

The Western Port Times

Grantville & Districts



Volume 4 Number 9

FREE

January 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.



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- 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/
- Koo-Wee-Rup Swamp Historical Society: kooweerupswamphistory.blogspot.com.au/
- Korumburra & District Historical Society: Janet Wilson 5657 2267 or PO Bo 293, Korumburra 3950
- Lang Lang & District Historical Society: langlang.net/historical.html
- Leongatha and District Historical society: 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
- Western Port Historical Society Inc.: hwphs.org.au/
- Wonthagi Historical Society: wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/
- Wonthaggi Genealogy Inc.: secretary@wonthaggi-genealogy.org.au



From the *San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 20 March 1896, page 2

Local and General News

The annual State School picnic will be held to-morrow at Cowes. The steamer, "Genista" will run as usual in the morniuug [*sic*], and take the children and parents or those in charge. The children will be carried [*free*], and adults will be charged 2s. return. The steamer will return to Cowes, and bring them back in the evening at 6 o'clock, so that they will return before dark.

The Cowes Church of England repairs are nearly completed. The painting and decorating is finished inside, and it only now remains for the painting to be done outside to complete the church. Mr. Durran, the contractor, expects that he will be finished this week, so that service will be held next Sunday.

Mrs. Talbot, of Blackwood, has been very successful this season in raising a good crop of potatoes. We have received a couple of samples which weigh four and a quarter pounds. These specimens, which are of the White Elephant kind, can be seen at the office of this paper.

A boy in the employ of Mr Towers, of Blackwood, was riding after cows last week when his horse became restive, reared up and fell on him, breaking his thigh. The lad's condition is looked on as rather serious.

A Service of Song entitled "Uncle Tom," from "Uncle Tom's Cabin," will be held at Bridge Creek Hall on Easter Sunday, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. In our last issue it was stated there would be no collection, but it has been decided to hold a collection at the close of the service.

A composition, in prose and verse, entitled "Picturesque Tasmania, the jewel of Pacific Isles!" will be given at the Kilcunda State School on Easter Monday by Mr West.

Two of our local residents have decided in trying their fortunes in the West, viz., Mr. Randles, baker, and Mr. Hearne, bootmaker, whose loss will be felt both by the cricket club and Sunday school. In the former he had charge of the senior class, a position which he was thoroughly capable of fulfilling. We understand that Mr. Randles has disposed of his business to Mr. E. Coel, baker, who has been well and favorably known in Winchelsea for many years. It appears that Mr John Cleeland, the owner of the property on which the bakehouse stands, has consented to build a weatherboard house adjoining it for the use of Mr Coel and his family. This it is thought, will be ready in about two months

time. Me [*sic*] Coel will, however, commence business next week as Mr Randles leaves about Tuesday.

There is the best quarry of granite in the world at Cape Woolamai. This is a big assertion to make, but it can be said without exaggeration. There has been erected from the quarries one of the largest buildings in Melbourne—built for the New York Insurance Company—at the corner of Elizabeth and Collins street. The blocks of stone that have been hewn out weighing over twenty tons. The lessee states that he expects to employ twenty men shortly in the quarries.

The committee of the regattas will meet on Monday afternoon, at 4 o'clock, to make preliminary arrangements for the coming regatta and sports, which is almost definitely arranged. The only amusement that has been neglected is the ball in the evening, so the dancing men of the district should attend the meeting and help to make the ball a success.

A few enterprising gentlemen are expected to visit the district shortly to examine the coal mines at Kilcunda, with a view of working them. It is to be hoped they will see their way clear to do so, as it would be a boon to the district. The coal here will compare with any in the Australian colonies.

A visitor in the employ of Foy and Gibson, named Mr. M'Lean, was residing with Mr John Campbell on the Bass river, was kicked by a horse, and severely cut behind the ear, and had his jaw broken. Dr. Wilson, who is attending him states that the patient is improving, but it will be some weeks before he will be able to attend business.

Mr John Campbell of Bass River has a fine sample of amber cane, several of the stalks growing to a height of 11ft 6in. This shows that our district will hold its own with any other in the colony.

Some tall shooting took place on Wednesday morning near Newhaven. We are informed that a youth named John Hall killed twenty swans in two shots from a double barrell [*sic*] gun, but we do not know the calibre of the gun.

Owing to the growth of population at Outtrim, in consequence of the development of the Outtrim mine, there has been a demand for tncreasd [*sic*] school accommodation in the diatrick [*sic*]. On Wednesday the Minister of Education proceeded there for the purpose of

(continues on Page 4)

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

inspecting sites that have been suggested for school buildings.

As evidencing the quality of the soil in the neighborhood of Korumburra it may be mentioned that a consignment of potatoes from the farm of Mr W. Cormack, about one and a half miles from the township, recently realised about 15s a ton higher than any other potatoes quoted in the Melbourne market.

The social given by the Bass Mutual Improvement Society on Friday last proved a great success. Nearly thirty couples put in an appearance, and dancing was kept up with spirit under the able leadership of Mr Quinlivan until morning. The catering by Mrs Leeson was especially good, and gave every satisfaction.

Also

From the San Remo Times, Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser, 27 March 1896, page 2

Mr. S. Shearer, the well-known coach driver from Lang Lang to Queensferry, sold his business and rolling stock to Mr. Hardingham. He went to Melbourne to make arrangements to proceed to West Australia, and with him took a purse which contained 29 Sovereigns. He met a friend, and with him spent most part of the day. They entered a hotel to have a drink, but on feeling in his pocket for his purse, found it was gone; also his watch and chain. His friend said he would see if he could find out who had robbed him, and returned with the watch and chain, but no purse, saying it cost him 5s. to get it back. The detectives have the matter in hand, and they surmise things look very suspicious in recovering the watch and chain and not the money.

A man named William Young was placed in the lockup at Grantville on the evening of the 10th inst. by Constables Walsh and Neal. He was misbehaving himself in a most ungentlemanly manner during the concert held in the Mechanics' Institute. He was brought before Mr. Paul, J.P., next morning, and fined 5s. for his offensive behaviour.

A meeting of the Grantville Mechanics' Institute was held on Monday evening last, there being a good attendance. The principal business was to receive tenders for caretaker and librarian for the institute. Mrs. Monk is the successful tenderer. There was a discussion in reference to the calling of tenders, which has caused a little disturbance *[sic]* in the camp, but it is *[sic]* to be hoped by next meeting that it will all pass over.

On Saturday evening next, at the usual

weekly meeting of the Bass Mutual Improvement Association, Messrs. Gray and Read will debate the question, "Is mankind improving morally?" Mr. Gray will affirm, Mr. Read will deny. The members are expected to take part in the discussion afterwards, and an instructive evening should result. Visitors are, according to the rules, cordially invited.

There is some talk of a Mutual Improvement Association to be formed in Grantville, and a good idea was suggested that the three associations at Grantville, Bass and San Remo should affiliate, and thus increase the circle of their influence for good. We hope so.

Mr. A. Webb, implement maker, of Blackwood, exhibited horse hoes and harrows at the Grantville show, but there being no class for them no prizes were awarded. The implements were much admired, and the workmanship and finish were first-class. The above gentlemen was managing partner of a well-known firm in Melbourne, James Wood and Co., implement makers.

A certain young man from Kilcunda recently lost himself in the bush through the bush fire, while wending his way to find a camp. After travelling for several hours through the timber, he found himself some miles from the camp, but although his horse was worn out he showed that humanity was in him, for he picked up a small dog which had wandered through the scrub with him, and carried it some miles on horseback. On presenting himself at his destination, he looked as if he had had a pretty rough time. A moral can be taken from this young man.

Owing to the holidays, Messrs. Robertson, Allen and Gardner will hold their sales next week on Wednesday, April 1st, and after as usual.

It is with regret we have to record the departure of Mr. W. Robbins from amongst us next week. The Queensferry residents gave him a small token, which shows that he was appreciated amongst them. A large assemblage of friends met on Tuesday last to wish him good-bye and every success in his new district. He leaves for Tarwin next Wednesday.

A cricket match takes place at Grantville on Thursday between Melbourne Post office *[sic]* club and Grantville club, and on Good Friday the visitors will be entertained by an excursion round the bay, in sailing boats owned by Messrs. Lang and Smith. On Saturday Grantville play Korumburra *[sic]* on the ground of the former.

(continues on Page 5)

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

A local tradesman at Grantville purchased two pigs, and there was a difficulty how to get them home. A happy thought struck him he would take them on horseback in a bag—one on each side—so piggies were put in the *[sic]* bag and thrown across the horse, the owner smiling to himself how easily he had got over the difficulty. He mounted his steed, and proceeded on his way home. The “prisoners” objected to being carried that way, so squealed for liberty. The horse thought it was time he had something to say in the matter. He commenced to snort and buck to the amusement of the onlookers, which the rider objected to but to his surprise he found himself up near the telegraph wires listening to the messages going along the wires. The horse tried all he could to remove the pigs, but could not, and was found some time after at the pier in a subdued mood, with the pigs still on his back. On interviewing the rider, he stated that he was none the worse for sailing through the air.

The Cowes sports committee has prepared a very good programme—which will be found in our advertising columns—of horse racing and athletic sports, which ought to command a good attendance.

It is notified in our advertising columns that horse hoes and harrows will be sold by auction, at Grantville, to-morrow.

Mr. Wetzell has two splendid vehicles for sale, very cheap, at Grantville.

From *The Western Port Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 24 June 1904, page 2.

Fatal Accident

A sad accident happened at Kilcunda on Saturday last, resulting in the death of Edgar F. Glanfield, 13 years of age, only son of Mr Fred T. Glanfield. The boy, who was out riding with his sister, put his pony at a fairly high log, intending to jump it, but was thrown off, and the pony fell on top of him, fracturing his skull. The girl, finding that her brother could not get up, rode home, a distance of a mile and a half, and told her mother, but when they returned to the boy he was dead. It is supposed that death was almost instantaneous. Great sympathy is felt for the parents in their bereavement. The funeral took place at the San Remo cemetery on Tuesday, and was largely attended. The burial service was read by Rev. B. E. Williams, the Methodist minister.

From the *Age*, Tuesday 16 February 1926, page 12

Big Area Swept

Furniture Removed From Homes

(Re-paragraphed for the sake of clarity.)

Dalyston, Monday.—Sunday, with a shade temperature of 102 deg., and a strong north-westerly wind blowing, was the occasion of the worst bush fires experienced here for many years.

Starting near Glen Forbes, the fire turned by the strong wind quickly swept the grass country of the Woolamai hills, and gaining volume in the rough country, burnt fiercely until it reached terrifying dimensions, and simultaneously attacked the homesteads of the thriving dairy farms on the Archie's Creek-Woolamai road owned by Messrs. H. E. Ellis and H. Slade.

Both homes were immediately in danger, and after a hard and strenuous fight, Mr. Slade's property was saved. Mr. Ellis was not so fortunate as, although his house escaped, outbuildings and a garage, in which was a car, were destroyed by the fire. By mid-day the position looked very serious, and a number of places were in danger.

An urgent message was sent to Wonthaggi, nine miles away, for assistance, to which a ready response was given. Between 200 and 300 volunteers, headed by the Wonthaggi fire brigade, came out to assist the settlers.

In the meantime, the fires had reached the property of Messrs. James Daly and C. Sibley, the homestead of the latter being in grave danger. With the aid of volunteers, the house and outbuildings were saved, but a valuable stack of peas, grass and fencing were destroyed.

A change of wind brought the fire into the properties of Messrs. A. Leeman and S. Sleeth, who both had grass and fencing destroyed. Others who lost were Messrs. W. Alford, G. Oakley, McDowell, Ruddell Bros. and C. Daly. The fire burnt right through the night, and most of the farmers in the affected area were up all night protecting their property.

So desperate did matters look at one period that some of the people took furniture and valuables out of their houses and placed them in the crops of green maize growing on the properties.

KEAM'S CAMPING PARK SAN REMO

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From the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 19 April 1882

Shire Of Phillip Island And Woolamai

No date of meeting given. Capitalisation as per original.

Present. Councillors H. F. Norton (President), J. Hayes, M. Turnbull, S. West, A. Aldridge, and J. Kidd.

The minutes of the previous meeting having been read and confirmed, letters sent were read.

Letters were received from Mr. Muntz, Shire Engineer, and the Chief Commissioner of Police, about billiard table licenses.

Extension of time was granted to P. Quinlivan and R. Gall to complete their contracts.

Certain ratepayers of the Woolamai Riding asked that the Dog tax should not be enforced, as they kept dogs to kill the wallaby which destroyed their crops:—Request could not be entertained.

G. Poole applied for certain roads to be opened which had been closed. Postponed to next meeting.

Slaughtering licenses to Messrs Sabbritt and Nowell were renewed.

The report of the Rate Collector and Clerk of Works was received and adopted.

R. J. Fuller applied for an alteration of track—Not entertained, as the Council had no power to grant the request.

Payments to amount of £53,18 8s [sic] were passed, including balance due the acting-Secretary (Mr G. Hull), who ceases to act after this date.

Councillor J. W. Delaney for the Corinella Riding and Councillor A. Aldridge for the Woolamai Riding were recommended to be appointed Assistant Inspectors of Fisheries. Notice to be forwarded, asking for them to be gazetted.

The Secretary was instructed to advertise tenders for Works at Harris' road, Powlett river; Taylor's corner, Jeetho, and kerbing and

gravelling at Griffith's Point, on the motions of Councillors Hayes, Kidd, and Aldridge.

Resolved that tenders be called for the New bridge at the Bass in accordance with the plans and specification forwarded by Mr Muntz, and that a special meeting of the Council be held on the 29th inst., at noon, to consider the same.

The Dog inspector presented a report showing a list of parties who had paid their dog fees. He was instructed to summon all owners of unregistered Dogs.

Councillor West moved that all minute books and papers bearing on the closed roads question, and appointments of Slaughtering Inspectors, be laid on the table at the next Council meeting.

The Clerk of Works was instructed to obtain a proper levelling instrument.

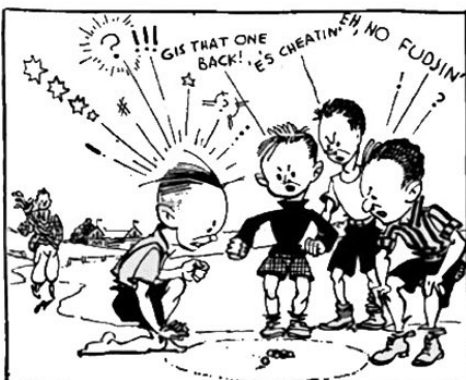
The report of the Committee recommending that Mr Hull be paid £15 beyond what he has already received from the Council, and the acceptance of the tenders; From R. Gall, contract 244 for £23 6s 4d, and L. R. Brown, contract 248 for £4 8s 1½d, was received and adopted.

Councillor West proposed, seconded by Councillor Hayes, and carried unanimously, that [it] is the intention of the Council at the next meeting to strike a rate of 1s. in the £.

At a special meeting called for the purpose, it was moved by Councillor Nolan [sic], seconded by Councillor West, and carried unanimously, that the resolution passed at the last meeting to strike a rate of 1s in the £ be rescinded.

Present : Councillors Norton (President), West, Turnbull, Kidd, Hayes and Aldridge.

BLUEY and SOL



Another One for the Nineteenth!



From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun and Lang Lang Guardian*, 24th January 1937

News From The Powlett July 1902

From *The Western Port Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 4 July 1902, page 2: Powlett.

After a long spell of disagreeable wet and stormy weather, we have been favoured during the week with a most pleasurable change to fine warm sunny days, and clear nights with light frosts.

Mrs Rankin one of the oldest Kilcunda residents, passed away on Tuesday in the Melbourne hospital after a series of paralytic strokes. The deceased lady was 72 years of age, and was widely known. The remains were brought to San Remo, and interred there on Wednesday last.

Mr R. Hawkins left for Kyneton during the week, to join the bonds of holy matrimony with Miss Abrahamson. We wish them much happiness.

News was received through the week, that Mrs Walter Pickersgill had been compelled to return to the hospital, owing to a sudden and serious turn having taken place in her condition. Her many friends are grieved to hear the bad news, and much sympathy is expressed for the family in their misfortune.

Mrs John Pynn at Wonthaggi has been very ill for the past fortnight and additional distress has been caused by the critical condition of one of her children.

Mr Hade of the Bass is arranging to open a butchery business, midway between this *[sic]* and Archies' Creek. The convenience will be incalculable.

Mr Henty of Nyora and Outtrim who is opening a general store here hopes to have everything in readiness in a week's time. The building he is to occupy, is having the finishing touches put on it by Mr Kinder, the architect and builder.

I am glad to see that Mr Caples who had a bad attack of erysipelas is *[sic]* up and about again.

From *The Western Port Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 11 July 1902, page 2: Powlett.

On Saturday the Ryanston football team was to meet Loch, but the match has been declared off. Instead, Ryanston will play a team of married men from the Powlett River, at Archies' Creek. Play will commence at 2.30 p.m.

It is remarkable that while butter from this district now only commands 1 | 3 and less in Melbourne. The price locally is from 1 | 6 to 1 | 10 a lb. and hard to get at those prices.

I once read an amusing book by Jerome K. Jerome, entitled "Three men in a boat," and was very much interested by his description of the embarrassing events which befel *[sic]* the adventurers. History repeats itself, and the story of three Powlett men in a boat must be heard to be appreciated. Jerome has been totally eclipsed.

A pigeon match will be held at the Ozone Hotel on 26th inst., when number of sweepstakes will be shot off.

Steps are being taken by the residents here to do something with regard to the developing of the coal measures proved to exist through the district. Several meetings have been held and active steps taken to get the matter going.

The billiard table for the Ozone Hotel has arrived and been put into position. It is one of Alcock's best, full size and cues similarly. The dimensions of the room are 24 x 18ft and allows great freedom and scope to players. Mr E. Henderson of Inverloch, who also commences a hair saloon, will attend to the wants of patrons.

The weather is again wet and squally, with inside comforts in constant demand.

From *The Western Port Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 18 July 1902, page 2: Powlett.

A very enjoyable valedictory social and send off, was accorded Mr Bert Anderson, lately blacksmith at Archies Creek, who is leaving for South Africa shortly, in the Bridge Creek Hall, on Monday night. The guest was the recipient of a travelling bag and gold sleeve links, the presents of the Ryanston Football Club and friends throughout the district, and a handsome pendant from the A.N.A. Mr D. Kelly, the president of the A.N.A. made present in each case accompanied by a feeling reference to Mr Anderson's sterling qualities, as a resident and his ability in his trade, and that Mr Anderson has made a host of staunch friends during his residence here, goes without saying, as evidenced by the large number of ladies and gentlemen who gathered in the Hall to bid him God Speed. There were quite fifty couples joined in the dancing and the ante-rooms were also full. The music was so seductive that it was not until morning that the festivity concluded.

A horse buyer for the Indian and African markets, visited us on Monday, but as his intentions were not advertised, his purchases

(continues on Page 8)

News From The Powlett (continued from Page 7)

were few.

The weather is again fine, with hard frosts at nights.

Mr T. Hearn of Kilcunda, has just finished bricking and cementing the large underground tank, recently sunk at the Ozone Hotel, although the difficulties to be contended with have been almost insuperable, the work has been completed in a very finished manner.

Mr Hunter, late of Korumburra, has taken the blacksmith shop here from Mr. Daly, and will open up at once. Mr Hunter was one of those severely injured in the acetylene gas explosion at Korumburra recently. He has completely recovered from his injuries, and is as strong and vigorous as ever.

The frequent report of guns is heard in the duck country, suggesting that some slaughter is taking place among the birds. They are becoming wary in consequence.

Mr W. Ferguson senr., who is assisting Mr R. Molloy at the Blackwood, cut his foot badly with an adze, on Monday, and surgical assistance had to be obtained.

From The Western Port Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser, 25 July 1902, page 2: Powlett.

[Note: phrasing as per original]

A meeting to arrange matters in connection with the forthcoming R.C. Bazaar, was held in the Powlett River Church, on Sunday morning, after service. The date of opening was fixed for January 7th 1903 and continue for the remainder of the week. Stallholders were appointed and a large number of donations made towards the art union.

Mr C. Shanklin's friends will be sorry to hear that he had the misfortune to break his leg on Sunday last in a very simple manner. After leaving his camp (he is engaged at the Government bore, Wonthaggi North). Several showers had fallen during the day and the road was in a greasy condition. Losing his equilibrium he was precipitated [*sic*] on the road, taking the weight on his ankle, which snapped, incapacitating [*sic*] him completely. Medical assistance was obtained on Monday, and the sufferer is now on a fair way to recovery.

A meeting was held at the Ozone Hotel on Wednesday evening, in connection with the movement to forward the development of the coal here. Correspondence was read by the secretary, and arrangements made to meet the Minister of Mines and others who are expected to visit [*text too faint to read*] with the movement next [*unclear word*].

Foxes are very numerous and destructive.

Two were shot during the week.

The Post and Telegraph Department have apprised the secretary of the movement for a San Remo Inverloch line that the department are sending an officer to report upon the connection, reports in his opinion, the route to Inverloch should be via Outtrim, if a line were necessary, the local wants, i.e. of the Powlett have apparently been overlooked and will now be urged, and Inverloch left to shift for itself. It will only take 7 miles of posts to connect Anderson's corner with this part and the outlay to complete the line will be a mere bagatelle.

Messrs Dean Bros, of Port Melbourne, have a staff of men on the erection of the R.C. Church and no time is being lost to complete the edifice.

Mr Henderson is promoting a billiard tournament in the Ozone Hotel billiardroom. First prize £3 or trophies. It will be contested at an early date.

A cattle sale was held in the Ozone Hotel yards on Tuesday, it was well attended and there was a demand for good stock.

At the next sitting of the licensing court, Mr Parer will apply for a transfer of the victuallers license held by Mr P. J. Daly, for the Ozone Hotel.

The weather has been unsettled all the week, and slight rain has also fallen.

Nice shops are being erected by Mr P. J. Daly, for Messrs Kennedy, bootmaker, and Schade, saddler. Mr Kinder is the architect and the builder.

A good many visitors, shooting and fishing, are in the district, and the hotel is still full to overflowing.

From The Western Port Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser, 5 July 1901, page 2.

A Serious Accident

A young man named Hector Jackson, of Glen Forbes, was working for Mr. Claud Anderson clearing land on Friday last, when a chip of wood stuck him in the eye, he thought nothing much of it at the time although it was very painful. The next morning the eye became very much inflamed and Mr. Anderson thought it would be advisable to have medical advice, so drove him to Lang Lang on Saturday en route for the hospital where he received immediate attention. The patient became so bad that an operation was performed, taking out the eye. The most unfortunate part is that the young man is almost blind in the other eye.

The Grantville Area Sawmills

by

Geoffrey Guilfoyle

Additional Research by Robert Glover

Note 1: As with the examination of the piers of Grantville and Queensferry which appeared in the September and October 2021 issues of *The Western Port Times*, discussion of the timber industry is also by necessity heavy on speculation.

Note 2: This piece re-uses some of the material (slightly altered) found in the *Pier Pressure* and *Milling About* articles in the September 2021 edition of *The Western Port Times*.

Thanks to Rod Brazier for the photographs of George Brazier, Josiah Brazier, and the Sawyer house on the Bass River.

Introduction

In the late 1860s, the area around Deep Creek on the eastern side of Western Port Bay, while not quite a township or even proto-town, could be classified as a settlement. This was due to the presence of the Corinella Coal Mining Company which put down a number of test pits on both sides of the Bass River near Almurta in 1867-1868.

Deep Creek seems to have been the entry point to reach the workings on the Bass* and also probably acted as a supply depot for the company, likely serving the same purpose for Samuel Cohen, the owner of the Hurdy Gurdy and Westaway cattle runs at that time, a function that Deep Creek/Grantville would maintain until the coming of the Nyora to Wonthaggi railway in 1910.

By 1869, with it now obvious that no profitable coal deposits sat beneath the soil awaiting exploitation, more attention was paid to the excellent timber of the area.

Woods and Miller

Very little is known about the Woods and Miller sawmill, including information about the owners and why the mill wasn't a success. The 1870 *Sands & McDougall Directory* lists John Woods under *Timber Merchants and Agents*, and he also has an entry in the *Saw and Moulding Mills* category. Furthermore, in the general directory you find: *Woods, John, timber merchant, 27 and 66 Condell-st., 189 Smith-st., F., saw mills, corner of Gore and Moor streets, F.*

The 'Miller' in Woods and Miller is harder to pin down. Perhaps: *Miller, John, wood and coal yard, 15 Little Bourke-street east.* If this is the right man, he is very much the junior partner in the venture.

Also listed in the directory is a certain John Quiggin, a *commission merchant., & shipping agent, Spencer-st.*¹

* By following the creek east then swinging south and following the Bass River to Almurta you avoided the worst of the hills, which, though a longer journey, made carting supplies and equipment easier.

The First Sawmill

When was the mill constructed? Probably the second half of 1869. Around this time, perhaps with some encouragement from Woods and Miller, James Stewart set up his general store, which we know was operating in late 1870 and likely much earlier. The presence of the general store, almost certainly a pier, the homes of timber workers and probably a few employees of Cohen, has to have been a major factor in government surveyor, Edmund Colbert, in 1870, choosing Deep Creek as the nucleus for a future township.²

With everything in place – transport, supplies and housing – why did the Woods and Miller sawmill fail?

According to our one and only primary source on the matter...*This place was formerly occupied for the timber trade by Messrs Woods and Miller, and conducted by one Thomas; but, I believe, strictness of law on the manager's part, and shortness of funds on the part of the firm, prevented this industry taking that stride which it is well able to do under favorable circumstances, as the district contains the best timber in the colonies.*³

While the lack of money is clear, it is uncertain what "strictness of the law on the manager's part" implies. An unwillingness to bend rigid government rules, possibly, or a strict taskmaster who alienated the workers, or both, perhaps. Thomas was later replaced with Alexander Stewart, probably when the ownership changed.

For change it did, as the same source informs us...*Since that time the late Mr Graham, of brewing notoriety, was owner; his affairs here were conducted by Mr A. Stewart, and were wound up with satisfaction to all parties.*

It is unknown when Alexander Stewart arrived at Deep Creek, whether he came with his family straight from the goldfields around 1866 or settled elsewhere first. Stewart's own

(continues on Page 10)

The Grantville Area Sawmills (continued from Page 9) reported comments are contradictory. The most reasonable scenario is he arrived in Deep Creek in 1869 specifically to work at the mill, probably as a sawyer or hauler.

Either Stewart had milling experience as a young man in his native Scotland, or he proved naturally adept at it; either way, he rose through the ranks, so to speak, the 11 January 1871 birth certificate of his daughter, Isabella Stewart, giving his occupation as “timber merchant,” which strongly points at a management role.⁴

Thomas Graham, a noted brewer and wealthy man living in Collingwood, died on 31st January 1871 – without leaving a will, but leaving two widows, one in Melbourne and (allegedly) one in England with two sons (his), the grieving Melbourne widow also (allegedly) having a living husband when she married Graham. The subsequent legal wrangling dragged on until July 1872.⁵

With the death of Graham, activity at the mill probably ceased pending the outcome of the court case. At some point, Stewart acquired the equipment from the now quiet mill and, depending on the scenario, moving it to a new location, went into business for himself.

When? Given that the legal wrangling wasn't resolved until mid-1872, this would be the likely date for getting the equipment; however, with the assent of all the parties concerned, it could have been earlier. The litigants would have been far more interested in the money raised than preserving the assets for future milling operations.

On balance, July 1872 seems the best fit, with Stewart spending a couple of months setting up at Glen Forbes for a late-Spring 1872 start with six months of good weather and solid ground ahead. This provided fewer transport problems and maximized profit. On Isabella Stewart's December 1872 death certificate, her father is now listed as a “saw mill proprietor.”⁶

Mill Speculation

The early 1870s is something of a ‘dark ages’ for primary source material. Regional newspapers were only just starting and the Phillip Island rate books were still several years from being extended into the area under discussion. Thus we don't know for certain where the first sawmill was located or how it was powered, whether by steam or water. There is an obvious candidate, but more than one scenario which fits the known facts.

So where was the Woods and Miller sawmill sited and in what configuration? Let the speculation begin...

Scenario One

The map below was compiled in the second half of 1872. The waterwheel is the original Woods and Miller setup. After Graham died, Stewart, believing the waterwheel was inefficient and no amount of reconfiguration would make it so, purchased all the auxiliary equipment, invested in a steam-power plant, and relocated to Glen Forbes.

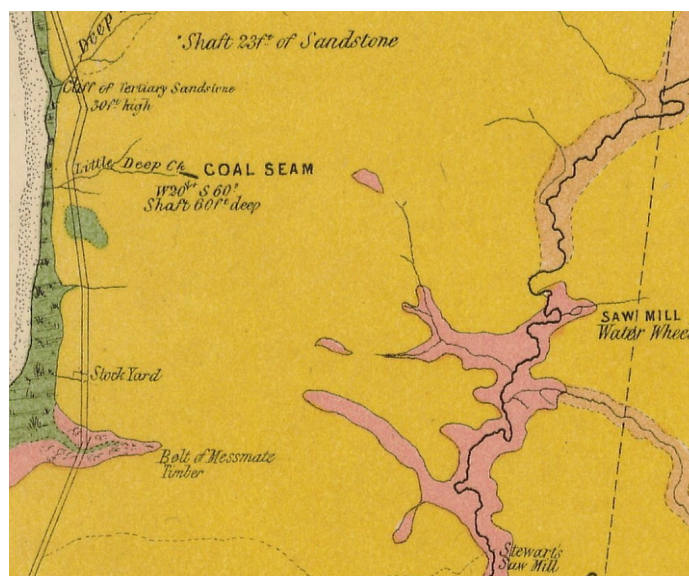
Pro: It helps explain the financial failure of the sawmill. Too much initial expense (including, probably, building the Deep Creek pier) versus too little return.

Con: Fair or not, Stewart had a reputation for parsimony. Having to pay for a steam-engine himself was doubtless an unwelcome if necessary expense – but why spend all that money relocating the mill to Glen Forbes instead of putting his steam-power plant to use at Almurta and utilizing the existing infrastructure? Surely the timber there was still largely untouched.

Scenario Two

This is a mid-1873 map. Woods and Miller were using steam-power from the start but in a bad location and/or the mill was badly run. Woods and Miller sold out to Graham who died before making any major changes. Stewart eventually gained control of the equipment and moved everything to Glen Forbes, the location of the original mill

(continues on Page 11)



A geological map of the Western Port and Cape Paterson coal fields done by mining surveyor Ferdinand M. Krause in...1872 with a big question mark. If 1872, when? Almost certainly not early in the year and the map might even have been done in 1873. Possibly even early 1874.

The Grantville Area Sawmills (continued from Page 10)
 being lost. The waterwheel was John Quiggin's from the start, which explains why Quiggin's mill was never as efficient or productive as Stewart's steam-powered mill.

Pro: Stewart would have picked up everything cheaply, including the all-important steam-power plant.

Pro: If the initial location was bad, it explains the move to Glen Forbes.

Con: A lack of any evidence.

Scenario Three

This is a mid-1873 map. The Woods and Miller mill was on Allotment 158 (just north of Glen Forbes), but for some reason it was not paying. After Graham's death, Stewart took over the operation but for some unknown reason moved it a few kilometres to Allotment 162 (just south of Glen Forbes), establishing nearby Queensferry as an outlet for the timber. This scenario implies that the Deep Creek pier and general store were already in place when Woods and Miller arrived, and that the waterwheel at Almurta was built by Quiggin.

Pro: It was cheaper to set up the base of operation at Deep Creek than establish a new one elsewhere.

Pro: The added distance from Glen Forbes to Deep Creek would have made transport more difficult, especially during the winter and spring. This could have lowered profitability.

Pro: Stewart encountered the same problem when he took over, hence his creation of Queensferry thus halving the distance.

Con: it is a convoluted explanation.

Scenario Four

(What Really Happened)

Probably. It is Scenario One with a minor but important change.

The map dates to the second half of 1872. The water wheel is the original Woods and Miller creation. After Stewart became mill manager, believing the water wheel was inefficient and would remain so regardless of any action taken, he convinced Graham to invest in a steam-power plant. Before anything could be done with it, Graham inconveniently died. Stewart eventually managed to purchase the equipment from Graham's estate cheaply and set up at Glen Forbes.

Pro: The initial setup helps to explain the financial failure of the sawmill. Too much expense (including, probably, building the Deep Creek pier) versus too little return.

Pro: The ever-thrifty Stewart picked everything up for a bargain price, including the all-important steam-engine, which would have been a major factor in his calculations.

Con: Why move to Glen Forbes? Everything was set up for milling at Almurta and surely the timber there was still largely untouched?

But for reasons known only to himself, to Glen Forbes he went, establishing the second mill on the eastern side of Western Port Bay. For more on the location and construction of the Woods and Miller mill, see *The Original Mill* on page 19. To learn of its fate, read on.

Introducing John Quiggin

The name Quiggin has cropped up a number of times now. First mentioned as a commission merchant & shipping agent, how did he come to be involved with a water-powered timber mill in Western Port?

In regard to timber milling in the eastern Western Port region, John Quiggin is second only to Alexander Stewart in importance and far less appreciated. In most narratives, if mentioned at all, he garners just a line or two, usually as a precursor to the Braziers. Unlike Stewart, Quiggin also at various times owned or operated mills in other areas of the colony, from Mooroopna to Murchison to Shepparton to Bairnsdale. This isn't surprising given his background, as his obituary in the *Bairnsdale Advertiser* shows:

In his nineteenth year he left his native island [Isle of Man] for Liverpool, where he remained but a short time, taking his departure for Canada, where he carried on business as a building contractor at Kingston, on Lake Ontario. Some years later he removed further west to London and Hamilton, near Niagara Falls, where he entered upon the sawmilling business, which proved a good success. Still following the steady flow of population westward, he entered the United States of America, and erected sawmills at Milwaukee and Chicago, on Lake Michigan. In the year 1858 he removed south to St. Louis, a large city on the Mississippi, where he entered into the timber business on a very extensive scale, and with much success until the Civil War broke out in 1860...

During the American Civil War he sold the business and with his family left for Canada. For a time he managed a mill on Vancouver Island before deciding to try his fortune in Australia. The *Bairnsdale Advertiser* continues the story...

(continues on Page 12)

The Grantville Area Sawmills (continued from Page 11)

After visiting Tasmania he finally settled in Melbourne and started in business as a shipping and commission agent, and very soon got a large connection, principally with Tasmania. Success accompanied his efforts, and eventually he became the owner of a number of sailing vessels and agent for many more. But the extraordinary rapid progress made in improvements in steam ships soon enabled them to compete successfully with sailing vessels, and Mr Quiggin, foreseeing what was coming, disposed of his shipping interest, but still continued to carry on the timber and commission business at his office in Flinders street, Melbourne. (21 December 1893).

Quiggin and Mutlow

It wouldn't be a *Western Port Times* without an appearance, major or cameo, from William B. Brandrick. So, over to you Mr. Brandrick...

I knew Mr. Stewart, a saw-mill proprietor. I had a difference with him about £7, which was collected to buy books for the school, and never paid over. I was next asked by some working men to assist them in starting a co-operative sawmill, as they could neither get stores nor money from Stewart. I also asked a gentleman to come down from Mount Macedon to start a sawmill.⁷

The gentleman referred to who came down from Macedon was John Quiggin. He brought with him an associate named Alfred Mutlow.⁸

In the mid to late 1860s Alfred Mutlow was a police constable in South Australia. After leaving the force he moved to Melbourne and somehow ended up working for John Quiggin. 'Working for' seems the appropriate descriptor for their relationship, given that Quiggin stayed in Melbourne and Mutlow ran the mill at Almurta, as reflected in the advertisement they placed looking for partners in the venture: *PARTNER WANTED, to join advertiser in working a saw-mill at the Bass River, Western Port. Apply to Alfred Mutlow, at the mill; or to John Quiggin, New Dock, Spencer-street.*⁹

Sticking with Scenario Four, Quiggin would have managed to secure the water wheel and whatever timber transport system was in place cheaply. This probably included the Deep Creek pier, if not from the estate of Graham then from Alexander Stewart himself who no longer needed it after 1873.

Thus with no money owed and a minimal outlay, Quiggin thought he could turn a profit on the mill. Did he succeed?

The best indicator as to profitability is that

the venture lasted under two years, probably much less, made somewhat uncertain by not knowing when it started. It had certainly concluded by early 1875. The Phillip Island rate book for that year, compiled in April, mentions Lee's mill, Stewart's mill and Brazier & Co. No Quiggin and Mutlow.

An undershot water wheel (the most likely configuration) was simply not efficient enough. Stewart had already pointed the way, not that George Brazier needed the tuition.

Brazier, Monks & Sawyer

(also known as Brazier & Co.)

(also known as The Grantville Sawmills)

George Brazier had considerable experience with steam-powered machinery, as recorded in the *Weekly Times*:

We now come to that of which trial was made the other day – Fowler's double engine direct action steam-plough and cultivator – the first and best. It has been brought out by Mr. George Brazier, with a view of working, by contract, for any farmer having land suitable who may be willing to employ him. Having for many years travelled with a steam thrashing-machine in the colony, he may be presumed to possess that undefinable, but most valuable commodity "colonial experience." [1 Jan. 1870, page 7].

It is not recorded whether any farmer took Brazier up on his offer. Presumably, few, for Brazier soon turned to sawmilling but without, it seems, much success. Or he only ever intended to set up the mill then sell it at profit. Or he did, indeed, establish a good business but other circumstances forced him to sell. It depends on how you read the sources, of which there are exactly two.

The first is a 26 August 1873 advertisement on page 3 of the *North Eastern Ensign* selling Atlas brand sawing machinery, all "nearly new." Whether this indicates a failed attempt by Brazier at a sawmill or he is simply on-selling equipment is unknown. It seems to be the same equipment later offered as part of the sale of a mill at Docker's Flat by Brazier in May 1874, an enterprise "in full work, and doing a first-class Trade."

This raises the question: If business is so good, why is Brazier selling up?

Regardless of his motives, Brazier is now out of the timber milling business...but not for long.

Interestingly, it is Brazier & **Co.** Saw Mill Proprietors doing the selling. Just who the **Co.** comprises is another unknown and it

(continues on Page 13)

The Grantville Area Sawmills (continued from Page 12)
is tempting to think George Francis Monks might be involved.

The link between the Brazier and Monks families is Muckleford, in the second half of the 19th century a goldfields town near Castlemaine with a railway station, primary school and racecourse. Muckleford today is a lightly populated locality, a sort of goldfields Queensferry. But unless there are two George Braziers, Muckleford is where he lived for a time in the 1860s.¹⁰

It is also the place where George Francis senior and Ellen Monks made their home, George Junior being born there in 1862, and George Senior demonstrating a steam-powered threshing machine there in 1869, the same year he won a road maintenance contract and appeared in court charged with selling sly grog.¹¹

The connection between George Brazier and Thomas Lynne Sawyer is unknown. The October 1877 probate documents (16/534) in the Will of George Brazier, deceased, appointing Sawyer as one of the two executors indicates some pre-existing friendship. Also notable is that all three principals in the mill arrived in the Grantville area about the same time.

More important and even less fathomable is the connection between Quiggin and Brazier. How did Brazier go from selling a sawmill in May 1874 to being the eponymous mill proprietor at Western Port later in the year?

Equally relevant but also a mystery is the nature of the deal done with Quiggin (Mutlow having dropped out at this point). It included the tramway system and the Deep Creek pier, with the waterwheel now being abandoned. Beyond the probate documents hinting that Brazier seems to have entered any agreement the financially poorer of the two (a tip-off that the previous 18 months in the sawmilling industry had not been kind), the exact fine-print details of this transaction can only be

(continues on Page 14)

For Sale.

SAWING MACHINERY, by Atlas Company.
Vertical frame complete, counter shaft, pulleys, &c. Saw bench, with saws, trucks, &c. Belts, trollies, jinker, chains, falling tools, blacksmith's tools, &c.; all nearly new, and with the latest improvements. Inspection invited. The owners would remove and fix it if required.
GEO. BRAZIER & CO.,
Lima Station, Benalla.

From the *North Eastern Ensign*, 26 August 1873, page 3 Advertising.

TO-MORROW.

WEDNESDAY, 20th MAY.

AT BONTHERAMBO.

F O R S A L E.

SAW MILL PROPERTY

ALEXANDER TONE

HAS received instructions from Brazier and Co., Saw Mill Proprietors, Bontherambo, to **SELL** by **PUBLIC AUCTION**, at the **MILL, DOCKER'S FLATS**, on the above date,

The whole of their

PLANT AND MACHINERY,

&c. &c.

VIZ. :

Saw Mill, by Atlas and Co., Melbourne—the latest improvements

Vertical and Circular Saws and Benches

Trollys, Junkers, Mill Trucks

And a Lot of Sundries connected with the above.

The Mill is now in full work, and doing a first-class Trade.

ALSO,

A Team of Eight Working Bullocks

Dray and Tackling complete, and 2 Draught Horses.

TERMS DECLARED AT SALE.

Sale at 1 o'clock.

ALEXANDER TONE, Auctioneer.

121 73

From the *Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, 12 May 1874, page 3: Advertising.

The Grantville Area Sawmills (continued from Page 13)
 guessed. The same documents also suggest that the company started on or about 19 Jan. 1875 when Brazier secured the property from Quiggin.

However, Quiggin's continued if silent involvement in some capacity is backed up by the *Victorian Government Gazette* which in February 1875 and 1876 has him renewing his sawmill license for three acres on the Bass River (5 Feb. 1875, page 223 and 11 Feb. 1876, page 292). It was further renewed on 29 December 1876 (page 2397).

If this is the water wheel site (155C), now abandoned, the question arises – why renew the license? The obvious conclusion is that the land was of use to Brazier & Co., perhaps containing cabins for the workers or a smithy. After all, previous workers under Quiggin and Mutlow and Woods and Miller needed housing onsite. They couldn't all live at Deep Creek.

The *Victorian Government Gazette* provides further evidence for a continuing Quiggin involvement with Brazier & Co. The *Contacts Accepted* section of the 7 July 1876 edition (page 1263) has Quiggin as the winning bidder to supply...*fifty telegraph poles of 40 feet in length and fifty of 45 feet in length at 1s. 5d. and 1s. 11d. per lineal foot respectively.* This seems to be before Quiggin acquired his Redbank mill (more on which later), which means it has to be on behalf of Brazier & Co, the only other mill he had an interest in at that time.

All that can be said for certain is that by April 1875 (via the Phillip Island rate book for that year), Brazier Monks and Sawyer was up and running with ownership split 50-50 between George Brazier and Thomas Sawyer (according to October 1877 probate documents).

What of the *Monks* in Brazier Monks and Sawyer? Although his name is in the title, given the financial arrangement outlined in the probate documents, Monks has to have been a "salaried partner," a concept common today in legal and accountancy firms. Senior management with a commensurate wage. What it meant in practice is anyone's guess.

The mill was situated just south of the water wheel on Allotments 155A (just to the north of the future Almurta railway station). According to the Phillip Island rate books, it quickly became a major employer, eclipsing that of Stewart's mill. This only includes those directly employed, and not locals doing some contract work. Other accounts may, and do, differ. In 1878, according to the rate

book for that year, Brazier's mill employed 21 men (1 sawyer, 1 clerk, 19 labourers) versus Stewart's 13 men, all listed as labourers.*

John Quiggin was not entirely absent from the area, having purchased Allotment 87 at Queensferry in September 1876 with his son, William, buying Allotment 88 at the same date. On the other hand, they did relinquish land. Quiggin in February 1878 abandoned his plan for a jetty at Sawtell's Creek (near Tooradin) and both he and his son, after only a year, abandoned their respective 300 plus acre holdings at Jeetho, also in 1878.^{12 **}

To further emphasise the Quiggin/Brazier link there is this from the *Riverine Herald*, 7 December 1876, page 3: *In Annesley-street the accident occurred, and the huge machine now lies on the side of the road for the time being, a wreck. The owner, Mr. Brazier, has entrusted the repairs to Mr. J. W. Horwood... The ponderous engine will be employed to drive the machinery of a sawmill at Redbank, which was lately purchased by Mr. Quiggin...*

While having some unspecified financial attachment to Brazier & Co., Quiggin was busy elsewhere. The *Bairnsdale Advertiser*

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* Mill vs. Mill From the 1878 rate book

Brazier's Mill: Maslin, James / McCassalem, Edward / Carr, William / Jones, Arthur / Crook, James / Connor, J. / Connor, T. / Jeffries, James / Boan, Alexander / Brazier, Josiah / Miles, William / Thomas, John / Robson, David / Richardson, Edward / Gray, Richard / Field, Abraham / Smith, George / Carr, Thomas / Carr, Austin / Connor, William / Hargood, J. (Brazier is a sawyer, Hargood a clerk, the rest labourers)

Stewart's Mill: Gillan, James / Riddell, Alexander / Johnston, Daniel / Brown, John / Henderson, William / Lindsey, Stephen / Powell, Thomas / Natcott, Charles / McMahan, James / Saunders, James / Davidson, Alexander / Casey, George / Wilson, Peter W.

** The purchase of the Queensferry blocks is not a clear-cut as I make it. The *VGG No.64*, 15 Sept. 1876, page 1695, lists both Quiggins as paying the license fee for their respective 20 acre blocks four days before they purchased them. But the date of this license is to start from 1-10-1876. A year later, in *No.54*, 25 May 1877, page 999, these licenses are now in arrears, having never been paid. Is that because these are Lots 87 & 88 and have been purchased, or do they refer land elsewhere that was allowed to lapse, as the land at Jeetho was? Secondly, the Phillip Island rate books, not unusually, don't reflect what the *VGG* is saying. Entry 405 in the 1876 book has: *Quiggin, W.V. & J. Merchants.* That's it. Helpful, isn't it. The land (amount unspecified) is merely listed as being in the Parish of Corinella. Neither Quiggin is in the 1877 book. The 1878 book does record the 300 plus acre lots at Jeetho. It also records, for the first time, Jonathan Quiggin's Allotments 3,4 & 6 in Section A of the original Grantville, land he purchased in February 1873! So...good luck trying to figure out what is going on.

The Grantville Area Sawmills (continued from Page 14) and Tambo and Omeo Chronicle fills in the details:

In the year 1876 Mr Quiggin visited the Goulburn Valley and thoroughly explored the red gum forests along the river from M'Coy's Bridge up to Nagambie. He was so impressed with their extent and value that he at once decided to erect a number of sawmills... In 1878 he erected sawmills at Toolamba and Murchison, and later on at Kialla, Arcadia, Cooma and Coomboona, besides a second one at Murchison. With these mills he cut nearly the whole of the timber required in the construction of the railway from Nagambie to Shepparton, besides that for many other lines throughout the colony... In 1878 the subject of this sketch started a branch of his timber business in Wyndham street, Shepparton... (21 December 1893).

The friendship and/or financial association between the two senior members of both families was broken on 9 July 1877, when George Brazier died at Fairhill Cottage in Carlton at the age of 49 after a long illness.¹³

In his Will, [a copy of which is included with the probate documents], dated 26 February 1876 and witnessed by two of the mill workers, William Carr and George Fletcher, he left his estate to his wife, Elizabeth. It consisted of no property, only his half share in Brazier & Co., which amounted to £2800, a sizeable amount of money (for the time).

But it is the liabilities that command interest: *Mortgage dated 19 January 1875 to John Quiggin to secure advances over property of firm £750. Further... Amount due to John Quiggin for further advances. £300.*

On 7 September 1881 Quiggin placed the following ad in page 8 of the *Argus*: *SAWMILL at Western Port for SALE, with tramways and jetty. John Quiggin, 141 Flinders-street west.*

The genesis of that advertisement has to have been sealed here, as a consequence of



The Sawyers at their property on the Bass River. It is tempting to think the sluice gate Thomas Sawyer is sitting on is the Woods and Miller original.

this amount. Quiggin didn't quite foreclose on the unpaid mortgage, instead, if he wasn't before, he now became, or became to a greater extent, the silent partner in the venture. What he, Elizabeth Brazier and Thomas Sawyer agreed to will probably be never known, but agree they must have, for Brazier & Co continued for two more, presumably profitable, years.

There is one anomaly in the probate papers. George Brazier also owed £550 to Thomas H---- (the surname isn't clear). This is the only mention of the name, and his relationship to Quiggin and Brazier is a mystery. He was likely paid his money – perhaps by Quiggin – and vanishes from the story.

In January 1878, Brazier & Co. made a donation of £5, under the label "Grantville Sawmills Accident Fund," to the Alfred Hospital. Given the nature of timber felling and sawing, it was a form of insurance, and proved a fortuitous offering, as shown less than a month later with the injury to Stephen Lindsay on 4 February. He was admitted to the Alfred Hospital suffering from a compound fracture in the leg caused by a log falling on him. A year later, in May, Robert Nelson ended up in the same hospital with a hand severely injured by a circular saw.¹⁴

Both vanish from the Phillip Island rate books after their accidents, either electing not to return to the mill or incapable of doing so. There is no record of Brazier & Co. being sued for negligence. Possibly the men received a payout which satisfied them and were, hopefully, capable of finding employment elsewhere.

The amicable working relationship between the principals of Brazier & Co. seem to have broken down in late 1879. Or maybe it was a mutually agreed parting, at least in regard to two of those involved. Sawyer and Monks now leave the company, Monks later showing up working in some capacity at No.2 saw mill for the Yea and Alexandra Railway.¹⁵

Presumably, Sawyer sold his half share to...who? Josiah Brazier, probably. Or it could have been split amongst the two Braziers (Elizabeth and Josiah) and Quiggin. It is known that Elizabeth Brazier took over the lease of Allotment 155A, or at least had done so before March 1882 when it was offered for sale by the Government. Regardless of the financial arrangements, after this time it became Brazier's mill, managed by Elizabeth Brazier and her and George's son, Josiah Henry Brazier.¹⁶

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The Grantville Area Sawmills (continued from Page 15)

Scott & Sawyer's Mill

In The Hotels of Grantville article in the December 2020 issue of *The Western Port Times*, I said by way of introduction to James Scott who managed the Prince Alfred Hotel in 1880: *This Mr. Scott was James Alison Scott, former sawmiller, though his partner in that business, Thomas Sawyer, was not part of the hotel venture.*

At this time I was under the impression that Scott was involved with Brazier & Co. On further examination, other than a friendship with Sawyer, he wasn't; nor does he have any tie to any other mill in the area. His sawmilling activities, if any, were clearly in his past. According to the Phillip Island rate books, for one year only, 1879-1880, he and Sawyer jointly owned a house and 20 acres in an unspecified location in "Grantville & Jeetho & Jumbunna." (Entry 555).

After quitting the mill, Sawyer stayed in the Grantville area, until when is uncertain; however the 1887 Phillip Island rate book (entry 742) definitely places him in Melbourne, though he continued to own the 17 acre Allotment 178 (today's business strip on the bay side of the Bass Highway). Sometime after March 1887 he sold this allotment. The new owner had it surveyed and divided into 49

lots which were offered for sale by Munro & Baillieu on 17 April 1888.¹⁷

Whatever his land holdings in the Western Port area, Sawyer's main interest was now Gippsland. Perhaps not coincidentally, so were those of the Quiggins. From the *Bairnsdale Advertiser* article quoted from earlier:

In 1886, the Shepparton and Melbourne businesses were transferred to his sons, who have since carried them on under the style of Quiggan Bros. In that year Mr Quiggan removed all his sawmills to Gippsland, where he carried on an extensive business up to the time of his death.

From the same newspaper on 27 January 1885, page 3: Gazette Notifications. Renewal of Licenses: Wm. V. Quiggin (sawmill). Thomas L. Sawyer (sawmill).

This hints that if there was now bad blood between the Braziers and Quiggins, that Sawyer wasn't part of it. In any case, Sawyer's mill was in Gippsland, not Western Port.

Brazier's Mill

In 1880, for reasons uncertain, the Deep Creek pier ceased to be used, at least by the Braziers...probably. The pier doesn't seem to have been damaged or destroyed. Given Quiggin's 7 September 1881 advertisement selling the mill, tramways and pier, unless it is referring to another structure, the pier at Deep Creek was still very much intact if perhaps rundown. The timeline is also uncertain, and it could have been only after the closure of the mill that the pier fell into disuse. Some of the primary sources, however, say otherwise, that this abandonment was in early 1880. [See *Pier Pressure* in the September 2021 edition for a discussion of this evidence].

The following is a speculative answer which does seem to explain what is occurring and doesn't contradict the evidence. It assumes that the breakdown in relations between the Braziers and Quiggins did take place.

So what happened?

Quiggin was under financial pressure, the genesis of which is perhaps found here...

...He was so impressed with their extent and value that he at once decided to erect a number of sawmills. The first and most extensive he built in Mooropna at a cost of about £4000. He hurried the erection of this mill anticipating that the Goulburn Valley railway was to be constructed at once, but the general election of 1877 and consequent change in the Government altered matters. The Berry Ministry changed the route from the west to the east side of the

(continues on Page 17)



George Brazier. Photo taken 1876, a year before his death.

The Grantville Area Sawmills (continued from Page 16) river, thus necessitating a new survey and a delay of two years. This was a serious loss." (*Bairnsdale Advertiser*, 21 December 1893).

In July 1880, Quiggin placed his affairs in the hands of George Horne of Farmer and Darvell. Horne and the creditors astutely gave Quiggin the chance to trade his way out of debt. This was achieved over a series of 7 dividends, paid to creditors from 7 February 1881 to 9 October 1882.¹⁸

Thus in 1879, Quiggin may have wanted to wind up the company and sell or redeploy the assets. Another reason could be that the profitability of the mill was slipping due to a diminishing supply of suitable trees. He didn't think there was enough for another year.*

The Braziers likely disagreed on all points. Both sides dug in.

To force the issue, Quiggin played his ace: denying the Braziers access to the Deep Creek pier.

To get around this, the Braziers built their

*Furthermore, 1879 had been a bad year generally. According to the 1879 Phillip Island rate book (page 83), the mill only employed nine men which indicates either a lack of work or some other trouble. That Stewart's mill was down to five could mean drought or bushfires disrupted operations in both locations. Regardless of the reason, profitability would have been lower, the last thing Quiggin needed at this time.



Josiah Henry Brazier
1858-1929

own pier, possibly in the dying days of 1879 (if you ignore one piece of primary source evidence for a later date) but more likely in early 1880 after the departure of Sawyer and Monks. They placed it in "new" Grantville (the Grantville of today) rather than "old" Grantville (the Deep Creek area of the late 1860s and early 1870s): a short and narrow and not necessarily well-constructed pier. It had one job to do and for a limited time.

It is possible that those with an interest in having a jetty close to their business or homes rather than at Deep Creek kicked in a bit of money to defray cost. John Dickins would be one candidate. So would Thomas Sawyer, who was probably living on Lot 178 at the time.

All this is guesswork, but it does explain Brazier's pier, the existence of which is inferred from written primary sources rather than physical remains. This lack of a remnant is a problem. [See Pier Pressure in *The Western Port Times*, October 2021].

No matter which pier the Braziers used, those who worried about the diminution of millable timber were not wrong to do so, and by the end of the year the Braziers conceded that the operation couldn't continue. Brazier's Mill now vanishes from the Phillip Island rate book. Hence Quiggin's 7 September 1881 advertisement in the *Argus* selling the plant, tramways and pier, probably the one at Deep Creek rather than Brazier's. He may have found a buyer for the plant and associated equipment, but clearly not the infrastructure.

The tramway would have eventually rotted away or been plundered for the wood, and the Deep Creek pier, while used by those living nearby, wouldn't have been maintained and would have also decayed.

Quiggin renewed his license for the old sawmill site (155C) in January 1880 but over the next two years let the payment lapse until it was officially cancelled on 6 April 1882. That was the end of the operation began by Woods and Miller around 12 years previously.¹⁹

Brazier's mill site fared no better. Allotment 155A was put up for sale by the government on 17 February 1882.²⁰

The timber industry would be revived by the Wallace Brothers in a much diminished form later in the decade. [See the October 2021 edition for the story of the Ant and Bee Mill]. But as a major exporter of timber and mainstay of the area in regard to employment, the local timber industry had effectively ended.

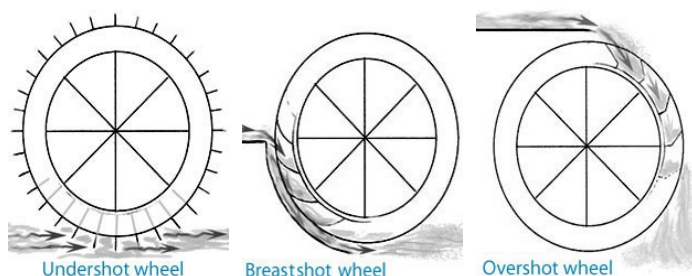
(continues on Page 18)

The Grantville Area Sawmills (continued from Page 17)

Footnotes:

1. *Melbourne And Suburban Directory For 1870*, Sands & McDougall, 1870: page 519 (Miller), page 551 (Quiggin), pages 621, 716, 724 (Woods).
2. *Argus*, 7 October 1870, page 4 (James Stewart's store).
3. *Alexandra Times*, 5 August 1876, page 3: Mornington and South Gippsland No.3.
4. Certificate 509, Schedule A, Births in the District of Cranbourne and Mornington in the Colony of Victoria, 11 January 1871.
5. *Argus*, 31 January 1871, page 4: Deaths; *Leader*, Saturday 19 August 1871, page 22: Graham V. Graham; *Age*, Monday 22 July 1872, page 3: Graham V. Graham. But every other Melbourne paper (and many further afield) carried the story.
6. Certificate 4, Schedule B, Deaths in the District of Bass in the Colony of Victoria, 16 December 1872.
7. *Argus*, 25 November 1875, page 6: Law Report.
8. *Argus*, Monday 29 September 1873, page 1: Advertising (Partner Wanted); *Alexandra Times*, 26 August 1876, page 2: Mornington and South Gipps Land No.4.
9. *South Australian Police Gazette No.261*, 13 April 1866: Appointments; 21 September 1870, pages 151 and 262: Missing Friends; 5 October 1870, page 159: Missing Friends; *Victorian Police Gazette No.37*, 13 September 1870, page 217: Missing friends; *No.39*, 27 September 1870, page 229; *Argus*, Monday 29 September 1873, page 1: Advertising.
10. *Mount Alexander Mail*, 7 October 1861, page 3: Advertising; 9 August 1864, page 3: Newstead District Road Board.
11. Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria, Birth Certificate 7291/1862; *Mount Alexander Mail*, 21 January 1869, page 3: Muckleford; 4 May 1869, page 2: Newstead Council; 4 September 1869, page 2: Items of News; 6 September 1869, page 2: Items of News.
12. Corinella, County of Mornington [cartographic material], drawn and reproduced at the Department of Lands and Survey, Melbourne, Victoria, 1948; also, same source, 1973 map, Sheet 1; Department of Lands and Survey, Melbourne, Victoria, C246(3) L.918, May 1885 via Landata; also, same source, C246(11), Corinella, Sheet 1; *Victorian Government Gazette, No.16*, 1 February 1878, page 255; *No.101*, 12 October 1877, page 1934: Applications For Licenses Approved; *No.61*, 14 June 1878, page 1370.
13. *Weekly Times*, 14 July 1877, page 17: Deaths; *Age*, 10 July 1877, page 2: Deaths; Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria, Death Certificate 7371/1877.
14. *Telegraph, St Kilda, Prahran and South Yarra Guardian*, 12 January 1878, page 3: In The Barber's Shop; *Argus*, 4

The three most common forms of water wheel propulsion.



February 1878, page 5; *Age*, 5 May 1879, page 2: News Of The Day; *Argus*, 5 May 1879, page 5.

15. *Alexandra and Yea Standard, Gobur, Thornton and Acheron Express*, 8 February 1889, page 2.

16. *Herald*, 18 March 1882, page 4: Country Lots.

17. Corinella, County of Mornington [cartographic material], drawn and reproduced at the Department of Lands and Survey, Melbourne, Victoria, 1948; also, same source, 1973 map, Sheet 1; Selections at the Bass & Powlett Rivers, County of Mornington [cartographic material], Department of Crown Lands and Survey, Victoria, 1882; Phillip Island rate book 1887, page 49, entry 742; "Grantville on the Sea." ad, 17 April 1888 land sale by Munro & Baillieu.

18. *Victorian Government Gazette No.80*, 23 July 1880, page 1928: Insolvency Notices; *No.8*, 28 January 1881, page 282: Insolvency Notices; *No.30*, 1 April 1881, page 985: Insolvency Notices; *No. 49*, 3 June 1881, page 1467: Insolvency Notices; *No.136*, 9 December 1881, page 3529: Insolvency Notices; *No.99*, 29 September 1882, page 2390.

19. *Victorian Government Gazette No.2*, 9 January 1880, page 75; *No.133*, 26 November 1880, page 2854; *No.6*, 21 January 1881, page 139; *No.40*, 29 April 1881, page 1156; *No.7*, 27 January 1882, page 165; *No.16*, 17 February 1882, page 454; *No.39*, 6 April 1882, page 837.

20. *Victorian Government Gazette No.16*, 17 February 1882, page 412; *Herald*, 11 March 1882, page 1: Country Lots; 18 March 1882, page 4: Country Lots.

The Allison-Elliot Link

In 1883 Elizabeth Brazier, late of Grantville, married Edward William Allison, an undertaker of Elgin Street, Carlton. Allison had two daughters. Elizabeth's son by George Brazier, Josiah, also late of Grantville, took a fancy to the second daughter, Annie Isabella, and they married on 22 May 1884. Elizabeth and Edward's marriage was short, the undertaker dying in 1887 at the age of 54. His son-in-law, Josiah, was one of the two executors.¹

Elizabeth plunged into matrimony a third time, in 1891 marrying a man named Jonathan Elliot, whom she apparently outlived, being described once again as a widow in the notice regarding probate for her Will in 1918. Her executor was her son, Josiah, who only outlived her by 11 years, dying in 1929 at the age of 71.²

1. Brazier, Elizabeth, marriage. Reg. No. 1417/1883; Allison, Edward William, death. Reg. No. 936/1887, Births, Deaths and Marriages, Victoria; *Age*, 14 January 1885, page 8: Funeral Notices; 3 March 1888, page 14: Funeral Notices; 7 June 1884, page 5: Marriages; *Leader*, 14 June 1884, page 42: Marriages; *Age*, 25 May 1888, page 8.

2. Allison, Elizabeth, marriage. Reg. No. 1544/1891; Brazier, Josiah Henry, death. Reg. No. 8386/1929, Births, Deaths and Marriages, Victoria; *Argus*, 3 July 1918, page 16.

Note: Edward William Allison doesn't seem to have had any direct connection with the firm John Allison Monkhouse which also existed at the time, and continues to do so.

The Original Mill

by

Geoffrey Guilfoyle

Additional Research by Robert Glover

It isn't recorded why Woods and Miller choose a waterwheel to power their mill. The presence of the Bass River may be the determining factor, offering a free and endless source of power. Given that in high summer the Bass River today becomes a muddy creek for most of its length, this seems laughable. However 150 years ago, before the building of dams and the drawing off water from tributary creeks, the water level was likely higher all year round than it is today.

Even in the 1920s the Bass was navigable by rowboat for a certain distance beyond the influence of the tide, as shown by Ernest McCaughan who wrote about it in the *Argus* (22 July 1922).*

Despite the interest attached to the mouth, I think the upper reaches of the river are its greatest charm. Here the stream winds through green rapier like bushes, and big-framed solemn-eyed bullocks, roused by the rattle of the rowlocks as one pulled up stream, raise their heads from the lush grass to graze curiously at the unaccustomed intruder.

Crown Allotment 155C was chosen as the mill site**, and following on from the trail blazed by the Corinella Coal Mining Company,

* Reproduced in full in *TWPT* February 2021 edition.

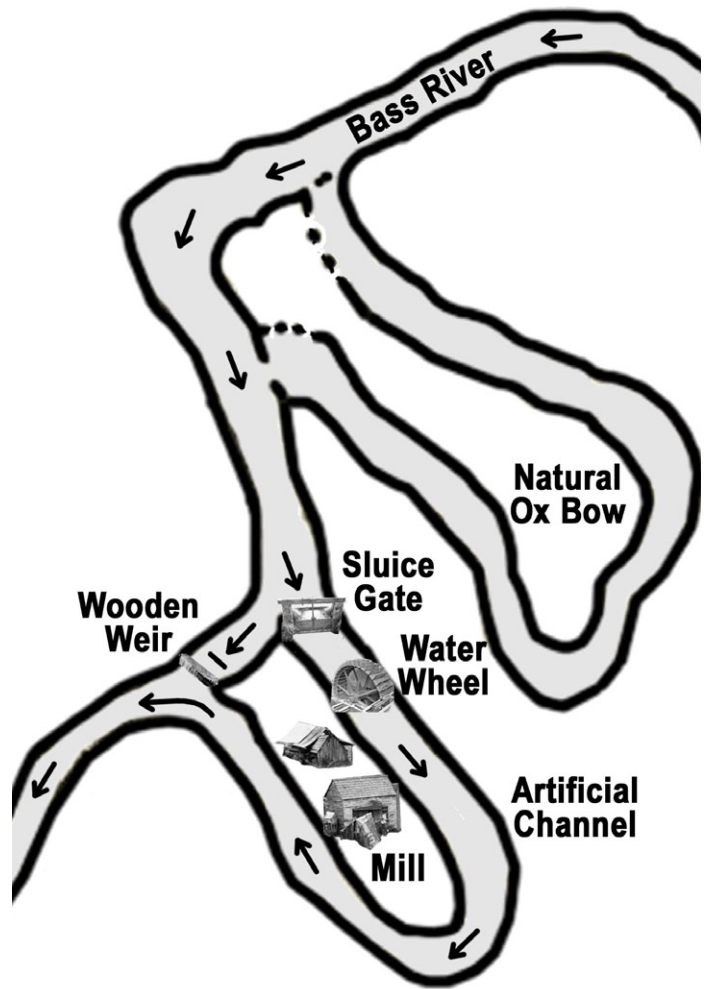
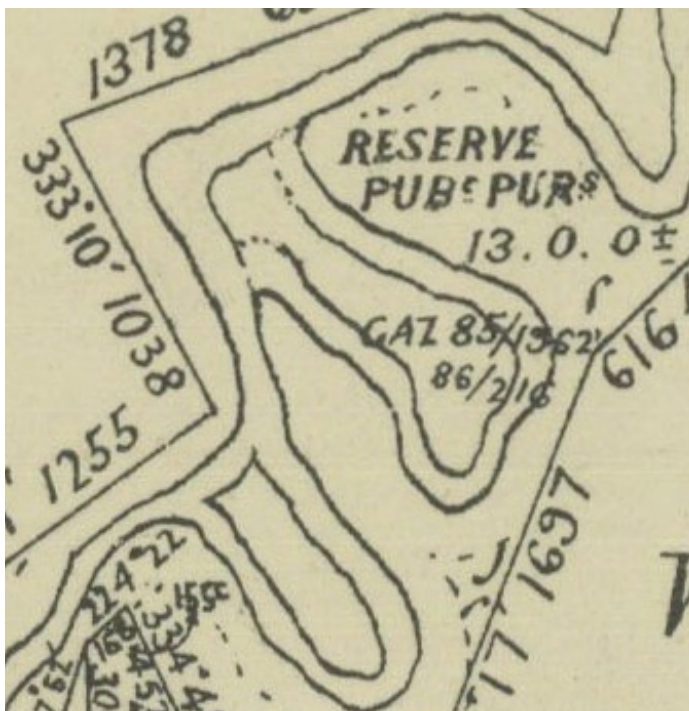
** Interestingly, if the Woods and Miller mill was in place before the 1869 Land Act, the allotment size and location would have been determined by the presence of the mill.

Deep Creek became the transshipment centre. The early presence and infrastructure provided by the CCMC may have even been the main factor in choosing the sites.

Allotment 155C is today very different to 150 years ago. The mill sat just to the north of the later Almurta railway station. However, unlike the more recent (historically speaking) station, nothing remains of the mill. Both ox bows (natural and excavated) are long gone, and any mill remnant has long been demolished or ploughed over and under.

With the Bass River at (future) Almurta chosen, construction began. First, a channel needed digging. From the maps included with this article, it is clear that the 'U' ox-bow is artificial. Why they didn't modify the natural ox-bow slightly to the north is puzzling. Maybe it was too wide and long or there was no suitable place for a weir. More likely, and this is reflected in the map, it dried up in the summer and maybe even then was being reclaimed by nature.

(continues on Page 20)



The Original Mill (continued from Page 19)

Regardless, the channel was dug and the water wheel assembled. It was probably mostly built of wood rather than metal, and almost certainly, given the financial constraint on Woods and Miller, was of the undershot type, which provided the least power of the three common methods of locomotion but was the cheapest to construct and maintain.

A wooden sluice gate to control the flow of water would have been placed either at or near the entrance to the channel with a wooden or rock weir placed further along the river to allow sufficient water to backup and feed the channel.

The main saw had to be near the water wheel. In the accompanying sketch, the mill complex is placed on the 'island' formed by the artificial channel. More prosaically, it was actually likely between the channel and the large ox bow.

When finally abandoned, it was undoubtedly stripped of any equipment or material that could be used elsewhere and then left to rot, which it would have slowly done.



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(Department of Environment,
Land, Water and Planning).



The course of the Bass River in 1891 (top) and 2021 (below). The base of both (natural and artificial) ox bows seem to have merged together to become the Bass River. The water wheel, sluice gate and weir sections are now farmland.

Clifton, Twiggan & Turner

Excerpts from Jan Harper's *Three Stops on the Line* (Kernot Hall and Reserve Committee, 2003):

In the early 1870s, Messrs. Mutlow and Clifton established the first saw mill on the Bass River, about 250 metres from where the Grantville-Almurta Road now is (lot 155)... Professional sawmillers who had settled at Grantville and Queensferry including Silas Brazier, purchased Mutlow's mill in 1876 and it became known as Brazier's Mill... There was another saw mill adjoining Brazier's on the Bass River, called Twiggan's Saw Mill, but nothing is known about it.

Twiggan is clearly a misreading of Quiggan, the perpetual misspelling of Quiggin. Handwriting being what it was in pre-typewriter days – often indecipherable – it isn't hard to see how the Qu became Tw. What is far less clear is how Clifton instead of Twiggan was matched with Mutlow.

Who was Clifton? Did he work for Quiggin at the mill?

From Joseph White's *100 Years Of History* (Shire of Bass and Phillip Island, 1974):

Another sawmiller to obtain a sawmill site and commence sawmilling was a man named Henry Giles Turner. He obtained his license on 1st January 1876 and continued operations until 1883 when he sold out to Alexander Stewart. The site of this mill is not known but it is thought to be Crown Allotment 158A.

CA 158A is mid-way between Brazier's Mill at Almurta and Stewart's Mill at Glen Forbes. Henry Turner does not appear in the 1876-1883 Phillip Island rate books. There was no 1st January 1876 *Victorian Government Gazette*, and his name doesn't appear in any of the January 1876 editions. A search of the *Trove* archive turned up nothing.

White's account is often muddled and often wrong, but unlike some amateur (and professional) historians, he doesn't make up 'facts' to fit some preconceived notion. It is usually based on something. If Turner's mill ever existed, it was clearly as peripheral as Lee's and left even less impression in the historical record. Namely, none, which for an operation which supposedly lasted seven years is puzzling.

And if you are wondering who Lee was, he was a sawmiller as peripheral as Turner, but who made slightly more of an impression in the historical record in much less time. But his is a story for another time.