

# The Western Port Times

## Grantville & Districts



Volume 5 Number 4

FREE

August 2022

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This magazine is a continuation of the original Western Port Times, which was published in Grantville from 1898 until 1908 by T. C. Monger, and from 1908 to August 1910 by Harold B. and J. A. Sullivan, at which date the premise is said to have been destroyed in a fire and everything lost. Publication never resumed.

At its peak, the paper was distributed from Flinders and Hastings on the Mornington Peninsula, to San Remo and Phillip Island, Inverloch and the Powlett region, through to Jumbunna and Loch, and as far north as Lang Lang.

\* \* \*

**The Western Port Times.**  
PHILLIP ISLAND AND BASS VALLEY ADVERTISER.  
Circulating in Crown Bay, Corinella, French Island, San Remo, Flinders, Hastings, Kilcunda, Newhaven, Portland, Queenscliff, Rhyll, River Park, Wonthaggi, Wonthaggi, Wonthaggi, and Lang Lang.

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Advertisements include: POST OFFICE STORE, Grantville; J.T. PAUL, GENERAL STOREKEEPER; WESTERN PORT TIMES; GRANTVILLE HOTEL; Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser; and THE TIMES.

**THE WESTERN PORT TIMES, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1918.**

Advertisements include: THE AUSTRALIAN STATES & MORTGAGE CO., LIMITED; P. SHEAHAN & CO.; SHARPLES CREAM SEPARATOR; and W. BROWNING'S SALE.

#### Feared Loss of a Fisherman

George Watson, from Flinders, in 1896.

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#### A New Theatre Manager

Harold Sinclair, a qualified bioscope technician, takes over as operator at the Wonthaggi theatre in 1916.

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#### The Minor Sawmillers

Part two of two, this time dealing primarily with Arthur Faram, Henry Gillbee and John Lewis. And we catch up with Alfred Selman from part one.

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#### An Unclaimed Treasure

A "puff" piece for a city newspaper in 1923 offers some very dubious history about Corinella.

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## E. A. HADE,

**WHOLESALE AND RETAIL Butcher.**

Families waited on for Orders at

**BASS, SAN REMO, GRANTVILLE, QUEENS-FERRY & BLACKWOOD.**

Customers are respectfully requested to pay their accounts every month,

E. A. HADE.  
Bass.

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- Friends of Churchill Island Society: <https://focis.org.au/about-churchill-island/>
- Hastings–Western Port Historical Society: <https://www.hwphs.org.au/>
- Inverloch Historical Society: <http://inverlochhistory.com/>
- Also: [cv.vic.gov.au/organisations/inverloch-historical-society/](http://cv.vic.gov.au/organisations/inverloch-historical-society/)
- Koo-Wee-Rup Swamp Historical Society: [kooweerupswamphistory.blogspot.com.au/](http://kooweerupswamphistory.blogspot.com.au/)
- Korumburra & District Historical Society: [www.korumburrahistory.com.au](http://www.korumburrahistory.com.au) or PO Bo 329, Korumburra 3950.
- Lang Lang & District Historical Society: [langlang.net/historical.html](http://langlang.net/historical.html)
- Leongatha and District Historical society: [leongathahistory.org.au](http://leongathahistory.org.au)
- Phillip Island & District Historical Society: <http://pidhs.org.au/>
- Phillip Island Nature Parks, Churchill Island Heritage Farm Collection  
<https://victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/churchill-island-heritage-farm#collection-records>
- South Eastern Historical Association: [seha.org.au](http://seha.org.au)
- Western Port Historical Society Inc.: [hwphs.org.au/](http://hwphs.org.au/)
- Wonthagi Historical Society: [wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/](http://wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/)
- Wonthaggi Genealogy Inc.: [secretary@wonthaggi-genealogy.org.au](mailto:secretary@wonthaggi-genealogy.org.au)



From the *San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 2 October 1896, page 2.

## Local and General News

The San Remo Court of Petty Sessions will be held on Friday next.

The monthly meeting of the Phillip Island Shire Council will be held at the Shire Hall to-morrow week.

As the s.s. *Genista* was getting up steam on Saturday morning one of the plates of the boiler started causing a leak. The passengers and mail had to be conveyed to Cowes, and hence by boat to Stony Point. The s.s. *Vixen* is now in use till the necessary repairs are effected, which are not of a serious nature.

Something ought to be done to prevent the cattle and horses standing about the main road at night. Those who have occasion to travel after dark often come in contact with a horse or cow, and are in danger of being kicked.

Captain Henderson's "Fawn," occupied in towing the schooners in and out of the Bass river, was using the Korumburra coal, and had great difficulty in keeping steam up. Mr. Davis, from the Kilcunda mine, sent him 2 tons as a trial, and the Engineer states that he can tow in and out quite easily, and always keep a full head of steam. This shows that our coal is superior to the Korumburra.

It is rumored that the owners of the "Swan," which sprung a leak off Cape Schanck a few weeks ago, is repairing her, and will take her to Melbourne and sell her. It is the intention of one of them to proceed to West Australia.

Mr. Lang, of the Grantville Hotel, is receiving entries for a billiard tournament to be played at the above hotel, starting on Saturday, 7th November. The first prize is £4, a sum worth winning. The entry fee is 4s. 6d., which is now open.

A few weeks ago a presentation of a pair of fish dividers were sent to the Rev. George Watson as a token of respect on his leaving Cowes for Yarraville. The following is the reply:—"St. Luke's Parsonage, Yarraville, 28th September, 1896.—J. P. Townsend, Esq., A. Thornton, Esq.—Dear sirs,—I beg hereby to acknowledge the receipt of the beautiful pair of fish dividers, and your letter of the 23rd inst. accompanying them. Will you kindly convey the most cordial and sincere thanks of Mrs. Watson and myself to the friends on Phillip and French Islands who contributed towards their procurement. Our sojourn on the Islands was a brief but exceedingly pleasant one, and I am sure we profited by

our experiences in many ways. We cannot but remember the many kindnesses received on all hands while with you, and this token of your esteem and kindly remembrance assures us what it is—the joy of every clergyman and his wife to know—that our labours, feeble and imperfect though they were, were truly appreciated. We are much encouraged by the expressions of regard and esteem contained in your very kind letter; and, again thanking you all, we pray that He who sendeth down every good and perfect gift, will ever richly bless the dwellers on Phillip and French Islands.—I remain, dear sirs very faithfully yours, George Watson.

We regret to have to announce the death of Mrs. Miles, of Blackwood, which took place on Thursday evening, from inflammation of the bowels. Great sympathy is expressed for her husband and family.

### Also

From the *San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 9 October 1896, page 2.

The Court of Petty Sessions will be held to-day at San Remo.

The Phillip Island Shire Council meeting will be held to-morrow week. It was stated in our last issue to-morrow week, but should have been to-morrow fortnight.

The butter trade is looking up again. There were several tons shipped on the "Vixen," via Stony Point, to Melbourne through the week.

The Shire Secretary has received notice from the Secretary of the Bass Valley League that a deputation will be held at Melbourne on Wednesday next, 14th inst. The members of the deputation will meet at the Victoria Coffee Palace, Melbourne, at 10 o'clock before waiting on the Minister of Railways.

Constable Walsh, of Grantville, has passed his examination for Sergeant. This shows that he is well advanced in the service for so young a man.

This is the year for election of a member for the Board of Advice for the district of Griffith's Point. The members holds [*sic*] office for three years when elected. There are five members for this district to be elected, and the nomination day has been fixed for the 16th inst., and an election will take place, if more than five is nominated, on the 2nd of November. Polls will be taken at the State

(continues on Page 4)

*Local and General News (continued from Page 3)*

schools in the district, the school teachers to act as assistant returning officers, Mr. George Hull being the returning officer appointed by the Education Department.

A very heavy hailstorm passed over San Remo yesterday afternoon about 3 o'clock, lasting about half an hour. The hailstones were about as large as a good-sized marble.

The Council are determined to have in their arrest of rates [*sic*], the first batch of summons having been issued this week. There will be twenty-two come on for hearing to-day at the San Remo court. Another batch will be formed for next court day.

The Handicap Billiard Tournament, of £5 10s., which was announced to take place at the Grantville Hotel, Grantville, starting on Saturday, November 7th, has been postponed till Saturday, November 14th. Entries close on November 4th, and the handicaps will appear in the San Remo Times and other local papers on Saturday, November 7th.

The Inspector of State Schools, Mr. Curlewis, will visit the Newhaven State school to day and examine the children, and on Saturday morning the San Remo school. On Monday he will examine the Rhyll and Cowes schools.

A dance was held at Queensferry on Saturday night. There was a good attendance, and the evening passed off in a very enjoyable manner, everyone thoroughly enjoying themselves.

Two small snakes were discovered in a child's cot in the house of a local resident of Korumburra a few evening's ago, the hot weather having brought the reptiles out in hundreds.

A public meeting is to be held at Korumburra to protest against an increase in freight on coal.

The output at the Outtrim mine for the past fortnight was nearly 6,000 tons. Extensive additions are being made to the machinery to increase the output.

Also

*From the San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser, 16 October 1896, page 2.*

The Phillip Island Shire Council will hold their usual monthly meeting to-morrow.

Sheepowners in this district are preparing for shearing. Mr. Potter expects to commence next week, and it is expected they will all then follow suit.

For election of the Board of Advice for the District of Griffith's Point, San Remo, Corinella and Woolamai Ridings, there being only the

required number of candidates nominated, the following are elected:—Messrs. Patrick J. Daly, William Good, David Gunn, Robert P. Peters, and Thos. C. Monger.

An election of members for the Board of Advice of the School District of Phillip Island will be held on the 12th November, 1896, and the 22nd October, 1896, has been fixed as the day of nomination. The members hold office for three years when elected. Polls will be taken at the State schools in the district, the school teachers to act as assistant returning officers, Mr. S. West, J.P., being the returning officer appointed by the Education Department.

As will be seen by our advertising columns, the Grantville annual races are announced to take place on the Grantville racecourse on Monday, December 28th. The programme is a first-class one, including the Grantville Handicap of 10 sovs., and should ensure a good days sport. A new booth has been built on the course for the convenience of the public. The V.R.C. rules will be strictly adhered to. Entries addressed to the Secretary of the Grantville Racing Club, Grantville, will be received up to Monday, December 21st, 1896.

The s.s. Maitland will leave Melbourne on Wednesday next, 21st October, at 2 p.m., for San Remo, arriving here about 7 p.m. on Thursday morning.

Church of England service will be conducted by the Rev. H. E. Potter at the Shire Hall at 11 a.m. on Sunday.

If the San Remo Regatta Club are thinking of having their regatta and sports this year, it is quite time they made a move in it. At the last meeting held at the close of the season, it was arranged to have their regatta and sports through the Christmas and New Year's holidays, so as not to clash with Cowes. It was also agreed by the committee to hold their meeting at about the end of October or the first of November. It ought not to be delayed later than that, if possible sooner, as the time is very short.

Hares seem to be very plentiful this season. In the early morning they are to be seen playing about the paddocks in the township of San Remo.

The members of the Bass Cricket Club will meet on their ground to-morrow for practice.

A man named Roberts, residing at Jeetho, was lodged in the lock-up, Korumburra, on Monday evening, charged with indecently misconducting himself in the main street, opposite the Bank of Australasia. Constable

*(continues on Page 5)*

*Local and General News (continued from Page 4)*

Tucker, who arrested him, stated he was perfectly sober at the time. Dr. Joyce, J.P., fined him £5 or one month's imprisonment.

Also

From the *San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 23 October 1896, page 2.

The Wonthaggi Football Club will hold a social by invitation at the Bridge Creek Hall on Friday next, 30th inst. There are a large number of tickets issued.

Mr. Reddy, of the Powlett River Hotel, holds a social at his hotel to-night. It is by special invitation, and there should be a good muster.

Our readers will see by advertisement in our advertising columns that the San Remo Regatta Club will hold a meeting on Monday afternoon, November 2nd, at 4 o'clock, at Bergin's Hotel, re arriving at day of holding regatta, election of officers, and any other business.

As will be seen by our advertising columns the residents of Bass intend to hold sports there on Boxing Day, consisting of horse racing, tilting the ring, foot, hurdle, sack racing, and other athletic sports. The programme of sports will appear in a future issue.

Ratepayers will see by last Saturday's council report that the council do not intend to execute any works in the shire for the next six months, and there will be no necessity for ratepayers to apply to have works done, as they will only receive a stereotyped answer.

Messrs. Gunn and Mapleston, whilst crossing Turnbull's Paddock, Bridge Creek, one day last week saw a fox run into a hollow log. They could just see him, so thought the safest way to make sure of getting him was to shoot him. Mr. Gunn went home and got his gun, and after despatching Reynard, when poking him out of the log, found four small pups. A sharp boy coming on the scene, who had heard that the council gave a bonus on all foxes caught, put them into a bag, carried them to San Remo, and interviewed Mr. Bonwick, wanting to know "How much he gave for foxes?" Mr. B. took the pups and drowned them.

Also

From the *San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 30 October 1896, page 2.

Some 60 head of cattle were crossed from Newhaven to San Remo on Monday by Captain Loch's cattle punt, and a few horses were taken over to the Island the same day.

Mr. Cleeland also swam his stud horse San Remo over.

Several sheep owners have already shorn their sheep, and the average has been up to the standard this year. The lambing has also been fairly good.

In consequence of an error being made in the returns of the Corinella and Woolamai Board of Advice nominations, it is declared invalid, and a new election is necessary. Particulars in our advertising columns of this issue.

A deputation of members of the Nyora-Kilcunda Railway League are deputed to wait on the Minister of Railways on Wednesday next, 4th November, at his office, Melbourne, at 12 o'clock.

A large snake, of the brown species, was killed at Newhaven last week, and when skinned was found to be 5ft. 3in. in length.

The regatta meeting will be held, as stated in our advertising columns, on Monday evening next at seven o'clock, not four as was notified last week. It has been considered that the later time would be more convenient for those who are occupied in the day time. The Secretary has written to the committee to that effect.

The continued dry weather has brought the grasshoppers out. There are large numbers in the districts of Blackwood, Kilcunda, and along the coast from Kilcunda to San Remo. If there is a good downpour of rain they will prove very troublesome this season.

\* \* \*

From *The Western Port Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 9 November 1900, page 2.

## Painful Accident

On Monday afternoon, a little boy, 3 years of age, son of Mr. C. Grant, of Milford, met with a painful accident. The little fellow, in company with an elder brother, had been sent *[to deliver]* a message to the nearest neighbour's about five minutes walk from home. Whilst there the little boy was playing about, waiting for the return message, when, by some unaccountable means, he slipped backwards and fell into a tub of boiling water the hand and the arm up to the elbow being terribly scalded. The good friends around, on learning of the accident, lent every aid, and applied the usual ready remedies to relieve the little sufferer, who is now progressing favourably. Sympathy is felt for the parents, because not very long ago they lost a twelve months' old child through a slight burn on the foot.



From the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 24 January 1883

## Shire Of Phillip Island

No date of meeting given.

Present: Councillors Norton (President), Stewart, Hayes, Turnbull, West and Aldridge  
Minutes of previous meeting was read and confirmed. Letters sent were read and approved of.

### Correspondence

From different Charitable Institutions acknowledging receipt of donations forwarded.

From R. S. Peters applying for forty chains road to be made. No action to be taken.

From Messrs J. Kidd, S. Sloss, W. Harbison, and J. Stephenson, applying for renewal of slaughtering licenses.—Granted.

From Secretary of Lands Department notifying that land at Cowes fronting the beach had been reserved and gazetted on the 22nd December last.—Received.

From T. Bergin, asking for side walk to be repaired.—Granted.

From W. J. Gilchrist, enclosing his account and opinion with reference to the name of Shire.—Received.

### Reports

From Clerk of Works in reference to [*unclear name*] road. It was agreed that the road be surveyed at Councils expense with a view of fencing the same.

From Clerk of Works, relating to Nowell's fence.—Adopted.

From Clerk of Works, in reference to Guy's creek bridge.—Repairs to be executed at cost not to exceed 24s.

In reference to culvert at Burtons and Jenners, repairs to be effected by day labor.

In reference to Richardson's road, tenders to be called at next meeting for clearing forty five chains of ti-tree etc.

From Inspector of Slaughtering Licences.—Received.

From Rate Collector, reporting amount of arrears of rates.—All defaulting rate collectors [*sic*] to be summoned forthwith.

Payments amounting to £84 8s. 8d. were ordered to be made.

No tenders having been received for contract 281 it was agreed to call for fresh tenders.

The valuer reported that he had completed the valuation of the property of the shire which amounted to [*unclear numerals*] viz., Corinella Riding, £4246; Woolamai Riding, £3018 10s.; Phillip Island Riding, £3057 10s.

Councillors Newton [*sic*], Turnbull and

Stewart, having been appointed a committee to draw out estimates for the current year, reported an estimated revenue and expenditure of £2022 3s., which was received and adopted.

The Secretary was instructed to forward copies of bathing regulations at Cowes to the different hotel proprietors and resident constable, with the request that they be complied with.

The Dog Inspector was instructed to summon all owners of dogs who had not paid the fees.

On motion of Councillor West the salary of Clerk of Works. &c., was increased to £100 per annum from 1st January, 1883.

On motion of Councillor Norton the following days were fixed for Council meetings during the current year:—Fridays at eleven a.m. February 23, March 23, April 27, May 25, June 29, July 27, August 24, September 28, October 26, November 30, December 28th.

Councillor Turnbull's notice of motion to erect stabling at the Shire Hall was postponed till meeting in March next.

On motion of Councillor Stewart, in absence of Councillor Clarke, it was agreed to call for tenders for three culverts at Bass bridge.

On motion of Councillor Stewart, it was agreed to call for tenders for culvert at Natcotts, and levelling at Chinns.

Notice of motion by Councillor West, that at next meeting the Shire Council will proceed, to strike a rate of one shilling in the £1 on the net annual value of property in the Shire for the year ending 31st December 1883.

By Councillor West, that the salary of the Secretary be raised to £60 from the 1st January 1883.

By Councillor Turnbull, for clearing and grubbing on Cape Patterson road.

By Councillor Aldridge, for three seats round honeysuckle trees on the Beach at Griffith's Point.

By Councillor Stewart for cutting a drain at flat bottom [*sic*] Creek.

Council adjourned till Friday 23rd, February at 11 a.m.

**SAN REMO HOUSE—Unsurpassed  
rest and health resort, lofty rooms  
and outdoor sleeping accommodation.  
MRS. J. T. DENHAM.**

## Four Weddings and a Funeral

From the *Leader*, 26 June 1909, page 46: Weddings.

### Richie and Tulloch

A very pretty and interesting event took place recently in the Bass Valley, when Murray Dickson, second son of Mr. and Mrs. Jno. Richie of "Koorilla," Krowera, was married to Hazel, second daughter of Mr. Jno. Tulloch, of "Scotswood," Bass Valley. The Rev. J. G. Davies, of Elsternwick, performed the ceremony. The bride, who was given away by her father, was gowned in a charming Empire frock of creme messaline silk, trimmed with silk insertion, buttons and silverbraid, with the usual spray of orange blossom, and wore a beautiful lace veil lent by the bridegroom's mother. She also carried a shower bouquet of sweet peas, roses and asparagus, and wore a gold bangle, the bridegroom's gift. Miss Marie Tulloch acted as bridesmaid, and wore a pretty gown of pale blue serge, made Empire, and trimmed with pale blue, gold and white braid, and wore a pearl ring, gift of the bridegroom. After the ceremony the guests (about 100) sat down to a sumptuous repast in a large marquee, where the usual toasts were honored. Later the bride and bridegroom left for Melbourne, en route for their future home in the Western district, amidst showers of rose leaves and confetti. The bride's travelling dress was a mauve Directoire costume, braided with violet and buttons, and a smart white fur toque, trimmed with a violet mount and violet veil. Many handsome and costly presents were received.

From the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 11 September 1907, page 2: Poowong

### Densley and Steinholdt

A wedding which created a great deal of interest was solemnised at the Kilcunda Methodist Church on the 27th ult., the contracting parties being Mr. Chris Steinholdt and Miss Bessie Densley (youngest daughter of Mr. Densley), the Rev. F. H. Butchers performing the ceremony. The church was crowded by friends and acquaintances, and was tastefully decorated with flowers and evergreens. The bride was given away by her father, and, with the bridesmaids, looked charming in her wedding garments. Miss Harding presided at the organ, and as the happy couple left the church, played the "Wedding March." At the conclusion of the ceremony a goodly company sat to breakfast, which was a bright and enjoyable function.

From the *Argus*, 10 April 1917, page 1: Family Notices

### Palmer and Whyatt

Palmer-Whyatt.—On the 12th March, 1917, at the residence of the bride's sister, Kia Ora, Corinella, by Rev. Hamilton, John George, fourth son of Mrs Plamer and the late Frederick Palmer, Corinella, to Susie, third daughter of Mrs. Whyatt and the late Timothy Whyatt, Blue Gums, French island. Present address, Bayview, Corinella.

From the *Great Southern Advocate*, 20 July 1905, page 3: Loch

### Long and Magill

On Wednesday, 15th inst., Mr. John Ralph Magill, grazier, Woodleigh, was united in the bonds of matrimony to Miss Mary Jane Long, daughter of Mr. William Long, grazier, of Woodleigh. The ceremony which took place in the church was performed by the Rev. R. B. Mearns, Presbyterian minister, Loch. Mrs Tulloch assisted by the Misses Tulloch were responsible for the decorations of the building which were very tasteful, the chief feature being a beautiful wedding bell which hung over the head of the bride. As it was the first marriage that has taken place in the church, the board of management in accordance with the usual custom, presented the newly-married pair with a handsome family Bible at the close of the ceremony. A luncheon at the house of the bride's parents followed, at which the usual toasts were proposed and heartily responded to. A dance for young people took place in the evening which was largely attended and the festivities were kept up till an early hour next morning. Mr. and Mrs. Magill left Nyora next morning on their wedding tour.

From the *Dandenong Journal*, 16 July 1931, page 4.

### Obituary

There died at her residence, 22 Rodd street, Dandenong, on Wednesday evening, July 8, Mrs. Elizabeth Jane Jackson, whose age was 56 years, and she has left to mourn for her a grown up family of daughters and one son. Her funeral moved from her residence, at 10.30 a.m. on Friday, and she was buried in the Church of England portion of the Grantville (Gippsland) cemetery, whither she had been taken by Mr. W. J. Garnar, undertaker. Accompanying the mourners by road was the Rev. Francis Morton, of St. James' Anglican Church, Dandenong, who officiated at the home and then the graveside.

## Mother Nature vs. Wonthaggi

Or what you get when you place a town on low-lying land and initially pay insufficient attention to drainage.

From the *Daily Telegraph* (Launceston, Tasmania), Friday 30 September 1910, page 4

### Floods In Victoria

#### Coal Mines Affected

("Daily Telegraph" Special Copyright)

Melbourne, Thursday. — Flood waters are running in torrents over the line at the railway station at Poulett [*sic*] and over the streets. Two shifts have been knocked off work at the mine in consequence. The people living in Dudley, who work at the [*sic*] Wonthaggi have to wade through water over their knees. The low-lying ground is all flooded, and several houses are surrounded by water.

From the *Ballarat Star*, Tuesday 13 June 1911, page 1

### Damage At Wonthaggi

#### Country Flooded

Wonthaggi, Monday.

The roads in the vicinity of Wonthaggi are in a deplorable condition after the heavy rains, and in many places are a menace to public safety. The Buffalo Creek road yesterday was covered at one spot to a depth of 10 feet. Seven drills have as a consequence of the waterlogged condition of the country been put out of commission, and drilling operations generally have been very much retarded. The sea broke over the bar at the mouth of the Powlett River, and flooded the country up as far as Dalyston, about three miles. The wind yesterday did a great deal of damage. Roofs were blown off in the direction of Hicksborough, and windows smashed, while at North Wonthaggi the new public hall was blown down, and other small buildings wrecked.

From the *Age*, Thursday 22 June 1911, page 9

### Damage To Buildings

Wonthaggi, Wednesday.—Last night and to-day the wind was blowing with hurricane force, and it has caused considerable damage. A verandah in front of one shop and a large number of outhouses and tents were blown down. Two big tanks were displaced and blown across Murray-street. The wind was accompanied by heavy showers of rain and hail. So severe was it that all the wandering horses, of which there is a large number in the town, took refuge under the verandahs

of the business places in Graham-street. The booming of the sea about two miles away could be distinctly heard above the gale, and huge waves could be seen breaking on the coast.

The Powlett River is rising, and fears of another flood are entertained.

From the *Age*, Monday 28 December 1914, page 6

### Rain In The Country

#### A Series of Thunder Storms

#### Alarm At Wonthaggi

#### Town Light Extinguished

Wonthaggi, Sunday.

On Christmas night a very heavy thunder storm passed over Wonthaggi. The lightning was practically continuous for over three hours. The storm came up from the sea, and for over two hours its approach kept the heavens brilliantly illuminated. At 10 p.m. the storm was right over the town. The picture theatres were well filled, and the crowds in them were startled by a terrific peal of thunder, all lights being extinguished. This occasioned a good deal of alarm, and everybody was anxious to get out of the building. Women and children cried, and the men were also scared. The crowds soon assembled in the streets, and the rain came down in torrents, over an inch falling in a short while. Such vivid lightning has never before been experienced in the district.

Many shops were flooded, and damage was done to the electric lighting service, but not to any great extent. Over 2 inches of rain fell during the day and night.

From the *Geelong Advertiser*, Wednesday 10 July 1918, page 6

### Wonthaggi Flooded

A violent hailstorm, accompanied by thunder and lightning, struck Wonthaggi on Tuesday morning at about ten o'clock. Half the business places in the town were flooded, the hail blocking up the spouting. The hail remained on the ground for five hours. Gardens were beaten flat, signboards broken away, and windows smashed. The electric light and power service from the State coal mines to the town was interrupted, and electricians had to face the storm to effect repairs. Telephone and telegraphic communication was greatly interrupted.



From the *Lang Lang Guardian*, 13 April 1918, page 3.

## Lang Lang Police Court

Monday, April 8

(Before Messrs Tanner, P.M., Cogle, M'Millan, and Bourke, J's.P)

Eliza M. Cox was charged with having at Loch, between 1st August, 1917, and 28th February, 1918, feloniously forged certain orders to obtain goods to the value of £10 5s 6d from Robert Gillespie, with intent to defraud.

Superintendent Fowler prosecuted, and Mr Mellor appeared for defendant.

Robert Gillespie, storekeeper, Loch, said credit was stopped to Mr and Mrs Cox in August last. On February 2, one of Cox's girls came to the store with an order. Witness supplied the goods and booked them to J. Ryan. The value of the goods was 2/6.

William Thomas Harrison, Phillip Amery, and Louis Baden-Powell Neander, employees of Mr Gillespie, gave evidence as to receiving orders and booking them to J. Ryan.

John Ryan, farmer, Loch, stated he knew accused, and he did not sign the orders produced nor authorised anyone to sign his name to orders. On or about February it came to his knowledge that someone was getting goods at Gillespie's store.

Mary Ryan, wife of the last witness, and Bessie Ryan, daughter, gave evidence to the effect that they did not order the goods named.

Constable Orgill of Loch, said the accused denied the writing of the notes and orders.

No evidence was called for the defence, but Mr Mellor, addressing the bench, contended that there was no evidence that accused had received no evidence that accused had received the goods.

Superintendent Fowler said that there was strong evidence against the accused.

The charge was then altered to unlawfully imposing upon Robert Gillespie by fraudulent representation in writing with a view to obtaining a certain benefit.

Accused pleaded guilty to this charge.

Mr Tanner strongly commented on accused's conduct in using the children for such a purpose. The bench decided not to treat the accused severely, and inflicted a fine of £5, with £6 10s costs.

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Window Blinds for the summer, at sorts, at the Melbourne Furnishing Coy., Wonthaggi.

From the *Dandenong Journal*, Wednesday 7 March 1945

## Former Bass Shire Councillor Passes On

Mr. Hugh John Berry, 61, who ably represented Glen Alvie in the Bass Shire Council for many years and was a shire president for a term, died in the Dandenong and District Hospital on March 3rd. He had been in ill-health for the past 10 years, but it was only in the last two months that his illness took a more serious turn. Since coming to Dandenong seven years ago, the late Mr. Berry made many firm friends, particularly on the bowling green, and all sincerely regret his passing. He was born at Little River, near Geelong, where he was married 41 years ago. Taking up farming at Glen Alvie he soon made a success of that avocation and turned his attention to public affairs. As a councillor he played a big part in the advancement of the district and he was greatly missed when he retired to Dandenong to live in Benga Av. He was a valued member of the Bowling Club up till the time of his death, and many members were numbered among the mourners who gathered to pay their last respects when his remains were laid to rest in the Church of England portion of the Dandenong Cemetery on Monday. Before the funeral left deceased's late residence Rev. C. C. Macmichael conducted a service at the home and again officiated at the graveside. Wor. Bros. Cr. Westmoreland and L. W. Garnar, Wor. Bro. Rev. C. C. Macmichael, on behalf of the Duke of Connaught Lodge 190, Loch, conducted the Masonic service.

The pall-bearers were Cr. R. Williams. Messrs. R. Boote, C. Westmoreland, D. Pianta, H. Twiss, P. Smale, L. Linas, T. A. Hill, A. J. Anderson and M. J. Green.

The late Mr. Berry is survived by his wife, two sons – Hugh and Robert (R.A.A.F.) and one daughter, Ivie (Mrs. Pemberton). To them goes out the sympathy of the whole community in their sad hour.

W. J. Garnar and Son carried out the funeral arrangements.

From the *Argus*, 7 September 1910, page 11: Powlett Coalfield

## A New Quarry

By means of a small, portable diamond drill, designed by Mr. Stanley Hunter, of the Mines department, a new rock quarry, which will be useful for supplying metal and pilchers for road construction in the Powlett district, has been discovered at Kilcunda.

From the *Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advertiser*, Friday 8 October 1915, page 3: San Remo.

## Meanwhile At San Remo...

The San Remo-Grantville road was the first the Country Roads Board authorised for construction in this shire. The work was begun apparently in good faith but it has only been continued at a snails pace, and the leading route for access to San Remo from the city remains impeded. Shortage of labor is assigned as the cause of the delay, but there is nevertheless always a howl about *[the]* unemployed in Melbourne. On the road mentioned between Lang Lang and Grantville there is a tract of six mile *[sic]* of sand which is annoying to motorists but if bits of that patch covering only one mile were attended to motor trade would be vastly stimulated. It scarcely needs to be pointed out that the passing to and fro of a constant stream of visitors from the city is calculated to advertise the district and largely increase the value of land. The shire council might make some effort to stimulate the C.R.B. to greater activity.

The Cooperative Coal Mine, Kilcunda, has been closed down for some time. It did not pay owing to the heavy salary list of the management. The plant was sold by auction on the 30th ult. There were attendance *[sic]* of buyers and good prices were realised.

The old pipe culvert across the main road approaching the principal part of the town of San Remo has been replaced by an open drain. For *[a]* fortnight during its construction travellers by vehicle had a bad time while driving over it. They went bumpity-bump in a distressing manner, expecting every moment to be thrown into the sea, while their interval *[sic]* organs performed the evolution known to ballroom dancers as chassey and cross-over. Now however, a screening of gravel over the rough metal has reduced the depression and improve *[sic]* matters so much that one's liver alone scarcely gets the shaking which disciples of Galen say is good for it.

Much satisfaction has been expressed in San Remo and Phillip Island with the decision of the local Shire council by the casting vote of the President, negating a proposal to omit "Phillip Island" from the title Phillip Island and Woolamai Shire. The debate on the subject was distinguished by a plentiful lack of convincing argument on the affirmative side.

The local shire council has a skeleton securely locked in its cupboard. It dare not take the grisly thing out because of the shudder-some effect it has on councillors. This is the

question of stock wandering on the roads which was shunted at the June meeting for a month and has been conveniently forgotten ever since. The neighboring shire of Poowong and Jeetho firmly grasped its nettle in July when it decided by the casting vote of the acting chairman to impose a trespass fine of 10s on each beast, half the money to go to the ranger. It is a pity there is no common in San Remo on which poor people could depasture a few cattle. The late Thos. Bent said he took off his hat to the cow. The bull is also a very useful animal; but everything in its place. For instance, no one admires a bull in a china shop nor in the main street of a town.

From *Table Talk*, 26 January 1922, page 8: Talk of the Week.

## Where Bass Landed

In that quiet little hamlet, Rhyl *[sic]*, (Phillip Island) which lies dreaming under the summer sun by the deep waters of Westernport Bay, there is to rise a memorial cairn over a well, to commemorate the landing of Bass in 1798, of Murray and Grant in 1801, and that of Captain Baudin and others. Some time ago, when the Governor first visited Phillip Island, Sir James Barrett was of the party, and it was then that the movement of marking the historic spot was mooted, with the result that the work will be undertaken by a number of residents with the assistance of the National Parks' Committee and the Department of Public Instruction. Mr. Thomson is hon. secretary of the Phillip Island Committee, and Sir James Barrett chairman of the National Parks' Committee. The memorial is to be erected on Rhyl *[sic]* Point; and will face out across Westernport and remain sentinel-like, 'mid the shrill notes of the wild fowl that hover thickly in the vicinity.



The monument at Rhyl in 2014.

From the *San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, Friday 10 April 1896.

## Feared Loss of a Fisherman

Dirty Weather In The Bay

Faint Hope Of Recovery

Leaves A Wife And Two Children

Yesterday afternoon news was received here from Dromana by Constable Neal [*sic*] that there had been a fisherman named George Watson missing from Flinders since Wednesday morning. It appears that the missing man, who is only 30 years of age, left home in a boat called the Fugitive about 10 a.m. on Wednesday morning last with the intention of attending to his cray pots, and since then nothing has been heard or seen of the unfortunate man. Although he was warned by a companion to the effect that a squall was springing up he persisted going, saying he would be back before it came on. However he did not return and a search party consisting of Messrs. T. E. M. Darling (in command), N. Sardella, Jno. and Jas. Mannacks, A. M'Arthur, and A. Lucas started out to see if they could find any trace of the missing man or his boat. The waters around Cape Schanck were first inspected, but nothing could be discovered to lead them to believe that Watson had been wrecked in that locality. A start was then made to cruise the coast along the Phillip Island, and up till a late hour last night, when the weary searchers reached San Remo, their search had been a fruitless one.

Questioning Mr Darling, who is in command of the search party, as to whether they entertained any hopes of his recovery he replied that it was possible for Watson to have been carried out to sea, and, if such was the case, some of the steamers engaged in the intercolonial trade between Melbourne and Sydney might pick him up, but although the latter theory is quite possible, at the same time it is highly improbable.

The fishermen aver that the weather in the bay on Wednesday was the roughest that has been experienced for some time.

Great sympathy prevails amongst his comrades for his wife and family and it is to be hoped that their search, which was continued this morning, will not be as fruitless as yesterday's.

Word has been telegraphed to all the police stations along the coast of Phillip Island, and also to all those situated on the main land

where it is possible that the Fugitive and its only occupant could have drifted. Word has also been sent to the Engineer and Master of Harbors, at Melbourne, with the hope that the Government will send out further assistance to continue the search along the main coast.

The missing fisherman had been following that calling almost all his life, and was much respected and looked up to by all his fellow fishermen. His parents reside at Stony Point, and he leaves a wife and two children, aged nine and seven years, awaiting his expected return.

The Fugitive was a very fast yacht, measuring 23 feet in length, and had only recently won a race at Hastings.

From the *Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advertiser*, Friday 19 May 1916, page 2: Local and General.

## A New Theatre Manager

The Wonthaggi Theatre Company, Ltd., have been successful in securing the services of Mr Harold Sinclair, as operator for their spacious and comfortable picture theatre. Mr Sinclair is a gentleman who has had a very large experience in his profession. He has held positions at the Empire Theatre controlled by Union Theatres Limited, and the Tivoli Theatre, both of Adelaide, S.A. In South Australia the Government have framed very strict regulations regarding operators' duties with regard to biograph machines, electric motors, dynamos, wiring, lighting, etc., and in order to obtain a position in that State it is necessary for those who contemplate taking up bioscope operating as a profession to pass a very severe examination. Mr Sinclair has been through all this and holds a full certificate of competency from that Government in regard to his qualifications which are of a very high order. It may be stated that South Australia is the only one of the Australian states which prescribes such a necessary examination. Mr Sinclair has also had touring experience in Tasmania, New Zealand and other Australian States and is a member of the Australian Federated Theatrical Employes Union. He also offered his services as a member of the Australian Army but they were not accepted.

**WATER CARTED**  
**K. HUXTABLE**  
**KOOWEERUP 175**

# The Minor Sawmillers

With apologies to Julius Caesar...

They came, they sawed, they didn't conquer.

## Part Two: Arthur Faram, Henry Gillbee and John Lewis. (Alfred Selman was also present).

by

Geoffrey Guilfoyle

Additional Research by Robert Glover

Note: This is very much a work in progress and heavy on speculation.

### Faram's Mill.

After the failure of Joseph Lee's sawmill and the departure of the eponymous owner (with former co-owner Alfred W. Selman still lingering at Queensferry) the next man to try and make money exploiting the timber resources of the area was Arthur John Faram in 1877. He would be competing with Crump & Grant/Stewart and Brazier & Co., the two established and stable milling operations just about reaching their peak.

It isn't clear what Faram did for a living previous to 1877. He owned three three-room cottages and the sizeable chunk of land they sat on in Coventry-street East in Emerald Hill which he put up for sale in January 1873. Whether he lived with his wife of four years, Caroline, in one of them is unknown, but by December of that year they were living in Claredon Street, Emerald Hill.<sup>1</sup>

Faram drops from the record for the next four years, reappearing at Western Port in March 1877: *The old mill known as Lee's has been taken up by Mr W. Faram, of St. Kilda, which will be the means of giving employment to about thirty hands and sixteen horses.*<sup>2</sup>

The writer mislabels him as W. Faram, puts him in St. Kilda, and, as usual in these matters, over-estimates the amount of employment. In April 1878, the largest mill complex, Brazier & Co., employed 19 men directly.<sup>3</sup>

Faram's Saw Mill, according to the 1877 Phillip Island rate book (page 46), compiled just weeks after the mill started, had two employees: James Williams and Emanuel Jones. This is probably his initial "setting up" stage, as the following month he was advertising for two wood turners. The ad gives his address as "Claredon-street, Emerald Hill" and not Western Port. This suggests either an absentee owner or one who is still settling his affairs before moving to the region.<sup>4</sup>

Somewhat contradicting the idea of an operation in its infancy, the 1877 rate book lists the Net Annual Value for the three local

mills as: Brazier, Sawyer & Monks, £130; Crump & Grant (Stewart's), £115, and Faram, £115 [entry 401-403]. This places Faram on par with the long established (by Alexander Stewart) Crump & Grant. It isn't recorded whether Faram protested this seemingly excessive assessment. (The Council would have just looked at the amount of land leased and the mill – Lees – now working again, and judged accordingly).

Clearly undercapitalised, Faram looked for a partner for the venture. And this is where Alfred W. Selman returns to the narrative – or he should, fresh from his "teaming up" with Lee. But he doesn't. He wisely sat this one out. Instead Faram found Henry Gillbee.

### Gillbee, Faram and Co.

At this point I would usually proffer some information on the person under scrutiny, in this case Gillbee. Other than he may have died in 1882 at the age of 50, there is nothing on him before his coming to Western Port and little after his departure. Even his surname is uncertain, being either rendered Gilbee or Gillbee, and his first name does appear to be Henry, except in the *Victorian Government Gazette* where it appears as William, thus sharing his name with a prominent doctor in the 1870s who died in 1885. Our Gillbee was not a prominent doctor; he was an obscure sawmiller. Presumably he had some suitable timber-related background, but even this is an assumption.

It is uncertain when Faram and Gillbee formed Gillbee and Faram and Co. – they were advertising under the name in January 1878 – and just who constituted the "Co." component. The April 1878 rate book names the operation as Gillbee & Faram's Mill with three direct employees: the previously mentioned James Williams and Emanuel Jones with George Goddard now joining (entries 540-542). The same book on page 65 (entries 501-506) lists the NAV (Net Annual Value) for the sawmills

(continues on Page 13)

*The Minor Sawmillers (continued from Page 12)*

(Braziers, Stewart and Gillbee & Co.) as £130, £115 and £115. As pointed out previously, this does not reflect the respective size of their operations.

More interesting is a notation found in the "remarks" section in the Gillbee entry: "Sept. p. by J. Lewis." And here, maybe, we have the "Co." in Gillbee and Faram and Co. If that name raises a memory, go back and read the sub-headings for this piece.

So in mid-1878 how well are Gillbee and Faram doing, competing against the "big boys"? From the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 17 July 1878, page 3...

*Griffith's Point Police Court*

*Saturday, July 13th.*

*Before Messrs. S. West (Chairman), M. Turnbull, and H. Anderson, J.P's...*

*J. Carson v. Gilbee, Faram and Co.; horse hire, £19 16s. 8d.—Verdict for amount.*

*A. W. Selman v. Gilbee, Faram and Co.; goods, £4 12s. 1d.—Verdict for amount.*

*Selman and Uprichard v. Gilbee, Faram and Co.; work and labour, £20.—Verdict for amount and £1 costs.*

*The court then adjourned.*

Did Selman get his money? Not from Faram because...

From the *Record and Emerald Hill and Sandridge Advertiser*, 12 July 1878, page 3: Local Insolvent...

*Arthur John Faram, of Emerald Hill, auctioneer. Compulsory sequestration. Causes of insolvency—Losses by a sawmill at Western Port and depreciation in the value of real property. Liabilities, £4,082 7s. 8d.; assets, £3,538 19s.; deficiency, £543 8s. 8d. Mr. Hafey, assignee.*

And from the *Argus*, 13 September 1878, page 5: New Insolvents...

*Henry Gillbee, of Collins-street east, late sawmill proprietor, now out of business. Causes of insolvency—Pressure of creditors, having commenced business without sufficient capital, and losses through bush*

*fires. Liabilities, £941 18s. 5d.; assets, £35; deficiency, £906 18s. 5d. Mr. Cohen, assignee.*

Gillbee seems to have hung on for a bit longer than Faram before giving up. Could he have continued to run the mill solo? The weight of evidence says no. Lewis came in as Faram exited in early July; Faram's assets were considerable and most likely included the mill equipment which he possibly sold or mortgaged to Lewis to pay some of the firm's debts, and Lewis, as already mentioned, had a tie to Faram and/or Gillbee and was there to pick up the pieces in June 1878, probably cheaply. Or he came with his own mill (if he was a sawmiller from Clunes as one source avers). This would explain his second mill, set up in a timber reserve. (This will be looked at later).

Before we get to Lewis, some tidying up.

Gillbee now vanishes from history, possibly dying in 1882 at the age of 50 if *Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria's* certificate 12592/1882 is the same man.

Perhaps foreseeing how the milling venture would turn out, Faram applied and paid for an auctioneers' license in January 1878.<sup>5</sup>

This went about as well as the mill at Western Port...

From the *Age*, 14 December 1878, page 6: Police Intelligence...

*City Court (Friday).—Before Mr. Wilton, J.P., and a bench of magistrates.—Arthur John Faram, recently an auctioneer carrying on business at Emerald-hill, was charged with obtaining from Mr. Stephen Grey, by means of false pretences, a sum of £120. In January, 1874, the accused sold a piece of land to the prosecutor for £120, but did not give over the deeds. A few days ago Mr. Grey ascertained that the deeds were in the possession of a building society, to whom the prisoner had mortgaged the land he had sold to him. He consequently gave information to the police and Faram was arrested by Detective Dowden. He was remanded to Emerald-hill. Several other charges of a similar nature will probably be brought forward against the prisoner.*

Remember those cottages in Coventry-street East in Emerald Hill which he put up for sale in January 1873...

From the *Record and Emerald Hill and Sandridge Advertiser*, 10 January 1879, page 3: Serious Charge Against Mr. A. J. Faram...

*Mr. Arthur John Faram, who has carried on business for several years in Clarendon-*

*(continues on Page 14)*

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|--|
| <p><b>GILLBEE, FARAM, and Co.,</b><br/> <b>BLACKWOOD SAW MILLS,</b><br/> <b>QUEENSFERRY, WESTERNPORT.</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>Blackwood and Blue Gum cut to order. Delivered</b><br/> <b>at Queensferry. 61ram</b></p> |
|--|

From the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 16 January 1878, page 1.



*The Minor Sawmillers (continued from Page 13)*

street, Emerald Hill, as an auctioneer and house and land agent, was brought before the City Police Court on Wednesday on a charge of obtaining money by false pretences from a woman named Mrs. Smith. The charge was based on a transaction which took place nearly five years ago when Mrs. Smith purchased a small cottage and piece of land from the defendant on the time payment system. When she had paid up the full amount of the purchase money she applied for the title deed, but could not obtain them – hence the present action.

Faram seems to have avoided jail and continued on as an auctioneer, albeit it a bankrupt one. (I could add perhaps morally as well as financially, only who really expects honesty from auctioneers and real estate agents?). He also seems to have had friends in high places...

From the *Argus*, Tue. 21 April 1896, page 7: Insolvency Court – Unconditional Discharge...

*In the Insolvency Court yesterday Judge Molesworth granted an unconditional certificate of discharge from his debts to Arthur John Faram, of Emerald Hill, auctioneer, on the motion of Sir Matthew Davies.*

Arthur John Faram died on 30 March 1914, now back in Coventry Street, South Melbourne (ex-Emerald Hill). He was survived by Caroline and eight children.<sup>6</sup>

And now the triumphant return of Alfred W. Selman...

### **Selman & Gillbee's (Planned) Mill**

At some stage, presumably before he took Gillbee and Faram and Co. to court, Selman and Gillbee applied for a sawmilling site at Woolamai. The exact location isn't known, which doesn't matter as it was never pursued for reasons already covered. The application was declared abandoned by the Government in July 1879.<sup>7</sup>

And so ended Selman's stint as a sawmiller at Western Port. He had already left the district by this time. The 1879 Phillip Island rate book, compiled in May, is bereft of a Selman at Queensferry.

But...there is a little wrinkle to the Selman story which I find interesting. In the *Victorian Government Gazette* No.26, 28 February 1879, you find on page 487 in the *Contracts Accepted* section that a certain A. W. Selman won the right to supply "250 Western Port blue-gum telegraph poles" for £735 2s. 6d.

Is there an unaccounted Selman-owned mill at Western Port? Not likely. Could this be

after he has left the district and established a mill elsewhere? Possibly, but why then does the contract specify Western Port blue-gum? Selman must have had some association with a local mill in 1879. It is unlikely to be either Stewart or Brazier & Co. That leaves the successor to Lee and Gillbee, both former associates of Selman, namely John Lewis.

### **Lewis Has A Go**

Before coming to Western Port, John Lewis may have had a sawmill at Clunes (though I can find no evidence of this). As previously noted, he also seems to have had some tie to Gillbee and Faram and Co. And that's about all the information there is on the man. As Faram, then Gillbee and Faram, took over from Lee, now Lewis steps in. The exact sequence of events and the timing is, as usual, confusing. Lewis seems to have been better capitalised than Gillbee and Faram so it may not have been lack of money that ended his venture. The trouble is there are three different mutually exclusive accounts explaining the failure. I also have another which may have contributed to the decision to quit.

*The difficulty Lewis encountered was the lack of suitable milling for timber. When the land was selected the hills were covered with great forests of bluegum, messmate and blackwood trees and it was thought by sawmillers that there would be an assured supply of timber for many years to come. The selectors' ability to clear the land of its trees did not come into the sawmiller's calculations, for in the space of a few years the selectors denuded the hills of timber... (Joseph White, 100 years of History, page 64)*

*There were formerly two other saw-mills in the vicinity, both of which, however, have ceased working for some time. One of these was engaged exclusively in the work of sawing blackwood, the proprietor, Mr. Lewis, having a contract from the Government for the supplying of timber for railway carriages. After, however, carrying on for about twelve months, Mr. Lewis was obliged to abandon the industry, owing to the faulty nature of the blackwood, a log of say 500ft. not having, on an average, more than one-fifth of really sound timber. I understand that, in consequence of the Railway Department refusing to accept blackwood from the Bass country, Mr. Lewis had to obtain what was required to finish his contract from Tasmania. (Weekly Times, 9 April*

*(continues on Page 15)*



The Minor Sawmillers (continued from Page 14)

1881, page 9: Along the Coast to Kilcunda.)

There is no wood better for the manufacture of railway carriages, for the lining of ships' cabins, for substantial furniture, billiard-tables, piano frames, and many other similar purposes. In no part of Australia did it grow better than in the particular track of Gippsland, and hence the reserve was made. But it was and is inaccessible. A Mr. Lewis entered into a contract with the Government to supply annually a very large quantity of sawn timber, and made his preparations in adequate fashion. He established his mills in the heart of the best timber. He constructed a tramway to the crest of a ridge overlooking the Westernport waters at Grantville. Hence he had a fairly good road to a little shipping port. He built comfortable huts, almost worthy of the name of houses, for his men, and seemed to have settled himself for a long period of successful work. But the road out was only half the battle. A road was necessary from every tree to the mill; the hills were rugged, the gullies were steep, the expenses consumed all profit, and before the contract was finished Mr. Lewis shifted his plant and works to Tasmania. (Argus, 6 March 1890, page 11: The Great Southern Railway.)

Firstly, you can safely dismiss White's account. It is a secondary source, it is Joseph White, and his reason, while not entirely wrong, ignores certain factors which are covered in a quote from the Age (to be discussed shortly).

The Weekly Times piece is also suspect. Would it really take John Lewis 12 months to realise the timber was faulty? Secondly, Stewart a few miles away wasn't encountering the same problem, and Lee didn't report anything amiss.

The Argus account is the most detailed (though wrong on one point – the Grantville connection – and backed up by another newspaper article, one even more detailed but worth quoting at length because it really does show what Lewis was up against:

Early last year Mr. J. Lewis, formerly of Clunes, obtained the contract for the supply of 2,000,000 feet of blackwood to the Railway department. He at once removed his old plant to this reserve. Most of the good timber around the mills has been taken during the last seven years by the mill proprietors and splitters, and Mr. Lewis was thus forced to lay from six to eight miles of new tramways into untouched country in order to obtain the timber he desired. The country here is very hilly generally, and intersected with small gullies

running to a point. To get the logs to the mills by any animal power is next to impossible, and it has been necessary to construct a double tramway on the top of a hill, with a rise of 500 feet in 3700 feet. A fourteen horse-power engine has been erected on the hill, with a drum eleven feet by seven feet wide, and of a very strong kind, to receive the three-quarter inch wire rope by which the logs are pulled up on one side, and the trucks let down the other... The range to be crossed is over 800 feet in height, and few persons who have not seen the country can imagine the obstacles to be overcome... (Age, 14 May 1879, page 5: The Sawmill Industry at Western Port).

The Age account above isn't perfect as a primary source. It has Lewis winning the contract in early 1878 while still milling at Clunes and immediately moving to Western Port, which can only have been mid-year if he took over the Gillbee and Faram site. Thus any contract would need to date from around that time, not earlier.

The contract itself is, to put it mildly, colossal. Two million feet is just under 379 miles. Of what isn't stated. Presumably not heavy railway sleepers. The Weekly Times source states railway carriages and that makes sense. That the Victorian Railways would entrust such an undertaking to one relatively minor sawmiller on the Bass River is either audacious or Lewis had friends in high places.

Yet in the Victorian Government Gazette, coinciding roughly with the collapse of the Gillbee and Faram mill and precipitating the move from Clunes to Western Port, is this order [see below] for a "Supply of sawn blackwood." I have no idea if £15,847 15s. 2d. equals 2,000,000 feet of blackwood, but it will certainly buy a lot of timber for rolling stock.

There are two other factors which need to be considered in the failure of the mill. Firstly, in Part One last issue, I mentioned that Lee had to use Stewart's tramway in order to get timber to Queensferry. This applied to Lewis. As he must have with Lee, Stewart saw Lewis as a competitor but also as someone to squeeze money from in the form of fees for use of his section of the tramway. Given the

(continues on Page 16)

| Serial No. | Purpose, No. of Trainers, and particulars of Contract. | Amount.                | Name for Approval.                              | Charged against Vote or Fund.                                  | Authorized according to Regulations on the date stated. |
|------------|--|------------------------|---|--|---|
| 2160       | RAILWAYS—<br>Supply of sawn blackwood ... ..           | £ s. d.<br>15,847 15 2 | John Lewis ... ..                               | Railway Loan, 39 Vict. 531. Schedule 2. Item 1. Rolling-stock. | J. Woods. 29/3/78.                                      |
| 2161       | Supply of 1000 redgum sleepers, at 3s. 6d. each        | 280 0 0                | William McCulloch and Co., Limited <sup>1</sup> | Vote 69/2. Stores, 1877-78.                                    | J. Woods. 5/6/78.                                       |

From the Victorian Government Gazette No. 59, 7 June 1878, page 1322: Contracts Accepted.

*The Minor Sawmillers (continued from Page 15)*

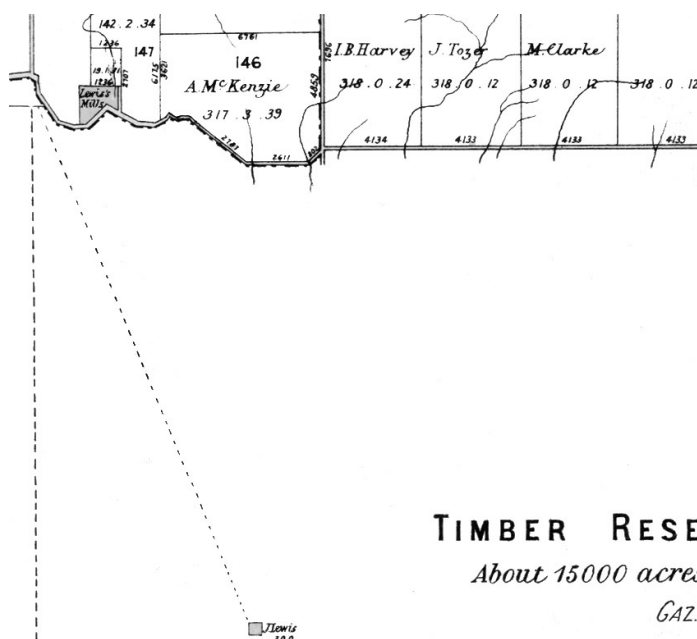
reputation of Alexander Stewart, whether fair or unfair, these were probably high. They were not excessive enough to encourage Lee to construct his own tramway, but Lewis seems to have given it a go, bypassing Stewart's mill entirely and linking up with the tramway at the Bass bridge.<sup>8</sup>

More potentially fatal to Lewis was the status of the 15,000 acres of untouched timber mentioned in the *Age* article. This September 1878 notice which appeared in the *Victorian Government Gazette* would have worried him:

*Woolamai — Temporary reservation of Crown lands for the preservation of the growth of Timber.— About Fifteen thousand acres.*<sup>9</sup>

It is unclear what this reservation had on the output of the mill. Despite all the problems, Lewis continued to run the mill until at least January 1880.

The Phillip Island rate book for 1879 (entries 520-523) shows him with four employees vs just five with Stewart and nine for Brazier & Co. In comparison with the two 'big boys', who for reasons not yet clear were having a rough year, Lewis is doing quite well. The Council certainly thought so, the respective 'rates' for the year being £175, £125 and £130 (entries 503-505). Once again, you get the feeling this is the Council looking at the amount of land held and perceived activity rather than production.



The two mills of John Lewis. Although there was only a distance of about three to four miles between them, due to the hilly nature of the terrain (not shown here) the tramway would have meandered considerably, perhaps even reaching a length, as suggested in the *Age*, of about six to eight miles. Source: Selections at the Bass & Powlett Rivers, County of Mornington [cartographic material], Department of Crown Lands and Survey, Victoria, 1882.

The 1880 rate book (page 103) has Brazier & Co. (in the process of losing the "Co." and becoming Brazier's mill) enjoying a much improved year, now directly employing 12 men. Lewis, on the other hand, is down to three. One of these men is Edward Wallace. It isn't clear if this is Wallace Senior or Junior, but if the son, this is undoubtedly the Edward Wallace of the future Ant & Bee Mill, and Moore & Wallace Mill (more on that operation shortly).

In the actual "Mill" section rather than the employee rents part, the rate book lists only Brazier & Co., and Stewart's mill (entries 522 & 523). There is no Lewis mill. Why? Perhaps because he told the rate collector something like: "I'm shutting down in a few days and leaving the colony, so #@!\$! you!" Or the late 19th century equivalent. The 1880 rate book was compiled in mid-January. Sometime after this Lewis closed the mill, abandoning the site.

With Lee, Faram, Gillbee and Lewis as a harbinger of failure, no one is recorded rushing to take over the location.

### Mill Spotting

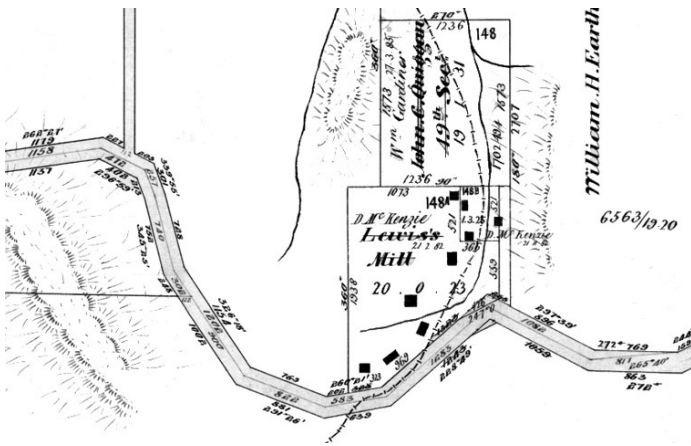
The secondary sources dealing with the matter (*100 years of History, Glen Forbes: A Brief History, Three Stops on the Line*) all place Lee's Mill – and therefore Quiggin (mistakenly), Faram, Gillbee and Lewis – on Lot 147. In Part One last issue I looked at the transfer of a 3 acre mill site on the Bass River from Lee to Quiggin (according to Joseph White), Quiggin to Gillbee (held by Quiggin from 1 January 1877, transferred 16-11-1877) and Gillbee to Lewis (12-7-1878). The *Victorian Government Gazette No.73* (28 July 1878) confirms the transfer and reissues the license to Lewis, dating it from 1 July 1878.

With the exception of Gillbee to Lewis (reasonably assuming the mill closed some time before Faram declared bankruptcy) these dates do not match the actual milling operations. We appear to be dealing with two different locations, one home to a timber milling operation – Lee, Faram, Gillbee and Lewis – and the other held by different sawmillers – Lee (maybe), Quiggin, Gillbee, Lewis – and never used as a sawmill site.

Is there any primary sources which can clear up the matter? Yes, just one – but it is decisive. The map, Plan 754A [see next page], originally drawn up in June 1879, clearly shows the main Lewis mill on the 3 acre 148B. He also (presumably) leased the

*(continues on Page 17)*

The Minor Sawmillers (continued from Page 16)



Plan 754 A: Corinella, New Roads. Public Records Office, Historic Plan Collection: VPRS 8168/P0004

20 acre Lot 148A. Allotment 148 is above this with John Quiggin's name crossed out. This has to be the Quiggin to Gillbee to Lewis license, unused; there is no mill site on the 20 acre block. To the right of Lots 148, 148A and 148B is Allotment 147, of over 142 acres, upon which is traditionally – and as should be clear by now, wrongly – placed the mill of Lee, Faram, et. al.

With the departure of Lewis, it might seem as if the minor sawmillers disappear from the area for good. Apart from the Ant & Bee Mill, they largely do for about 25 years, only to make a reappearance towards the end of the first decade of the 20th century.

## The Even More Minor Sawmillers

From Joseph White's *100 Years of History*, page 63: *There was another sawmill in the area – the location and site are not known – it also used the tramway. It is said the owner's name was John Head.*

Gee, thanks Mr. White. Glad you brought him into it. Is there anyone else you want to mention? Crump & Grant, for instance? No? How do you have information on Lee and Lewis, have dragged non-entities like Head and Turner into the story, BUT HAVE NEVER HEARD OF CRUMP AND GRANT?\*

Ahem. Moving on...

The coming of the railway and the start of coal mining saw, from around 1908, a minor revival of the timber milling industry. This, combined with a new generation of both machinery and farmer, and the desire to clear their land whilst adding to their income, saw a number of small temporary mills arise.

The McCabe family is a typical example,

\* Unlike Turner, who may not have existed, John Head did – he's listed in the 1875 & 1876 Phillip Island rate books as a labourer. His connection to the timber industry, if any, isn't known. It is possible he worked for Quiggin & Mutlow.

milling their land – Lot 228 of 281 acres, east of Almurta railway station and on the border with Jumbunna – around 1915-1916. So much timber were they carting to the railway station (probably Kernot) that Councillors McGrath and Walker proposed that Earnest McCabe be held responsible and bear part of the cost of repairing the damage he was causing to the Almurta-Kernot road. McCabe also partly-owned Allotment 19, of 102 acres, at Glen Alvie and that may also have been milled.<sup>10</sup>

More ambitious and of longer duration was the Kernot Sawmilling Company Limited. The *Victorian Government Gazette No.16* (1. Feb. 1911, page 894) shows it as being registered on 25 January 1911. All other information on it are from secondary sources written nine years ago (*Glen Forbes: A Brief History*, Glen Forbes History Group, 2013) and nearly 20 years ago (Jan Harper, *Three Stops on the Line*, Kernot Hall and Reserve Committee, 2003). I have problems with the account of the early sawmillers in both publications. So *caveat emptor*.

*In order to clear his and his brother Harry's forested land for farming, in 1911, Francis Shackelford established the Kernot Sawmilling Company which included the Bass River Sawmill site. Almost the entire output from his sawmill was purchased by the Wonthaggi State Coal Mine for pits props and other coal mine purposes. (Glen Forbes: A Brief History, page 14).*

*The Kernot Sawmilling Company was formed in 1911 "to cut timber on the land belonging to H. B. Shackelford", a farmer of Glen Forbes. Besides the Glen Forbes property they purchased lot 50 in Kernot. Altogether from the two properties they cut three million super feet of timber for the State Coal Mine. Shackelford died a few years later, and the Kernot Sawmilling Company closed in 1914... (Three Stops on the Line, page 11)*

Three million super feet in under four years! According to Joseph White in *100 Years of History* (page 64), Stewart's mill had been cutting on average 620,000 super feet per year. That's just under 2½ million super feet in four full years. Hint: take any figure regarding the amount of timber milled by any of the major or minor players and give it the same level of credibility as you would a piece of political advertising a week before polling day.

Closer to home, are two mills on which there is little information, with the two primary

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The Minor Sawmillers (continued from Page 17)

sources mentioning the mill being brief and vague:

A new saw mill is about to be started at Grantville to cut sleepers for the Bass Valley railway line. (Ballarat Star, 13 June 1908, page 6: News in Brief).

...he left the mill without the consent of the plaintiff, and obtained work at the Government saw mill at Grantville.<sup>11</sup>

This Government mill does seem to have existed. How long it operated for is unknown and its location is also lost. There is no mention of any mill in the Shire of Phillip Island & Woolamai 1908/1909 or 1909/1910 rate books.

The final of the also-ran sawmillers I wish to discuss is the Moore and Wallace Mill. Unique amongst the numerous sawmills from 1870 to the early 1920s, it was supposedly at Corinella. This unlikely location makes sense only if the raw timber to be cut and shaped was coming in from French Island, though a mill at Stony Point with its railway would be more practical. Again, there is no reference in the rate books to any mill at this time.

Edward Wallace Junior was not new to the business, being one half of the Ant & Bee mill of the late 1880s and early 1890s. For the story of that operation see *The Western Port Times*, October 2021 edition.

The Moore & Wallace mill venture was not a success. Wallace never seems to have believed in it, which raises the question: why did he go into it in the first place?

Isaac Moore, of Corinella, petitioned for a dissolution of partnership between himself and Edward Wallace, jnr. They were carrying on business as saw millers at Corinella, having rented a saw mill and timber paddock. It was alleged against defendant, who was benchman and bookkeeper, that he did not carry out his duties properly; also that he left the mill without the consent of the plaintiff, and obtained work at the Government saw mill at Grantville. Plaintiff had therefore to engage a benchman. His Honor ordered the dissolution of the partnership, the accounts to be supplied and an inquiry made by the registrar, who was appointed receiver. (Age, 26 May 1910, page 8: Korumburra County Court).

According to the 1908/1909 rate book (entry 1323), this timber paddock was a 40 acre lot either owned or leased by Wallace. Unfortunately, the rate book doesn't record where it is. What the 1908/1909 rate book entry does say (annotated in pencil) is that this land is being sold to J. Hutchinson. A look at the rate book (entry 1287) from the previous year lists Wallace either owning or leasing Allotment 169 near the future Glen Forbes railway station. It is listed as 8 acres. This is wrong as various cartographical material shows it as just under 40 acres. Additionally, this same source shows this as the block purchased by Hutchinson (on 29 January 1910). Thus the mill was in the Parish of Corinella, not actually at Corinella, being actually at Glen Forbes on Lot 169.<sup>12</sup>

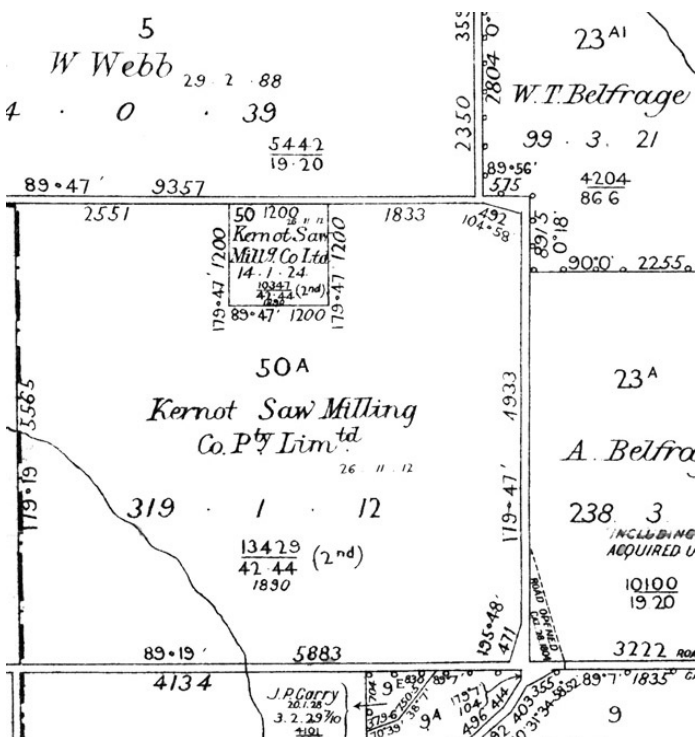
Moore isn't in the rate book and may have lived elsewhere, the money man, while Wallace was on the spot running the show. Or not, as the (court) case may be.

And this suitably downbeat note ends the story of the minor and too-insignificant-to-be-considered-minor sawmillers in the area.

Footnotes:

1. Record, 7 January 1869, page 2: Family Notices – Births, Marriages, and Deaths; Argus, 25 January 1873, page 3: Advertising; 11 December 1873, page 7: Advertising.
2. South Bourke and Mornington Journal, 21 March 1877: Grantville.
3. Shire of Phillip Island and Woolamai 1878 rate book, page 65, entries 507-524.
4. Age, 21 May 1877, page 1: Advertising.
5. Victorian Government Gazette No.23, 22 February 1878, page 416: Auctioneers' Licenses.
6. Argus, 1 April 1914, page 1: Family Notices.

(continues on Page 19)



The Kernot Sawmilling Co., located about a kilometre to the east of the Kernot Railway Station on the (more-or-less) 14 acre Lot 50 and the (more-or-less) 319 acre Lot 50A. Source: Jumbunna, County of Mornington [cartographic material] Department of Crown Lands and Survey, Melbourne, 1936.

The Minor Sawmillers (continued from Page 18)

7. Victorian Government Gazette No.73, 25 July 1879, page 1870.

8. Road Plan 754A, Road Survey, Parish of Corinella, County of Mornington. Public Records Office, Historic Plan Collection, VPRS 8168/P0004.

9. Victorian Government Gazette No.102, 27 September 1878, page 2364.

10. Phillip Island and Woolamai Shire 1916-1917 rate book, page 56, entry 1108 & 1109; *Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advertiser*, 1 October 1915, page 3: Shire of Phillip Island and Woolamai.

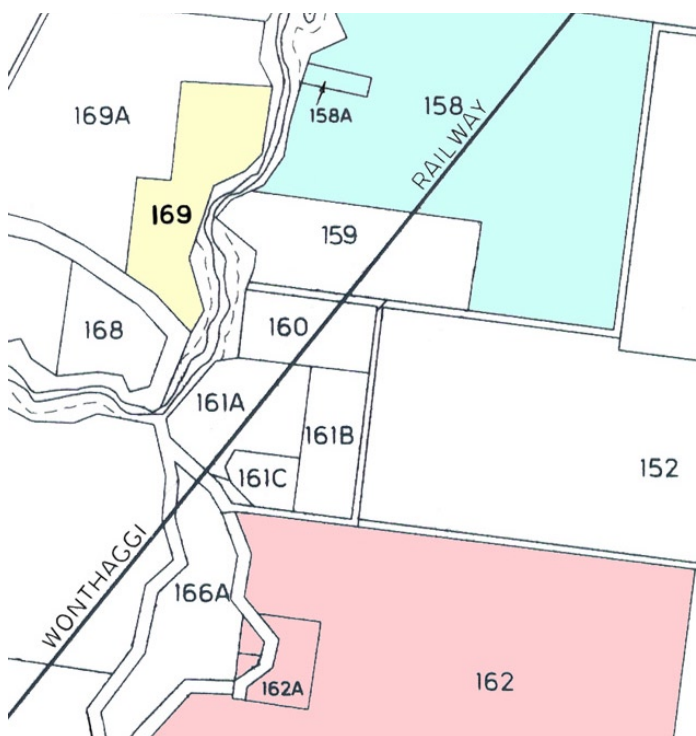
11. *Age*, 26 May 1910, page 8: Korumburra County Court.

12. Corinella, County of Mornington [cartographic material], Department of Crown Lands and Survey, Melbourne, Victoria, 1948; Corinella, Sheet 2, County of Mornington, [cartographic material], Department of Crown Lands and Survey, Victoria, 1973; Corinella, Sheet 2, C246(12), Department of Crown Lands and Survey, Victoria, 1973.

### Addendum

#### The Numbers Guessing Game

When talking about jobs and employment, those writing about the mills seem to have included in the totals, or the owners included in the total, locals hired for specific tasks who



The short-lived Moore & Wallace mill was on the 40 acres Lot 169, on the west side of the Bass River and just north of the future (around a year away at the time of the mill) railway station at Glen Forbes. It is unclear where this mill obtained the trees from given Allotments 158 and 162 were on the other side of the river.

Lot 158A is a possible site for the first mill at Western Port: the Woods & Miller sawmill, later taken over by Alexander Stewart, who abandoned the land for Allotment 162A for reasons unknown. The more likely sequence of events is that the Woods & Miller sawmill was on Lot 155C at Almurta and Stewart moved from there to either 158A and hence to 162A or straight to 162A.

also worked elsewhere; were what we would today call contract workers.

An example of this would be horse or bullock team owners and/or drivers or a carpenter on 24-hour call. It is possible that family members of men employed directly by the mill who may have done regular casual work were considered employees. The wife of a mill labourer who acted as the camp cook or helped with cleaning, for instance.

The rate book totals, however, may be too low as they only list the men leasing or renting accommodation from the mill. In other words, they are living in company-owned cabins at either the mill itself or the place of timber export (Grantville, Queensferry and, later on, Bass Landing). Some employees probably lived with their families locally.

*The number of men employed at the mills in various capacities is about 30. Most of them are married, and of course mess at home. The single men are provided for by a resident caterer... (Illustrated Adelaide News, 1 March 1877: The Bass River Saw Mills).*

The key phrase here is *in various capacities*.

Overall, it is difficult to gauge how they calculated these matters back then. No matter how they figured it, the numbers still seem exaggerated.

This raises the question of the minimum number of workers needed to run a sawmill. This is just the sawing and doesn't take into account logging and transportation. The answer seems to be that the question is wrong. One person could run a sawmill; it would just be utterly inefficient and unprofitable. The correct question to ask is: What is the *minimum* number required to efficiently run a late 19th century steam-based sawmill?

It has to be more than just the two or three men the rate books show working for John Lewis. On the other hand, the figures provided for the two main saw mills – Stewart and Brazier & Co. – whilst probably on the low side, don't seem that far from the correct figure.

\* \* \*

## Lang Lang Talkies

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From the *Herald*, Saturday 24 February 1923, page 12.

## An Unclaimed Treasure The Charms of Corinella

by John F. Peters

Vice-royalty has discovered Corinella. It remains for some distinguished personage to discover Corinella.

This little watering place, on the eastern shore of Westernport, has become increasingly popular as a holiday resort during the past few years. It boasts a past, too, as well as a future, though few are aware that it is identical with "Settlement Point," where nomad sealers made a temporary home in the early 1820s.

The name is not Italian, as one might conclude, but pure-bred Australian aboriginal. It means "running water," and is supposed to have been suggested by the strong tide that runs in the channel off the point of Corinella.

### Victoria's First House

It was here, way back in 1826, that what is described in a Victorian Year Book as "the first house in Victoria" was built by sealers. "Captain Wright," says the Year Book, "found sealers living near Settlement Point, where they had sown two acres of wheat and some maize. An engraving in the sumptuous atlas to D'Urville's 'Voyage autour du Monde' (Paris, 1840-46) gives a view of one of those residences, and of the sealers engaged upon their work."

The spot has been located, and is now occupied by the home of Mr Harold Hughes, a well-known resident of the district.

"The Point," as the natives familiarly call it, is one of the best fishing grounds in Westernport. Parties motor from East Gippsland and other parts in the vicinity for a day's fishing, and it is seldom that they return empty-handed. Large quantities of schnapper, whiting, and oysters (in the season) are sent to the markets in Melbourne. The fact that Corinella's railway is six or seven miles away probably accounts for it not being better known to holiday-makers.

### Early Struggles

Mrs Elizabeth Wilson, of Heywood's Lagoon, is the oldest resident. Her reminiscences date back to 1854, when as a girl of 14 she took ship with her family from Tooradin, and sailed round the bay. Their immediate destination was Bass, at that time just being settled by the Anderson family, who have given their name to a township in the neighborhood. Finding Bass uncongenial, they moved a few miles westward to Corinella, and settled down to farm. It was

a great day when they got their first patch of wheat to grow, but unfortunately they were not able to make a success of it. Potatoes brought by a craft from Van Diemen's Land served them no better, and since then the locality has never had a good reputation as far as agriculture is concerned.

They were often troubled by tribes of blacks, who created a great deal of mischief in the settlement. Tribe would war against tribe, and bloody conflicts would result. At length a band of emigrating aborigines from French Island drove out the warlike mainlanders, and then there was peace.

### The Thrills of Sealing

Another old resident would have some stirring tales to tell, were he not too modest to recount them.

Of a naturally adventurous disposition, he conceived the idea, as a young man, of exploiting some of the rocky islets in Bass Strait, which abounded in seals. In his smart little thirty-foot yacht, the *Rosalie*, he made many trips to the rocks, often camping on them for months at a time, and capturing large numbers of their ungainly denizens. In fair weather or foul he set out alone on his enterprises, and often had narrow escapes from being wrecked. Those who have effected a landing on an unfamiliar rock in mid-ocean, in the wrong sort of weather for pleasure hunting, will have some idea of the courage and resource necessary for such adventures as these.

Many of the seals were disposed of at the Aquarium in Melbourne. Mr John Leadbeater, a well-known taxidermist of the period, who took an interest in the young sealer's exploits, was instrumental in sending specimens of them to other parts of the world, some of them even getting as far as the University of Rochester (New York).

### Wanted—A Fairy Prince

For all that, this interesting little Corinella remains unknown. Why Port Phillip should receive all the compliments, whilst its Cinderella sister-bay, Westernport, should be comparatively neglected, is a mystery which probably only a philosopher could explain.

It only needs appropriating. Who will be the fairy prince who will claim this little Cinderella for his own!