Weeaprounah.

[65] Correction of his own valuation by Police Crown Lands Bailiff Olney, 27 April 1909, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5856, 2624/49.50 Weeaprounah.

[66] C Tucker to Joseph Pettett, 29 August 1906, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5554, 2770/49.50 Weeaprounah.

[67] JG Sainsbury, 12 March 1903, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 292, 212/47; MC Olney, 25 February 1906, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5838, 2111/49.50 Barwongemoong.

[68] William Cavanagh, 25 March 1905, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 298, 2168/49.50 Wyelangta; Thomas Alcorn, 16 June 1894, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5800, 376/44 Moorbanool.

[69] C Tucker to Joseph Pettett, 29 August 1906, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5554, 2770/49.50 Weeaprounah.

[70] James Short, 13 January 1900, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 296, 2439/42 Weeaprounah.

[71] PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5588, 1885/42.44 Moorbanool.

[72] T Murphy to WT Webb MP, 3 October 1891, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5851, 2565/42 Moorbanool.

[73] William Jackson, 5 October 1897, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5837, 2442/42.44 Olangolah.

[74] For example Charles Trew, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 3248, 1846/49.50 Barwongemoong; Bridget Cullen, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5562, 2143/42.44 Moorbanool.

[75] File note WH Gregson to Crown Lands Bailiff, 8 February 1894, PROV, VPRS 626/P0, Unit 958, 2286/10.20 Barramunga.

[76] File note TT Duncan, 6 March 1894, PROV, VPRS 626/P0, Unit 958, 2286/10.20 Barramunga.

[77] Memo TT Duncan, 6 April 1894, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5839, 2392/42.44 Olangolah; see also Memo TT Duncan, 17 April 1894, PROV, VPRS 5357/P0, Unit 5800, 376/44 Moorbanool.

[78] Stoler, *Archival Grain*, pp. 32–33.

Historical maps, geographic information systems (GIS)

And complex mining landscapes on the Victorian goldfields

Peter Davies, Susan Lawrence and Jodi Turnbull

'Historical maps, geographic information systems (GIS) and complex mining landscapes on the Victorian goldfields', *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria*, issue no. 14, 2015. ISSN 1832-2522. Copyright © Peter Davies, Susan Lawrence, Jodi Turnbull.

This is a peer reviewed article.

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Abstract

PROV holds a remarkable collection of maps prepared by mining surveyors in the nineteenth century. The maps record water race networks created by alluvial gold miners, who needed large volumes of water to wash gold from the earth. These mining water systems were often very extensive, winding for miles through the hills to divert water to mining claims. The Beechworth (Ovens) goldfield was an important centre of alluvial mining in colonial Victoria and it was here that the most complex water networks were created. Many of the races and dams built by miners are preserved in goldfields landscapes today. We have integrated historical PROV maps of water races at Beechworth into a geographic information system (GIS) to analyse and understand the location and extent of historical water networks. This combination of historical maps and digital technology offers a powerful new tool to help understand the relationships between competing water users and the changes they brought to colonial mining landscapes.

Introduction

Maps and other records held by Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) provide a vital basis for understanding the development of early water supply networks around Victoria associated with gold extraction. Miners' use of water created the foundation of water management and law in colonial Victoria, which was later adopted around Australia.[1] Practical water management was crucial to the success of gold mining, as miners needed abundant supplies of water to wash gold from the earth. In response to frequent water shortages they built extensive networks of races and dams to capture and store water in creeks and gullies and divert it to their mining claims. Ground sluicing and hydraulic sluicing of alluvial deposits were the main techniques where large volumes of water were needed, along with water for puddling machines, steam engines, water wheels and crushing batteries. By the late 1860s there were almost 4000 kilometres of actively managed races in the seven mining districts of Victoria.[2] The remains of these mining water systems are often well preserved on the goldfields today, with recent analysis shedding new light on the development of water resources in colonial Victoria.[3]

.....

The water networks developed by miners were important not only for the wealth in gold they generated but for demonstrating how much water was naturally available and their role in establishing legal mechanisms and a marketplace for water resources. The mining industry was the earliest settler group to develop extensive water networks, laying the foundations for later municipal and agricultural water supply. Understanding this early period provides insight into the origins of Victorian attitudes to water.

Gold miners and government officials developed a system of laws and regulations during this period to manage the distribution of water on the goldfields. Permits, and later, licences entitled miners to control and sell substantial quantities of water for mining purposes. Applications for water rights licences required formal surveys that generated detailed maps of proposed water supply networks. Many of these maps are now held by PROV. They provide an essential basis for understanding the development of mining water supply networks around Victoria.

In this paper we demonstrate how PROV maps have helped reveal the nature of water management and the emergence of complex mining landscapes on the Victorian goldfields. We focus in particular on the Beechworth (Ovens) goldfield as a region with well-preserved mining landscapes and substantial documentary evidence of water distribution networks. Beechworth was an important centre of goldfields water management in nineteenth-century Victoria, where miners built extensive networks of dams and races on an aggregate scale far greater than elsewhere in the colony. While the Coliban System of Waterworks in central Victoria was a government-built project, alluvial miners at Beechworth invested private capital to create complex mining water systems, and they held more than half of all the water rights licences issued in Victoria during the main mining period.[4] Other large, private water providers in Victoria included the Bendigo Water Works Company and the Lal Lal Waterworks Association.[5] Correlating archival maps from Beechworth with modern topographic and cadastral maps (known as geo-referencing) using a computerised geographic information system (GIS) database (MapInfo) has created powerful new tools to help identify and interpret landscapes of water management. The use of digital technology with historical documents has gained momentum since the mid 1990s and today geo-referenced historical maps are being utilised widely in historical research.[6] The integration of modern mapping technologies with conventional paper maps permits detailed analysis of historical mining landscapes and improves our understanding of how miners manipulated water resources.

We begin by describing the nature of mining and water management at Beechworth in the nineteenth century. The Beechworth district was a major alluvial goldfield that produced almost 12 per cent of all the gold found in Victoria.[7] Ground and hydraulic sluicing were used extensively at Beechworth, far more so than at other goldfields during this period. We then review the historical map resources held by PROV that relate to water rights licences at Beechworth and outline our approach to the material, which involves the use of several GIS applications. GIS is a sophisticated computer software system that enables information from many sources to be integrated, analysed and re-combined. In our work we have used geo-referenced maps from PROV, Google Earth imagery, and data from a relatively new laser survey technology, LiDAR, to analyse spatial and temporal relationships between races, dams and reservoirs, and other water features on Victorian goldfields.[8] In this paper we focus specifically on the Beechworth goldfield and on the activities of two miners from the district, John Pund and Donald Fletcher, to understand the complexity of water manipulation in the area and to highlight the benefits of combining PROV's map resources with modern computer mapping technology.

Gold and water at Beechworth

Gold was first discovered at Beechworth, known initially as the Ovens goldfield, in February 1852.[9] Rushes occurred on numerous creeks and gullies in the area, some of which became established communities including Woolshed, Yackandandah, Stanley and Eldorado. Most of the gold in the area was present as very fine grains or flakes distributed through alluvial deposits, rather than in a thin layer over pipeclay or bedrock as occurred at other goldfields.[10] Recovering gold from the washdirt at Beechworth thus required abundant supplies of water. The area receives an average of 950 mm of rain per annum, which meant that surface and ground water was available through much of the year for mining purposes. Subterranean springs and aquifers also fed surface waterways.

Miners on the Ovens goldfield initially used pans and cradles to wash gold from creek beds. The nature of alluvial deposits, however, meant that ground sluicing was soon adopted as the primary means of recovering gold. Ground sluices diverted water through channels or races and over a working face to loosen and wash away the soil and clay. The dislodged material was shovelled into a sluice-box with riffles or blocks on the base, behind which the heavier particles of gold were trapped. In later years hydraulic sluicing and paddocking were also practised, which left major scars on mining landscapes.

.....

All these methods required substantial volumes of flowing water. To ensure reliable supplies, miners at Beechworth built dams on creeks and gullies to create reservoirs, and dug races to direct water to their mining claims. Water races were simple earth-cut channels, normally about one metre deep, and one to two metres wide, with a V- or U-shaped profile. They were excavated manually by pick and shovel and often extended for five to ten kilometres or more around the hills, falling at a slight gradient to ensure the flow of water. Tunnels, siphons and flumes were also used where necessary. Dams were simple mounds of clay piled across a creek bed, with a pipe and valve inserted in the base to control the outflow. Miners built this entire infrastructure, often at very considerable cost, before they could even begin mining.

Miners could, however, recoup the cost of building dams and races by selling water to other parties. The first recorded miner in Victoria to sell water was John Reilly at Beechworth. He was an Irish-born civil engineer with recent experience of alluvial mining in California. Beginning in 1853 Reilly built several miles of races from Nine Mile Creek (Stanley), in the hills just south of Beechworth, to supply water for his own sluicing operations.[11] He also sold water to miners working downstream, charging each up to seven shillings per day.[12] It was claimed in later years that Reilly earned 'virtually 100 guineas weekly' with his local monopoly on water supply.[13] In July 1860 the local mining surveyor reported that one sluice-head of water (about 36,000 gallons or 163,656 litres over 12 hours) brought in rent of about £9 per week.[14]

By the late 1860s miners had excavated more than 740 miles (almost 1200 kilometres) of water races in the Beechworth, Yackandandah, Stanley and Buckland mining divisions.[15] This included some of the longest water races ever built in Victoria, including the Pioneer Ditch which reportedly ran for 70 miles (113 kilometres) from the Kiewa River at Dederang to Yackandandah. [16] There were dozens of main races, often diverting millions of gallons of water out of one watershed and into another on a daily basis. Secretary of Mines Robert Brough Smyth referred to the 'almost embarrassing multiplicity of small reservoirs' in the district.[17] Miners at Beechworth had created a complex landscape of mining water systems.

Resources and methods

Historical maps of water race networks derive from several PROV series. One of the most important is VPRS 6784 Water Right Licence Files 1863–1973, created by the Department of Mines, which includes dozens of large maps from the Beechworth area. Locality Plans (VPRS 14969) from the Department of Mines also contain a range of historical maps relating to water management. The Beechworth series date mainly from the 1870s and 1880s, by which time the administrative processes of surveying and map-making were well established. Regulations were based on the *Mining Statute 1865* that allowed holders of a miner's right to apply for a 15-year licence to cut races, build dams and use the water for mining and domestic purposes.[18]

The Beechworth maps principally show the plotting of distances and bearings taken in the field by the local mining surveyor along an approximate course of the race that was initially marked out by the miner applying for the licence (see figure 1). Race alignments typically extended several kilometres from the source of supply (a dam or spring) to the mining claim. Maps frequently show where older, pre-existing races cross the route, along with dams, road and track crossings, nearby property boundaries, flumes over gullies, and springs that increased the water flow. Map sheets were typically about 60 cm long and 90 to 120 cm in width and drawn at a large scale of eight chains to the inch (1:6336) or even four chains to the inch (1:3168). Each one includes a standard statement signed by the mining surveyor (Henry Davidson) endorsing the quality of his work:

I hereby certify that I personally surveyed the race represented by this plan; that the instruments used were a theodolite and chain both in perfect adjustment; that the bearings are taken from the magnetic meridian, the variation of which is given on the plan; that the survey is connected with the nearest available fixed mark in the locality; and that the District Surveyor was furnished with a certified copy of the plan immediately after its completion.[19]

Maps also include summary information about the total length of the race (in chains and links), and the width and area of land to be reserved as 'gathering ground', which was not to exceed four acres for every mile in length of the race.[20] The total daily volume of water to be diverted was also provided, which in the case of Beechworth licences was often between 500,000 and 1,000,000 gallons (2,275,000 to 4,550,000 litres).



Survey plan for water right licence application no. 492 by Donald Fletcher, PROV, VPRS 6784/P6, Unit 1, File 492 Water Right.

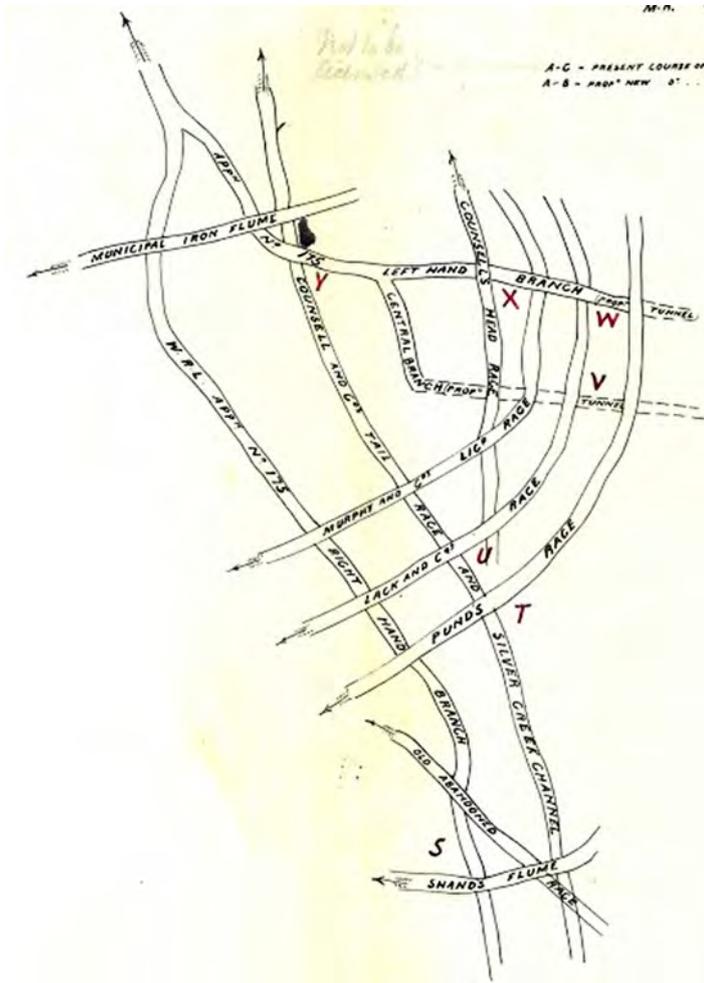
Our research has identified and mapped many of the major races, dams and associated mining water features on the Beechworth goldfield, with a focus on the catchments of Two, Three, Six and Nine Mile creeks. [21] The use of GIS, as a spatially referenced database, is important to help understand rich and complex mining landscapes and provides new ways to visualise and analyse changes over space and time. The GIS software used for this project is MapInfo v.11, with the base data supplied by VicMap (Victorian Government) including cadastral, vegetation, transport and hydrology datasets. Geo-referencing, or registering, historical maps involves digitising the paper map at high resolution and adding control points to the digital map. This can be done either by assigning geographical co-ordinates to known points or linking points to their equivalent position on the digital basemaps. In this case, cadastral boundaries and roads were used most often to assign control points. The original map is then warped slightly to create a 'best fit' with the chosen map projection.[22]

Matching historical maps with modern spatial data can result in errors, especially due to distorted or inaccurate mapping in the original maps or those introduced during digitising. Geo-referencing errors were minimised, however, due to the highly accurate nature of water right plans and the high quality digital scans obtained from PROV. Many water rights were originally surveyed and mapped using cadastral (property) boundaries as datums (or reference points). Water right plans that did not display enough cadastral information were not selected for geo-referencing. The accuracy of the geo-referenced maps used here is estimated to average between plus or minus 2 to 4 metres. Geo-referenced historical parish maps, many of which indicate water right boundaries, were also widely used to help map water race networks. For this project the level of accuracy was acceptable for the purposes of both locating features on the ground using iPads and understanding the broader complexity of the water supply systems.

The historical map can then be used to identify features, including races, dams and mining claims, in association with modern geographical markers. Races and dams can be traced and superimposed on topographic maps, Google Earth or LiDAR[23] to reveal the spatial relationships of mining water infrastructure to modern surface features. Geo-referenced historical maps can also be used with iPad applications such as Galileo and Avenza PDF Maps. Galileo is a global positioning system (GPS)[24] application that records points along a path while Avenza imports geo-referenced maps to the iPad. In this way the iPad can be used as an alternative to conventional dGPS, allowing the user literally to walk around the goldfield to the specific location of features shown on the historical map. The process readily permits the identification of relics and visualization of historical landscapes, matching archaeological features with historical maps and texts. The iPad provides a larger screen or interface than dGPS and greater overview of historical and modern features. Alignments of historical water races in GIS can also be combined with LiDAR survey images to reveal relationships between historical features and the modern land surface. LiDAR enables landscape features such as mine shafts, ditches and sluiced areas to be identified even in places where there is heavy vegetation that would otherwise make locating them difficult or even impossible.

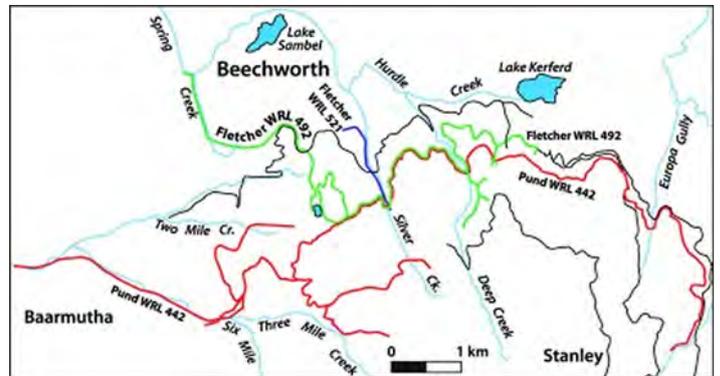
Water merchants at Beechworth

In this section we show how combining PROV resources with computer mapping technologies extends our understanding of the activities of two miners at Beechworth, Donald Fletcher and John Pund, who were also major proponents of water manipulation. They and many others like them in the district invested thousands of pounds to create and maintain elaborate mining water systems. The hilly nature of the terrain at Beechworth meant that water races often ran parallel or criss-crossed at numerous points, as miners sought the best alignment to convey their water resources (see figure 2). This led to constant negotiation and argument about access, priority and control over the available water supplies.



Overlapping water races near the head of Silver Creek, Beechworth, segment of plan from PROV, VPRS 6784/P3, Unit 1, File 521 Water Right.

Donald Fletcher was born in Scotland in 1829. He worked in a Glasgow woollen mill before migrating to Sydney on board the *Telegraph* in 1855 and moving to Beechworth later that year. In 1859 he married Elizabeth Davidson and together the couple had nine children. Fletcher had substantial claims at Pennyweight Flat in Beechworth, and he later mined at Silver Creek, Eldorado, Clear Creek and Yackandandah. He was also among the first to use hydraulic sluicing in the Beechworth district, beginning in 1860.[25] By the 1870s he was a well established figure in the mining community.[26]



Composite map of water race networks developed by Donald Fletcher (green and purple) and John Pund (red). Other races are marked in black.

Fletcher began developing his water supply network in the 1860s. In March 1883 he applied to renew his water rights licence. The plan of survey[27] shows the main race and its feeder channels extending from Deep Creek, four kilometres south-east of Beechworth, into a reservoir containing up to 5.7 million gallons (25.9 megalitres) of water (see figure 3). The race then continued past the Beechworth Lunatic Asylum and terminated at a long sluice box and tail race on Spring Creek. The total length of the race network was 12.5 miles (20 kilometres). Along the way the race crossed, or was crossed by, at least twenty other water races and flumes. It drew extra water from a number of tunnels driven into hillsides to tap natural springs, and diverted water across the watersheds of several major creeks.

A few months later, in June 1883, Fletcher applied to renew his water rights licence on Silver Creek. [28] Although this was a much shorter race of a little over two miles (3.8 kilometres), the upper section was deeply entangled with the races of other miners. Over the years a dense weaving of water channels, flumes and tunnels had been constructed by various parties to exploit as much of the available surface and ground water as possible.

By this time a number of large companies exerted considerable control over mining water supplies at Beechworth. These groups made large investments to construct race networks, deep tail races and tunnels, blasting through hard rock to drain alluvial claims and to source spring water. John Pund was one of these entrepreneurs, and although now largely forgotten, he played an important role in developing water supply networks at Beechworth in the nineteenth century.[29]

John Martin Dietrich Pund was born around 1835 in Hamburg, Germany and trained as a sail maker before migrating to Victoria in 1854. He married Emily Ada Sherry in 1859 and the couple had three children, including Percy 'Jack' Pund who later worked alongside his father. In 1873 John Pund became naturalised as a British subject.[30] In the early days Pund developed mining interests at Yackandandah, Woolshed and Nine Mile, although his main claims were at Three Mile Creek, where the family settled in 1874.[31] John Pund succeeded in becoming one of the largest and most successful alluvial miners and water barons on the Beechworth goldfield.

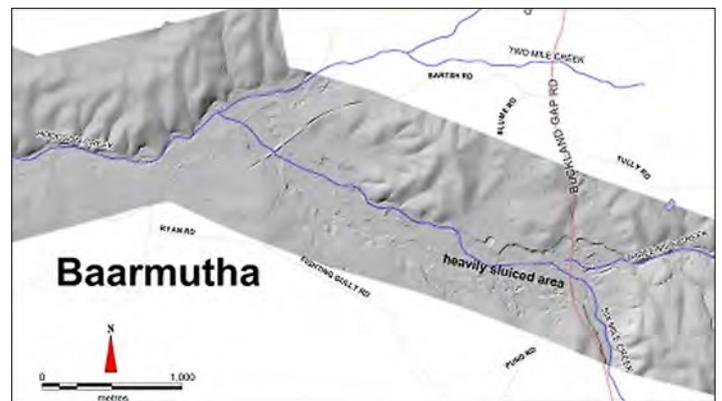
The Three Mile Creek mining area, now called Baarmutha, is located about 5 kilometres south of Beechworth. The area was mined in the 1850s but was largely abandoned by the following decade. John Pund, however, saw potential in the area if a better water supply could be obtained. In 1865 he secured a 15-year water right licence (no. 58) with three other miners.[32] Within five years the party had constructed 12 miles (19 kilometres) of water race from the Upper Nine Mile Creek to Three Mile Creek (see figure 4). Pund continued to develop his mining leases and water rights in the following years. In 1881 he obtained a water right licence, which delivered 950,000 gallons to the Three Mile Sluicing area.[33] Several years later he went into partnership with John Alston Wallace, one of Victoria's major mining entrepreneurs with extensive interests around the colony.[34] By 1895 the pair controlled the major water network supplying the Three Mile and Six Mile diggings. In the early years of the twentieth century Pund & Co were averaging over 1000 ounces of gold per year.[35] Following his death in 1915, the enterprise was eventually sold and became the GSG Amalgamated Co, which continued to sluice the Three Mile claim area until 1950.[36]



John Pund's water race network circa 1915 superimposed on Google Earth image.

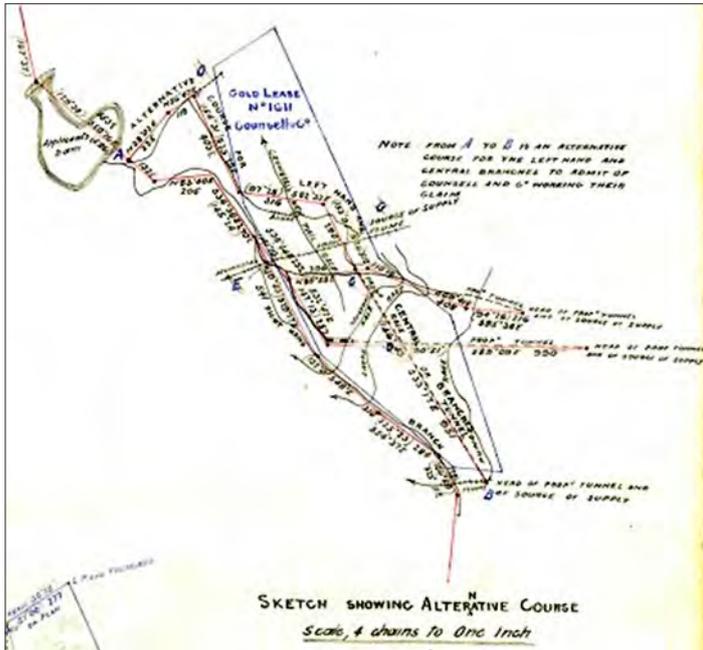
Water races and historical GIS

PROV maps of water races in the Beechworth district contain abundant detail and information. When registered in a GIS database they help reveal not only the scale and route of water races but the relationships between mining water networks and the shape of the land itself. Dense vegetation often makes the identification of remnant water races on the ground difficult, but geo-referenced historical maps, used with an iPad and LiDAR coverage, help to reveal the location and extent of these features. LiDAR images help to identify the physical remains of water systems and mining activity where they would otherwise remain hidden.



LiDAR image of Three Mile Creek sluicing area where Pund & Co operated from the 1860s to the early twentieth century.

John Pund's water race system extended for up to 28 kilometres, diverting water out of the Upper Nine Mile Creek, across the headwaters of Spring Creek and into Three Mile Creek. This involved a major diversion from the Kiewa River into the watershed of the Ovens River. The race network included 30 crossings of other races in the area. By the turn of the century miners such as Pund were also being required to build sludge dams to retain the debris from their mining operations. The use of LiDAR with historical maps reveals how these important changes to water management were integrated with mining practice (see figure 5).



Alternative surveyed course of Donald Fletcher's water right no. 521 on Silver Creek, segment of plan from PROV, VPRS 6784/P3, Unit 1, File 521 Water Right.

The plan of Donald Fletcher's water right on Silver Creek (no. 521) shows a complex alternative course that was surveyed to accommodate the sluicing claim of another party (see figure 6). This demonstrates the vital role of the local mining surveyor, who was charged with negotiating conflicts over water access between competing groups. There was often limited space in the hilly terrain to maintain gradients and alignments, and it was the responsibility of the mining surveyor to oversee and plan these landscapes of water management. By the 1880s, maps of water races provided an indispensable record of how mining water systems had developed through space and time.

Beechworth was an important centre of water management on Victoria's colonial goldfields. Miners built extensive networks of races and dams to secure reliable supplies of water, on a scale far greater than elsewhere in the colony. By the 1880s they continued to hold more than half of all the water right licences on issue and conducted sluicing operations on a massive scale. Their manipulation of surface and ground water via race networks was planned and recorded in detail by local mining surveyors. The maps they created, combined with modern geo-spatial technologies, provide a vital key in understanding the great lengths to which miners went to capture and control critical water resources.

Endnotes

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- [2] Robert Brough Smyth, *The Gold Fields and Mineral Districts of Victoria*, facsimile of 1869 edition, Queensberry Hill Press, Melbourne, 1980, p. 547.
- [3] P Davies and S Lawrence, 'Flows of water on a nineteenth-century Australian goldfield', *Water History*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 2013, pp. 331–347; P Davies and S Lawrence, 'The Garfield Water Wheel: Hydraulic Power on the Victorian Goldfields', *Australasian Historical Archaeology*, Vol. 31, 2013, pp. 25–32; S Lawrence and P Davies, 'The Sludge Question: The Regulation of Mine Tailings in Nineteenth-Century Victoria', *Environment and History*, Vol. 20, 2014, pp. 385–410; S Lawrence and P Davies, 'Learning About Landscape: Archaeology of Water Management in Colonial Victoria', *Australian Archaeology*, Vol. 74, 2012, pp. 47–54.
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- [5] Russell, *Water for Gold!*, pp. 69–84; Erica Nathan, *Lost Waters: A History of a Troubled Catchment*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2007, p. 27.
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- [8] P Davies, S Lawrence and J Turnbull, 'Harvesting Water on a Victorian colonial goldfield', *Australasian Historical Archaeology*, Vol. 29, 2011, pp. 24–32.
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- [12] *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 May 1853, p. 3.

[13] Alpha, or Charles Grey Bird, *Reminiscences of the Goldfields of Victoria, New Zealand and New South Wales in the Fifties and Sixties (in Two Parts)*, part 1, Gordon and Gotch, North Melbourne, 1915, pp. 35–6.

[14] *Mining Surveyors' Report*, Department of Mines, Melbourne, July 1860, p. 16; *Report from the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly, Upon the Ovens Gold Fields Water Company's Bill; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee and Minutes of Evidence*, Parliament of Victoria, Melbourne, 1859–60, p. 10.

[15] Smyth, *Gold Fields and Mineral Districts*, p. 548; C Woods, *Beechworth: A Titan's Field*, Hargreen Publishing Company, Melbourne, 1985, p. 99.

[16] Lloyd, *Gold in the North-East*, p. 39; *Beechworth Water Rights. Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Subject of Water Rights in the Beechworth District*, A–No.28, Parliament of Victoria, Melbourne, 1860–61, p. 2.

[17] Smyth, *Gold Fields and Mineral Districts*, p. 137

[18] Davies and Lawrence, 'A mere thread of land', pp. 180–2.

[19] PROV, VPRS 6784/P8 Water-Right Licence Files, Unit 1, File 488 Water Right.

[20] Davies and Lawrence, 'A mere thread of land', p. 179.

[21] This study is part of a larger research project, 'Cultural landscapes of colonial water management in Victoria's Central Highlands', funded by the Australian Research Council and conducted with the support of La Trobe University. Further research results on Beechworth are presented in J Turnbull, P Davies and S Lawrence, *Historical Archaeology of Water Management at Beechworth*, La Trobe University, Report No. 4473, 2014.

[22] J Turnbull, 'Historical GIS – Examples from the Creswick Goldfields', *Geospatial Science Research*, Vol. 2, 2012.

[23] LiDAR is a remote sensing technology used to create highly accurate three-dimensional maps of the Earth's surface. It uses laser technology to record images of the ground surface without vegetation obscuring the image. LiDAR is effectively an 'x-ray' of the Earth's surface that reveals topographic features such as hills and river beds in high resolution.

[24] GPS (global positioning system) is a technology that uses satellite data to locate users on the Earth's surface. Differential GPS (dGPS) is an enhanced version with a higher level of accuracy and precision.

[25] Lloyd, *Gold in the North-East*, p. 156. The party of Chappell and Son were reported to be using two hydraulic hoses on Europa Gully in August 1859 but with only limited water pressure, *Reports of the Mining Surveyors and Registrars*, Beechworth Mining District, August 1859.

[26] Woods, *Beechworth*, pp. 98–9, 159. When Fletcher died in 1904, he was still actively engaged in developing a large sluicing claim at Yackandandah, *Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, 9 July 1904, p. 7c.

[27] PROV, VA 2719 Department of Mines, VPRS 6784/P3 Water Right Licence Files 1863–1973, Unit 1, File No. 492 WR.

[28] PROV, VA 2719 Department of Mines, VPRS 6784/P3 Water Right Licence Files 1863–1973, Unit 1, File No. 521 WR.

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[30] J Hilderbrand, *The Baarmutha Story*, second edition, PB Publishing, Gisborne, Victoria, 2012, p. 98.

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Forum articles



John Jones

A builder of early West Melbourne

Dr David J Evans

'John Jones: a builder of early West Melbourne', *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria*, issue no. 14, 2015. ISSN 1832-2522. Copyright © David Evans

Dr David J Evans is a former Principal Research Scientist with CSIRO Materials Science and Engineering based in Geelong. He has also been active in charity work and served as the Honorary Secretary and later Executive Officer of Sirovilla Inc., a Geelong-based housing charity established in 1972. While serving in this role he published the organisation's history in 1999 under the title *The Sirovilla story*, Patsey Pacific, Belmont, Victoria, 1999. David moved with his family to West Melbourne in 1995 and developed an interest in local history particularly in the heritage properties of the region. Now in retirement David has made extensive use of Public Record Office of Victoria to trace the history of a number of West Melbourne's heritage properties. He is a committee member of Hotham History Project Inc.

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Abstract

This paper gives an account of the life and work of John Jones (1836–1909), a Welshman who plied his skills as a stonemason and builder in inner Melbourne during the latter half of the nineteenth century. During his working life, Jones built over 40 homes, predominantly in West Melbourne, including his family home in Hawke Street. Primary historical records available at Public Record Office Victoria have been used to trace the surviving homes built by Jones and to map their location. The earliest surviving property is a simple brick and stone cottage in Hawke Street constructed in 1873. More recent properties built between 1877 and 1889 were generally larger two-storey residences characteristic of the late Victorian era. In his last major project in 1892, John Jones was one of two contractors to build St David's Hall at the rear of the Welsh Church in La Trobe Street, Melbourne. The hall has served the Welsh Church community in Melbourne for over 120 years and in the 1890s was used as a medical clinic for women, which later evolved into the Queen Victoria Hospital.

North Melbourne and West Melbourne have developed in parallel, with the first major building in the area being the Melbourne Benevolent Asylum, which opened in 1851.[1] Situated in bushland at the western end of Victoria Street, the asylum straddled the boundary of both suburbs and became the area's dominant landmark during the nineteenth century. The sale of

town allotments to accommodate the rapidly growing population quickly followed and within 20 years both North Melbourne and West Melbourne had significant areas of residential development. In West Melbourne the residential area was confined to the north-western fringe of the city and consisted of a mix of worker's cottages and larger two-storey row houses. Industries were also attracted to the area, particularly after the draining of the West Melbourne swamp in 1879, and over time encroached into the residential area.[2] Further commercial development in the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries resulted in the displacement of much of the early housing stock so that by the late 1970s only small pockets of the original housing remained. However, it was not until the 1980s that the heritage value of the surviving homes was recognised and efforts made to record and conserve the surviving historic properties.[3]

There were a great many builders active in West Melbourne during the nineteenth century but the name of John Jones is one that keeps re-occurring in the historical records. He was a particularly industrious builder with over forty homes to his credit and at least another six in partnership with his cousin, David Hughes. The vast majority of Jones's work was in West Melbourne where he lived with his family from the 1860s until his death in 1909.

This paper gives a brief history of John Jones's life and work. Primary historical records have been used to trace the surviving homes in West Melbourne and to map their location and some of their early occupants. His role in the construction of St David's Hall at the rear of the Welsh Church in La Trobe Street, Melbourne is also described and the importance of this hall to the establishment of the Queen Victorian Hospital is highlighted.

Early years

John Jones (see figure 1) was born on 26 March 1836 in the village of Pantperthog in North Wales.[4] His father died when he was very young and the family relocated to the nearby village of Corris. At the age of 16, Jones was working as a fuller in one of the local woollen mills. [5] It is unclear how long Jones remained at the mill but according to a surviving diary written in his native tongue we learn that by 1855 at the age of 19 he was working as a stonemason in the district of Corris.[6]



John Jones circa 1890. Photograph: C Hewitt, 95 Swanston Street Melbourne, provided by Evan Hughes.

In 1856, Jones and several of his friends and colleagues decided to emigrate to Australia where his uncle, John Hughes and cousin David Hughes were establishing themselves as builders in Portland and Parkville respectively. It was with David Hughes that Jones would later join in partnership to build a number of homes in inner Melbourne.

Jones left Wales on Thursday 17 April 1856 and sailed from Liverpool on the *Mindoro* on 22 April.[7] He arrived at Sandridge (Port Melbourne) on Sunday 13 July, a journey of eleven weeks and six days. After several months in Melbourne, Jones moved to Portland where he teamed with his uncle, John Hughes, who was working in the town as a stonemason.[8] Hughes has a number of fine buildings to his credit in Portland including Customs House (1849–50) and Burswood (1855–56), the mansion of Edward Henty, Portland's first permanent settler.[9] It is highly likely that the young Jones contributed to a number of Portland's early buildings while working with Hughes but it should be noted that many early buildings attributed to John Jones in Portland in the 1850s are those of another stonemason with the same name.[10]

After approximately two and a half years in Portland, Jones returned to Melbourne where it appears he commenced building in his own right. Two notices of intention to build under his name were lodged in 1858; the first for a workshop in Grimes Lane, Melbourne on 30 June 1858 and the second for a store in Gore Street, Fitzroy on 1 October 1858.[11] Around 1859, Jones was struck with gold fever and set off for the Chiltern and Beechworth diggings to try his luck.[12] He appears to have had some success since he reported trouble with gold thieves and was even stabbed, although fortunately not seriously. It is not known when Jones returned to Melbourne but it is likely that prior to 1867 he was engaged in small scale alterations and additions in Melbourne that have not been captured in the records.

In 1867, Jones lodged an application to build two cottages for himself in Hawke Street, West Melbourne near the corner of Spencer Street.[13] It is believed that these houses were located at 40 and 42 Hawke Street, near the corner of Dicks Place, and although they have not survived, they appear to be the first houses built by Jones in West Melbourne, marking the beginning of his long career as a house builder in the neighbourhood.

Tracing John Jones's buildings

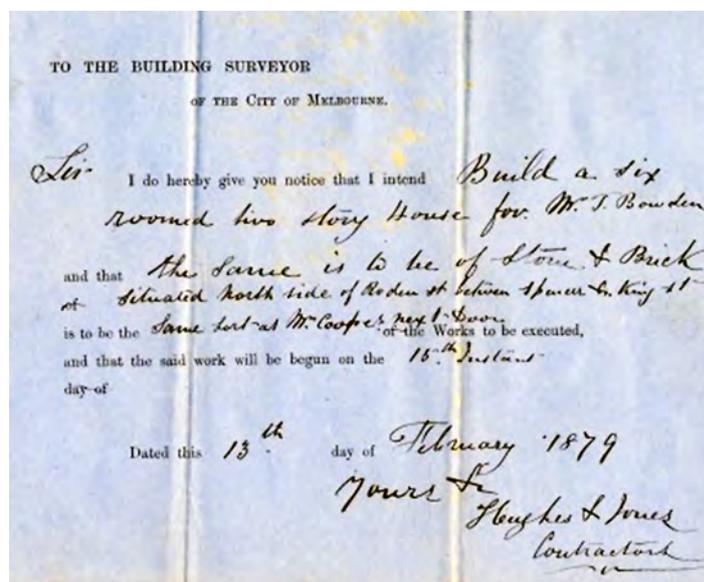
In Melbourne after 1850, builders were required to lodge a notice of intention to build with the council and pay the prescribed fee before commencing work. An index of these applications, arranged in chronological order, was compiled by the late Winston Burchett of the University of Melbourne's School of Architecture. This index (now called the Burchett Index) is available on microfiche at Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) and is a key resource for identifying the location, construction date, architect and the name of the contractor for early buildings in Melbourne. In 2013, entries in the Burchett Index were incorporated into a searchable database within the Australian Architectural Index.[14]

The methodology used for tracing the homes built by John Jones initially involved a search of the Burchett Index for notices lodged by Jones between 1856 and 1909. Over 40 notices were found, most of which are for properties located in West Melbourne. Unfortunately, these notices do not uniquely locate a property because the situation was described in terms of the street name, the block as defined by the nearest cross-streets (in most but not all cases) and the side of the street (north, south, and so on). Street numbers were rarely given and if used were unreliable before 1889 when street numbering in West Melbourne was standardised. [15] Thus in order to unambiguously locate a property, additional primary records including rate books, directories and land title records must be consulted.

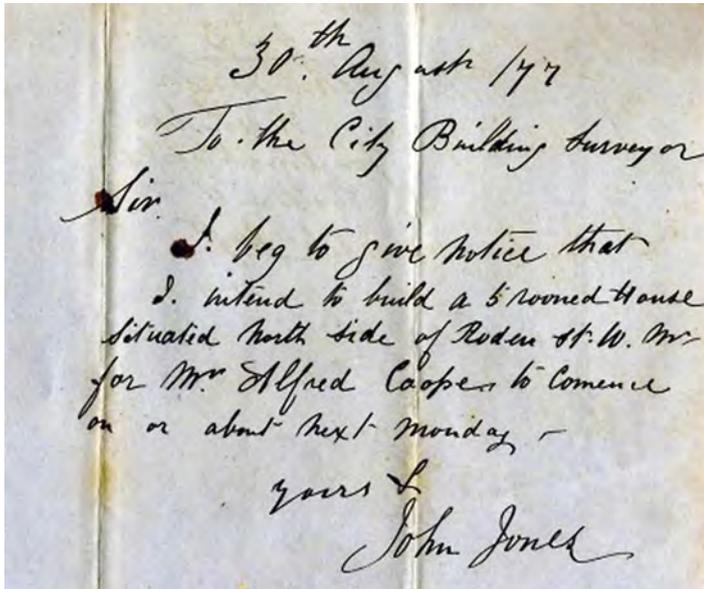
Rate books for the City of Melbourne are available at PROV on microfiche and give details of rated properties including the owner's name, occupier, the size of the land and details of the building including the number of rooms, type of construction and the rates levied. [16] By scanning forward through the rate books over consecutive years around the time of construction it is possible to see a property appear for the first time. The name of the occupant in the rate book should correlate with the occupier in the *Sands and McDougall's Melbourne and suburban directory* and can provide a useful marker for a house.[17] The details of neighbouring properties (occupants, owners and property details) are also useful markers but it must be remembered that adjacent entries in the rate books are not necessarily neighbouring properties because before 1880 vacant land was not listed. By following a house forward through the rate books and the directories until street numbers are reliable it is generally possible to determine the address of a property. Finally, land titles show the history of ownership of a piece of land and its location, and as legal documents, are highly reliable. They are particularly valuable in eliminating

ambiguities that may arise from other primary sources but importantly they relate to the land only and on their own cannot provide a construction date for a heritage property.

Consultation of the original notices of intention to build contained within VPRS 9288 is also important since occasionally it provides additional information that has not been captured in the Burchett Index. For example, according to the 1879 listings in the Burchett Index, Jones, working in partnership with his cousin David Hughes, lodged a notice to build a six-room two-storey house on the north side of Roden Street between Spencer and King streets for T Bowden.[18] The original notice as shown in figure 2 has the additional comment 'same sort as Mr Coopers [sic] next door'. This comment was helpful in locating the house since some 18 months earlier on 30 August 1877, Jones gave notice to build a five room house on the north side of Roden Street for Alfred Cooper (see figure 3).[19] Thomas Bowden owned several houses in Roden Street but Alfred Cooper had only one so by cross-referencing with the rate books it was not only possible to locate these neighbouring properties but also to confirm their dates of construction. References to the notices of intention to build in this paper are to the primary records contained within VPRS 9288.



Notice lodged by John Jones and David Hughes on 13 February 1879, registration number 7904, PROV, VPRS 9288/P1 Notices of Intention to Build, Unit 13.



Notice lodged by John Jones on 30 August 1877, registration number 7333, PROV, VPRS 9288/P1 Notices of Intention to Build, Unit 13.

An important secondary source of information on heritage properties in the City of Melbourne is Graeme Butler's, North and West Melbourne Conservation Study undertaken for the City of Melbourne in 1983.[20] This study gives architectural details of each property together with a photograph and in selected cases historical information on builders, early owners and tenants. More recently, properties listed in Butler's study have been incorporated into the City of Melbourne's online database of heritage places (i-Heritage).[21]

Using the above resources it has been possible to identify, with a high level of confidence, all of the surviving homes built by Jones in the West Melbourne region. An index of all properties for which Jones gave a notice of intention to build has been compiled but in a number of cases their exact location has not been unambiguously identified.[22]

Jones's properties (1873–1889)

Jones constructed over 40 homes in inner Melbourne between 1867 and 1892. A number of these homes were built for specific clients but many were self-funded and sold only on completion. With the exception of St David's Hall (see below), Jones did not use an architect for any of his projects although he did use the same decoration to the façades and party walls particularly for homes built during the latter part of his career.

Table 1 summarises the surviving homes built by Jones and shows the registration number used by the City of Melbourne, the current address of each property and the

original owner or tenant. With the exception of the house in Fitzgibbon Street, Parkville, all of the surviving homes are situated in Roden, Hawke or Adderley Streets, West Melbourne and their locations are shown in figure 4.

A study of the owners and occupants of houses built by Jones during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries gives a glimpse of the early population of West Melbourne. From a scan of the rate books and the *Sands and McDougall* directories it is apparent that many of the homes were leased with a significant number of these changing hands frequently. This indicates a very mobile society possibly in response to the changing nature of the suburb from one that was almost exclusively residential in the 1880s to a mixed use in the first half of the twentieth century. Major employers of these residents included the Victorian Railways, the shipping industry and associated Victoria Dock and the Metropolitan Gas Company (forerunner of the Gas and Fuel Corporation).

Long-term residents employed by the Victorian Railways in the late 1800s include, Fred Fewster (131 Hawke Street) who was in the Transportation Branch, Thomas Bowden (80 Roden Street) who was described as a railway official and Alfred Cooper (82 Roden Street) who worked as a rolling stock inspector.[23] Another employee of the Victorian Railways was William Hulme of 152 Roden Street. His son, Andrew Hulme, a tailor based in Elizabeth Street and later Little Collins Street continued to live in the house following the death of his father in 1904.[24]

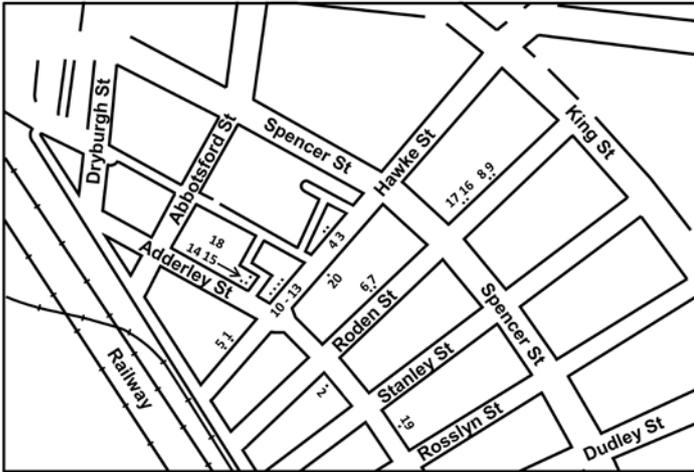
Captain George Pitkethly, who purchased 76 Hawke Street from Jones in August 1880 for £530, was master of the barque *Kate Tatham* and later the *Earn*. He was Master of the latter vessel when he died at sea off King Island in 1889.[25] During the last 9 years of his life he alternately occupied and leased his property to such people as boot retailers William Leeming and Pat Morgan.[26] Leeming was the proprietor of the Colonnade Boot Bazaar located at 1 Errol Street, North Melbourne.[27]

A number of other residents of Jones's houses worked in the manufacturing industry. These included, Joshua Proud of 218 Adderley Street who was a manufacturer of blacking and charcoal, and Thomas Easton of 80 Hawke Street, who was employed by the Victorian Iron Rolling Company located in Dudley Street, West Melbourne. [28] The Tait family were the owners and occupiers of 76 Hawke Street from 1880 until 1917. Mr Tait was a foreman with the Metropolitan Gas Company for 27 years and died in August 1890.[29] He was survived by his wife, Agnes, a music teacher who continued to live at number 76 for many years.[30]

Table 1. Surviving properties built by John Jones between 1873 and 1892.					
No.¹	Date	Details as per notice of intention to build	Address of property	Built for or owner	Occupier
5267	21 Feb 1873	Hawke St, below Adderley two-room brick cottage	112 Hawke St	D Davies	D Davies
5883	9 May 1874	Adderley St, situated near corner of Roden St – cottage	179 Adderley St	J Clarke	
5983	23 Jul 1874	Hawke St, between Spencer & Ireland streets – two cottages	44 Hawke St 46 Hawke St	J Jones J Jones	J Burrage W McKnight
6199	19 Jan 1875	Hawke St, north-west side – two-room brick & stone cottage	114 Hawke St	I Williams	I Williams
7147	4 Apr 1877	Roden St, north side between Spencer and Adderley streets – two-storey, five-room house	148 Roden St	J Stokes	J Stokes
7179	3 May 1877	Roden St, between Spencer and Adderley streets – six-room, two-storey house	152 Roden St	A Hulme	A Hulme
7333	30 Aug 1877	Roden St, north side – five-room house	82 Roden St	A Cooper	A Cooper
7584	13 Apr 1878	Parkville, Fitzgibbon St – brick cottage with parapet	59 Fitzgibbon St, Parkville ²	G McAdam	G McAdam
7904	13 Feb 1879	Roden St, north side between Spencer and King streets – six-room two-storey house. ‘Same sort as Mr Coopers next door’.	80 Roden St ²	T Bowden	T Bowden
8040	14 Jul 1879	Hawke St, between Ireland and Adderley streets – two brick and stone houses	76 Hawke St 78 Hawke St	J Jones	G Pitkethly H Tait
8457	4 Aug 1880	Hawke St, near Adderley St – stone and brick house	80 Hawke St	J Jones	T Easton
8842	7 Jul 1881	Hawke St, north side between Adderley and Ireland streets – six-room house	‘Bodiwan’, 74 Hawke St	J Jones	J Jones & family
9350	5 Sep 1882	Adderley St, north west of Hawke St – brick house with slate and iron roof	220 Adderley St	W Clarke	W Clarke
181	17 Feb 1883	Adderley St, north side of Hawke streets – two-storey brick house	218 Adderley St	J Proud	J Proud
503	24 Sep 1883	Roden St, north side between King and Spencer streets – two two-storey houses	92 Roden St 94 Roden St	J Jones Jones/Evan Roberts	R Moore E Roberts
1188	12 Nov 1884	Adderley St, rear of Mr Proud’s dwelling, first house north side of Hawke St – workshop	218A Adderley St	J Jones’s workshop & stable	J Jones
2756	28 Apr 1887	Adderley St, near Roslyn St – brick and stone two-storey house	‘Corris’, 136 Adderley St	J Jones	R Jones
3810	8 Mar 1889	Hawke St, south side opposite Ireland St – two-storey house	131 Hawke St	F Fewster	F Fewster
5549	23 Jul 1892	La Trobe St West – classrooms and hall at rear of church	La Trobe St, Melbourne	Welsh Church Trustees	

Notes to Table 1:

1. Registration number used on the notice of intention to build
2. Built by Hughes and Jones

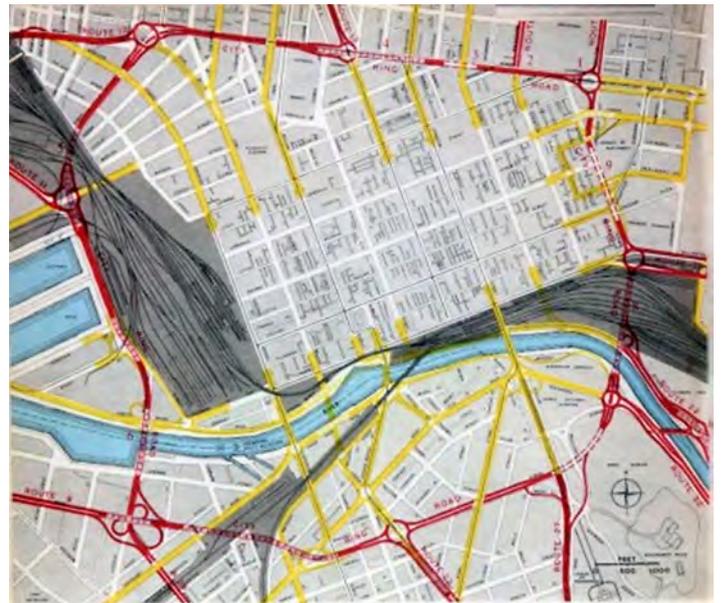


Map showing the location of the surviving homes built by John Jones in West Melbourne between 1873 and 1889.

Key to map		
No. on map	Current street number	Build date
1	112 Hawke Street	1873
2	179 Adderley Street	1874
3	44 Hawke Street	1874
4	46 Hawke Street	1874
5	114 Hawke Street	1875
6	148 Roden Street	1877
7	152 Roden Street	1877
8	82 Roden Street	1877
9	80 Roden Street	1879
10	76 Hawke Street	1879
11	78 Hawke Street	1879
12	80 Hawke Street	1880
13	74 Hawke Street	1881
14	220 Adderley Street	1882
15	218 Adderley Street	1883
16	92 Roden Street	1884
17	94 Roden Street	1884
18	218A Adderley Street	1884
19	136 Adderley Street	1887
20	131 Hawke Street	1889

Another person of interest to live in a house built by Jones was Phillip Pedretti, a World War I veteran who resided with his family at 46 Hawke Street from 1943 until the late 1960s.[31] Phillip Pedretti was originally a miner from Dry Diggings near Daylesford and enlisted with the first Australian Imperial Force in Melbourne in 1916.[32] He served with the Third Pioneers and was taken on strength in France in December 1916. He was hospitalised several times during 1917–18 and received treatment for shell shock in England before returning home in March 1919. [33] After the war Phillip Pedretti found work as a driver.

The survival rate of houses built by Jones is less than 50% and has been severely impacted by past planning decisions. For example, a 1954 proposal to build an inner city ring road by the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works required the widening of Hawke Street through public acquisition of properties on the north-western side of the street (see figure 5).[34] The scheme was later abandoned but it was too late to save up to nine terrace homes including at least five built by Jones.



Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) plan of a proposed inner-city ring road that required Hawke Street, West Melbourne to be widened to divert through traffic from the central business district area. EF Borrie, *Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme Report*, Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, Melbourne, 1954, p. 98.

The oldest surviving home built by Jones is the cottage at 112 Hawke Street built for carpenter, David Davies in 1873 (see figure 6). Land title data shows that Davies officially purchased the land from George Baker on 4 March 1873, two weeks after Jones lodged a notice of intention to build a two-room brick cottage for Davies on 21 February 1873.[35] The house with David Davies as owner and occupier first appears in the rate books in 1874, clearly dating the cottage to between 1873 and early 1874.[36] The house is a typical single-fronted worker's cottage with original wrought iron fence, veranda decoration and roof structure. The addition of the parapet orbs is clearly out of character and suggests a later addition. David Davies lived in the house for approximately eleven years before selling it to George Hill in 1885.[37] The adjacent property at 114 Hawke Street (see figure 6) was also built by Jones in 1875, approximately one year after the completion of its neighbour.[38] It was built for fireman Isaac Williams who also purchased this allotment from George Baker in 1874 and resided there with his wife until his death in 1898.[39]



Early surviving cottages built by John Jones in Hawke Street in the 1870s. Right, 112 Hawke Street, built 1873 (registration no. 5267) and left, 114 Hawke Street, built 1875 (registration no. 6199). Photograph: David Evans, 2013.

Another early Jones cottage of similar design is that at 179 Adderley Street, West Melbourne (see figure 7). Butler reported that this residence was built for John Clarke in 1889 at the same time as the corner shop at 181 Adderley Street.[40] However, land title data and a notice of intention to build lodged by Jones on 9 May 1874 clearly indicates that Jones built this house for John Clarke in 1874 on land that Jones had sold to Clarke two years previously.[41] The cottage is similar to those at 112 and 114 Hawke Street with a similar veranda, fence and roof structure.



179 Adderley Street, West Melbourne. Built 1874 (registration no. 5883). Photograph: David Evans, 2007.

Houses built by Jones after 1877 were generally two-storey terraces of six or seven rooms. The highest concentration of such houses is in Hawke Street, between Ireland and Adderley streets. In 1885, there were seven of Jones's terraces in this space although only four have survived. The original streetscape can be gauged from the photograph shown in figure 8 taken circa 1977. The four two-storey terraces on the right were built by Jones between 1879 and 1881 while the two, two-storey terraces on the extreme left were all that remained of a block of three, called Bala Terrace, constructed by Jones in 1885.[42] The single-storey cottage wedged between the two blocks of two-storey terraces is the oldest home in the block and was built by David Clarke for William Clarke in 1873.[43]



South-west side of Hawke Street between Ireland and Adderley streets, circa 1977. Photograph: Ted Strehlow. Reproduced by permission.

The same streetscape today (see figure 9) shows the four surviving terraces built by Jones between 1879 and 1881. Butler reported that this row is one of the few relatively original streetscapes in West Melbourne and is unusual since each house is set at an angle parallel with the side street (Ireland) rather than directly fronting Hawke Street.[44] This, together with the fact that they are the work of a local owner-builder adds to their local historical significance.



South-west side of Hawke Street between Ireland and Adderley streets showing the unusual streetscape with houses set at an angle to the street. Photograph: David Evans, 2014.

Each house features a two-storey veranda addressing the street from between the party walls. This style, generally known as Victorian filigree, is characteristic of much of the housing in the inner suburbs of Melbourne during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The extensive use of decorative ironwork is regarded as distinctly Australian, although comparable examples do exist in many other countries notably the United States (New Orleans), the West Indies and South Africa.[45] The major variation to the external façades of such houses was the decoration to the party walls and parapets, and builders tended to use the same features over and over again. Jones was no exception and for all his two-storey homes he used moulded figurehead plaques, lion heads and scrolled corbels on the party walls. Parapets appeared to be an optional extra and were generally plain.

The house at 74 Hawke Street (extreme right, figure 9) was the Jones family home. Jones lodged a notice of intention to build for this house on 7 July 1881 to accommodate his growing family.[46] He married Margaret Jones from Wales in the Welsh Church of Melbourne in 1874 and they had three children, Dafydd (born 1877), Elizabeth (born 1881), and Gwendolen (born 1883).[47] The house was named 'Bodiwan', sometimes spelt 'Bod-iwan', which is attributed to Margaret Jones

after a stately home in Bala, North Wales, the town of her birth. Confirmation of the name, 'Bodiwan' comes from two sources.[48] Firstly, notices of intention to build submitted by Jones after 1881 were signed 'John Jones, Bodiwan, Hawke Street' and secondly, from a petition submitted to the City of Melbourne by West Melbourne residents in 1887.[49] This petition requested the reinstatement of the hackney carriage stand to the corner of Hawke and Spencer streets, and because it pre-dates the standardisation of house numbers in West Melbourne, residents often gave their address using their street and house name (see figure 10). Such petitions are a wonderful resource for local historians searching for original names of old houses in the neighbourhood.

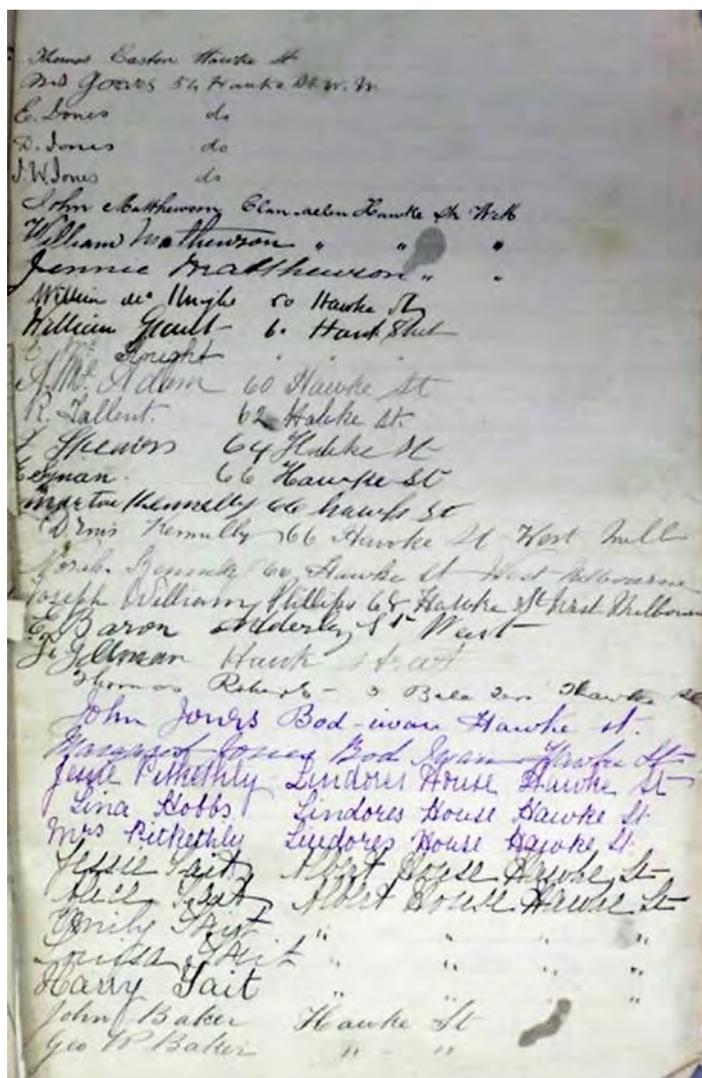


Image of a page (3 of 9) of a petition submitted by West Melbourne residents to the Melbourne Town Council in 1887 showing use of houses names. PROV, VPRS 3181/P0 Town Clerk's Files, Series I, Unit 348, Hackney Carriages, 1887.

Photographs of the Jones family home circa 1884 and 130 years later in 2014 are shown in figure 11. The people standing at the front gate of the house in the early photograph are John and Margaret Jones and their two eldest children, Daffyd and Elizabeth Jones. The identities of the people on the first floor veranda are unknown.



'Bodiwan', the Jones family home at 74 Hawke Street, West Melbourne: (left) circa 1884, photographer, unknown; (right) 2014. Photograph: David Evans, 2014.

Jones went to considerable effort to distinguish Bodiwan from its neighbours.[50] For example, it has a scrolled parapet above its cornice contrasting with the plain parapets of 76 and 78 Hawke Street. He also installed a wrought iron fence and used a classic Victorian pattern for the encaustic tiles for the front veranda. The allotment is also significantly wider than the others in the street although the original land title specified each allotment as 18 feet in width.[51] As owner and builder of the adjacent homes Jones clearly became aware of a hiatus of almost three feet in the dimensions of the original survey and commandeered this extra width for himself. The error in the original survey was not corrected until a new certificate of title was issued in 2002.[52]

Between 1882 and 1889, Jones was active in building at least 15 houses in the West Melbourne area although only seven of these have survived to the present day. Particularly good examples are those at 92 and 94 Roden Street (shown in figure 12). Jones formerly purchased an allotment with a 40 foot frontage between Spencer and King streets from John Alison on 15 October 1883 after making an application to build two two-storey houses on this land on 24 September 1883. [53] The properties first appear in the rate books in 1884 consistent with the date 'AD 1884' moulded into the parapets. After subdivision, Jones sold these houses to Evan Roberts (92) and Richard Moore (94).[54]



'Rothwell' at 92 Roden Street and 'Thor Alice' at 94 Roden Street completed by Jones in 1884 (registration no. 503). Photograph: David Evans, 2014.

Another fine example of a late Jones house is located at 136 Adderley Street (see figure 13). The notice of intention to build was lodged on 28 April 1887 again consistent with the date 'AD 1887' moulded into the parapet.[55] The house was named 'Corris' after the nearest town to his birthplace in Gwynedd, North Wales and was initially occupied by Robert Jones and later by JJ Owen, minister of the Melbourne Welsh Church.



'Corris' at 136 Adderley Street, West Melbourne (registration no. 2756) completed by John Jones in 1887. Photograph: David Evans, 2014.

With the depression of the 1890s, demand for new homes dried up and after 1889 Jones did not construct any new homes. His last home, which has not survived, was for a 'dwelling house of stone and bricks' for Isaac Williams in Dudley Street in 1889.[56] After this time, Jones continued smaller-scale work variously described in the records as 'additions' or 'reinstatements' largely to his own properties.

St David's Hall, Melbourne Welsh Church (completed 1893)

The last major construction by John Jones was a project undertaken for the Melbourne Welsh Church in 1891–92. The church, of which Jones was treasurer for 22 years, had need for a hall and rooms for a Sunday school and other social occasions.[57] Plans for the buildings were prepared by architects SWL Powell and to keep costs to an acceptable figure, the church acted as builder using John Jones and Robert Jones, two experienced builders from the congregation, to undertake the project using day labour.[58] With strong patriotic spirit, the church elders instructed the builders to 'hire Welsh tradesmen where possible.' The hall, shown in figure 14 was built for a total cost of £815.1.9 and was used for the first time on the first of March 1893 (St David's Day) and is appropriately known as St David's Hall.



Melbourne Welsh Church in La Trobe Street, Melbourne with St David's Hall in the background. Photograph: David Evans, 2007.

St David's Hall has been a popular venue for meetings and celebrations of the Welsh Community in Melbourne and has been used for a wide variety of events including weddings, eisteddfods and meetings of the Cambrian Society. The society was established in 1872 and held regular meetings in the hall including the diamond jubilee of the society in 1932.[59]

Many weddings were celebrated in the hall. Typical of these was the wedding of Hilda Morton of North Melbourne to Henry Pinney of Moonee Ponds in June 1910.[60] Hilda was a member of the church congregation and a Sunday school teacher and following their marriage the couple celebrated their wedding breakfast in St David's Hall. The Reverend JJW Owen, who later lived in the house built by Jones at 136 Adderley Street, West Melbourne, officiated at the wedding.

Prime Minister Mr Billy Hughes was one of many distinguished guests to be welcomed by the Welsh community in the hall.[61] This event in January 1916 celebrated Mr Hughes's appointment as Prime Minister and farewelled him on his world travels in support of World War I efforts. Another distinguished guest entertained in the hall was Lord Mountevans, formerly Admiral 'Teddy' Evans, who in addition to being a distinguished British naval officer was second in command to Captain Robert Scott during the British Antarctic Expedition of 1910 to 1913.[62]

This story of John Jones's building works would not be complete without mentioning the use of St David's Hall in the 1890s as a medical day clinic for women.[63] The clinic was established by Dr Constance Stone, the first Australian woman to practice medicine in Australia. Dr Stone was working at Dr John Singleton's Free Medical Mission in Collingwood in the early 1890s and saw a need for a separate medical clinic for disadvantaged women. Her husband was the Rev Dr David Egryn Jones, minister of the Welsh Church and also a doctor. Together in 1896 they persuaded the church elders to grant permission for Dr Stone to establish her clinic in St David's Hall. Under Dr Stone's supervision the clinic ran in the hall for a number of years and was staffed by two of the first female doctors to graduate in medicine from the University of Melbourne including her sister, Dr Clara Stone.

The clinic initiated by Dr Stone and her colleagues became the nucleus of the Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital which continues today as the Monash Medical Centre. A plaque commemorating Dr Stone's work is mounted on the front of the church in La Trobe Street and a second plaque was mounted inside St David's Hall on the 75th anniversary of the foundation of the hospital in September 1971. The church community have continued to support the hospital through fundraising for over 100 years helping to keep the legacy of Constance Stone and Egryn Jones alive.

Jones family history

Margaret Jones died at Bodiwan on 23 December 1891 at the age of 48.[64] John survived his wife by 25 years and died in Melbourne on 23 January 1909, aged 73.[65] At the time of his death John Jones owned 11 homes including the family home and these were left to his children as follows: numbers 44, 46, 62 and 64 Hawke Street to Gwenddolen Jones; 84, 86 and 88 Hawke Street to Elizabeth Jones; and 11 and 13 Ireland Street and the stable and workshop at the rear of 218 Adderley Street to David Jones.[66] Excluding the family home at 74 Hawke Street only three of these properties (44 and 46 Hawke Street and 218A Adderley Street) have survived to the present day.

The Jones family retained ownership of the family home for three successive generations with Gwenddolen Hughes (third child of John and Margaret Jones) taking ownership of the property from her siblings in 1914.[67] The Hughes family lived in Bodiwan raising their family of two boys, John and Evan, until it was sold in 1955, a continuous occupation by the Jones/Hughes family of 74 years.[68]

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to the late Mr Evan Hughes, grandson of John Jones, for his assistance during the writing of this work and for copies of documents relating to John Jones's life. His assistance with the history of the Melbourne Welsh Church and St David's Hall in particular was greatly appreciated. My thanks also to Margaret Grobb of the Portland Historical Society, Dr Karl Hessian for a preprint of his paper on the history of house numbering in inner Melbourne and to the staff at Public Record Office of Victoria for their assistance. I would also like to thank Allen Haines for digital restoration of the early photographs and Dr Jeff Church for drawing the map showing the location of Jones's properties. Finally, my thanks to the members of Hotham History Project Inc. for their encouragement.

Endnotes

[1] Mary Kehoe, *The Melbourne Benevolent Asylum, Hotham's Premier Building*, Hotham History Project, North Melbourne, 1998, p. 17.

[2] Albert Mattingley, 'The Early History of North Melbourne', *Victorian Historical Society Magazine*, Vol. V, No. 2, December 1916.

[3] Graeme Butler, *North and West Melbourne: Conservation Study for the City of Melbourne of North and West Melbourne*, Vols 1 and 2, Melbourne City Council, Melbourne, 1983.

[4] Anon., 'Welsh Pioneers: John Jones', *Cambrian Society Magazine*, April 1939, p. 12.

[5] 1851 Census of England and Wales, Parish of Pennal Upper, p. 194.

[6] Diary of John Jones, 1856, kindly made available by Evan Hughes and translated from Welsh by Elin Coleman, March 2000. Excerpts of John Jones's diary have been published in *Y Fanner*, 10 May 2000.

[7] PROV, VPRS 7666 Inward Overseas Passenger Lists (British Ports) [Microfiche Copy of VPRS 947], Fiche 110, *Mindoro*, p. 9.

[8] Anon., 'Welsh Pioneers', p. 12.

[9] Gwen Bennett, *Portland; Now and Then, A Guide to Portland's Historic Buildings*, Gwen Bennett, Portland, 1993, p. 13.

[10] *ibid.*, pp. 2 and 10. Margaret Grobb, Secretary, Portland Historical Society, personal correspondence, 2013.

[11] PROV, VPRS 9288/P1 Notices of Intention to Build, Unit 6, No. 540, 30 June 1858, and No. 782, 1 October 1858.

[12] Anon., 'Welsh Pioneers', p. 12.

[13] PROV, VPRS 9288/P1, Unit 10, No. 1860, 31 January 1867.

[14] PROV, VPRS 9463/P3 Burchett Index: Notices of Intention to Build (Microfiche), Australian Architectural Index available at <<http://www.mileslewis.net/australian-architectural.html>>, accessed August 2013.

[15] Barbara Armstrong, 'Beware the Street Number', *Ancestor*, Vol. 31, No. 8, 2013, pp. 8–11.

[16] PROV, VPRS 5708/P2 Rate Books.

[17] *Sands and McDougall's Melbourne and suburban directory*, Sands and McDougall, Melbourne, 1863–1901.

[18] PROV, VPRS 9463/P3, Unit 122, No. 7904, 14 February 1879.

[19] PROV VPRS 9288/P1, Unit 13, No. 7904, 14 February 1879, and No. 7333, 30 August 1877.

[20] Butler, *North and West Melbourne: Conservation Study*, Vols 1 and 2.

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[22] The index is available upon request from the author.

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[24] Butler, *North and West Melbourne Conservation Study*, Vol. 1, p. 356; *Argus*, 1 August 1904, p. 1.

[25] *Age*, 12 March 1890, p. 4.

[26] Butler, *North and West Melbourne Conservation Study*, Vol. 1, p. 356.

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- [33] *Ibid.*
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- [61] *Age*, 10 January, 1916, p. 7.
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- [63] Shirley Roberts, 'Constance Stone – Australia's first women doctor', *Journal of Medical Biography*, 1995, No. 3, pp. 1–7; Gwendolen H Swinburne, *Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital: a history: the first fifty years*, Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital, Melbourne, 1951.
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Military exemption courts in 1916

A public hearing of private lives

Jennifer McNeice

'Military exemption courts in 1916: a public hearing of private lives', *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria*, issue no. 14, 2015. ISSN 1832-2522. Copyright © Jennifer McNeice

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Abstract

Amid ANZAC commemorations and stories about the eagerness of Australian men to join World War I, it is rarely reported that approximately 45% of eligible men did not enlist and more than 87,000 men actively sought exemption from military service. Acknowledging these statistics, and the experience of these men, does not diminish respect for those who served or for the sacrifices they made. Instead, it allows a more accurate perspective from which to view their actions. This article explains the historical context of exemption court records and explores how these records can help illuminate the experience of the men who stayed at home. Those seeking a deeper understanding of the social context of military service can consult exemption court records that are freely available at Public Record Office Victoria. The records document men who sought exemption from military service, their reasons for doing so and the decisions of the exemption courts.

Voluntary recruitment

The enthusiasm of Australian men to volunteer for service in World War I is legendary. Young men pretended to be older and old men pretended to be younger. Others, dismayed by rejection, tried to enlist at different locations. These truths are embedded in the Australian public consciousness. But another truth, affecting more men, is less well known. The narrative has tended to ignore the men who chose not to volunteer.

As we shall see later in this article, some of these men actively sought exemption from military service. Exemption court records at Public Record Office Victoria document the reasons the men gave in their applications for exemption. Together with newspaper reports of court proceedings, they provide a broader and more balanced perspective about the government's campaign to encourage men to enlist.

Australia entered the war in the midst of a general election following a double dissolution of the federal parliament. Both sides pledged support for the war, with Labor's Andrew Fisher declaring that Australia would be in it 'to the last man and the last shilling' before winning a majority in both houses on 5 September 1914.

Ultimately there were 416,809 enlistments in the army during the war. This number represents 38.7% of the eligible male population, that is, men between 18 and 44 years of age.[1] It is estimated that a further 178,800 were rejected.[2] Therefore approximately 45% of eligible men did not try to enlist.

Enlistment status	Approximate % of eligible males
Did enlist	38.7%
Tried to enlist but rejected	16.6%
Did not try to enlist	44.7%

Table 1: Voluntary recruitment of eligible population

Under section 49 of the *Defence Act 1903*, soldiers could not be conscripted to serve beyond the limits of the Commonwealth of Australia, so a volunteer force was required. There was no difficulty in obtaining the enlistments required to fulfil Australia's initial promise of 20,000 men. But as the war continued, enlistments fell and the demand for new forces and reinforcements increased.

The *War Precautions Act 1914*, enlarged eligibility criteria, recruitment drives, a war census and attempts to introduce full conscription were among the techniques used to try to boost enlistments.

As the number of recruits dwindled, the eligibility criteria expanded. In the first year of the war the upper age limit of recruits was increased from 35 to 45 years; the minimum chest measurement was reduced from 34 inches to 33 inches; and the minimum height of 5 feet 6 inches was reduced to 5 feet 2 inches. In April 1917, the height standard was reduced again to 5 feet.[3]



Go! It's your duty Lad. Join to-day [picture], Great Britain. Parliamentary Recruiting Committee. London: David Allen & Sons Ltd [1915], 1 poster: colour photolithograph on buff paper; 102.128.0 cm., Accession no(s) H33861/3, State Library of Victoria.

Month	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918
January		10,225	22,101	4,575	2,344
February		8,370	18,508	4,924	1,918
March		8,913	15,597	4,989	1,518
April		6,250	9,876	4,646	2,781
May		10,526	10,656	4,576	4,888
June		12,505	6,582	3,679	2,540
July		36,575	6,170	4,155	2,741
August		25,714	6,345	3,274	2,959
September		16,571	9,325	2,460	2,451
October		9,914	11,520	2,761	3,619
November		11,230	5,055	2,815	1,124
December		9,119	2,617	2,247	
Total	52,561	165,912	124,352	45,101	28,883

Table 2: Enlistments by month (except 1914 which is given as an aggregate covering August to December in that year).

Source: E Scott, *Official history of Australia in the war of 1914–1918*, Volume XI, *Australia during the war*, seventh edition, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1941, pp. 871–72.

War census and call to arms

The *War Census Act* was given Royal Assent on 23 July 1915, and subsequently, a war census was taken between 6 and 15 September. All males aged between 18 and 60 years of age were required to complete the first schedule, that is, the personal card, and everyone 18 years of age and over who possessed property or income had to complete the second schedule, that is, the wealth and income card.

The personal card asked questions about name, address, age, marital status, dependants, health, occupation, military training, possession of firearms and ammunition, place of birth, parents' places of birth and naturalisation.

In June 1915 Australia pledged 5,300 men each month as reinforcements.[4] Reports from Gallipoli and intense recruiting drives saw a spike in enlistments through July and August of the same year. By November, data from the war census showed that Australia still had almost 600,000 fit men between 18 and 44 years of age.[5] It was reported that the number required for reinforcements had grown to 9,500 each month and William Hughes, who had replaced Fisher as Prime Minister, announced that an additional 50,000 men were needed before June 1916.[6]

Description	Number
Males 18–34 of neither enemy birthplace nor enemy parentage	661,544
Males 35–44 of neither enemy birthplace nor enemy parentage	293,774
Males 18–34 of enemy parentage but not enemy birthplace	19,597
Males 35–44 of enemy parentage but not enemy birthplace	10,562
Males 18–34 of enemy birthplace	6,547
Males 35–44 of enemy birthplace	3,848

Table 3: Enemy origin of males 18–44 years of age identified in war census.

Source: GH Knibbs, *The private wealth of Australia and its growth together with a report of the war census of 1915*, Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Melbourne, 1918, p. 15.

The war census recorded details of 1,349,597 men between 18 and 59 years of age and identified approximately 990,000 men between the ages of 18 and 45, other than enemy subjects.[7] In December 1915, regulations under the *War Precautions Act* required these men to answer more questions including:

Are you willing to Enlist Now? Reply 'Yes' or 'No'.

If you reply 'Yes' you will be given a fortnight's notice before being called up.

If not willing to enlist now, are you willing to enlist at a later date? Reply 'Yes' or 'No', and if willing, state when.

If not willing to enlist, state the reasons why, as explicitly as possible.

A special appeal from Prime Minister Hughes, the 'call to arms', was enclosed with the form. Hughes claimed that 16,000 men were needed each month for reinforcements, in contrast with the figure of 9,500 men reported the previous month.

Some expressed the view that 'there is a veiled threat about this manner of appealing for volunteers'.[8] Eligible men who had not signed up would have felt considerable pressure. The number of recruits spiked again but many men remained defiant. In May 1916 Senator Millen reported that the census showed 120,000 single men of military age were not willing to enlist.[9]

It was an issue that had the potential to divide communities, or perhaps bring underlying divisions to the surface. The 1916 Irish Easter Rising and subsequent executions added to the tension. The widow of one of the Irish rebels, Skeffington, reported, 'My husband was unarmed, he was a non-combatant, and he was an earnest and a well-known pacifist. I was not allowed to see my husband, to receive a message from him, or to bury his body'.[10] Such testimony would produce sympathy even from those who initially deplored the rebels' actions. 'Many ordinary Catholics, coming from the working classes, would not have supported conscription anyway, and British repression in Ireland only strengthened their opposition'.[11]

Conscription plebiscite and call up

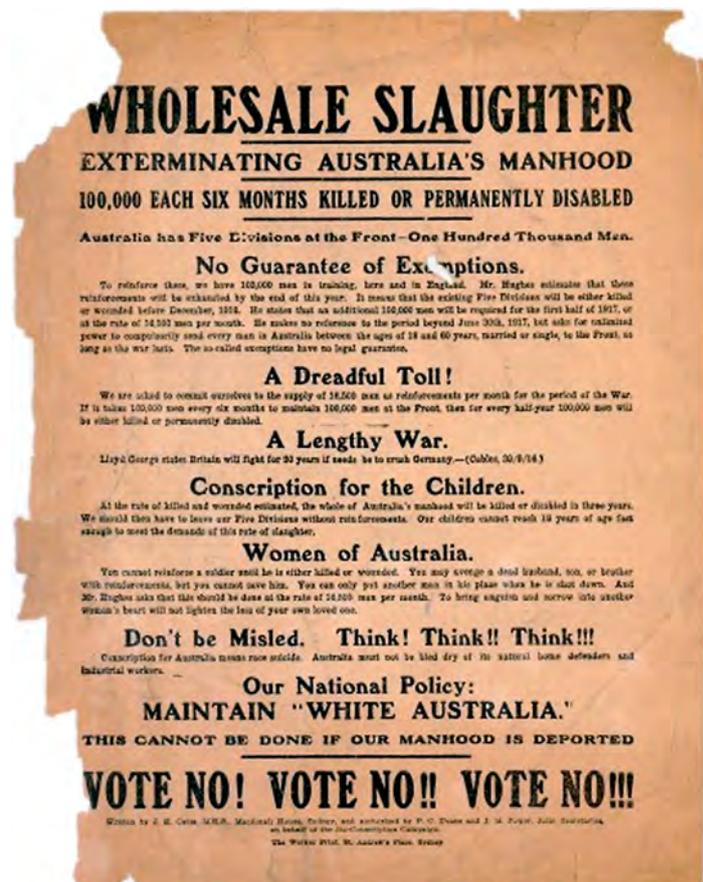
The massive loss of lives at Pozieres in July 1916 put further strain on the volunteer system. Hughes called for a conscription plebiscite. The Referendum Bill was announced on 14 September: Australia would vote on conscription on 28 October 1916. What happened in the interim probably influenced the result.

The *Defence Act* already allowed men between 18 and 60 years of age to be called up for service within Australia. Hughes assumed that Australians would vote in favour of conscription and he wanted men in training camps quickly so that overseas conscription could be implemented soon after the referendum. A proclamation on 29 September 1916 required single men between 21 and 35 years of age to report for medical examination. It is not clear how many men were obliged to comply with the call up, due to the delay since the time the census was taken and changes in categories. The following excerpt gives some idea of the difficulties:

Senator Pearce in reply to Senator Barnes (Vic.) said that 230,000 fit, single men between 21 and 45 were registered when the census was taken. The fit single men at the time of the census, between 18 and 45, numbered 307,150. Of those 103,748 had enlisted and embarked up to June 9, 1916, and 50,492 had enlisted and were in camp; while 91,380 of the fit single men between 18 and 45 had dependants.[12]

War service regulations provided that anyone who did not respond to the call up was liable to incur a penalty of six months imprisonment.[13] Given the heavy-handed approach and the men's previous reluctance to enlist, it is not surprising that the call up met with significant resistance. On the face of it, the call up only required men to train in Australia and many men argued that this would cause hardship. In the context of the referendum they were opposing a real possibility of being sent to battle in Europe. As AG Butler has observed,

Examining officers were interested to find that, whereas in voluntary recruiting for the AIF they were constantly troubled by attempted impersonation in order to enter the force and by men who tried to 'get past the doctor' after multiple rejections, the precise opposite was now the case. Medical officers had to meet the determined, and very effective endeavours of a large number of 'fit' Australians to prove that they were 'unfit' for service.[14]



Wholesale slaughter, Exterminating Australia's Manhood ... Vote No. [picture] . Contained in: Riley and Ephemera collection. Poster collection 1916, State Library of Victoria.

Exemption Courts

The *Defence Act* allowed exemption from military service on religious grounds.[15] War service regulations allowed further exemptions:

- Where it was in the national interest for a man to continue in his work, education or training;
- If military service would cause serious financial hardship;
- For the only son of a family;
- If at least half of the sons in a family enlisted;
- For sole support of aged parents, widowed mother or orphan siblings under 16 years of age or physically incapable of earning their own living.

These regulations were announced before the conscription plebiscite. A series of amendments were made until the regulations were repealed in December 1916.[16]

Local exemption courts were established to hear applications for exemption. Many were held during October before the plebiscite and some were held in November 1916. Approximately 190,000 men reported for medical examination in response to the call up. The number of defaulters is unknown. Of the men who reported as required, more than 45% applied for exemption. Nearly 40,000 men were unsuccessful.[17]

Sample records

Exemption court records are a valuable resource for family, local and social historians. Decisions of exemption courts were entered into registers. Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) now holds some of these exemption court registers from many locations throughout Victoria. It is useful to compare these registers with newspaper reports: combining information from the two sources often provides a different picture than would be suggested by either source alone.

Consider the case of three farming brothers from Strathbogie. The Euroa register records that Raymond Grot Barns was shearing and harvesting, and exemption was granted until 31 January 1917. Lawrence Henry Barns applied for exemption on the basis that 'two brothers and myself manage farm for our widowed mother, farm about 650 acres, about 100 acres in crop, about 800 sheep and lambs to shear.' He was granted exemption. The entry for Eric James Barns states: 'Engaged cultivating land and keeping sheep. Assist to harvest 90 acres of crop. 700 ewes and lambs to shear. Also I am in ill-health.' He was granted exemption until 31 January 1917.[18]

The local newspaper reported: 'Lawrence Henry Barns, Raymond Barns and Eric Barns, three brothers, of Strathbogie, appeared, and, by arrangement, decided that the two last-named should go on January 31st. Lawrence Barns was then exempted.'[19]

There does not seem to be any consistent basis for recording details of exemption applications. Details of crops and stock are included in the Euroa register, as shown above. The same column in the Benalla register only records the regulation under which an application is made, for example, 35(1)(f), which covered the sole support provisions. There is even more variation in newspaper reports. Some papers baldly report the outcome of the hearings, listing names under headings of 'absolute exemption', 'temporary exemption' and 'refused'. Other newspapers, such as the *Euroa Advertiser*, describe the hearings but do not provide a consistent level of detail. The Barns brothers' crop and

stock figures were not included but these details were included for some other applicants.

James Joseph Bamblett, an engine driver from Devenish, said he had a chaff-cutting plant and was the only one who could look after it. When his application was refused he said his brother could not look after the machine, and sending him meant his mother and sisters would starve. The register shows that he appealed against the decision but the appeal was struck out when he failed to appear before the district appeal court.[20] Herbert James Guppy, farmer, in his appearance,

said there was one other son. He was the only one to carry on. His brother did light work. One brother had been killed at the front. His brother could not manage horses, was dumb, and could not read or write.[21]

Guppy's application was refused but he appealed against the decision. The appeal was allowed and exemption was granted.[22]

Courts for dealing with applications for exemption from military service were held before a police magistrate and a representative of the Defence Department. Sometimes this led to disagreements. Thomas Nicholas Costello of Kyneton applied for exemption on the basis of providing sole support for his widowed mother.

In response to Lieut. Lord, applicant said he gave his mother 25/ per week. Lieut. Lord: Well, if you went into camp you could afford to give her £2/2/ a week. Mr Bartold granted an exemption, but Lieut. Lord gave notice of appeal. [23]

The register shows that Costello was granted conditional exemption but has no details of an appeal. Lieutenant Lord's opinions were also reported in other cases. George Walker Fowler, a Kyneton blacksmith, applied for exemption on the grounds of exceptional domestic financial obligations.[24]

Replying to Lieut. Lord, applicant said if he had to go into camp his father would have to close up the business. They had a lot of work on hand just now which was not finished. Lieut. Lord: So has the Empire, and unless you fellows come forward and do your duty it won't be finished. The application was refused.[25]

PROV also holds some exemption certificates and applications for exemption for very limited locations (Rushworth and Fitzroy courts). The applications and decisions give an insight into the thoughts of some of the men and the impact the call up would have on their lives. Some examples of applications put before the Rushworth exemption court are given below.

Charles Corbett of Waranga Basin seemed to meet the exemption criteria, writing: 'I am the [support] of a [invalid] Father and I also have two Brothers on Active service.' His application was refused because he did not appear at the exemption court.[26]

Martin O'Leary of Waranga Basin was not sure of his birth date but thought he was over 35 years. His application was refused.[27]

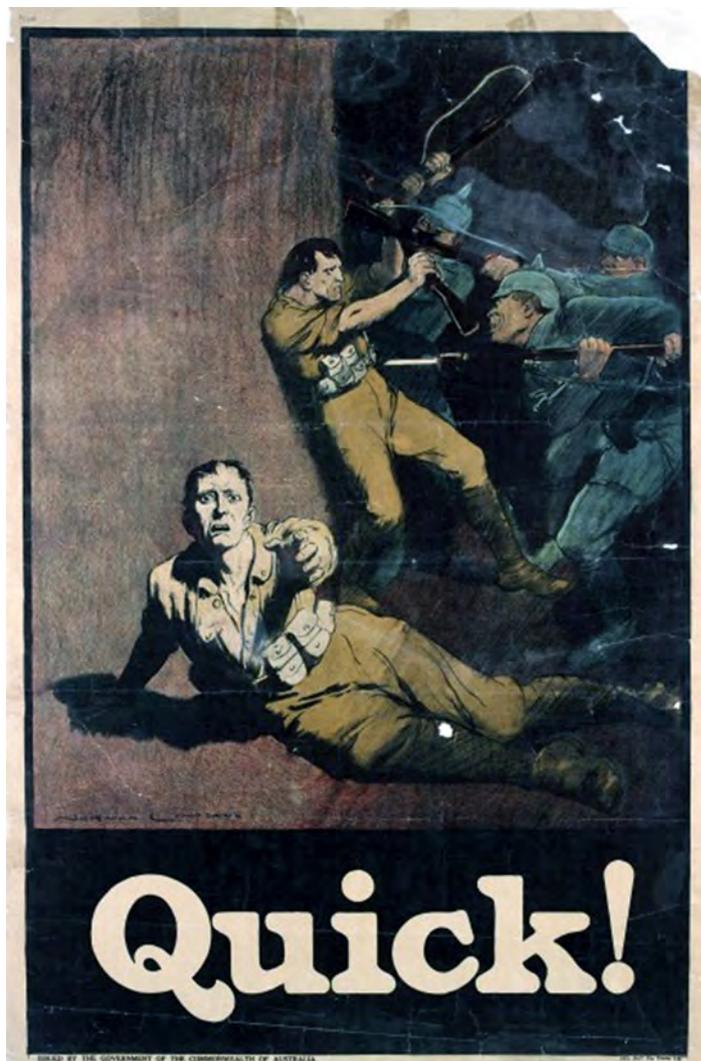
Henry Bibby, a 29-year-old farmhand from Myola was eligible for exemption on the basis of being the only son. However he seemed to fear that this might not be sufficient and added to his application, 'I crop in on the share and I have no body to look to my interest!'[28]

George Stephen Hilburn, a 21-year-old blacksmith from Rushworth, simply wrote, 'I want to fix things up at home.' His application was withdrawn.[29]

William Wason, a 26-year-old farm labourer from Myola, wrote: 'I had taken a contract and have not got it completed. I am cutting wood and have not got it stacked and have not yet got paid for it also that I cannot pay my debts until I get paid myself, it will take me till harvest to get it finished.' His application was refused. He was given seven days to report to camp.[30]

Similarly named, William Lee Wason, a 31-year-old farmer from Myola, wrote: 'I cannot see my way clear to kill any man. I have got to assist in getting the harvest off. I am prepared to go with the Red Cross as a non-combatant.' His scruples were disregarded. He was granted exemption 'until 31 January 1917 to harvest'. [31]

John Aylward, a 33-year-old grocer from Waranga Basin reported indifferent health. 'I have had a bad nervous breakdown and have never properly recovered. Insomnia and rheumatism varicocele.' His application was refused.[32] The local newspaper reported that the Police Magistrate, Richard Knight, contended 'that a month's training in the open air would be a splendid tonic for nervousness and insomnia!'[33]



Quick! [picture] , Norman Lindsay 1879-1969, artist. ca. 1918, poster : photolithograph 101.0 x 66.0 cm., Accession no(s) H141842, State Library of Victoria.

Public perception

Mr Knight presided over several exemption courts in Victoria. He seems to have brought an element of showmanship to the hearings. It was noted that his humorous remarks and crisp comments often provided good copy for journalists.[34] Some proceedings were reported under headings such as 'The comedy and drama of it' and 'Police Magistrate in great form'.

Despite whatever solemnity was attaching to the sitting of the court and its proceedings both applicants and those of the general public who were there out of curiosity, could not repress laughing – and often vociferously – at the form the applications took and the consequent remarks of Mr Knight, who throughout was in great condition and frequently very witty.[35]

Leslie John Sargood, a farmer from Gooram, applied for exemption on the grounds that he looked after his father's farm and his only brother was in France. Mr Knight granted exemption but remarked that all fathers had suddenly become incompetent.[36]

Private financial information was also aired in the courts. William Denis Hoare, a farmer from Merton, cited his financial obligations. Having bought a farm two years earlier he was still in significant debt. He held 1293 acres and presented a financial statement in support of his application for exemption. Mr Knight told him 'You are in a jolly good position.' The case was adjourned pending receipt of a statutory declaration.[37]

Leslie Dighton of Euroa was employed as a groom at 15 shillings per week. He was the only single son at home and claimed that his mother depended on him. Mr Knight refused the application for exemption. He echoed Lieutenant Lord's sentiments, noting: 'The Government will give you 35s a week and your keep, and you would be more support to your mother if you went into camp.'[38]

Francis Vidler, a farm hand from Gooram, said he was in a bad state of health and not fit for camp life. He was suffering from appendicitis and, in response to the magistrate's question, advised that he was about 12 miles from a doctor. Mr Knight responded, 'If you go into camp and an operation is necessary you will be only 12 minutes from a doctor.' The application was refused.[39]

Harry Wright, a 24-year-old farmer from Carag Carag, wrote in his application dated 14 October 1916 that he was the sole support of his parents and was married since 4 October. In the exemption court hearing he felt it necessary to add that he did not get married to dodge the war. Mr Knight replied, 'Nobody said you did. If you did you had been dodging it a long time before that.'[40]

Lancelot Risstrom, a 23-year-old from Rushworth wrote, 'I am the only remaining son also, that my father cannot possibly carry on with farming and contracting without my services. In the event of me being conscripted it would mean that my father would have to realize on his property, stock and plant.' His application was refused. He was given seven days to go into camp, with Mr Knight's comment, 'It will only be a holiday for you.'[41]

Richard Knight was 53 years of age at the time of the exemption court hearings. His sons, Lieutenant (later Captain) Rupert Grenville Knight and Warrant Officer Cyril Frank Knight were at the war. Rupert Knight had been home for several months after suffering gas poisoning from the explosion of a Turkish mine. He re-embarked for service on 6 October 1916 as the exemption court hearings were beginning and later received the Military Cross.[42]

Perhaps it was the prospect of Mr Knight's wit that prompted some men to withdraw their application in court. Perhaps some men felt that if they were to be sent to camp anyway, there would be greater honour in going voluntarily. However there was also a perception of unfairness in some cases:

One was struck by the obvious inability of the average young man to state his position clearly and concisely to a tribunal. While the authorities were perhaps right in decreeing that applicants for exemption be debarred from being represented by Counsel at the hearing of their claims ... it still led in a few cases to results which were not satisfactory, either to the applicant, the presiding magistrate, or the public.[43]



The Empire's call [picture] [1914 – ca. 1918] , Contributor David Kent, 1 postcard : gelatin silver ; 14 x 9 cm, Accession no(s) H99.166/7, State Library of Victoria.

Conclusion

Men who had not enlisted by the time the exemption courts were held had already resisted significant pressure to do so. The call up and associated exemption process was in full swing in the month leading up to the conscription plebiscite. This gave the public a taste of what conscription involved. Men could be ordered to abandon their obligations at short notice.

The records also convey a strong sense of suspicion that the reasons given by applicants for exemption were not regarded as genuine. Fingerprinting successful applicants for exemption certificates added an edge of

criminality to proceedings. With or without a presiding magistrate's wit, the public hearing of private matters represented the government's forceful attempt to push men into service. Paradoxically this process probably contributed to the defeat of the conscription plebiscite.

After this result the exemption courts ceased and men were released from training camps. However the exemption court records of 1916 continue to provide a fascinating glimpse of the thoughts and lives of men who chose not to enlist. As Australia prepared to vote on conscription, the records also offer a snapshot of social attitudes at a pivotal moment in a young nation's history.

Endnotes

[1] E Scott, *Official history of Australia in the war of 1914–1918*, Volume XI, *Australia during the war*, seventh edition, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1941, p. 874. The total number of men aged between 18 and 44 years is estimated at 1,077,000 from these figures.

[2] AG Butler, *Official history of the Australian Army Medical Services, 1914–1918*, Volume III, *Special problems and services*, first edition, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 1943, p. 882n. Some men were rejected more than once.

[3] There is slight discrepancy between official reports and press reports of the enlistment standards in operation at different times: Scott, *Official history of Australia*, p. 439; Butler, *Official history of the Australian Army Medical Services 1914–1918*, Volume I, *Gallipoli, Palestine and New Guinea*, second edition, Australian War Memorial, Melbourne, 1938, pp. 20n, 525; Australian War Memorial encyclopedia, *Enlistment standards*, available at <<http://www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/enlistment>>, accessed 1 September 2015; 'Volunteers wanted', *Argus*, 21 December 1914, p. 10.

[4] '100,000 Men', *Argus*, 5 June 1915, p. 17.

[5] Scott, *Official history of Australia*, p. 310n.

[6] 'Call for more men', *Argus*, 26 November 1915, p. 6.

[7] GH Knibbs, *The private wealth of Australia and its growth together with a report of the war census of 1915*, Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Melbourne, 1918, p. 15.

[8] 'Pressure to enlist', *Argus*, 6 December 1915, p. 6.

[9] 'Debate in the Senate', *Argus*, 11 May 1916, p. 8.

[10] 'Execution of Skeffington', *Argus*, 12 May 1916, p. 7.

[11] EM Andrews, *The Anzac illusion: Anglo-Australian relations during World War I*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1993, pp. 126–27.

[12] 'Single men', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 September 1916, p. 6.

- [13] *War service regulations 1916: Statutory Rules*, 29 September 1916, No 240, Commonwealth of Australia, reg. 9 (2).
- [14] Butler, *Official history*, Volume III, *Special problems and services*, p. 888.
- [15] *Defence Act, No 20 of 1903*, Commonwealth of Australia, sec. 61.
- [16] *War service regulations 1916: Statutory Rules*, 29 September 1916, No 240, reg. 35 (1). Amended 18 October 1916, No 253; 20 October 1916, No 269; 10 November 1916, No 285; 22 November 1916, No 296. Repealed 6 December 1916, No 305.
- [17] Butler, *Official history*, Volume III, *Special problems and services*, p. 889.
- [18] PROV, VPRS 8509/P1 Local exemption court register of applications for exemption from military service, Unit 1: p. 9, entry 120, Barns, Raymond Grot; p. 9, entry 123, Barns, Lawrence Henry; and, p. 15, entry 294, Barns, Henry James.
- [19] 'District exemption courts', *Euroa Advertiser*, 10 November 1916, p. 4.
- [20] PROV, VPRS 1881/P0, Register of applications for exemption: 87th military sub-district, Unit 1, p. 1, entry 7, Bamblett. 'Exemption court at Benalla', *Benalla Standard*, 17 October 1916, p. 3.
- [21] 'Exemption court at Benalla', *Benalla Standard*, 17 October 1916, p. 3.
- [22] PROV, VPRS 1881/P0 Register of applications for exemption: 87th military sub-district, Unit 1, p. 2, entry 16, Guppy.
- [23] 'Kyneton exemption court', *Kyneton Guardian*, 26 October 1916, p. 2.
- [24] PROV, VPRS 2393/P0 Exemption court register of applications for exemption (from military service), Unit 1: p. 2, entry 13, Costello; and, p. 5, entry 35, Fowler.
- [25] 'Kyneton exemption court', *Kyneton Guardian*, 26 October 1916, p. 2.
- [26] PROV, VPRS 12455/P1 Applications for exemptions from military service, Unit 1, No. V/52/E/79, Corbett. The consignment includes a book of eleven certificates of exemption and two packages each containing approximately fifty applications for exemption. The applications include up to three numbering systems but are not arranged consistently by any order.
- [27] *Ibid.*, No. V/52/E/152, O'Leary.
- [28] *Ibid.*, No. V/52/E/75, Bibby.
- [29] *Ibid.*, No. V/52/E/170, Hilburn.
- [30] *Ibid.*, No. V/52/E/76, William Wason. 'Rushworth exemption court', *Murchison Advertiser and Murchison, Toolamba, Mooroopna and Dargalong Express*, 17 November 1916, p. 2.
- [31] PROV, VPRS 12455/P1, Applications for exemptions from military service, Unit 1, No. V/52/E/128, William Lee Wason.
- [32] *Ibid.*, No. V/52/E/77, Aylward.
- [33] 'Rushworth exemption court', *Murchison Advertiser and Murchison, Toolamba, Mooroopna and Dargalong Express*, 17 November 1916, p. 2. John Aylward is reported as John Hayward in the newspaper.
- [34] 'Police Magistrate Knight', *Shepparton Advertiser*, 31 January 1918, p. 3.
- [35] 'Military exemption court', *Shepparton Advertiser*, 23 October 1916, p. 3.
- [36] PROV, VPRS 8509/P1 Local exemption court register of applications for exemption from military service, Unit 1, p. 3, entry 30, Sargood. 'Exemption court at Euroa', *Euroa Gazette*, 7 November 1916, p. 3.
- [37] PROV, VPRS 8509/P1 Local exemption court register of applications for exemption from military service, Unit 1, p. 3, entry 36, Hoare.
- [38] *Ibid.*, p. 4, entry 54, Dighton.
- [39] *Ibid.*, p. 5, entry 67, Vidler.
- [40] PROV, VPRS 12455/P1 Applications for exemption from military service, Unit 1, No. V/52/E/148, Wright. 'Rushworth exemption court', *Murchison Advertiser and Murchison, Toolamba, Mooroopna and Dargalong Express*, 17 November 1916, p. 2.
- [41] *Ibid.*, No. V/52/E/80, Risstrom.
- [42] 'Death of Mr Knight, P.M.', *Australasian*, 5 June 1926, p. 50. 'Police Magistrate Knight', *Shepparton Advertiser*, 31 January 1918, p. 3. NAA: B2455, Knight Rupert Grenville. NAA: B2455, Knight Cyril Frank.
- [43] Exemption court proceedings', *Euroa Advertiser*, 10 November 1916, p. 2.

An Innocent Pentonvillain

Thomas Drewery, chemist and exile 1821-1859

Dorothy Small

'An Innocent Pentonvillain: Thomas Drewery, chemist and exile 1821-1859', *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria*, issue no. 14, 2015. ISSN 1832-2522. Copyright © Dorothy Small

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Abstract

During my family history research I stumbled upon an intriguing story of an innocent Pentonvillain named Thomas Drewery. Thomas was wrongly convicted and sentenced to transportation. The correspondence clearly showed he never accepted his conviction or the injustice that had befallen him. This article explores the story of his fight to be reunited with his family. Among the records held at Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) is VPRS 2877 Inward Registered Correspondence I [Land Branch], which includes correspondence discussing the vexing question of payment for his family to come to Melbourne. Thomas had assistance from several quarters; one was a stranger, a convict serving ten years in Van Dieman's Land (Tasmania). In Melbourne Thomas arrived as an exile, and found work in his profession as a chemist. He established a business in Elizabeth Street, served as a councillor and went on to manage a hotel. He succeeded in reuniting his family. In the correspondence I discovered the harsh British legal system and the devastating effect it had on Thomas and the bleak circumstances that it inflicted upon his family. Through my research into these invaluable PROV resources, Thomas's story can now be told.

Let me introduce you to a Yorkshireman, Thomas Drewery, a family man living in Kingston Upon Hull, England. Thomas had a chemist store only streets away from where he was born in Hull. In July 1845 he went on a holiday to Leeds with friends. Thomas with his friend Abraham Wilkinson left Leeds on Friday 8 August and went by train to York. The holiday ended abruptly in York, on 12 August 1845, where he was apprehended and charged with theft and taken to Wakefield prison. This had devastating consequences for the rest of his life.

The resources of Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), especially the Inwards Registered Correspondence of the Superintendent of the Port Phillip District, hold the story of Thomas's struggle to be reunited with his family.

The crime blamed on Thomas took place in August 1845 in Wakefield, Yorkshire. A stranger walked into a public house to hire a horse and gig. He explained he needed to go to Stanley Colliery and would return late that evening. He never returned.[1] The stranger gave his name as '... Mr Drewery of Hull, Coal Merchant'.[2]

At this time Thomas was in Leeds with Abraham Wilkinson unaware of the crime in Wakefield which was 10 miles away. On Friday 8 August, the two men left Leeds for York. Thomas was arrested the following Tuesday. At the trial the prosecution presented three eye witnesses who were employees of the publican. These witnesses agreed that the theft took place on Monday 4 August at 1.30 pm.[3] The defence counsel presented one witness, Abraham Wilkinson:

[Abraham] ... swore that Drewery was ... in Leeds, 10 miles distant at the very moment of the alleged felony ... jury not believing Wilkinson, but the other three witnesses, found Drewery guilty, and he was sentenced to seven years transportation.[4]

There would have been no charge for Thomas to answer if he had been in Hull at his usual place of work because there would have been a number of witnesses to testify his innocence.

Over the months in Pentonville prison, Thomas wrote three petitions to the Home Secretary.

In the 1840s in England, when a person was convicted of a criminal offence there was no right to appeal the conviction as there was no court of criminal appeal. The only avenue for appeal was for a prisoner to petition the Home Secretary. Under the then prison rules, convicts in Pentonville prison were permitted to write and receive only one letter every six months. The petitioner might ask for clemency and refer to their previous good character and standing in the community. Often other family, friends or work colleagues would write a petition in support of the prisoner.

After serving eighteen months of his seven-year sentence Thomas was selected to be transported on the ship the *Joseph Soames*.^[5] When the *Joseph Soames* landed at Port Phillip on 24 September 1847, all 249 exiles were given a conditional pardon; a condition of the pardon was that they were not allowed to return to England until their sentence had been served.^[6]

Thomas wrote to his wife Elizabeth and explained, '... arrived at Geelong on the 24th [September] -(my birth day). I remained on board a few days, then took steamer for Melbourne. I had a situation offered at Geelong, but the salary was beneath my notice *in this country*'.^[7]

In England, Elizabeth had help from a local Hull solicitor Edward Sidebottom. He told the family he would only take the case if he was certain Thomas was innocent. He worked through the trial notes and the evidence, and took statements from 'four credible witnesses'.^[8] With fresh evidence from new witnesses Sidebottom was convinced Thomas was innocent.

Sidebottom wrote a petition on behalf of Elizabeth; as did Thomas's former employer William Hay. The petition stated the good character of Thomas was exemplary. Between March and June of 1846, Sidebottom enlisted the assistants of the borough members of parliament to secure a pardon for Thomas in their petitions to the Home Secretary. It was the Home Secretary who decided the outcome of each of these petitions. The Home Secretary wrote to Sidebottom explaining he had seen the full report of the evidence at the trial. He was of the opinion that the declarations by the new witnesses that Sidebottom had presented had not been made on oath, nor tested through a cross examination. He therefore could not contemplate placing any weight on this new evidence.

Despite the months of legal work by Sidebottom, the Home Office in Westminster rejected each of the petitions. At that time all of Thomas's legal channels had been exhausted. Without a legal right of appeal the system made it difficult for anyone to prove they were innocent.

And there Thomas's case would have halted but for a confession letter which found its way to the *Hull Packet and East Riding Times* newspaper. This letter was written by a serving convict named John Webster.^[9] He addressed his letter of confession to the Reverend Mr Walter the religious instructor at Hobart Van Dieman's Land (now known as Hobart, Tasmania). Walter realised the importance of the letter and promptly forwarded it to an acquaintance, Mr Barkworth in England. The letter read as follows:

Sir,
... In the month of July or August, 1845 ... I took the first train ... to Wakefield, in Yorkshire. I went to one of the principal inns ... Whilst in conversation with the waitress [sic] ... I enquired if I could have a horse and gig ... I told the maid ... that my address was Mr Drewery, of Hull, coal-merchant, that I was going to Stanley Colliery, and that I should return the same evening. I drove past Stanley, and made my way back to Newcastle. On the Saturday following, the gig was sold by auction ... Last night, whilst conversing with a fellow prisoner, he asked me if I knew Mr Drewery, a druggist, in Hull; he told me that he was transported for stealing a horse and gig in the summer of 1845 ... I was convinced that Mr Drewery had been transported innocently, and ... I was the guilty party. It is for the benefit of Mr Drewery and his suffering family that I make these facts known to you, sincerely hoping ... an innocent injured man may be restored to his friends ... Yours, a wretched Convict, John Webster

The article concluded with the added comments:

There can be no doubt as to the genuineness of the letter and ... will ... clearly ... establish the innocence of poor Drewery, to the satisfaction of the present Secretary of State, and the public.^[10]

Unfortunately Webster's letter was not believed by the British government. Their attitude was to doubt the statements 'one convict made to relieve another of the offence of which he had been convicted'.^[11] Again Sidebottom wrote, this time to the new Secretary of State Sir George Grey:

... drawing your attention to one or two material points ... had Drewery really [sic] intended to steal the horse and gig, he certainly never would have given in his own name ... the description given in Webster's letter is a correct one.^[12]

John Webster had accurately described the crime which he could only do if he was the guilty person. When John had the conversation with the fellow convict in Van Diemans Land, it was six days after the *Joseph Soames* had sailed for Australia. It would be six months before the letter of confession would impact on Thomas's circumstances.

.....

A month after Thomas arrived in Port Phillip he wrote to Elizabeth, and his letters were published in the *Hull Packet and East Riding Times* newspaper. In his October letter he explained how he had been employed by Dr WB Wilmot MD, the coroner and magistrate for Port Phillip. 'The situation is to manage the business at the Melbourne Medical Hall I have agreed for twelve months, at £50 per year, with house to live in, and all found.'^[13] The letter then described how he heard the news that the convict John Webster had confessed to being the guilty person:

... in Hobart Town ... a book kept ... for prisoners to make any remarks, found therein something to this effect – John Webster states that a person of the name of Drewery, formerly a druggist in Hull, has been transported for seven years, charged with an offence of which he himself is guilty and that the said Drewery has not the slightest knowledge of the same.

My dear, here are fresh proofs of your husbands innocence ... I hope you will give this publicity in the press, to erase any stigma my position may have brought upon you and friends.

The only compensation I ask is that government will send you and my dear children out to me respectably, not as the wife of a convict ...^[14]

Thomas wrote in his letters that he was aware of the social and financial hardship his conviction would have on his family. He wanted his wife to publicise his pardon in an effort to erase the social stigma his conviction would have brought upon his wife and children.

There was no doubt Elizabeth endured hardship supporting herself and her two young children. Elizabeth had to live in a town where people knew her husband had been convicted. It was no surprise that Thomas would ask for family and friends to support his wife. Thomas acknowledged that his conviction had brought *stigma* upon his family. It would seem unlikely that Elizabeth would have been able to gain employment with a husband convicted and transported. Due to financial hardship Elizabeth moved in with her mother.

In his December letter Thomas urged Elizabeth to join him in Melbourne. His wife was keen to join her husband but she had no money to pay for the family's passage to Melbourne. This would be the topic of many letters between Thomas, the British government and the solicitor Edward Sidebottom.

In England events moved in favour of Thomas through the legal efforts of Sidebottom. He wrote to the Hull borough members and lobbied the government to establish whether it would pay for the passage of the Drewery family.

The newspaper also continued to highlight the family's predicament. The *Hull Packet and East Riding Times* explained that it was raising a public subscription for the Drewery family:

... subscription will have been raised previous to her [Mrs Drewery] departure, sufficient to enable Drewery to begin business at Melbourne, and thereby maintain his wife and family in a respectable manner. Mr Sidebottom has already received between £50 and £60 on his behalf.^[15]

Thomas's case had become known to other parliamentarians. In a speech in the House of Commons Mr Ewart MP asked Sir George Grey, Secretary of State, what he was going to do about Thomas Drewery's situation?^[16]

The Times newspaper reported:

The question asked by Mr Ewart MP, was the Secretary of State aware of the 'facts ... and, what measures would be taken for the relief of the innocent man'. Sir Grey replied, '... that an inquiry had been instituted ... there were circumstances attending this case which called for an inquiry.'^[17]

After this inquiry, Sir George Grey recommended to Queen Victoria to grant a free pardon to Thomas. This pardon would restore Thomas's rights, remit the original sentence and entitle Thomas to a return passage to England paid by the British government. The *Hull Packet and East Riding Times* reported:

Whitehall, 5 Jan 1848, Thomas Drewery is pardoned ... Mr Sidebottom ... received the following letter from the Home Office:

Sir, Secretary Sir George Grey having carefully considered your application on behalf of Thomas Drewery I have the satisfaction to acquaint you that under all the circumstances of the case, he has felt warranted in advising her Majesty to grant the prisoner a free pardon.

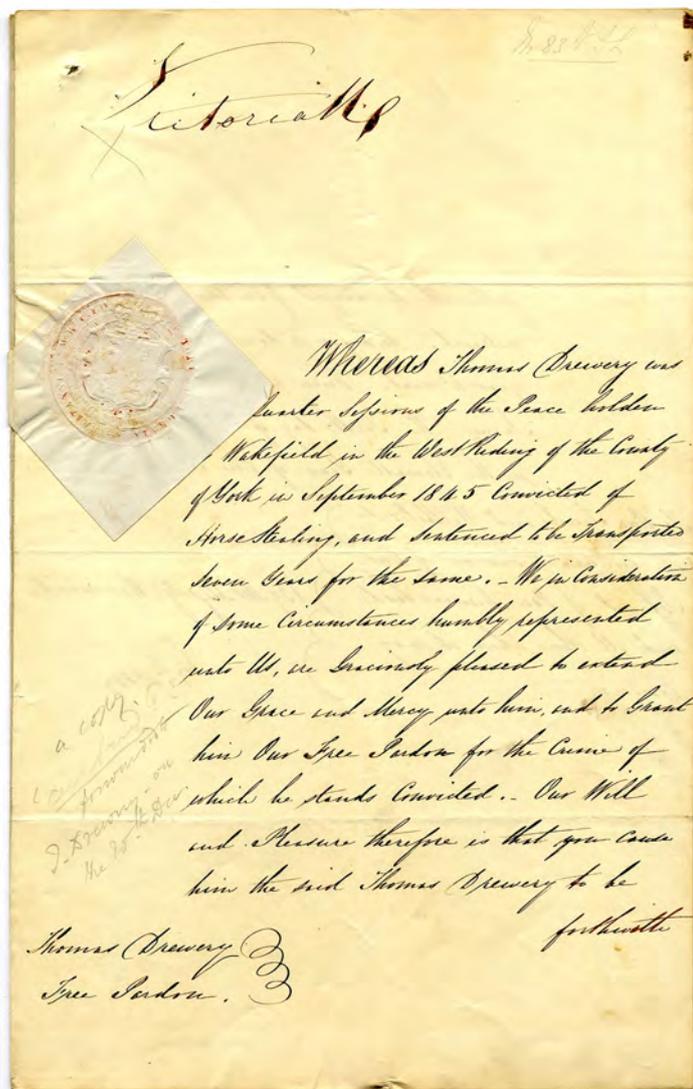
The newspaper report continued:

Since the announcement of the Free Pardon to Drewery, several letters have been received on the subject. The following letter from Mr Clay relates ... to the compensation of Drewery and his family ...

Montague-square, Jan. 11, 1848

My Dear Sir,

I am truly glad to hear of Drewery's pardon, which is owing entirely to your great exertions ... making to the poor fellow some compensation for the injustice society has inflicted on him ... if the Home Office does little or nothing, voluntary subscriptions, will do the rest. Pray accept my portion of the gratitude which is due to you from every body, for your exertions in the cause of justice and humanity. Yours faithfully, James Clay.^[18]



Thomas Drewery's Free Pardon signed by Her Majesty Queen Victoria, 6 January 1848. PROV, VPRS 2877/P0 Inward Registered Correspondence I (Land Branch), Unit 6, 1850/370a, letter re. family coming.

A week later the newspaper continued the campaign:

The free pardon which it has cost Mr Sidebottom so much time, labour, and money, to obtain ... the pardon conferred upon him can be regarded as no boon. It still leaves uncompensated three years of unjust confinement and exile ... for which no after honours or rewards can be an adequate atonement. A free pardon, then, is plainly not sufficient to meet the requirements of common justice. Men who have done nothing have small cause to be thankful that they are pardoned for it ... with that pardon will be ... a letter from Mrs Drewery, in which she expresses her willingness to go out to her husband with her children.[19]

The letters on the subject of the payment for the family's sea passage continued throughout the years 1848–1850. The British government's Home Office needed to be

persuaded to pay for the family's passage to Melbourne. Sidebottom wrote on 14 January 1848 to Sir George Grey, Secretary of State, making the observation that,

Her Majesty has ... granted a free pardon on the ground of his innocence, the family is, in a state of poverty, is entirely unable to raise the necessary amount ... she being totally destitute of money ...[20]

Then Sir George Grey, writing from Downing Street, Whitehall on 22 January 1848, to the Lieutenant Governor Sir William Denison:

Sir ... I herewith transmit to you in order that the prisoner may receive the benefit thereof without delay, a Free Pardon, which her Majesty has been graciously pleased to grant to Thomas Drewery. I have also to devise that Thomas Drewery may be provided with a free passage to his country by the earliest opportunity.[21]

Thomas declined the British government's offer of a free passage back to England. Instead, he asked the government to pay for his family to be sent to Melbourne. On 13 December 1848, he requested the

[British] Government fulfil its promise of a grant of £40 to pay the expense of my wife and children's passage ... as the money raised by my friends at home to assist me was expended in defraying the expenses of my wife and family [coming] out to me.[22]

The newspaper reported Sidebottom had found a shipping agent who had agreed to take Mrs Drewery and the family '... in addition to find them ... bedding and utensils which other passengers are required to take'. [23]

The *Port Phillip and Victoria Pioneers Sources in Victoria with source references*, contains an index in which Thomas Drewery's name appears with a reference to 'Family Coming'. [24] The index refers to records held by PROV, the Registers of Inward Correspondence of the Superintendent of Port Phillip, which then gave me the information needed to identify the Inward Registered Correspondence file where Thomas Drewery's letters could be found. The letters discussed the subject of paying for the passage of the Drewery family. Reading through the government correspondence revealed a level of confusion on the subject. Who did pay for the passage and who was entitled to be reimbursed? The letters discuss these vexing questions without apparent resolution. Interestingly the government were prepared to offer Thomas a free return passage to England but needed convincing to pay for his family to travel to Melbourne.

No. 49, 448
 49/1726.
 Relat. Collyer.
 27 Feb 1849.
 With reference to the payment
 of £40 to Thos Drewery
 Colonial Secretary's Office
 Sydney. 19th February 1849.
 Sir,
 Having referred to the
 Deputy Commissary General
 your letter of the 8th instant,
 No. 70, stating that up to
 that date you had
 received no communication
 from that Office respecting
 the payment to be made
 to Thomas Drewery to meet
 the expenses incurred by
 his wife and family in
 coming out to join him,
 I am directed by His
 Honour
 the Superintendent
 of Port Phillip.
 50/370

Colonial Secretary, letter to the Superintendent of Port Phillip with reference to the payment of £40 to Thomas Drewery, 27 February 1849. PROV, VPRS 2877/P0 Inward Registered Correspondence I (Land Branch), Unit 6, 1850/370a, letter re. family coming.

Thomas received a letter on 23 February 1849 which stated: 'Bank of Australasia, Melbourne branch of that bank £40 to the credit of Thomas Drewery.'^[25] Within 12 months, however, the government would write again and ask him to refund the £40.

The Colonial Secretary of New South Wales wrote to the Superintendent of the Port Phillip District on 25 January 1850, 'respecting the recovery of the money paid to Drewery.'^[26] On 11 February, Thomas wrote 'my wife did not receive £40 from Mr Sidebottom.'^[27]

The last letter in the correspondence was dated 14 March 1850, when the Colonial Secretary's Chief Clerk William Elyard, Government House Sydney, wrote to the Superintendent of Port Phillip:

... respecting the recovery from Thomas Drewery of the money paid in the Colony for the passage of his family to Port Phillip ... appears to have been before paid in England. I do ... enquire whether this money has yet been recovered?^[28]

I was unable to find any further correspondence on this matter in the archives, which makes it difficult to conclude whether the dispute was ever resolved. In his letters Thomas maintained that he did not receive any money. This included the public subscription raised through the newspaper and entrusted to Sidebottom to give to Thomas. Sidebottom would have been confident that the government would reimburse him the money he paid to the shipping agent. Unfortunately it is not clear whether Sidebottom was ever reimbursed by the government. Possibly he kept the remaining public subscription money to cover his costs.

In letters to the government Sidebottom stated Drewery never answered my letters, a claim both gentlemen made about each other. It could be understood that contacting Thomas would have been difficult as he changed his place of residence numerous times, however Sidebottom continued to reside in Hull and it would be hard to believe Thomas's letters would not have reached him.

The last letter on the subject I was able to find at the National Archives of the United Kingdom was dated 21 May 1850. Sir Charles FitzRoy, Government House Sydney, wrote having taken

... receipt of your letter 25 July 1849 I forwarded a copy of it to the Superintendent of Port Phillip, CJ La Trobe, requested he recover the £40 paid to Thomas Drewery from the Military chest.^[29]

Under the circumstances FitzRoy concluded he did not consider it proper to endeavour to enforce a repayment pending further instructions.

Thomas left the Melbourne Medical Hall and established his own chemist business. In 1851, Thomas advertised his chemist store had moved from Swanston Street to Elizabeth Street in Melbourne. That same year he was elected to the local council. Thomas served one term as a councillor for the ward of Gipps during the years 1851–1854, and then he retired.

After retiring from council Thomas applied for a publicans licence. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported he was granted a licence despite the local objections which alluded '... to his position as a City Councillor.'^[30] Thomas was the licensee who managed the Drewery Family Hotel in Fitzroy from 14 March 1854 to 24 April 1855.^[31]

Name	Residence	Sign	Surety
Richard (The Opp)	Lyons Street	The "Plummet" Family Hotel	J. D. Campbell
Davy Michael	Lyons Street	Travellers Home	W. H. T. Tuckett
Dutton Richard	Flinders Street	Duke of Wellington	W. H. T. Tuckett
Jacob John Walter	Lyons Street	Wood Park	James Broughton
James Thomas	Great Brunswick St.	The "Brunswick" Hotel	William H. Tuckett
Robert Stephen	The Lyons Hotel	The "Bridges" Hotel	James Murphy
Richard Edward	Flinders Land	The "Farmers" Hotel	James Murphy
Richard Richard	Little Collins Street	The "Oxy" Bazaar	Robert McCreath
Drewry Benjamin	La Trobe Street	The "Ship" Hotel	James Murphy
John Andrew	Sandridge	The "Ship" Hotel	James Murphy
John (Marston)	Little Collins St	The "Ship" Hotel	James Murphy
Drewry Thomas	Napier & Lyons Sts	Drewry Family Hotel	John Wood
Emerson William	Collins Street	The Duke of York	W. H. T. Tuckett
Oliver Albert	Lyons Street	The Duke of York	Henry Curwisch
James James	Swanston Street	The "Buckingham" Hotel	James Murphy
John James	Little Collins Street	The "Green" Hotel	James Murphy
John John	Elizabeth Street	William Tell Hotel	W. H. T. Tuckett
John William	Elizabeth Street	The "Royal" Hotel	J. P. James
John John	Elizabeth Street	The "Palace" Hotel	James Murphy
John John	Connell & Collingwood	The "Buck" Hotel	James Broughton
Thomas John	Douglas St. Melbourne	Original Scotch Hotel	Henry Curwisch
John John	North Melbourne	The "Compass" Hotel	Robert Tuckett
John John	St. Michael	The "Howe" Hotel	John Chen
John Thomas	Elizabeth Street	"Armenian" Hotel	Patrick McKean
John John	Lyons St. Melbourne	"Drewry" Hotel	John Broughton
Collingwood Michael	Douglas Street	"New of Australia"	John Broughton
Collingwood James	Sandridge	The "Pav" Hotel	Henry Curwisch
Collingwood Thomas	Melbourne	The "Regency" Arms	J. D. Campbell

List of publican's licences for the City of Melbourne records Benjamin Drewry as the licensee at the Olive Branch Hotel, La Trobe Street and Thomas Drewry as the licensee at Drewry's Family Hotel, Fitzroy. PROV, VPRS 7601/P1 Licensing Register – Metropolitan, Unit 1, entry no. 48 for the year commencing 1 July 1853.

The Drewry Family Hotel, which still stands on the corner of Gertrude and Napier streets, Fitzroy, was originally built in 1854 by Benjamin Drewry, and belonged to the Drewry family until the 1940s.[32] Benjamin and Thomas had similar surnames and both were born in Yorkshire however no family connection has been established.

Monday Sept. 25th
1854

I hereby give notice that I am about to erect a Billiard Room for Mr Henry adjoining his Family Hotel Gertrude St. according to Plans and Specifications made by Mr Johnson Architect Collingwood.

Witness my hand & seal this 25th day of September 1854

John Hutchinson

To the District Building Surveyor
Rec'd 27th 1854

Notice to surveyor of intention to build. PROV, VPRS 9288/P1 Notices of Intention to Build, Unit 4, 1854/1733 re. letter John Hutchinson builder for Drewry.

Thomas purchased a parcel of land situated 'between Drewry's Family hotel and Mrs Fosdykes store' where he intended to build a billiard room.[33] The notice was lodged with the building surveyor on 25 September 1854.[34] He signed the mortgage on 2 April 1855 for £240. The billiard room was built next to the hotel and auctioned off four months later.[35]

Clearly circumstances had changed for Thomas because he was no longer the licensee by the end of April 1855. By 1856 an advertisement appears for a general hand to contact T Drewry at 129 Swanston Street. This supposes Thomas had returned to work as a chemist.[36] Unfortunately this venture was short lived. By the end of February the stock in trade of a chemist was auctioned under order of the Supreme Court of Victoria.[37]

I was unable to find any records relating to Thomas in the archives for the period between March 1856 and the middle of 1858. However, according to his daughter's birth certificate the family lived in Charles Street, Collingwood in 1857.

By early 1858 the Drewery family had moved to Dunolly, Victoria. The township of Dunolly had experienced an impressive gold rush, starting in June 1856. What might have changed for Thomas is impossible to know, maybe the stories from the gold fields were too tempting for him to resist. Perhaps he had bad debts and needed to leave Melbourne.

In Dunolly's main street, Thomas opened a chemist business. The rate record showed he paid rates in 1859. [38] The family had only been in Dunolly for a short time when Thomas died from a heart condition. His death, tragic as it was, would leave the family destitute and homeless. After his death Elizabeth moved the family to nearby Castlemaine where they struggled to survive. When Elizabeth Drewery died in 1864, her children's future was bleak.

The plight of the Drewery children was unfortunately a common occurrence around the gold fields. The situation was so appalling that the Victorian Government introduced the *Neglected and Criminal Children's Act 1864*. Those children sentenced under the Act were placed in Industrial Schools.

Thomas and Elizabeth's eldest daughter, Ann 23 years old, was left to look after her siblings. Her brother Thomas was blind and lived out his life at the Castlemaine Benevolent Asylum.[39] The only other child old enough to work was Joseph, known as Jury by the locals, he lived out his life in nearby Chewton. Neither gentleman had any family of their own.

Thomas and Elizabeth's two younger children, Robert and Catherine (or Kate), were sentenced under the *Neglected and Criminal Children's Act 1864*. [40] Robert went to the Sunbury Industrial School.[41] He was discharged 31 December 1867. This was the last known whereabouts of Robert I was able to find. The Victorian Wards Register held at PROV had no record for his sister Catherine.[42] I was unable to find any further information about the circumstances of their eldest child Ann.

This personal story highlights the ordeal a miscarriage of justice had upon this family. Despite the hardships they faced the family maintained their dignity. Thomas believed he could do well in Melbourne and wrote to Elizabeth '... here I am respected'. [43] Once settled in Port Phillip, they seemed to enjoy the freedom of a tolerant society.

The documents do not answer all the questions about the Drewery family. However those letters and newspaper articles which have survived do reveal their fight for justice and their long battle for recompense. Its reward was a father reunited with his family.

Endnotes

- [1] John Webster's letter 10 June 1847, Criminal Petition, HO 18/168, National Archives of the UK.
- [2] Monday 4 August 1845 at 1.30 pm, Criminal Petition, HO 18/168, National Archives of the UK.
- [3] September Quarter Sessions, 10 September 1845, Chairman's notes, Criminal Petition, HO 18/168, National Archives of the UK.
- [4] 'Thomas Drewery's Case', *Hull Packet and East Riding Times*, 10 December 1847, p. 8.
- [5] K Clarke, *Convicts of the Port Phillip District*, Exiles to Port Phillip Arrived at Pentonville gaol 18 October 1845 and reported in 'Convict', *Hull Packet and East Riding Times*, 10 October 1845, p. 7.
- [6] Marten A Syme, *Shipping arrivals and departures, Victorian ports*, Roebuck Book, Melbourne, 1984. For consistency the article has used the same spelling for the ship *Joseph Soame* as was used in this book.
- [7] 'Thomas Drewery', *Hull Packet and East Riding Times*, 14 April 1848, p. 5.
- [8] 'Thomas Drewery, The Innocent Convict', *Hull Packet and East Riding Times*, 14 January 1848, p. 5.
- [9] John Webster tried at Surrey (Newington) on 1 December 1845, sentenced ten years transportation to Van Diemens Land, available at <<http://www.convictrecords.com.au>>, accessed 3 July 2015.
- [10] 'Thomas Drewery's Case', *Hull Packet and East Riding Times*, 10 December 1847, p. 8.
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The families of World War I veterans

Mental illness and Mont Park

Janet Lynch

'The families of World War I veterans, mental illness and the campaigns for admission to Mont Park Military Hospital', *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria*, issue no. 14, 2015. ISSN 1832-2522.
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Abstract

In 1918, World War I ended and Australia's social landscape was forever changed. The war took away the nation's innocence, and filled its people with sorrow and despair during and after the war. The cheerful enthusiasm and strong patriotism for King and Country had been sorely tested, and for many, would never be the same. The families of repatriated soldiers rejoiced at their homecoming, yet in time, some would despair at the changed man who had returned to them. This short piece is from my 2013 honours thesis, where I examined correspondence relating to returned soldiers with 'shell shock' and post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD) and their requests to be treated at Mont Park Military Hospital rather than the state-run 'insane' institutions. It also discusses how the Red Cross Society was instrumental in fundraising, and providing support for soldiers and their families, during and after the war. The insightful works of Marina Larsson were instrumental in engaging my interest in the compelling, 'other' story of soldiers who returned from World War I.

Introduction

World War I (also known as the Great War) ended with the Armistice in November 1918, after which time the Australian servicemen and women who survived the conflict returned to civilian life through demobilisation and repatriation. This was indeed a 'long war', with its effects lasting well beyond 1918, as was shown by the number of veterans who went on to suffer debilitating health problems over subsequent years. The government had optimistically planned for the short-term rehabilitation of injured soldiers, and initially focussed its resources on the most severely disabled and those who were displaying physical signs of illness at war's end. Repatriation Minister Senator Millen delivered a speech to the Australian Senate in 1918, in which he described 'totally and permanently incapacitated' soldiers as 'those who are bed-ridden and those who are paralysed, and who will always require nursing and medical attention'.^[1] However, the government had not foreseen that the demand for hospitalisation of mental illnesses among veterans would escalate, in an era when mental illnesses such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) were poorly understood.

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Military 'mental' hospitals were swamped with requests for admission by families, and even by soldiers themselves, such as EW Harrison who was desperate to be treated at Mont Park Military Hospital. At the time, civilian 'insane' asylums were considered inferior to the military hospitals, and the status of a returned soldier who was accepted for medical attention in a military facility, afforded a man a higher quality of care and general acceptance in society. Of most importance in the care of disabled soldiers and their families was the Red Cross Society. Its many tasks included the staffing of military hospitals and convalescence homes with nurses and volunteers, ongoing fund-raising efforts, as well as providing various items like gramophones, records and socks; small, yet important items to the patients. The struggle of disabled veterans has been brilliantly re-told in Marina Larsson's book, *Shattered Anzacs*, a moving story of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) soldiers who returned home from the war suffering disabilities or ill-health. These veterans were raised in a time when bravery and stoicism dictated that the harshness of war was not discussed, and mental illness was especially a taboo subject in society, and little understood by doctors. I researched some of the letters of soldiers and their families, in which I read their pleas with doctors for admission to Mont Park Military Mental Hospital, a place where they believed returned soldiers would be treated with care and dignity.

The struggle of disabled soldiers who returned home

After war broke out in Europe in 1914 and Britain made a 'call to arms,' Australia wasted no time in recruiting and deploying AIF soldiers to assist the 'mother country'. The Australian Prime Minister who replaced Andrew Fisher during the war was William Morris (Billy) Hughes. He described the war as a 'grave national peril' and 'a threat to our existence' even though it was fought 12,000 miles away.[2] Newspapers added to the community's fear by emphasising that a British defeat would spell 'national extinction' for Australia, which therefore needed to take all possible precautions against the German enemy.[3] By war's end in 1918, the Chief Army Medical officer, Colonel AG Butler, tabled in his report that Australia had suffered a loss of 59,342 lives, with the number of 'invalids' swelling to over 103,897.[4] Apart from those disabled men with missing limbs, deformed faces and bodies, there were many more with minds permanently affected by the carnage and constant shelling of trench warfare, of which no one at home could ever understand. The survivors tucked away these memories in the back of their tormented minds and tended not to speak of their experiences. The most

severely affected 'shell shock' cases were treated in the large military 'mental' hospitals like Mont Park, however over time the demand for inpatient services exceeded the resources.

The diagnosis of shell shock had been recognised by the British Army by the end of 1915 as the 'shock' of being buried by the earth or debris from a shell explosion, and was later associated with 'neurasthenia' or 'nervous breakdown' after battle, which displayed various symptoms such as confusion, stupor, amnesia, tremors, paralyses, anxieties or disablement.[5] In Australia, 'shell shock' had been seen as a disability affecting the serviceman's morale, which could be alleviated through his return to work, and the Senior Medical Officer of the Repatriation Commission in Sydney had remarked in the post-war years, that 'the rate of insanity amongst ex-soldiers now ... is not excessive'.[6] In the early twentieth century, authorities had little understanding of how psychological illnesses like PTSD could develop long after the wartime experience, although later it was recognised that trench warfare had traumatised many soldiers for the remainder of their lives.

Shell shock and post-traumatic stress disorders among veterans

Soldier SG of the 14th Battalion, AIF, was buried by a shell explosion at Gallipoli on 25 April 1914, and was evacuated to hospital in Egypt suffering from shell shock and chest injuries.[7] He was later discharged from the army as medically unfit, and was in and out of military hospitals for more than eleven years. When SG was examined by Dr Catarinich, the Medical Officer-in-Charge of the Repatriation Mental Hospital at Bundoora in 1925, he expressed suicidal thoughts toward himself, murderous thoughts towards his wife, and was diagnosed with depression and severe asthma. [8] Despite his past ill-health however, in 1924 the Repatriation Department had denied responsibility for his hospital care, suggesting that his condition was caused by alcoholism rather than war service. [9] However, Dr Catarinich and Dr Jones, the Inspector General for the Insane, Lunacy Department of Victoria, advocated to the Repatriation Department to have this decision overturned, arguing that his condition had been caused by SG's wartime experiences.[10]

The average age of the disabled men who returned home after the war was around twenty-seven.[11] This impacted heavily on the structure of local communities, as often there were fewer young, able-bodied men of marriageable age who could take over working farms from ageing parents. In addition, many parents had to take on the additional burden of caring for disabled sons as well as maintaining their farms. Catherine Smith of Casterton wrote to Dr Jones, the Inspector General of the Mont Park Military Hospital, about her son William in 1927, observing '... he is not normal. I doubt if he ever will be ... he is now trying his best to work up a little bee farm: so that remains to be seen, how he gets on ... his father is 75 years ... I am 65 years ... he is now over 40 and his life is blighted'.[12] Many soldiers like William Smith, who was wounded in France in 1918, also suffered from a physiological illness caused from battlefield experience, which was less recognised in the post-war period as a disability, compared to an identifiable wound or disease.



Portrait of Mont Park Hospital, CO and administration staff, circa 1919, Australian War Memorial, DAX2443.

Advocating for veterans at Mont Park Military Hospital

During the post-war years, as more servicemen began to display psychological disorders, families made regular appeals for their sons and husbands to be admitted, or kept longer at the military 'mental' hospitals such as Melbourne's Mont Park Military Mental Hospital.[13] In this period, the stigma of mental illness or 'insanity', which was seen to be caused or aggravated by an underlying hereditary condition, was a source of shame for many families. [14] As such, they did not want their shell shocked

soldiers to be classed as weak or insane, and advocated for them to be treated in a repatriation hospital as the conditions, treatment and staffing of these institutions was considered to be superior to the state-run 'insane' asylums.[15] Care in a military hospital provided afflicted veterans with access to specialised medical staff, superior food, entertainment and outings organised by volunteers such as the Red Cross Society (RCS), as well as endorsing them as 'mentally afflicted heroes'.[16]

In the 1920s, due to over-crowding, the Inspector General for the Insane at Mont Park and the Repatriation Department, Dr Jones, had attempted to transfer 75 patients from Mont Park to Victorian state-run institutions, and word spread quickly among soldiers' families. An emergency meeting was called by the Sailors' and Soldiers' Fathers Association of Victoria (Fathers Association) with the acting repatriation minister. Following their vigorous opposition to this decision, the transfer was stopped.[17] *Our Empire* later reported that in Parliament the Member of the House of Representatives for Corio, Mr Lister, asked the repatriation minister why the department and the Inspector General for the Insane had signed the authority to transfer patients, and he was advised that it was due to the pressure of space, as the number of soldier 'mental cases' had exceeded all estimates.[18] During the 1920s the demand to be accommodated in one of the 130 repatriation beds at Mont Park and its adjoining convalescent centre at Bundoora, which housed 'quiet' nerve cases, stretched the government's resources under the pressure of bad economic times. [19]

As shell shock was thought to be a temporary condition which would improve with good rest and patient care, the Repatriation Department had not planned for the new, prolonged and recurrent hospital admissions for 'shell-shocked' veterans; later many of these illnesses would be recognised as PTSDs.[20] The Fathers Association admonished the decision of the Inspector General for the Insane, and said they would join together with Women's organisations to fight such moves which they described as 'scandalous treatment of our war-strained soldiers'.[21] Such was the resolve of families that their soldier-boys have the best available treatment and care, which generally they were unable to give them at home, that they quickly formed protest groups and insisted that the Australian Government maintain its commitment to care for disabled and ill soldiers.

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In contrast, Dr Jones complained in a letter to the repatriation doctor that it was only in Victoria that soldier 'mental' cases were prevented from being transferred to civilian institutions due to the interference of the Fathers Association, and that the military mental hospital was originally meant to be used for shell-shocked soldiers but that use had come to an end.[22] He preferred that they retain around 50 or 60 'quiet' cases whom he would select to stay there and transfer the remaining 60 or 70 patients, that he described as 'fairly troublesome and chronic cases'. [23] He added that the views of the Returned Soldiers' Association, which asserted that the Repatriation Department should build a special mental hospital for all forms of mental disorder was 'extravagant', as in a few years' time the new accommodation would be empty, and that if the association succeeded with this demand, it would 'turn its attention to other states'.[24]

Larsson has observed that middle-class, educated families were over-represented in correspondence written to doctors at the military hospitals.[25] They were more powerful advocates, who were able to utilise their capabilities by networking and campaigning relentlessly, thereby negotiating to have their relatives admitted to military institutions like Mont Park. Many examples of their articulate letter writing can be found in the Mont Park archives, and in contrast there is little record of those who may have made verbal requests for an admission or transfer to Mont Park.[26]

Returned soldier LGB, who had suffered from melancholic depression as a result of active service, had resumed his teaching career but then 'lost confidence in himself' and was later admitted to Callan Park Mental Hospital in New South Wales (NSW) in 1923. [27] Dr Jones advised Dr Wallace of Callan Park that the patient's mother had requested he be moved to the Mont Park Military Mental Hospital so that his family could visit him more frequently. In response, Wallace stated that LGB's brother in NSW had been taking him out for visits, but lately appeared to have become afraid of the patient, and had 'given up on taking him out'.[28] A soldier's wife, Mrs HB of Upwey wrote to Dr Jones in 1928, requesting that her husband be kept at Bundoora longer, as 'he still has the idea I am afraid of him', adding that while he was there his health was improving.[29]

EW Harrison a bank clerk from Tasmania, who had been the first captain of the South Launceston Cricket Club, and described as a 'capable all-rounder, experienced and respected', enlisted in the army in 1915 when he was forty years old.[30] In the first season of the cricket club in 1907–08, he had made 719 runs including

4 centuries, at an average of 79.88, winning the association's batting average, which he won on another four occasions.[31]

Harrison had undertaken active service in France and was promoted from sergeant to lieutenant. He suffered permanent deafness from a shell explosion at the Somme battlefield.[32] He was later classified as medically unfit and returned to Australia on board the hospital transport ship *Ulysses* in 1919. This was the extent of known injuries listed in his service record, which also noted that his general health was good. Therefore it is uncertain when he began to suffer from a psychological illness which caused him to be admitted to the Mental Diseases Hospital in Tasmania.[33]

In December 1925, the Repatriation Commission had advised Dr Jones, 'While the Department is quite willing to do everything possible to find employment for patients who recover, I am afraid it will prove a very difficult matter indeed to place suitably Harrison, whom I know well'.[34] Harrison's determined effort for a transfer to Mont Park Military Hospital in Bundoora from the hospital in New Norfolk, Tasmania, was well documented by doctors in both states.

Subsequently, in response to a letter from Harrison's brother Charles, Dr Jones remarked, 'I think that you fail to realise our difficulties in dealing with your brother, it is extra-ordinarily difficult to put him off ... He is better now than he has been for some time, but we all suspect the presence of auditory hallucinations ... I can assure you that your brother is having all the attention and consideration that it is possible for a limited medical staff to give him'.[35] Despite concerns from doctors regarding his fragile mental state, Harrison continued his writing campaign for a transfer, expressing himself quite articulately.

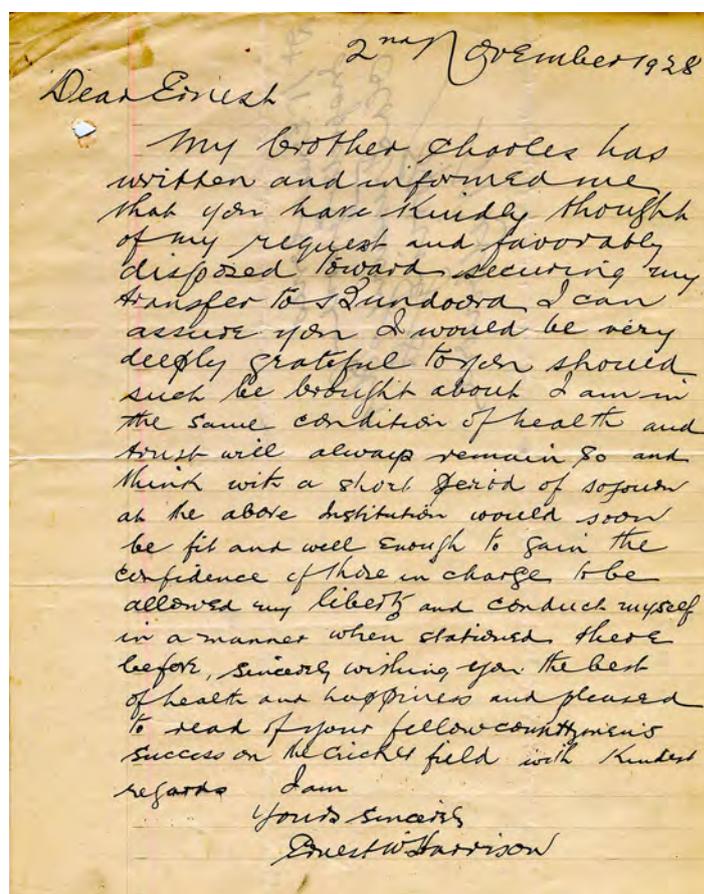
In 1928, Harrison was still pleading with Dr Jones for a transfer, stating that he was unfortunate to be an inmate of the New Norfolk Asylum and that he needed help from Dr Jones to obtain a transfer to Bundoora. He advised that he had sought assistance from his brother in his endeavour, and felt frustrated at his inability to achieve a result so far. He declared that his life 'was a damned bugbear', as prior applications to the Returned Soldiers' Association in Hobart and others (not named) had not brought him a satisfactory result. He again pleaded with Dr Jones to support his transfer and also asked the doctor to visit him when he was next in Tasmania.[36]

Previously, Dr Aitken, the Tasmania doctor treating Harrison, had written to Dr Jones regarding the patient's recent 'suicidal tendencies and obsession with being transferred to Bundoora', adding that he was 'at a loss at what to do with him'.^[37] Dr Aitken had responded to his brother Charles's request for a transfer to Mont Park, stating he was still having 'auditory hallucinations' and if he was transferred to Melbourne there would be a risk bringing him by boat 'due to his suicidal tendencies'.^[38] Despite his lack of success, Harrison was not deterred and he continued to write to authorities requesting a transfer. In another letter to Dr Jones in November 1928, while still hospitalised at the New Norfolk Asylum, he again pleaded his case to be transferred to Bundoora, thanking the doctor in advance and emphasising that his brother had requested that this transfer take place. He remarked that a 'stint at Bundoora would assist his rehabilitation', and he wished the doctor the best of health and happiness, even adding that he had read of the success of his fellow countrymen, the English, on the cricket field.^[39] Harrison also asked Dr Jones if 'it would cause offence if he wrote to the Red Cross Society requesting a donation to supply returned men with badly needed socks, towels and soap, as well as flannel shirts and underwear', explaining that he only mentioned this, as he had seen men without socks and shirts at the facility.^[40] It is unclear whether Harrison ever succeeded in his endeavours to be relocated to Mont Park, however he passed away in Tasmania at the ripe old age of 94.

The founder of the Australian Red Cross Society, Lady Helen Munro-Ferguson, wife of the Australian Governor-General, had been a member of the British Red Cross Society (BRCS) in Scotland. The Australian branch was established in response to the outbreak of war. When Lady Helen arrived in Australia in May 1914, she possessed a detailed knowledge of the Red Cross movement in Great Britain.^[41] The BRCS was loosely associated with the Swiss-based organisation, and in 1904 was forcibly merged with the British Aid Society by royal decree.^[42] After war was declared Lady Helen cabled the colonial office in London seeking authorisation from the BRCS to form a branch in Australia which was subsequently approved.^[43] Lady Helen held the office of national president for six years, defying tradition by running it like a modern-day chief executive officer (CEO).^[44]

The Red Cross had extensive experience overseas during World War I providing medical goods and voluntary labour to the armed forces. This experience proved to be of significant benefit after soldiers returned to Australia.^[45] Its development and management of military convalescent homes, along with medical supplies and volunteers, became integral to the

Repatriation Department's program for incapacitated soldiers; hence, they worked mutually towards restoring sick and disabled men to good health.^[46] Although soldiers' rehabilitation was the responsibility of the Repatriation Department, organisations like the Red Cross ensured that schemes and care were provided through generating the financial means for their own operations, and it also managed convalescent facilities through its formidable volunteer workforce.^[47] The schemes devised by the Repatriation Department included demobilising soldiers and providing medical care, housing, sustenance, education and training opportunities.^[48] The rehabilitation of disabled soldiers involved assisting men to overcome their physical impairments as well as attempting to improve their mental outlook.^[49] The repatriation minister sought the cooperation of the Red Cross in each state to provide, equip and conduct convalescent homes for discharged soldiers suffering the effects of war. Many of these private homes were gifted or loaned by individuals to the society and run by the local Red Cross branch, with a payment of 6 shillings per day per patient remunerated by the Repatriation Department.^[50]



2nd November 1928
Dear Ernest
My brother Charles has written and informed me that you have kindly thought of my request and favourably disposed toward securing my transfer to Bundoora. I can assure you I would be very deeply grateful to you should such be brought about. I am in the same condition of health and trust will always remain so and think with a short period of sojourn at the above institution would soon be fit and well enough to gain the confidence of those in charge to be allowed my liberty and conduct myself in a manner when stationed there before. Sincerely wishing you the best of health and happiness and pleased to read of your fellow countrymen's success on the cricket field with kindest regards I am
Yours sincerely
Ernest W. Harrison

First page of letter from EW Harrison to Dr Jones dated 2 November 1928, PROV, VPRS 7527/P1 Military Mental Hospital Correspondence Files, Unit 1, Item 29/565.

Accordingly, the Red Cross Society was also involved in advocating on behalf of soldiers who were hospitalised in Mont Park Military Mental Hospital and in Bundoora, after concerns had been expressed by family groups such as the Fathers Association, about the living conditions of 100 men grouped together with 'various stages of mental affliction'.^[51] The society constantly responded to requests for provisions of items such as slippers, pillowcases, and use of a motor car, which transported patients on weekly visits to the theatre.^[52] It also offered to donate additional gramophones and provided a woodwork teacher for patients' use.^[53]



Ladies of the Red Cross Society distributing comforts to wounded men at No 4 AGH, Randwick Military Hospital, later known as the Prince of Wales Hospital, Sydney, NSW, Australian War Memorial , H116130.

Another correspondent to Dr Jones was the sister of returned soldier Jack Linton, who wrote in March 1929 expressing her surprise that he was not at the military block 'as we understood he was to be', and asking '[w]ould you be good enough to review his papers at your earliest convenience and move him to the Military Block where he rightly belongs? He has suffered from shell shock since 1917 and has been in Caulfield Military Hospital every 18 months (approx.) since his return from active service'.^[54] Linton, a country boy from Maffra in Gippsland had enlisted in late 1915 and saw active service in France and Belgium. He suffered severely with trench feet, for which he was hospitalised in England, and was later diagnosed with shell shock. In April 1917 he also returned to Australia on the hospital transport ship *Ulysses* and was discharged medically unfit from the army on 13 December 1917.^[55]

Overall, although much has been written of the terrible conditions of trench warfare in World War I and the origins of the Anzac legend, there are very few books that encompass the struggle and despair of disabled veterans and their families as depicted in Larsson's *Shattered Anzacs*. Many soldiers developed mental illness years after returning home, and in addition to the many sick and physically disabled men, this placed a strain on limited post-war government resources in the lead up to the Great Depression. This article has examined some of the moving and confronting correspondence from the families of mentally ill veterans who advocated strongly for them to be admitted to Mont Park Military Mental Hospital. In addition, some patients, such as EW Harrison, were lucid enough to compose rational letters pleading their own case for a transfer.

Endnotes

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- [35] PROV, VPRS 7527/P1, Unit 1, Item 29/565, letter from Dr Jones, Inspector General for the Insane, to Charles Harrison, 21 September 1925.
- [36] PROV, VPRS 7527/P1, Unit 1, Item 29/565, letter from EW Harrison to Dr Jones, 23 August 1928.
- [37] PROV, VPRS 7527/P1, Unit 1, Item 29/565, letter from Dr Aitken to Dr Jones, circa 1925.
- [38] PROV, VPRS 7527/P1, Unit 1, Item 29/565, letter from Dr Aitken to Charles Harrison, circa 1926.
- [39] PROV, VPRS 7527/P1, Unit 1, Item 29/565, letter from EW Harrison to Dr Jones, 2 November 1928. Dr William Ernest Jones was born in Staffordshire England in 1867, and after immigrating to Victoria he was appointed Inspector General for the Insane in 1905, see 'William Ernest Jones' entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, available at <<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/jones-william-ernest-6882>>, accessed 1 September 2015.
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- [49] *Ibid.*
- [50] Leon Stubbings, '*Look what you started Henry: A History of the Australian Red Cross 1914–1991*', Australian Red Cross Society, East Melbourne, 1992, p. 13.
- [51] PROV, VPRS 7527/P1, Unit 1, Item 28/874, letter from PN Robertson, General Secretary ARCS (Victorian Division), to the Editor of the *Age*, 13 March 1925.
- [52] PROV, VPRS 7527/P1, Unit 1, Item 24/874, letter from Dr Jones, Inspector General for the Insane to PN Robertson, General Secretary ARCS (Victorian Division), 12 May 1924, letter from PN Robertson, General Secretary, ARCS (Victorian Division) to Dr Jones, 14 May 1924, and letter from J Eller, Acting General Secretary to Colonel Jones, Australian Army Medical Corps, 15 May 1925.
- [53] *Ibid.*
- [54] PROV, VPRS 7527/P1, Unit 1, Item 29/765, letter from Miss V Linton to Dr Jones, 4 March 1929.
- [55] NAA: 4134, LINTON, J J, personnel dossier, available at <<http://discoveringanzacs.naa.gov.au/browse/records/268685/19>>, accessed 8 September 2025.

Research journeys



Who says ‘you can’t change history’?

Jacquie Browne

‘Who says “you can’t change history”?’; *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria*, issue no. 14, 2015. ISSN 1832-2522. Copyright © Jacquie Browne

Jacquie Browne nee Keown is a mother of three amazing children, Nana of two phenomenal and gorgeous girls, Kenzie and Lillie, and a Melburnian through and through. She is a student of life, forever curious; from being halfway through her Bachelor of Arts way back when, to now always happily honing her complementary health practitioner skills; she ecstatically embraces all dancing, singing, music and travel.

Jacquie’s great loves include family and family history, both loves which her mum infected her with before her too-early demise. Currently she is riding her third wave of family history research, which has been the most exhilarating and gratifying.

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Abstract

‘Who says you can’t change history?’ shows the intensely personal quest to break down a massive brick wall, my family history mystery of 120 years. Born in 1892 in Carlton Victoria, my Nana Beatrice McMahon nee Hughes (but actually Watson) died at 59 years never knowing her birth family. The mystery continued throughout my mum’s life of 50 years and overshadowed my life for more than 50 years until 2011. Resuming the search that my mum had started and that I shared with her before her too-early death, has allowed me to feel closer to her than ever. Added to that reconnection with my deceased mum, came a radical u-turn after my old hometown of Melbourne had progressively lost all real sense of my birth family and belonging for me over 30 years; now this extensive research has breathed new life into my hitherto jaded hometown. My childhood suburbs now had several more new addresses that connected to my family, and some other suburbs and Victorian country towns now became newly significant to my past and my present. And of course with the houses came many new relations to share with, and the opportunity for me to present them with valuable untold stories of our shared forebears. This uncovering of a huge long-lost family shows how Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) records in the last four years have contributed immensely to my research and almost single-handedly uncovered a whole family tree. The crafting was not of just the static names in their little boxes that make up the family tree graphic. Family scenarios unfolded,

and were plumped up when combining various records to show different aspects of my ancestors’ lives. Cross-checking with records of other family members constructed whole family vignettes. My family history research yielded hundreds of records, often ingrained with more than a hundred years of dust. The records also showed up as multi-folded pages, often thick sheets and sometimes ‘paper thin’ like crepe paper. The folds were only annoying when it came to photographing them! PROV played such a vital role in my family history because my Watson family mystery has no family folklore passed down, no living descendants to chronicle the generations beyond my own and that of our grandparents. What surprised me when I finally met so many second, third and fourth cousins, was that I was not the only one left in the dark. Pen-inked words and old typewriting became the life-line to my large ancestral Watson family. Once I got comfortable with the peppered legal jargon of wills and probates, numerous ward registers, mental asylum records, court cases, watchhouse records and inquests, I was able to glean vital clues. Family dynamics flavoured several wills. Insights into Victorian history seeped through an often quirky turn of phrase. PROV has provided me with so much adventure and incredible surprise turns, even in connecting with other families who fostered my previously unknown great aunts. I love to share with people the vibrancy of PROV, not the staid perception that many people may have. This article is dedicated to my mum, Irene Mary Keown nee McMahon, 28 October 1930 – 16 July 1981

My beginnings: family life in the ‘burbs

I am a born and bred Melburnian. North Coburg and Fawkner were the suburbs where I grew up, and where for many years my mum and dad, my brother, my sister and I, lived, went to school, and attended church. Nearby lived assorted close family relatives in the suburbs of Essendon, Moreland, Coburg, Niddrie, Glenroy, Preston, then further away in Box Hill.[1] These were the intimately connected abodes of my known family at the time, before most of us spread our wings further afield in Melbourne, Queensland, New South Wales and Tasmania, surreptitiously eroding our cherished childhood closeness.

Winding back a generation, my mum was born and grew up in Brunswick,[2] and after she then married, spent her remaining life in North Coburg. She now ‘rests’ at Fawkner.[3] A straight line of suburbs sums up my mum’s residences.

When I moved to Frankston[4] after I married, that seemed like a faraway place. Apart from a two-year stint in Sydney, the rest of my life until now has been spent in beachside Frankston.

In 1981, my immediate birth family lived through a loss so unthinkable for any family. Both mum and dad died within two months of each other, leaving a gaping hole that no family could ever expect to fill. We three siblings became orphans at ages 25, 24 and 20.

Radical u-turn of my family life

Over the course of the decades that followed, I experienced ever-diminishing motivation to visit Melbourne and its northern suburbs. The only reason left for me to visit was for my ailing mother-in-law. Each car trip through Melbourne in the first decade of the 2000s jeered and mocked at my childhood memories of the Melbourne I had grown up in. Increasingly, I was affronted with masses of concrete structures, inner-city high-rise apartments, the likes of Etihad Stadium, multiple blocks of gargantuan corporate façades. This was no longer my revered childhood hometown. The sense of loss neared depression, robbed of visiting my parents with eager grandkids in tow. Even visits to mum and dad’s grave at Fawkner cemetery were losing any real meaning; and though my childhood home and other relatives’ houses were and are still standing, there was no loving connection to embrace. My hometown was now bereft of any heart and loving events.

Saving Grace: Family to the Rescue

Or so I felt until late September 2011 when my cousin’s son, Brad, rang me to enlist my help with a surprise present for his dad Geoff’s upcoming seventieth birthday in November. Why me? Because my mum back in the 1970s had enthusiastically taken up the role of family historian on both sides of the family, hers and her husband’s, my dad’s. She had unearthed births, deaths and marriage certificates, land grants, inquest and probate records, the latter three from Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) which was located in the Melbourne CBD at the time. Before my mum’s death, she had infected me with the family history bug. With my drivers’ licence in hand, I joined her on several research outings to Queenscliff, Sorrento, St Kilda and Gardenvale.[5] This was my first foray into family history research. My heart happily recalls these special times with my mum. Cousin Geoff and wife Pat had come to the cousins’ reunion I had arranged in 2008, so Pat knew that I held the family treasures.

Delightedly, I assisted in putting together a family history memento for cousin Geoff’s upcoming birthday in November 2011. That day I spent with Brad in Greensborough[6] on this surprise present also produced an offer that would *totally* change my family history, augment my memories and reignite my relationship with my erstwhile, beloved Melbourne. Brad, at day’s end, offered me temporary use of his Ancestry.com account.

Stoked, I began immediately. What astounded me was that this time, after my two, much earlier, research journeys, the playing field of family history research had been transformed so dramatically. The advent of the Internet, and the mass digitisation of records now placed so much at my fingertips.

PROV back in my life with a ‘vengeance’!

On 23 December 2011, the last day that PROV was open for that year, I found myself for the first time at their newish, you-beaut North Melbourne repository. On that day, Pandora’s box opened up and would lead me to practically set up home at the North Melbourne premises for the next two years. North Melbourne is very central and PROV has its own dedicated free car park away from the busy overpriced Melbourne CBD.



Nana Beatrice McMahon nee Hughes (but actually Watson) no longer 'Little Orphan Annie', 18 January 1892 – 6 February 1951. Jacquie Browne family collection.

Throughout 2012 and 2013 I spent countless hours wading through very old, dust-ingrained huge, heavy volumes of ward registers,[7] court records,[8] inquests,[9] mental health asylums records,[10] as well as will and probate records.[11] I have accessed documents from the 1870s through to 2004, though the records I found for the period 1985 to 2004 were solely wills and probates. After a break from family history research for most of 2014 I resumed my visits to PROV and added new types of records.

Preamble to PROV, small achievements

My first research jaunt, that I shared with my mum, before my marriage in 1977, pertained to one particular family line, her mother's. A complete mystery! Her mum had died back in 1951, aged 59, never knowing her birth family. The only clues we had to go on were my Nana Beatrice's early childhood years at Queenscliff with a 'grandmother',[12] and then teenage years into early adulthood at the Good Shepherd Convent Oakleigh (now Chadstone shopping centre).[13] Unfortunately this shared research journey turned up empty; we did not even manage to find my Nana's birth certificate.

After my mum's death in 1981, it would be five years before I started my second research journey. Initially, I managed one major breakthrough – I found Nana's birth certificate under a different name, Lavinia Beatrice Watson, a name she never knew was hers![14] Sounds great heh? Except, that is as far as I would get in the next eight years, despite hundreds of phone calls and letters. After contacting the Good Shepherd administration of the now-defunct Oakleigh convent, their letter suggested that Nana was a state ward. [15] My mum maybe had been too close to the story, assuming certain things, never considering that her mother had been a ward. On 16 July 1986, the fifth anniversary of my mum's death, the mail brought me a copy of Nana's ward register entry, issued from the Department of Community Services Victoria.[16] My first ever visit to PROV later in 1986 (which was then located at Cherry Lane in Laverton) yielded a copy of Nana's court appearance in Queenscliff.[17] The scrawled old writing in this massive volume, about 35 cm by 50 cm, was very lean on words, written with pen and ink about a tiny little girl, not yet three years-of-age: 'Beatrice Hughes', with comments like: 'arrest on view', 'being a neglected child, having no visible means of subsistence', 'at Queenscliff on 13 November 1894', 'Committed to the Department of Neglected Children'.[18] These few words set in motion the rest of my Nana's life, initiating her ward register record; two pages that abruptly and perfunctorily detailed her childhood all the way up to young adulthood; a past she would keep largely hidden from her three daughters. In July 1986, the year before her death in 1987, I showed this ward register to my aunty Marge, who was at that time the only surviving daughter of my Nana. Her eldest daughter, my cousin Colleen told me how her mother had cried over this ward register. These many-authored words, some conveying prejudicial overtones, recorded more than fifteen relocations and work placements with strangers, all meted out to a lonely young child and teenager. Aunty Marge cried because this record confirmed her long-held, deep gut-feeling that her mum had endured years of 'being pushed from pillar to post'.

No. 19,819		Name, <i>Beatrice</i>		<i>Hughes</i> <i>nee, Proule</i>		111	
Date of Birth	Place of Birth	Sex	Religion	Class of Residence	Marital Status	Age	Signature
11/19/1894	Woolton, N.S.W.	F	Roman Catholic	Residential	Single	100	<i>Beatrice Hughes</i>
PREVIOUS HISTORY OF -				SUBSEQUENT HISTORY OF RELATIONS			
Class Res. in English Hospital				As per signature of person concerned			
Father - <i>Beale</i>							
Mother - <i>Beale</i>							
Subsequent History of Child							
Name				Date			
1. <i>Beatrice</i>				11/19/1894			
2. <i>Beatrice</i>				11/19/1894			
3. <i>Beatrice</i>				11/19/1894			
4. <i>Beatrice</i>				11/19/1894			
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100. <i>Beatrice</i>				11/19/1894			

'Pushed from pillar to post', began 13 November 1894, Nana Beatrice McMahon nee Hughes (Watson) ward register, PROV, VPRS 4527/P0 Ward Registers (known as Children's Registers 1864 – 1887), Unit 43 (19692–20044), p. 111.

Eight years on, with no Internet as yet making records readily available online, and no funds after I gave up paid work, and a veritable 'needle in the haystack' with the Watson surname, I gave up the search, and got on with my life. The arrival of another baby kept me extremely busy while my other two children edged toward adulthood.

And so passed seventeen years before Brad's surprise gift allowing me to undertake research on his Ancestry.com account. Perhaps this had been foretold by an inner whisper after my cousins' reunion in 2008, a promise to myself; my still-intact desire to find Nana's birth family. With that inner whisper, the image I created and promised myself was to have 'one little old lady at our next reunion', supposedly the next year. I imagined her as a one-and-only distant relative who would be from Nana's birth family. No annual reunion eventuated, not in 2009 or 2010. So it was indeed wonderful to catch up with some cousins at Geoff's seventieth birthday in November 2011.

One little old lady – yeah right!

Little did I know at the time of Geoff's birthday, that almost exactly a year later, I would be holding another very different family reunion. This time, the participants would be overwhelmingly of new, previously unknown cousins. That fantasy of 'one little old lady' blew massively out in numbers. What astounded me was that those present at this Watson reunion of November 2012 represented the solution of the 120-year-old mystery, and a huge family of over 500 guestimated relatives in

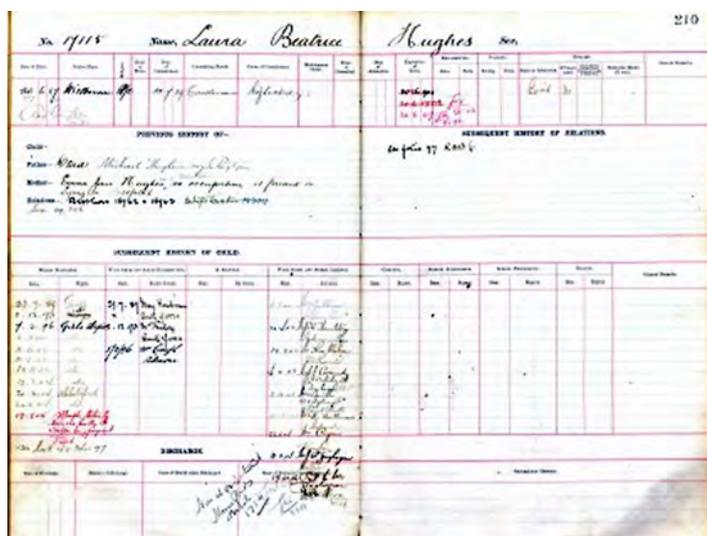
Australia alone, spanning at least seven generations. The truth about my Nana, who had for 120 years been this 'little orphan Annie',[19] and the family mystery that I was about to fully unravel, went way beyond my wildest expectations. What I found was that Nana had at least five siblings, and that her mother, Emma, was one of twelve children:- all twelve born as the family roamed through New South Wales and Victoria until they finally settled in Castlemaine.[20]



One little old lady! With 91 years of sass, she does not like the title of family matriarch – 'Just call me the old sheilah' quips Valma Gibbons. She is my newly-found, second cousin once removed. Valma is an absolute joy and wealth of love, experiences, determination, and amazing memories; and my second mum. Jacquie Browne family collection.

PROV you little beauty!

So what actually happened at my first visit to PROV on 23 December 2011? Via indexes and fellow researchers on Ancestry.com, I had broken through the 120-year-old brick wall. The first ancestor who enticed me to PROV, two days before Christmas, was a sister of my Nana, Laura Beatrice Hughes,[21] whom I found on an online state ward index.[22] Armed with the ward register index details, I accessed the microfiche of the original ward registers.[23] Armed also with my well-versed and exercised positive thinking, I made myself another promise, to find extra surprises *somehow*.



Ward register entry of Laura Beatrice Cahill (former Treacy) nee Hughes, one of at least five mystery siblings of my Nana Beatrice, PROV, VPRS 4527/P0 Ward Registers (known as Children's Registers 1864 – 1887), Unit 35 (16759–17223; Girls and boys neglected. Receiving House Book Vol. RH9 [New admissions for all neglected children]), p. 210.

'Somehow' happened. The above ward register page detailed my great aunt Laura's movements, foster parents' names, and the suburbs and towns where she lived until she turned 13. In the 'with whom and where licensed' column[24] were details of names, suburbs and towns of the people for whom she worked on placements that all wards were ordered to undertake until they turned 18 years-of-age. I would later reflect on how these circumstances could have been extremely scary and harrowing; a kind of forced labour for possibly unkind people. Of my Nana's five siblings that I have discovered, four also became wards over different years; all of them may have suffered cruelty and abuse, with no one to defend them, no right of redress. I can only guess that my Nana's silence speaks volumes of bleak and cheerless circumstances. This is demonstrated by some particularly harsh and judgemental remarks made about

her in her ward register entry on 1 May 1905, comments which probably foretold her being shipped off to the Roman Catholic Good Shepherd Convent in Oakleigh, a reformatory school for adolescents which became her new base:

Thought to be pregnant but such was not the case. She admitted however that she had been guilty of sexual intercourse with young fellows. She is evidently a liar.[25]

Though encountering comments such as this were disturbing and heart-breaking, finding details on Nana's siblings was tremendously exciting; and still is when I hark back to the totally locked-away mystery. The *extra surprises* I found that day in December 2011 were impersonal references to a 'Step Sister 18314'[26] and 'Brothers 15942 & 15943; these brothers then appeared in the step sister's records (who had been assigned the ward number 18314) with their names 'Edward & Henry Hughes', and were noted as being 'in the schools'.[27] Absolutely thrilled from viewing the microfiche, I then got a photocopy. Next I registered as a public user,[28] which enabled me to order and view the original records contained in huge dust-ingrained volumes. Excitedly impatient, I had to wait over the Christmas break.

So heralded the constant traipsing from Frankston to North Melbourne, weekdays and Saturdays: a mammoth task of searching and photographing thousands of pages.

A milestone, celebrating and honouring my research

On 20 April 2013, my research and my incredible story of uncovering such a huge long-lost extended family was honoured at the fortieth anniversary of PROV. [29] For two weeks a smattering of my family's records were displayed in two glass showcases in the reading room[30] alongside family photos that were of my lifelong family: my Nana and her three daughters. Also in pride of place was a photo of the first ever Australian George & Susan (nee Malone) Watson reunion that I held on 18 November 2012.

More surprises led me to finding connections to living family members. A 1990s probate detailed a daughter's married name; a goldmine find, especially considering her maiden surname, Watson.[31] Even more serendipitous, her married surname was quite unusual, so searching the online White Pages[32] for Victorian names proved a cinch. Contacting this cousin led me to another living cousin. This lead initially fizzled as this cousin's online phone number was disconnected.

'Drats!' I lamented, has she moved?

INVENTORY OF FURNITURE AND EFFECTS CONTAINED IN PROPERTY
NO. 30 FOLEY STREET KSW.

MRS. M. A. WATSON DECEASED

<u>HALL</u>	
Globe and Shade 3/6; Carpet runner, 6 yards £6;	£6. 3. 6
Mat 9 yards, £9; Pedestal 5/-	9. 5. 0
<u>FRONT BEDROOM</u>	
Globe and Shade 3/6; Lino square 12' x 9' £4	4. 3. 6
Wardrobe £7; Tables 2 small £2.10.0; Chair cane 15/-	10. 5. 0
Chest of drawers cedar £5; Double bed ends, mattress, wire	5. 0. 0
mattress and 5 blankets £9.10.0 lot	9.10. 0
<u>SECOND BEDROOM</u>	
Globe and Shade 3/6; curtains 1 set, 10/-; Chest drawers £9	9.13. 6
Small Table 15/-; Chair cane 10/-; Bugs 2, 10/-	1.15. 0
<u>THIRD BEDROOM</u>	
Globe and Shade 3/6; Congden square 6' x 9' £2;	2. 3. 6
Single bed 1, £2; Pillow and mattress £2.10.0	4.10. 0
<u>DINING ROOM</u>	
Congden square 10' x 12' £3; Dining Table £3.10.0	6.10. 0
Dining chairs 3 £2.5.0; Dining chair damaged 10/-	2.15. 0
Fire side chairs 2 £2; Cabinet £1.10.0; Set Fire Irons 15/-	4. 5. 0
Globe and shade	3. 6
<u>KITCHEN</u>	
Lino 9 yards £4.10.0; Globe and Shade 3/6, Table £4	8.13. 6
Gas Stove £1.10.0; Kitchen cabinet £5; Kitchen chairs 2 20/-	7.10. 0
Meat safe 10/-; Jardiniers 4 12/-; picture 1 5/-	1. 7. 0
Flat irons 2, 6/-; Wicker tray 3/-; saucepans 4, 12/-	1. 1. 0
Jugs 5, £1; Bucket 3/-; Brooms, straw and hair 8/-; Mop 2/6	1.13. 6
Garbage bin 2/6; axe 6/-; Lawn mower 20/-; Hedge clipper 9/-	1.17. 6
<u>CROCKERY</u> Cups and saucers 8, 16/-; enamel plates 2, 1/6	17. 0
Dinner plates 10, 15/-; bread and butter plates 10, 10/-	1. 5. 0
Bread plates, large 4, 4/-; Fruit plates 2, 3/- (3)	7. 0
Glass dishes 4, 2/-; Jam dishes 5, 2/6; Jam dishes glass 1/6	6. 0
Cream dish, saucer and spoon 7/6; Basins set of 6, 9/-	16. 6
Teapot 1, 3/6; Kettles 2, 6/-; Meat dish 3/-; Veg. dish 2, 6/-	18. 6
Plate, 2/6; Gravy bowl and plate 2/6	5. 0
<u>BATHROOM</u> Lino, 3 yards	1.10. 0
<u>BACK ROOM</u>	
2 Fire side chairs, damaged, £1; Sweeper £1; Dressing table £1; 3. 0. 0	3. 0. 0
2 chairs damaged 10/-	10. 0
	£108. 0. 6

I, Keith Charles Miller of 136 Auburn Road Auburn, Government Approved Valuer No. 806, do hereby certify that on the 13th day of May 1949 I inspected the abovementioned furniture and contents and value the same at One hundred and eight pounds - (£108/-/-)

K. C. MILLER
18/5/49.

J. B. Lead

Every home should have one, a meat safe, jardiner, and congden squares. I am still researching congden, most likely a floor rug. Inventory of household contents in a 1949 probate record. PPROV, VPRS 28/P3 Probate and Administration Files, Unit 4869, File 411/930.

Research can take many forms, and sometimes it pays to go the extra mile, literally. On a sunny late September Saturday in 2012, I drove to the address listed online and knocked on the door. I figured that if there was a new resident, I might get a forwarding address? 'Drats!' again, no-one was home.

Undeterred, I found a neighbour and enquired. Phew! I learned that she still lived there, so I left a note under the mat. Well as I expected, I was half way home when this cousin returned from walking the dog and rang me, so excited that I had found her and could tell her about her elderly father who died early in her childhood. Next day I travelled again to Rye. This 1990s probate yielded a

minor miracle, as legislated privacy provisions prohibits the public access to Australian Electoral rolls after 1980 for the time being.[33]

Another time, a hunch occurred to me on 11 November 2012 which led me to a find that blew me away when I compared it with that very first 1889 record discovered on my first visit to North Melbourne. It concerned great aunty Laura Hughes. This hunch caused a 180 degree turn in how I had perceived great aunty Laura for over a year. Her ward register, started on 22 July 1889 when she was handed to the Castlemaine court,[34] contained seemingly innocent, transient 1904 and 1906 entries showing her being 'licensed out' to a Geoghegan family in Maffra, Gippsland. Since first seeing it in December 2011, the Geoghegan name meant little to me, just a random family Laura worked for and moved on from. Laura later married twice at age 40 and then age 60.[35] All this time I had put Laura's records on the backburner as she had no living descendants to connect with. I already knew that she became pregnant to another worker at the Geoghegan property.[36] She had a little boy named Michael, and he too became a state ward. Sadly he died at four years-of-age.[37]

This hunch came the week before my scheduled Watson reunion. I was at the Mornington Peninsula Family History Society (MPFHS).[38] A random thought - I have come to learn that these are usually never random - I wondered if great aunty Laura had made a will? Previously, I had thought 'no', as she died in 1967, seemingly as an old age pensioner.[39] What the heck, I knew the microfiche of the original probate index very well, as I had already found more than thirty wills to date. Lo and behold, *she had indeed made a will!* A few days later, back at North Melbourne, more surprises unfolded for me. Laura willed most of her savings, engagement, wedding ring and watch to four sisters.[40] Their married names puzzled me. One sister's address was care of Bairnsdale police station. Another sister's name matched the name of the 'friend' informant on Laura's death certificate, finally revealing the friend's full name and gender;[41] but nothing explained how they knew Laura. Later at home, I searched the unusual married name of one of the sisters *and there it was* another wow moment! The index showed her maiden name.[42] It was Geoghegan, and sure enough all the sisters proved to be the Geoghegan sisters of Maffra. Once I connected the date given in Laura's ward record for when she was 'licenced out' to the Geoghegan family with the birth of the first of the six Geoghegan children, the former date proved to be six weeks prior to the birth. And that first child was the informant on Laura's death certificate![43]



Laura Treacy nee Hughes birthday card to her surrogate nephew/great nephew Patrick, of the Geoghegan family in 1934. Gifted by CM, a living descendant of the Geoghegan family; now part of the Jacquie Browne family collection.

Fast forward, to and fro searching

The next step was to trace forward to find living descendants, and this led to another three probates and a sad inquest of a 19-year-old lad of the Geoghegan family.[44] His death would explain why one sister, his mother, had moved to Bairnsdale. The lad crashed his car in a head-on collision, close to where I have now lived for the last thirty years in Frankston. I have driven past the location of the accident thousands of times. The inquest's black and white photos of the mangled cars are graphic.



On 3 February 1963 in Frankston, PD, a 19-year-old lad, died. He was a member of Laura's surrogate family, and son of an especially dear woman to Laura. PROV, VPRS 24/P2 Inquest Deposition Files, Unit 45, File 1963/407.

This inquest gave me greater insight into my great aunty Laura's life, along with family recollections that would shortly materialise. Further research of this family's probates and some people on Ancestry.com led to a day in January 2013 which I spent with a living descendant of the Geoghegan family. Wonderfully, she remembered my great aunty Laura very well. It helped that Laura had lived till 1967, sixteen years later than her younger sister, my Nana. Great aunty Laura had become a life-long loved aunt of the Geoghegan family, and for this I am so heartened and grateful. Via this 'surrogate family' I have a link to an ex-Queensland cricketer who 'dismissed Steve Waugh and Michael Clarke in the space of four balls' and 'knocked over Simon Katich for 3-64'. [45] Knowing that great aunty Laura had such a wonderful 'new family' is coloured with a bitter-sweet tinge, as electoral rolls showed she had lived in the same suburb as my Nana and my mum and my two aunts. [46] She was living within 4 to 6 kms from my family. We may have met her. My mum and aunts could have used some comforting from their aunt when their mum died, especially as their dad had already taken up with another woman on the side. Furthermore, the fact that Laura died in 1967 means that I too could have grown up with her also.

Coincidence or invisible familial threads?

Further instances of close proximity of living without knowing was to occur repeatedly with many other Watson relatives. Some stunning revelations showed that my Nana and daughters had several other cousins and uncles living in the same or adjacent suburbs. With my growing up, there were also second and third cousins living nearby.[47]

There is no logical reason for such proximity. Nana's ward register shows her birth at the Carlton 'Lying-in'[48] Hospital, before ending up at Queenscliff with two successive foster parents (not her 'grandmother' as she somehow believed). Once she turned thirteen, she was off to the Girls Depot,[49] then to Brunswick, the first of many 'licensed out' placements. Her uncle Alfred and his children lived in Brunswick at that time. Malmsbury followed at which time she was only 20 kms away from her mum at Castlemaine. In 1918, Nana served a placement in Gippsland possibly close to her sister Laura in Maffra, who would be visiting her 'surrogate' family in Maffra.[50] Later came Kerang, 80 kms approximately away from Nana's namesake aunty at Lake Marmal.[51] Finally, Nana settled with her husband and three girls in Brunswick, so close to sister Laura and uncle Alfred and several cousins. In later years, the next generations were at Coburg addresses, more 'unknown' cousins living close to me and my immediate family.[52]

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Uncanny synchronicity and proximity occurred for me also in September 1992, when together with my husband and our two older children I holidayed at a Healesville caravan park. By this time I was six years into my second research phase; in 1994 I would throw in the towel. Enjoying the spring weather after recent floods in this area, I sat by the Badger Creek and walked along Don Road fronting the park. Nothing spectacular, you might say, until I discovered twenty years later, in October 2012, via another probate document at PROV, that one of my 'unknown', mystery third cousins had been living literally next door to the caravan park. He is still there today. For seven days I was within a hundred meters of this third cousin. I might have walked right past him, proffering a friendly country hello.[53]

Cross-checking begins

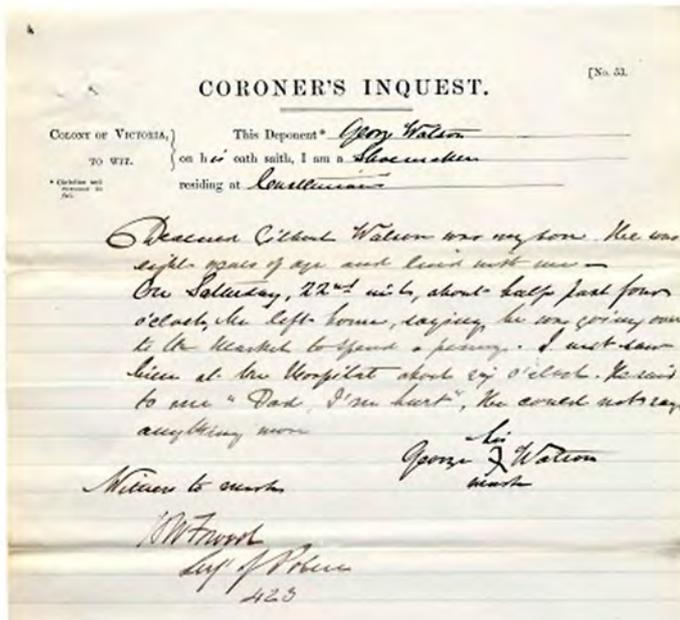
Laura's ward register entry led me to a court volume detailing her handover to the Department of Neglected Children. This was a lucky find, which mirrored my Nana's ward record and court appearance five years later. It was lucky because I did not find corresponding court reports for Nana's other siblings. Both Laura's and her sister's, my Nana's, court appearances were in country towns, Castlemaine and Queenscliff respectively. Three other siblings with ward records came before central Melbourne courts; Melbourne for the twin boys, Carlton for sister Florence; I was not able to locate corresponding court records for these children. Likewise, I was not able to find the 1874 Castlemaine court record for their mother, Emma Watson, even though this appears on her ward register entry. Interestingly, two years later I was guided to another set of records, the Castlemaine Watchhouse Charge Books.[54] This record helped me to estimate the date Emma was institutionalised and revealed more sad details. It showed that the barely 14-year-old Emma, my great grandmother, had been locked up for two days before her court appearance.

Finding my great grandmother's ward record was a surprise, and yet somehow not totally unexpected. [55] I had been wondering why she had given up at least five of her children over many years between 1887 and 1894, especially when she had a large family of eleven siblings to support her. Her ward record showed that she was removed from her parents and siblings for three years in 1874, at the tender age of 14 years, and sent away to Abbotsford Convent of the Good Shepherd many miles from her hometown of Castlemaine. This could indicate an extreme trauma in her youth. The circumstances in which she was

apprehended and brought before the Castlemaine court were very disturbing. 'This girl was found smoking opium with a chinaman, having spent the previous night, in company with a prostitute and 4 boys'. Initially I was quite judgemental and flummoxed to read this, as my other great grandmothers were all God-fearing Irish Catholics who raised and nurtured large families. Once I recovered from the shock, I began to examine different possible explanations for my Emma's actions. Maybe she had a fight with her siblings. Or perhaps, as the eldest daughter, she had been kept at home to help with the younger children, while her brothers were taught to read and write, and work alongside their dad in his boot-making business. Within such a constrained role, she may have rebelled, breaking out of the social norms imposed on proper female behaviour. With the discovery of Emma's ward record, my direct Watson family line features three generations of state wards; Nana Beatrice and her siblings, and sibling Laura's son Michael. *Yet another surprise turn in solving my Nana's birth family's 120-year-old mystery.*

Inquests: a mixed bag

Other inquests I found were filled with varied detail, depicting incredible stories of some of my Nana's eleven uncles and aunties. Of these twelve siblings, PROV holds inquest records for four of them – three brothers and one sister. All depict varied circumstances. The first in 1889, when the youngest of the twelve, Gilbert, aged 8, was tragically trampled by a horse at the close of Castlemaine's Saturday market day. He was taken to hospital, dying four days later. [56] Another, the oldest of the twelve, Alfred, died at 80 years-of-age at Royal Park Mental Hospital in 1937, from dementia associated with brain tumours.[57] The inquest of the sister, Lavinia Beatrice 'Beatty' McDonald nee Watson[58] revealed her death after eight years at Sunbury Asylum, ostensibly for mental alcohol-related causes.



'Dad I'm hurt' young Gilbert, aged eight in Castlemaine hospital after being trampled by a horse at the Saturday market, 22 June 1889. He dies four days later, as reported in the deposition of Gilbert's father George Watson at his son's inquest, PROV, VPRS 24/P0 Inquest Deposition Files, Unit 548, File 1889/849.

Inquests: institutional life and deaths

Finally, relieved but sad, because of his death circumstances, I have only this year, 2015, found the last remaining mystery brother, Arthur Ernest Watson. Aged 25, Arthur was delivered to Yarra Bend Asylum in 1896, because of epilepsy. A sad sign of the times when epilepsy treatment resulted in mental asylum placement. He died ten days later, after a chaotic train trip from Castlemaine to Melbourne with the escorting constable barely able to handle Arthur's fits. Arthur fell against the train's plate glass window, smashing it.[59]

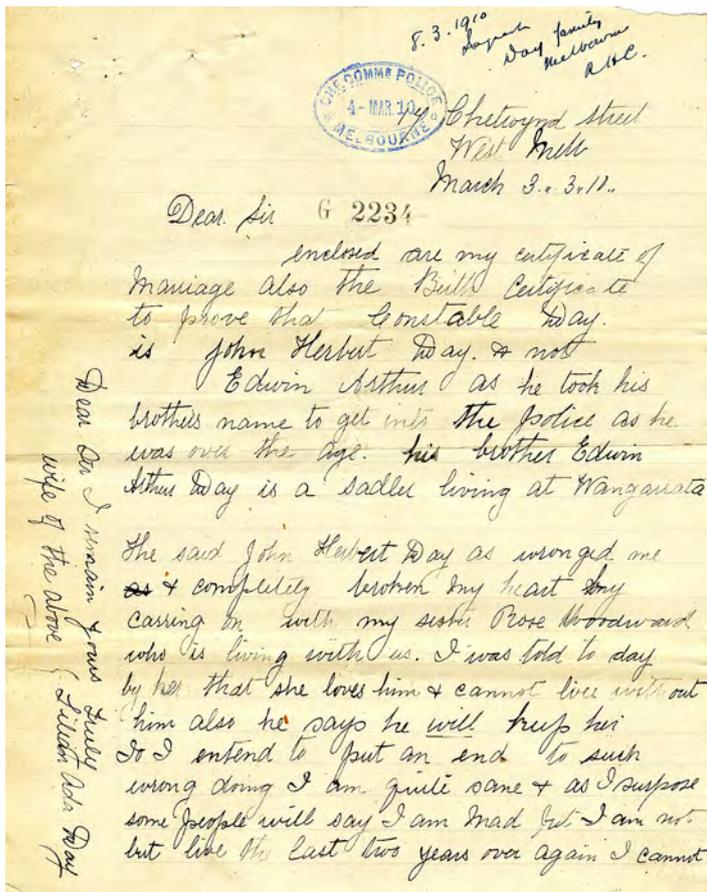
While searching for Arthur's mental asylum record, leafing through the files, a familiar name jumped out at me, and I *chanced* upon the record of a member of great aunt Laura's first husband's family, Agnes Treacy. *Another amazing find!*

I was also able to find inquest files for the next generation of my family. In addition to my great, great uncle Arthur, his brother Alfred and his sister Lavinia Beatrice McDonald nee Watson, who all ended up as 'inmates' of mental asylums, others from the next generation also suffered a similar fate; however, their time spent in mental asylums proved to be much longer. From the inquests I was able to discover that Nana's twin brothers spent their teen years and the rest of their

lives up until their fifties in Kew Asylum, finally dying at Ararat Mental Hospital (non-criminal wards).[60] There were moved to Ararat as Kew had for many years been grossly overcrowded, and because their removal to the country would not inconvenience any family members who would be visiting. Born the same day, they died within nineteen days of each other at the age of 57 in 1939, never having any family visit them for 44 years. My Nana never knew they existed, and perhaps nobody else in the rest of the Watson family knew either. It was because all of these family members were inmates of asylums that I was able to find inquests about them, as inquests were required for anyone who died in an asylum.

One other inquest record really stood out for me; it included four members of a family associated with my long-lost Watsons. One of the deceased was Lillian Day, the sister-in-law of one of my great, great uncles, Henry George Watson.[61] He was another uncle to my Nana. I discovered in the inquest from 1910 that Lillian, Henry's wife's married sister, flew into a jealous rage, set fire to her home and killed her three young children. Lillian then attempted to kill her younger sister Rose Woodward. Lillian died from a 'wound in the throat self-inflicted with suicidal intent ... whilst temporarily of unsound mind.'[62] At 11.40 pm, a witness of the unfolding tragedy, a neighbour of the Day family, was alerted to the fire and found 'Mrs Day on top of Miss Woodward' on the floor. They were struggling with each other and both were hysterical. The neighbour got them both on their feet and took them out to the front of the house. He then rescued the two boys, however they later died at the Melbourne hospital. The fire brigade arrived and found Lillian's two-year-old daughter was already dead. Lillian's sister Rose Woodward, only twenty years old, was the only survivor. Rose testified at the inquest that she had an 'affliction' with limited eyesight and had been living with her sister and her family for five years. With both parents deceased, 'the only place [she] had to fall back on for a home was Mr and Mrs Day'. On the day leading up to the fire, Rose had asked Lillian to accompany her while she sought a 'situation' and another place to live. Lillian asked her why she was leaving their home. Rose replied: 'I think it is best as I have learnt to love [your] husband'. Rose stated that 'we were friendly after the conversation and on good terms'. Before Rose went to bed at 8.35 pm, she saw Lillian writing a letter. Lillian's husband, Bert Day, was a police constable who was at work that night. The letter was addressed to the Police Commissioner, denouncing her husband who joined the force under his brother's name to conceal the fact that he was over age at the time of his appointment. Consequently the husband was kicked off the force, but he did marry again and have children.

It must have been such a blow to my great, great uncle Henry's wife, Maud, to so tragically lose her sister, two young nephews, a niece, and very nearly lose her other sister Rose. Barely eight years later in 1918, Maud and Henry lost their only child William in World War I. William died at the age of 21 in Montbrehain, France, on the very last day that any Australian or British battalion fought on the western front.[63]



Revenge-laden letter written by Lilian Day to expose her husband's falsified entry to the Victorian police force. She wrote this on 3 March 1910, just before killing her three young children and herself, PROV, VPRS 24/P0 Inquest Deposition Files, Unit 850, File 1910/154.

Building the jigsaw story, family comings and goings

With no family anecdotes or folklore for me to rely on, some of these records become so vital, and allowed me to cross-check dates and locales to reconstruct whole scenarios, vignettes of families interacting. We can relate young Gilbert's inquest in Castlemaine in June 1889 with his niece Laura being handed to the Castlemaine Court one month later. Emma had been living in Collingwood and so, presumably returned for her youngest brother, Gilbert's funeral. Laura's ward register states that her mum Emma Jane, is 'at present in Lying-in Hospital' in Melbourne for her next confinement.[64]

Definite belonging

More cross-checking of records rendered vital confirmation of my Nana's birth family. Nana's ward register entry lists her first foster parent as Mrs Bush on 13 November 1894. Mrs Bush's death certificate dated October 1899, shows a 'Stoke Street Queenscliff' address.[65] The ward record for Henry Hughes,[66] who at an initial guess, was my Nana's brother, gives details of his mother's whereabouts 'M(other) c/o Mrs Bush, Stoke Street Queenscliffe 18/4/94. Same address 4/8/94'.[67] While Nana Beatrice's ward register entry, unlike those of her siblings, makes no cross-references to her siblings, it does show her mother as being Emily Hughes. This corresponds to Henry Hughes's ward register entry which mentions Emma Jane Hughes as his mother, living in Stoke Street at the same time.

Familiar files take me back to mum

At one time in my research journey, when I had temporarily exhausted all Watson family leads, I ordered some probates of my mum's father's side. Within the files I inherited from mum are records photocopied thirty years ago at the old PROV office which was located in the Melbourne CBD. When it came to unfolding and holding the original probate documents of mum's paternal great grandfather, it proved an especially emotional moment for me; I felt a potent loving connection to mum. My guess is that maybe only one or two other relatives, if any at all, have perused them in that more than thirty-year interval, and the bridge of time between mum and myself, with this record, happily evaporated.

Renewed and new sense of family and belonging

Through these PROV records, births, deaths and marriages records, electoral rolls, Trove,[68] National Library online newspapers, cemetery indexes,[69] Mornington Peninsula Family History Society, Castlemaine Historical Society,[70] Ancestry.com, Facebook history pages and a couple of my 'new cousins', I now revel in a totally redefined outlook of my hitherto once-loved Melbourne. No longer tainted and jaded, no longer disenchanting, I have new connections with cousins and various houses in Coburg and Brunswick, and a totally new love for several houses and streets in South Melbourne, West Melbourne and North Melbourne, including a solid connection with the famous O'Connells Centenary Hotel, which is still standing.[71] Great aunty Laura lived there with her first husband, whose sister was the hotel licensee. Laura and her husband John probably walked the one block when they married at St Peter and St Paul's Roman Catholic Church in 1927.[72] Castlemaine has also become so special to me, old family homes and sites, the church and historical court buildings, and the market buildings all still standing proud.

Even the Melbourne General Cemetery, which is where my Nana and Pop are buried, now has taken on so much more relevance. No longer a solitary grave there for my 'Little Orphan Annie' Nana; her sister Laura is buried there, and so are three uncles, an aunty, and two aunts by marriage, as well as six infant cousins. And Fawkner cemetery, where mum and dad are buried, along with two uncles, and a close neighbour, now reveals my Nana's namesake aunt and her husband, another aunt and uncle, and several more cousins.

I have found so many second and third cousins throughout Melbourne and all over Australia, including Melbourne Queens Counsel Cliff Pannam and a connection by marriage to Lou Richards, the legendary former football player![73] Mum would have been so chuffed about Lou. When mum and dad were alive, myself, my husband and our two young ones would travel all the way from Frankston to North Coburg, for Sunday lamb roast at mum and dad's. Lou Richards was always included! We navigated through the lounge, being serenaded by dad's country and western songs on the radio, and into the kitchen where the roast preparation was in full swing. Presently mum would excitedly down tools and rush in to watch her beloved panel on Channel 7's World of Sport.[74] Mum so loved the banter of Lou Richards and Jack Dyer. Wow mum, now you know you are related to Lou!



Nana Beatrice with her 3 daughters at aunty Marge's wedding 1949. My mum, the blue bridesmaid. Aunty Kath is the pink matron of honour. Jacquie Browne family collection.

What a game changer for mum and me!

Now we have a totally 'new' family history with so many more lives to ponder, thanks in great part to all the records I found at PROV, which include: 41 will and probate records; one contest of will record;[75] 14 inquest files; 12 ward register entries; 7 mental asylum records; numerous court cases, 1 in Queenscliff, the rest for Castlemaine; numerous Castlemaine Watchhouse records; and 2 tramways employees records.[76]

How different is my connection to my hometown and state now. So I do declare – *'you can change history'*.

Endnotes

[1] All these suburbs except Box Hill, are northern suburbs of Melbourne. Box Hill is an eastern suburb, where two of my grandparents moved after leaving Essendon. Moreland and North Coburg are localities within the suburb of Coburg.

[2] Brunswick is another northern suburb of Melbourne, adjacent to Coburg.

[3] Fawkner is adjacent to Coburg. From Brunswick, Coburg is north of that and Fawkner is north again of Coburg.

[4] Frankston is now a suburb situated in the southeast of Melbourne at the gateway to the Mornington Peninsula.

[5] Queenscliff and Sorrento are seaside country towns. St Kilda and Gardenvale are suburbs of Melbourne.

[6] Greensborough is a relatively new suburb on Melbourne's northern fringe.

[7] PROV, VPRS 4527 Ward Registers (known as Children's Registers 1864 – 1887) contain individual records kept by the Victorian Government when a child under the age of 18 was placed by a court under its stewardship. The parents were deemed to be unsuitable or unable to continue raising or supporting their child. The child was legally deemed to be a ward of the state. The Victorian government department responsible for the administration and care of such wards has been variously but not exclusively known as the: Department of Industrial and Reformatory Schools, (PROV, VA 1466, 1864–1887) and the Department for Neglected Children (PROV, VA 1467, 1887–1924). These are the timeframes my research covers.

[8] PROV, VPRS 365/P0 Court of Petty Sessions, Cause List Book, Units 6–12. PROV, VPRS 2251/P0 Court of Petty Sessions Register, Units 1–21, covering the period 1888–1927. Also see PROV, VPRS 1379/P0 Court Of Petty Sessions Cause List Book (1859 – 1878); Court Of Petty Sessions Registers (1888 – 1964), Commonwealth Cases Register (1916 – 1946), Unit 4, Petty Sessions Register Set 2 (Queenscliff).

[9] PROV, VPRS 24 Inquest Deposition Files. Only files up until 1985 are currently publicly available in this series at PROV.

[10] PROV, VA 2846 Mont Park (Hospital for the Insane 1912-1934; Mental Hospital 1934-c.1970's; Mental/Psychiatric Hospital c.1970's-ct), VPRS 7424 Nominal Register of Patients; VA 2840 Kew (Asylum 1871-1905; Hospital for the Insane 1905-1934; Mental Hospital 1934-c.1970's; Mental/Psychiatric Hospital c.1970's-1988), VPRS 7690 Nominal Register of Patients, and VPRS 7680 Register of Patients; and VA 2839 Yarra Bend (Asylum 1848-1905; Hospital for the Insane 1905-1925), VPRS 7422 Index to Male and Female Case Books.

[11] PROV, VPRS 7591 Wills and PROV, VPRS 28 Probate and Administration Files. Historically these files have been separated and are issued to researchers as separate files. Thankfully, from the 1990s they have been combined in one file format in VPRS 28. Wills and probates up to 2009 are accessible at PROV, and up to 1925 are digitised and available online. There is an index for finding will and probate files available online on the PROV website.

[12] 'Grandmother' was the assumed relationship of the person whom my Nana recalled as raising her as a young child in Queenscliff. Her ward register entry shows she had two foster mothers in Queenscliff. PROV, VPRS 4527/P0, Unit 43 (19692–20044), p. 111.

[13] Covent of the Good Shepherd Oakleigh was 'established 1883 ... also known as the Private Reformatory for Roman Catholic Girls'. For further information see the entry for this organisation on the Find and Connect website, available at <<http://www.findandconnect.gov.au/guide/vic/E000188>>, accessed 20 August 2015.

[14] Name recorded as Beatrice Hughes in her ward register entry of 1894, PROV, VPRS 4527/P0, Unit 43 (19692–20044), p. 111, my Nana was registered at birth under the name Lavinia Beatrice Watson, *Federation Index, Victoria 1889-1901: Indexes to births, deaths and marriages in Victoria*, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, August 1997 (CD-ROM), birth registration no. 1892/2073.

[15] 'State ward' or 'ward of state' was the term used to describe a child under the guardianship of a state child welfare authority, see the Find and Connect website, available at <<http://www.findandconnect.gov.au/guide/australia/FE00010>>, accessed 20 August 2015. Letter to author from Sister M Frances McFaul, RGS, Assistant Archivist, Convent of the Good Shepherd, dated 22 May 1986.

[16] My Nana Beatrice Hughes's ward register entry dated from 1894. In 1986, her record (along with the records of many other people in the same volume) was less than 100 years old and so was initially available only via freedom of information at the Department of Community Services, Victoria. After all the contents of a volume are more than 100 years old, that volume of the ward registers becomes open to the public directly via the reading room at PROV.

[17] PROV, VPRS 1379/P0 Court Of Petty Sessions Cause List Book (1859-1878); Court Of Petty Sessions Registers (1888-1964), Commonwealth Cases Register (1916-1946), Unit 4, Petty Sessions Register Set 2 (Queenscliff), p. 43.

[18] Ibid.

[19] 'Little Orphan Annie' is the name of a famous US comic strip, books, several movie and theatre musicals, for further information see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Orphan_Annie>, accessed 20 August 2015.

[20] Castlemaine is a small city in country Victoria, in the goldfields region, about 120 kilometres north-west by road from Melbourne and about 40 kilometres from the major provincial centre of Bendigo.

[21] Laura Beatrice Hughes's ward register entry in PROV, VPRS 4527/P0, Unit 35 (16759-17223; Girls and boys neglected. Receiving House Book Vol. RH9 [New admissions for all neglected children]), p. 210. Details of Laura's birth, *Pioneer index, Victoria 1836-1888: index to births, deaths and marriages in Victoria*, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Victoria, 1998 (CD-ROM), birth registration no. 1887/17666.

[22] Victoria, Australia, Index to the Children's Registers of State Wards, 1850-1893, is an online index I found initially on the Ancestry.com website at <<http://search.ancestry.com.au/search/db.aspx?dbid=1977>>, accessed 20 August 2015. The index was originally compiled by Jenny Carter and Marion Paul, Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies Inc.

[23] The great news I discovered recently is that in the last two years a great many ward registers have been digitised and are available online from PROV and easily searchable.

[24] 'Licensed out' refers to how the wards were administered after they turned 13 years-of-age, at which time they were no longer fostered out to women or families who were paid an allowance for the upkeep of the ward child, instead being required to work and sent where the government decreed. Usually girls were assigned as domestic servants and boys as labourers.

[25] Beatrice Hughes's ward register entry, PROV, VPRS 4527/P0, Unit 43 (19692–20044), p. 111.

[26] 'Step sister' should read sister or half-sister. This 'step' reference confused me initially until I confirmed it was definitely a half-sister, that is, she is a sister related by blood. Step sister 18314 is a cross-reference to another child's ward register entry, that of Florence Johnston, PROV, VPRS 4527/P0, Unit 39 (18268–18646), p. 39. Florence's birth name was registered as Florence Adelaide Johnson, *Federation Index, Victoria 1889-1901: Indexes to births, deaths and marriages in Victoria*, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, August 1997 (CD-ROM), birth registration no. 1889/19784.

[27] The reference to 'industrial schools' described in Laura's ward register entry dated from 1889, referring to the two older brothers who were deemed as wards in 1887, is incorrect as legislation had been superseded and they should have been deemed as 'neglected children' or under the care of the Department of Neglected Children. 'Brothers 15942 & 15943' refer to the ward register numbers of Henry Hughes 15942 and Edward Hughes 15943, PROV, VPRS 4527/P0, Unit 33 (15782–16376: Girls & boys less than 6 years neglected. Girls Receiving House Book Vol. RH6 [new admissions 1887 – 27 February 1888]), pp. 77 and 78 respectively.

[28] Public user: anyone can register as public user of Public Record Office Victoria to view and research records, this can be done online at <www.prov.vic.gov.au/research>. Click on 'Create a new user account'.

[29] PROV in its current form was established under the *Public Records Act 1973*, so 2013 is its 40th anniversary.

[30] The reading room is the public space at PROV in North Melbourne where all my research has been undertaken. Records are brought up to this room for the public to access. There are many other resources that are available in the reading room, for example: microfiche, microfilm, and volume sets such as the *Victoria Government Gazette*. Computer terminals provide access to PROV records by ordering them, as well as access to online resources such as the inquests index, plus access to Victorian births, deaths and marriage indexes, and so on.

[31] MRW will and probate 1998, PROV, VPRS 28/P28, Unit 378, Item 1151321. I have used initials to defer to the privacy of living descendants.

[32] See White Pages online, available at <<http://www.whitepages.com.au>>, accessed 20 August 2015.

[33] Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903–1980, Ancestry.com, available at <<http://search.ancestry.com.au/search/db.aspx?dbid=1207>>, accessed 20 August 2015. There are other paid websites that provide access up to 1980. It is also possible to ask the National Library of Australia librarian online or by visiting Canberra in person. These can be accessed up to 2008. 'Ask a librarian' is limited to single name requests.

[34] PROV, VPRS 2251/P0 Court of Petty Sessions Register, Unit 2, 1888–1890, p. 239.

[35] Laura Beatrice Cahill, her second husband's surname, *Death Index*, 1921–1985, registration no. 1967/18513, *Marriage Index*, marriage registration no. 1927/967 and no. 1947/4016, *Pioneer index, Victoria 1836-1888: index to births, deaths and marriages in Victoria*, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Victoria, 1998 (CD-ROM), birth registration no. 1887/17666. The birth certificate information confirms her exact age.

[36] Michael Leo Joseph Hughes, ward register number 29346, PROV, VPRS 4527/P0, Unit 71 (29250–29546), p. 97, contains the entry for Laura's son, and states that his 'reputed Father ... was for some months in the same employ as the child's mother'. This son is also mentioned on Laura's ward register entry four times.

[37] Ibid. Also see Michael Leo Joseph Hughes, *Edwardian Index, Victoria 1902-1913: index to births, deaths and marriages in Victoria*, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Victoria, 1997, death registration no. 1909/11016.

[38] Mornington Peninsula Family History Society (MPFHS) is located at Towerhill Road in Frankston, for more information visit the MPFHS website.

[39] This is my assumption, as both her deceased husbands did not leave any will.

[40] Will of Laura Beatrice Cahill, PROV, VPRS 7591/P3, Unit 727, Item 665/310.

[41] Death certificate of Laura Beatrice Cahill quoted the informant, a 'friend' just as MJ Brown, death certificate no. 1967/18513.

[42] Kathleen Sparrow (married name), death certificate no. 1970/24093.

[43] Margaret Josephine Geoghegan's actual birth date obtained from other family histories available on Ancestry.com and from living descendant of the Geoghegan family, CM, whom I visited and who had the original family bible with births listed in the front pages. For privacy reasons, I do not name the living descendant here.

[44] PROV, VPRS 24/P2 Inquest Deposition Files, Unit 45, File 1963/407, inquest into the death of PJD on 21 March 1963 at Coroner's Court Melbourne. According to PJD's only surviving sibling, another brother GAD was godson to my great aunty Laura. Although this is a public record, I defer to the surviving brother and cousins by using initials.

[45] 'Joseph Henry Dawes', available at <<http://www.qldcricket.com.au/default.asp?PageID=1056>>, accessed 29 March 2013. Joseph Henry Dawes, Steve Waugh, Simon Katich and Michael Clarke are current and ex- Australian cricketers.

[46] Laura Beatrice Treacy (first marriage) and Laura Beatrice Cahill's (second marriage) address is 26 Carlton Street, Carlton, about 4 kms from her sister Beatrice at 58 Davies Street, Brunswick for the years 1936–1949. After 1949, there is a 14-year gap in the electoral rolls before Laura's name appears again in 1963, now living at 27 Barkly Street, Brunswick, so she was living at unconfirmed times over those years between 4 and 6 kms from her sister Beatrice and daughters and then a few extra kms away from my North Coburg address from 1956. See Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980, Ancestry.com, available at <<http://search.ancestry.com.au/search/db.aspx?dbid=1207>>, accessed 20 August 2015.

[47] Rosina Watson died in 1951, and lived in Coburg, PROV, VPRS 7591/P2, Unit 1538, Item 441/707 and VPRS 28/P4, Unit 191, Item 441/707; Arthur Patrick Watson died in 1959, and lived in Brunswick, PROV, VPRS 7591/P3, Unit 327, Item 556/407 and VPRS 28/P4, Unit 2097, Item 556/407; Myrtle Olivia Watson died in 1965, and lived in Coburg, PROV, VPRS 7591/P3, Unit 610, Item 632/886 and VPRS 28/P4, Unit 359, Item 632/886; FC (initials to defer to privacy of a living descendant) died in 1971, and lived in Brunswick, PROV, VPRS 7591/P4, Unit 231, Item 731/646 and VPRS 28/P5, Unit 1308, Item 731/646; FC inquest PROV, VPRS 24/P2, Unit 46, File 1972/45. These aforementioned people and other cousins' addresses also found in Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980, Ancestry.com, available at <<http://search.ancestry.com.au/search/db.aspx?dbid=1207>>, accessed 20 August 2015.

[48] Lying-in hospital is 'an old childbirth practice involving a woman resting in bed for a period after giving birth', for further information see article on Wikipedia, available at <<http://en.wikipedia.org>>, accessed 20 August 2015.

[49] Girls Depot (and Boys Depot), also known as 'Royal Park Depot, in Parkville was the sole reception centre for children committed to state care from about 1880 to 1961 ... a "clearing house" for boys and girls. Before they were boarded out, sent out to service or committed to a reformatory school', see Find and Connect website, available at <www.findandconnect.gov.au/guide/vic/E000118>, accessed 20 August 2015. My Nana's ward register entry mentions her being sent back to the Girls Depot when she was sick (inflammation of tonsils noted on 5 July 1900) from 10 to 24 July 1900 when she was returned to her second foster mother. There are three separate entries in three different columns.

[50] Gedes and Geoghegan family residences in Gippsland region were found using Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980, Ancestry.com, available at <<http://search.ancestry.com.au/search/db.aspx?dbid=1207>>, accessed 20 August 2015. Gedes of Gippsland, licensed out record from Good Shepherd Convent, received with archivist letters to author dated 22 May 1986 and 15 June 2012. Date for Gedes is given as both 3 March 1915 and 3 March 1918 respectively.

[51] Kerang and Lake Marmal are in the far north of Victoria.

[52] Movements in this paragraph are either from Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980, Ancestry.com, available at <<http://search.ancestry.com.au/search/db.aspx?dbid=1207>>, accessed 20 August 2015, or my Nana Beatrice's and great aunt Laura's ward register entries, PROV 4527/P0, Unit 43 (19692–20044), p. 111 and PROV, VPRS 4527/P0, Unit 35 (16759-17223; Girls and boys neglected. Receiving House Book Vol. RH9 [New admissions for all neglected children]), p. 210. The Kerang reference is from my Nana's *Great War Index, Victoria 1914-1920: index to births, deaths and marriages in Victoria*, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Victoria, 1997, marriage registration no. 1920/8741. The latter record was first obtained by my mum Irene Keown nee McMahon circa 20 January 1978.

[53] PCH will and probate, 1992, PROV, VPRS 28/P22, Unit 25, Item 1050030, which shows her surviving son's address as Don Road, Healesville (initials used in deference to privacy of living descendants).

[54] Details of my great grandmother Emma Watson appear in PROV, VPRS, 1444/P0 Watchhouse Charge Books, Unit 7, Item 52, p. 4. I also accessed Units 6–13, finding several entries for my great, great grandfather and a few mentions of his sons.

[55] Emma Watson, ward number 7492, PROV, VPRS 4527/P0, Unit 15, p. 53. This information was located in a separate section sewn into the back of this volume, which is why I initially had trouble finding the original record. Nicole Llewellyn, a PROV staff member at the time in December 2012, located it for me after I mentioned the concept of sewing together different volumes.

[56] Gilbert Watson inquest 27 June 1889 at Castlemaine Court, PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 548, File 1889/849.

[57] Alfred Joseph Watson inquest 30 April 1937 at Royal Park Mental Hospital, PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 1330, File 1937/628.

[58] Lavina Beatrice MacDonald inquest 8 May 1947 at Melbourne Morgue, PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 1564, File 1947/655. Lavinia Beatrice Watson was born 1878 in Castlemaine, *Pioneer index, Victoria 1836-1888: index to births, deaths and marriages in Victoria*, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Victoria, 1998 (CD-ROM), birth registration no 1878/14399. The 'old sheilah' Valma Gibbons (my second cousin, once removed) was born in 1924 and remembers Lavinia as aunty Beatty (actually her great aunt Beatty, sister to her Nana Florence). Lavinia Beatrice Watson is also the namesake of my Nana, her niece.

[59] Arthur Ernest Watson, PROV VA 2839 Yarra Bend (Asylum 1848 – 1905; Hospital for the Insane 1905 – 1925), VPRS 7399/P1 Case Books of Male Patients, 1896 – 1898, Unit 11, p. 1; Arthur Ernest Watson inquest 25 February 1896 at Yarra Bend Mental Asylum, PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 655, File 1896/279; *Bendigo Advertiser*, Tuesday, 25 February 1896, p. 3.

[60] Henry Hughes died 19 April 1939 at Ararat Mental Hospital according to the inquest into his death, PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 1374, File 1939/504. Edward Hughes died 8 May 1939 at Ararat Mental Hospital according to the inquest into his death dated 9 May 1939, PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 1375, File 1939/587.

[61] Henry George Watson, *Pioneer index, Victoria 1836-1888: index to births, deaths and marriages in Victoria*, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Victoria, 1998 (CD-ROM), birth registration no 1873/15174. Henry was honoured by his eldest sister, Emma Jane, my great grandmother, who named one of her twins after him. She also did this with the other twin Edward Albert, who was named after another brother. She also named my Nana after Lavinia Beatrice, as she did with two other daughters, Susan Matilda and Florence Adelaide. This pattern helped me irrevocably confirm this Castlemaine Watson family as my Nana's birth family. Only Laura Beatrice's naming was somewhat different, perhaps because Emma had lost her partner five months before Laura was born, and maybe the name was to honour him somehow. Her partner Michael Hughes remained special to Emma the rest of her life as she kept his surname, even though she obviously had other partners.

[62] Lilian Ada Burfield Day, Herbert Roy Day, Charles Cyril Day, Violet Lilian Day inquests 8 March 1910 held at the Melbourne Morgue, PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 850, File 1910/154.

[63] William Martin Watson, rank of private, was killed in action, aged 21 on 5 October 1918 at Montbrehain France, after 3 years fighting, NAA: B2455, WATSON W M, available online at <<http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=1915548>>, accessed 20 August 2015. There is information about the 21st Australian Infantry Battalion on the Australia War Memorial website, available at <www.awm.gov.au/unit/U51461/>, accessed 20 August 2015, see also AR McNeil, *The story of the Twenty-First: being the official history of the 21st Battalion, A.I.F.*, 21st Battalion Association, Melbourne, 1920.

[64] Confinement is the term that was once used to refer to the condition of a woman in childbirth.

[65] Mary Bush, Nana's first 'boarding out' foster mother, who died 4 October 1899 at Stoke Street Queenscliff, *Federation Index, Victoria 1889-1901: Indexes to births, deaths and marriages in Victoria*, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, August 1997 (CD-ROM), death registration no. 1899/15703,

[66] Henry Hughes, my Nana Beatrice's brother ward register entry, PROV, VPRS 4527/P0, Unit 33, p. 77. His twin brother Edward Hughes's entry is on p. 78.

[67] Queenscliff(e) is a small town on the Bellarine Peninsula in southern Victoria, Australia.

[68] Trove is a collection of online resources hosted by the National Library Australia, which includes an invaluable digitised collection of Australian newspapers.

[69] For example, Greater Melbourne Cemeteries Trust Deceased Search, available at <www.gmct.com.au/deceased-search.aspx>, accessed 20 August 2015, Springvale Botanical Cemetery Deceased Search, available at <<https://sbc.smct.org.au/deceasedsearch/>>, accessed 20 August 2015, Melbourne General Cemetery is planning to have its deceased search facility online soon.

[70] Castlemaine Historical Society Inc (CHSI), for further information visit their website.

[71] Some of the homes are only a block or two away from Public Record Office Victoria in North Melbourne, such as homes in Canning and Dryburgh streets, using information obtained in Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980, Ancestry.com, available at <<http://search.ancestry.com.au/search/db.aspx?dbid=1207>>, accessed 20 August 2015.

[72] St Peter and St Paul Roman Catholic Church, corner of Montague and Dorcas streets, South Melbourne. Laura's first marriage, *Marriage Index*, marriage registration no. 1927/967.

[73] Clifford Leslie Pannam QC is my second cousin once removed. Lou Richards's mum's maiden name was Pannam. Lou is connected to my mum and myself by marriage. My great, great aunt Alice Maud Watson married Robert Constantine Pannam in 1891, *Federation Index, Victoria 1889-1901: Indexes to births, deaths and marriages in Victoria*, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, August 1997 (CD-ROM), marriage registration no.1891/1555.

[74] World of Sport aired on Melbourne's television Channel 7 weekly for 28 years before its final airing in 1987.

[75] LAW (initials used in deference to privacy of only surviving grandson) v Reginald Rupert Gray (as executor of the will and estate Arthur Patrick Watson), PROV, VPRS 267/P5 Civil Case Files, Unit 80, Item 1960/4407.

[76] For Carl Anton Woess, see PROV, VPRS 12738/P1 Tramways Employees Record Book, Unit 5, p. 630, and for George Theodore Watson, see PROV, VPRS 12738/P2, Unit 6, p. 223.

