

The Western Port Times

Grantville & Districts



Volume 5 Number 3

FREE

July 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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To two employees of William Lang while delivering a drayload of wood in November 1910.

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Mr. Thompson Snr. of French Island in 1904 learnt the hard way to be aware of faulty forest devils.

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A Trip To The Bass Settlement

A report in the *Leader* by a visitor to the McDonald's Track, Poowong, Brandy Creek area in 1880.

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Body at the Back Beach

In 1898 on Phillip Island. It was later identified as Alexander Clerk, a visitor to the area.

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The Minor Sawmillers

Part one of a two-parter, this one dealing with Joseph Lee and Alfred Selman, and an extra section looking at Henry Gyles Turner or, more accurately, H. G. Turner.

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Clearing Land By Explosives

Remember when you could purchase explosives at your local general store?

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Links to other historical groups

- Bass Valley Historical Society: www.facebook.com/groups/bassvalleyhistoricalsociety
- 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/
- Koo-Wee-Rup Swamp Historical Society: kooweerupswamphistory.blogspot.com.au/
- Korumburra & District Historical Society: www.korumburrahistory.com.au or PO Bo 329, 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*, 4 September 1896, page 2.

Local and General News

A site for a public hall has been reserved by the Commissioner of Crown Lands of 1 rood in the parish of Wonthaggi North, commencing at the intersection of the east side of the road forming the west boundary of the said allotment, and the south side of the road to Anderson's Inlet.

The football match, which was to have been played on the San Remo ground on Saturday last, did not take place in consequence of the Wonthaggi team not turning up, owing to the bad state of the weather and roads, which was rather disappointing to the Hastings men. It is to be hoped another match will be arranged between these two clubs before the season is over. A bit of a scratch match was played between the members of the Hastings team and a couple of local players combined.

Messrs. Hackett and Millwraith have thanked the ratepayers through our advertising columns for the support they have received during the elections.

By our advertising columns it is notified that McCartin and Co., will sell by auction at Bass on Wednesday, 16th September, in the pound yards, 400 head of cattle, horses and sheep. The auctioneer invites further entries.

On Monday last, in Mr. Kennons paddock, Newhaven, Mr. Peter Currie killed a snake. His attention was called to it by his dog "Remo" dragging at something in the grass, and on looking he found the dog had hold of him about the middle trying to pull his snake-ship out, when Peter came to his rescue and dragged him out by the tail and killed him. He measured 3 feet 4in. in length, and was full of young ones.

The following applications for leases have been approved of:—Wonthaggi, Alfred R. Edwards and Patrick Kelly.

The Great Victoria Colliery Company are still carting coal to Queensferry pier and should have about 60 tons ready for shipment. The coal is of first-class quality and a bright clear colour. The tramway survey is being pushed on with from Queensferry to the mine, and is expected to be completed in a few days.

The following is the report of the Great Victoria Colliery, Bass, 25th August:—Main tunnel driven further 30ft. No.1 S. driven 27ft., and air shaft drive driven 18ft. Coal in faces very good. Hope to complete surveying and levelling of tramway by the end of the week.

The residents of Korumburra are anxious

that sittings of the County Court should be held at that town, and a deputation accompanied by Messrs. Mason and Downward, M's.L.A., waited on the Minister of Justice on Wednesday with this object in view. It was pointed out that at present the nearest County Court is held at Warragul, and that litigants from Korumburra are put to much inconvenience and expense in having to take their cases to that court. A petition in support of the application was presented by the deputation, and Mr. Cuthbert promised to confer with the County Court judges on the matter. If they reported in favor of the establishment of sittings of the court at Korumburra he hoped to be able to grant the request.

Also

From the *San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 11 September 1896, page 2.

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

Council will be held to-morrow. The principal business will be the election of President.

Mr. Grayden crossed 24 head of cattle yesterday from Newhaven to San Remo. A bull, after swimming him over, turned round and recrossed to the Island. On hunting up the cattle this morning only three could be found, the other 21 having strayed away.

On account of the lowness of the tide this morning, the steamer Genista ran aground about half-way up the Channel, and did not get off till half-past ten, too late to catch the morning train. It is high time the Government did something to this Channel. If a few hundred pounds were spent in clearing part of the Channel, the rush of tide would keep it clear.

Several new coal mining leases have been pegged out this week at Kilcunda, Wonthaggi and Powlett.

Captain Henderson has bought a small steamer to tow the schooners in and out of the Bass River. She has been used in the fishing trade up to the time of purchasing her.

The Bass show ground and pound yards has been withdrawn from sale. The sale was to have been held on Wednesday last.

The time for receiving tenders for several shire contracts advertised in our last issue has been extended till October meeting.

The cheap excursion trains to and from excursion districts this week have been well

(continues on Page 4)

Local and General News (continued from Page 3)

patronised, and the number of passengers book [sic] shows that these trips are widely appreciated. On the trip to Sale and other Gippsland stations there were 400 excursionists outward, while 700 travelled to Melbourne from that district. The train to Leongatha, on the Great Southern line, and the Outtrim branch, which ran on Wednesday, carried 350 into the country and 450 back to Melbourne.

Also

From the *San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 18 September 1896, page 2.

The inspector of the municipal books and accounts visited the Phillip Island shire office on Wednesday, and found everything to his satisfaction.

In our fourth page where a list of names of councillors and auditors appear, the names were omitted, but will be rectified in our next issue.

In our advertising columns it is announced that the steamer Maitland will sail from Melbourne every alternate Wednesday at 2 o'clock. She sails for San Remo next Wednesday arriving here at about 7 o'clock in the morning.

On Friday morning last the Genista lay aground for two or three hours. In our last issue it was stated that she ran aground on account of the lowness of water, but Captain Clarke informs us that it was the buoy that had dragged its anchor. It is not known whether it was the force of the tide or a vessel anchored at any time through the night.

Also

From the *San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 25 September 1896, page 2.

We have received the Australian Sunday School Teacher, a nicely printed and a very useful little work. In it there are two pictures—one a view of San Remo from Newhaven, and the other a picture of the whole of the children and teachers of the San Remo Sunday school. There is also an article on San Remo, which will be reprinted in our next issue.

The s.s Maitland arrived here on Thursday morning at 8 o'clock, from Melbourne, with cargo, etc., and left the same morning for the Gippsland lakes.

We regret to learn that Mr. T. Bergin has been laid up during the last week, suffering from several boils on the neck, but he is now, we are happy to state, progressing slowly towards recovery.

From *The Western Port Times*, 6 February 1903, page 2.

Bush Fires

Extensive bush fires have been raging nearly all through the district.

On Saturday a large fire started at Bass and passed through the properties of Messrs P. Anderson, Hoddinott, Stephenson, Hardings, Rosevear, Coleman, Dwyer and Littlejohn, destroying in all about 400 ac. of grass, chains of fencing and roasting alive a large number of sheep.

At Grantville, on Sunday, about mid-day a fire started at the back of the Show grounds. It made good headway and had soon passed over the road towards Messrs Park's and Cully's houses, high dead trees were burning close to the houses, and fears for their safety were entertained. The sparks and pieces of fire were falling all round near the homes. Several of the townspeople were congregated about, so as to be near should any of the buildings ignite, but towards evening the fire had spread as far as it could with the wind blowing from that quarter. During the night several large trees were burnt through. Whilst church services were being held in the hall, the congregation were somewhat startled by a large tree falling a short distance away.

Hundreds of acres of grass, and scrub were burnt at French Island. At about 11 o'clock in the morning the roar of the fire through the scrub could be heard at Grantville. At night the fires illuminated the whole of the country round. Strange to say no accident happened with stock and the greatest damage was done to fencing.

There was a large quantity of new timber on Grantville Show Grounds, but no damage was caused to it by the fire, although it passed within dozen yards of the timber.

A bush fire broke out on Mr Samuel Sandhurst's farm at Yannathan, on Saturday and did a great deal of damage. The men on the property endeavoured to beat back the fire, but it overpowered them and destroyed 140 bags of oats and 50 tons of straw, besides a large amount of grass and fencing.

The week before last a 17 roomed house, including outhouses, were destroyed by fire. It was situated on French Island, opposite Stoney [sic] Point and was owned by Mr Harvey, who erected it about eighteen months ago. It is rumoured that the fire policy was £1800, which is nothing like its value.

Nearly all the fires have burnt out, and left the places where they were burning very clear.

**For bronchial coughs, take
Woods' Great Peppermint Cure, 1/6**

From the *Wonthaggi Sentinel and State Town Miner*, Friday, September 16, 1910, page 3

“Where Were The Police?”

A Report and a Reprimand

Note: the inconsistent punctuation in the original has been corrected.

At a committee meeting of the Progress Association on Monday evening, the secretary was asked to give an explanation concerning a communication which had been forwarded to the Chief Secretary.

Mr. F. Murphy said he had been informed that the local constable had been hauled over the coals on account of certain statements contained in a letter which the secretary had written to the Chief Secretary. He desired to hear the facts of the case from Mr. Mesley.

Mr. W. E. Brunt asked that the letter should be read.

Mr. Mesley said he had been instructed at the last general meeting to write to the Chief Secretary drawing attention to the trafficking [*sic*] which was being carried on in connection with the sale of liquor. He had neglected to do so and on Monday last several members of the committee spoke to him concerning a disturbance which occurred in Graham street the previous evening. The inadequacy of the police service was commented on; also the number of drunken men who were at times to be seen in the street. He wrote as directed and drew attention to the riotous [*sic*] behaviour of a number of men on the previous evening, also to the number of two-gallon licenses which were held in the district, and to the alleged illicit traffic in drink which was being carried on. He asked if it would be possible to have sly grog-selling prevented and suggested that extra police assistance should be granted for the town. He was not positive of the wording of the letter, and he did not remember having used the word “riot.” He had since been told that the local constable had been asked for an explanation.

Mr. G. Heyward said that if the word “riot” was used it was a grave error, as such a report would prove detrimental to the town. He thought the town was well-conducted and no fault could be found with the police supervision.

Mr. Mesley: That supervision amounts to one policeman for 4,000 people.

Mr. R. L. Laidlaw said the constable had asked him if he heard the row on the Sunday night in question and he said “Yes,” and that a number of residents had asked, “Where were the police?” He told the constable for

his own benefit. He was closing his premises at 11 p.m. and about half-a-dozen men were shouting, swearing, and misbehaving themselves near his shop.

Mr. Corcoran said he did not hear any row. He knew the constable had been asked for a report on the matter.

Mr. Crombie said the secretary had done quite right in drawing attention to the matter.

Mr. Heyward said the attention of the local policeman should have been called to the matter before it was advertised in Melbourne. Wonthaggi did not want advertising in that direction, and in his opinion it would do the town more harm than good. The policeman should be told to do his duty and if he failed he should be reprimanded [*sic*]. In fairness to the policeman he should have been notified, and he thought the report should have been first made to him. One policeman could not be expected to be in half-a-dozen place at once.

The action of the secretary was endorsed.

The committee agreed that in future all such complaints should first be made to the local constable.

Mr. Mesley said he considered it a crying disgrace that only one policeman was stationed here — one policeman to nearly 5000 people. The whole of the residents were not law-abiding — not by any means — and he thought extra police protection was urgently required. He moved:—That the Chief Secretary be written to asking that additional police be stationed here and that proper quarters be provided for them.

Mr. F. Bird seconded.

Mr. Brunt said he had been informed by Inspector Dungy that the residents would not report petty thefts to the local constable. Unless reports were made no notice could be taken, and extra police would not be stationed here. If the row complained of had been reported on the following day the constable may have succeeded in bringing the offender to book.

Mr. Murphy said the conduct of the town was a credit to the residents and the State, and the record of offences did not warrant one policeman being stationed here. All petty thefts should be reported to the police.

(continues on Page 6)

Where Were The Police (continued from Page 5)

Mr. Heyward supported Mr. Murphy's remarks. He said he had seen more "drunks" in Collins-st. in one night than he had seen in Wonthaggi altogether. It was a mistake to cry "stinking fish." In his opinion the miners were the best-conducted body of men in Victoria.

Mr. Carling: It is the business people who are complained of.

Mr. Corcoran said he knew of many cases of petty thefts. Mr. Matthews had lost over 5,000 feet of timber. The theft was reported, but it was impossible to trace it. He (Mr. Corcoran) had lost 1,600 feet of timber in one night.

Mr. Bird said petty thieving would always be rife. He attributed it largely to travellers. He thought extra police were required.

Mr. Crombie said one policeman was not enough for Wonthaggi. The police should be present at all public meetings.

A Voice:—Was the policeman present on Sunday night's political meeting?

Mr. Richmond: No; he was at the theatre. The motion was carried.

* * *

From the *Dandenong Journal*, Thursday 31 January 1929, page 6

Lang Lang Jetty

A grant of £1,000 for the construction of a jetty at Lang Lang was sought by a deputation of councillors and residents of the Cranbourne Shire to the Minister for Public Works (Mr. Chandler) last week.

Mr. Downward, M.L.A., who introduced the deputation, said that the proposed jetty would be 500ft. in length.

Cr. Wildes remarked that his shire had been asking for the jetty for 15 years. A previous Minister (Mr. Goulde) had promised it.

Mr. Cole (chairman of the Foreshore Trust committee) said that the present jetty was in a dilapidated condition. The site of the proposed jetty was excellent, at Stockyard Point, about two miles from the present jetty. It would be in permanent deep water.

Mr. Chandler agreed to enquire about the promise which, it was said, had been made. Only one amount of money was available for ports and harbours each year, and he was not sure how it had been allocated. The building of the Tankerton jetty had been definitely promised also. He would see what he could do; he was not sure how the fund stood, but he knew that there were some large commitments.

Crs. Burhop and Stafford accompanied Cr. Wildes on the deputation.

From the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 27 February 1878

Griffiths' Point Police Court

Saturday, 23rd February.

Before Messrs D. Reid, S. West, Wm. Harbison, A. Stewart and M. Turnbull J.P.

The following parents were fined for neglecting to send their children to the Bass State School the requisite number of days for the quarter ending 31st December 877 [sic]; John Haide 2s. 6d., Frederick Dowel 2s. 6d., Henry Kernot 2s. 6d., Thomas Dwyer 7s. 6d., Robert Muldoon 12s. 6d., Patrick Quinvilan 5s., James Hawkins 2s. 6d., Ephraim Misson 2s. 6d., T. Hamilton 2s. 6d., Frederick Palmer 5s. Other cases were dismissed through sickness of the children, and other causes; also the case against Mrs. Sarah King, who proved to the satisfaction of the bench that her daughter had attended another state school the requisite number of days.

John West, was fined ten shillings for assaulting Constable Deacon outside his store at Cowes on the 22nd December last, Mr. James McKean, Solicitor, appearing on behalf of the constable.

Amos West, charged with a similar offence, was let off, Mr. McKean withdrawing the charge.

Isaac Ross, a boatman, appeared at the instance [sic] of James Deacon, Crown Lands Bailiff, charged with unauthorized occupation of Crown Lands. Mr McKean prosecuted on behalf of the crown. This was a most important case, touching the interest of every boatman and fisherman in Victoria. — The defendant had purchased a sailing boat, which he wished to lengthen, and put her up on the beach to do so. The regulations under the Act state that a fee shall be charged for sites for building or repairing boats or ships. The question arose as to whether those regulations intended to apply to persons repairing their own boats or to those who did so for trade. The bench took the latter view, and dismissed the case, although the defendant had been previously fined on a former occasion for the same boat, and was instructed to remove his material within three days.

D. A. Simpson

Chemist.

LOCH and LANG LANG.

Phone 4, Loch.

From the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 3 January 1883

Shire Of Phillip Island And Woolamai

Saturday, 23rd December 1882

Present: Councillor H. F. Norton (President), A. Stewart, J. Hayes, M. Turnbull, S. West, and A. Aldridge.

Minutes of previous meeting were read and confirmed. Outward correspondence was read and approved of.

Correspondence

From F. A. Nowell, with reference to fencing road through his selection—Clerk of Works to report at next meeting.

From A. Aldridge, T. Bergin, J. Sibbritt, and S. West, asking for renewal of their slaughtering licenses.—Granted.

From J. Richardson, asking for road to be cleared.—Clerk of Works to report.

From Harrap and Jenner, asking for extension of time on contract—To stand over.

From Secretary of Lands Department, stating that land applied for to be reserved, would be subdivided and sold by auction should a payable seam of coal be found in the district.—Received.

From Creswick relief fund committee, asking for the co-operation of the Council.—Referred to the President.

From Oriental Bank corporation, re overdraft.—Received.

From Mr. Walsh, asking for extension of time to complete valuation.—Granted.

From Mr. Smithurst, applying for balance of account due on his contract.—Secretary to write stating that he is fully paid.

From F. Bauer, drawing attention to the dangerous state of bridges at the Nobby.—Received.

From Post Office Department, stating that no funds were available for extension of the telegraph to Hastings, and that the Department could not grant a daily mail to Cowes and Griffiths' Point.—Referred to President.

From W. J. Gilchrist, stating that the name of the shire was "The Shire of Phillip Island."—Received.

From ratepayers in Jumbunna applying for bridge across the Bass.—Referred to the Clerk of Works for report.

From Rate Collector, stating that he caused 53 summonses to be issued for rates, and obtained verdicts in every case with the exception of those amounts paid into Court.

From Clerk of Works, re Guy's Creek Bridge.—No action to be taken for the present.

From Treasurer of the Shire, forwarding guarantee policy receipt.—Received.

Accounts amounting to £210 0s 9d were ordered to be paid.

The report of the committee, recommending the following tenders to be accepted, was adopted:—Contract 277, J. Emery, £8; contract 280, S. Davies, £13.

On the motion of Councillors Hayes and West, the mover and President were deputed to join with the Shire of Buln Buln in a deputation to the Public Works Department to obtain a grant for a bridge over the Bass.

On the motion of Councillors West and Turnbull it was agreed that as Messrs Harrap and Jenner had not finished their contract No.262 in time permission should be given them to do so in September 1883.

Tenders were ordered to be called for 10 chains clearing Fowler's Parade, Painting Shire Hall, and fencing ground of Shire Hall. Notices of motion were handed in from Councillor West to raise salary of Clerk of Works to £160 per annum. Councillor Turnbull to build stabling at the Shire Hall; Councillor Norton to alter days of Council meetings as per schedule.

Council adjourned till 20th January.

From the *Border Morning Mail and Riverina Times*, Saturday 10 February 1912, page 4

Man Mistaken For A Duck

In consequence of using a white handkerchief to keep away mosquitoes, Bert Shewes, a laborer, 22 years of age, living at Woodleigh, near Nyora, met with a serious shooting accident at French Island shortly after 4 o'clock on Thursday morning. Skewes was one of a duck shooting party and a companion, Frank Mcgrath, seeing the white handkerchief *[sic]*, flutter in the darkness, mistook it for a duck, and taking aim, fired a shot from a breechloading gun at a distance of about 30 yards. Skewes' face was peppered with shot, and his mouth and teeth badly damaged. Fortunately, however, none of the pellets entered his eyes. He was attended in the first instance by a medical man at Lang Lang, and afterwards removed to the Melbourne Hospital. His condition is not serious.

From the *Argus*, Saturday 30 September 1950, page 6

No Sport For Softies

By Barney Porter; Photographs by Len Drummond

There are so many deer in some parts of Victoria that they are classified as pests. Hunting them is an exciting, but strenuous, Australian sport.

If your idea of fun is to cover interminable miles of scrub, swamp and sand hummocks at a jog trot, carrying a high-powered rifle, and never making the slightest sound, then deer hunting is the sport for you—except among the miners of Wonthaggi who do it for recreation, and to rid the properties of their farmer friends of vermin.

Photographer Len Drummond and I found out that deer hunting at Tarwin Lower is like taking a toughening-up course for the Korea Force – with marksmanship thrown in.

We spent a weekend at it, in the company of workers from the Wonthaggi State Mine, with a sprinkling of tanners and businessmen thrown in. They are a happy-go-lucky crowd, whose main interest is in caring for their rifles and their dogs.

The last hunt started in the bar of Geoff Jongbloed's River View Hotel, when Keith Fisher mentioned casually that wild deer were playing havoc with fodder crops on his farm. That was enough.

Lynn Ollington turned up with his dogs, Spotty, Rambler, and The Queen; Paddy Brennocks lined up with his Peter; Arthur Smale brought along Pongo and Joe, and Jock Davies added to the pack his three bloodhounds, Monty, Rowdy, and Cobber.

Many stories are told about these dogs and these shooters. How Cobber put up a deer at Jindivick, a couple of years ago, chased him for two days and finally cornered him on the verandah of a farm house at Neerim miles away. And Ike Studd, regarded for years as one of the leading bushmen of the district, is proud of telling how he hunted for 14 years before he got his first deer.

"It happened one Easter Monday," he said. "The boys had been [unclear word] me and I said, "when I shoot a deer it will be between the eyes and no mucking about. Less than an hour later I was wading through the swamp at Tullaree when I sighted a big doe. I got her between the eyes at 100 yards."

The hunters put up their first deer early in the morning in a spot known locally as the Blue Hole. This is a swamp that has never been dry. It is so deep that nobody has ever been able to get bottom in the centre. Lynn Ollington, with his dogs, and Arthur Smale

were beating the edge of the swamp when Lynn found deer tracks. Before he could warn the others, a big stag, weighing from 300 to 400 lb., bounded up in front of him and headed for the rough country towards the coast, with Spotty close on his heels, followed by the rest of the pack.

The dogs chased that deer for a couple of hours, and had just turned it back within range of the waiting line of shooters when a couple of "City Slickers" began taking pot shots with a .22 repeater rifle at a pair of swans swimming on the Blue Hole. The shots confused the dogs, and alarmed the deer, which doubled on his tracks and got away.

The hunters took a poor view of that incident.

Early in the afternoon another deer was found, but it got out of Fisher's property, crossed the Lower Tarwin road and escaped in the Tullaree swamp.

Shortly before dusk, Martin ("Deadshot")

(continues on Page 9)



Lynn Ollington holds off one of his dogs and inspects the deer he finally shot after an all day chase by a score of hunters.

No Sport For Softies (continued from Page 8)

Kane, who claims that he only takes one bullet when he hunts because that is all he needs, was beating through The Cups swamp with Angus McDonald, manager of the Wonthaggi Co-operative, Lynn Ollington, and Eddie Wardle, a miner, when they surprised a doe and her fawn.

In the half light, the doe got away into Tullaree Swamp, but the fawn, which was quite a good size, led the hunters a merry chase for nearly an hour before Lynn Ollington killed it with a bullet behind the ear.

The hunters were kind. They quartered the fawn and distributed the venison among the visitors with an invitation to their Deerhunt Ball on October 7, when deer will be barbecued to provide supper for the dancers.

P.S.—This might escape the checker for the classified ads. section. FOR SALE.—One .22 repeater rifle. Apply, "City Slickers," this office.

From the *Age*, 16 September 1948, page 2: News of the Day

Deer Hunters' Ball

Lower Tarwin, on the Tarwin River flats, is a picturesque little South Gippsland dairying centre, 20 miles from Wonthaggi.

To it each weekend during the recent winter Wonthaggi deer hunters have travelled and shot many deer, both Sambur (the big fellow with the antlers) and Hog (red deer about the size of a sheep).

To conclude their association with the Lower Tarwin shooting mates, the Wonthaggi hunters have hired the little Lower Tarwin public hall for a deer hunters' ball. Wonthaggi's best orchestra has been engaged and the money raised will go to the building of a tennis court outside the hall and alongside the river.

Cream cakes and sponges will be provided by the wives of the Lower Tarwin shooters, but the Wonthaggi "boys" are taking the Tuesday before off and going out to shoot a deer—they hope—for the supper. They know that there are few things better than venison sandwiches.

From the *Age*, Friday 19 April 1912, page 8

Deer Hunt At Lang Lang

Lang Lang, Thursday.

A deer hunt took place at Lang Lang yesterday on the Agricultural College's leasehold. About 50 residents, with horses and hounds, spent the day hunting the deer, which were dislodged from the dense ti-tree cover. As a result of the day's sport, which was conducted under the superintendence of the Fisheries and Game department, thirteen deer were killed. Periodical onslaughts are made on the deer in this manner, with a view to reducing their numbers, owing to the damage they do to the crops.

From *The Western Port Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 10 November 1899, page 2

Accident At Grantville

The long list of recent casualties in this district received an addition last Friday morning, when a bolt took place on the main road close to the township. Two employes of Mr. W. B. Lang, named respectively Frederick Elvey and Wm. Rowland were coming towards Grantville with a drayload of wood, and when nearing Little Deep Creek the horse became unmanageable and bolted. Elvey was thrown violently to the ground, and the horse rushed at and attempted to jump the rails, which are erected to block the traffic from the old bridge, with the result that the animal was caught in the rails, and stopped. Messrs Cully and Parks, who witnessed the accident, went at once to the assistance of Elvey, who appeared to be much injured, where he was attended by Dr. Daly. It was found that he had sustained a severely cut right hand and arm, his legs were much bruised one of the wheels having evidently passed over him. He is now slowly recovering. Rowland had got off the dray just before the bolt took place, and so escaped injury. The horse was uninjured.

Carmichael's Garage

Official R.A.C.V. Service Station, San Remo

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All Types of General Repairs.

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BREAKDOWN TRUCK — IF IN TROUBLE RING SAN REMO 20.

Four Weddings and a Funeral

From the *Great Southern Advocate*, Thursday 9 February 1905, page 3: Orange Blossoms

Reece and Wilson

A very pretty wedding took place at Krowera lately, when Mr. William Wilson and Miss C. Reece, niece of Mr. C. Luke, were united in the bonds of matrimony by the Rev. R. B. Mearns. The pretty little church was suitably decorated for the occasion and all went merrily as a marriage bell. Mr. James Luke was best man and Mr. F. Reece groomsman.

Misses B. Reece and Alice Luke were bridesmaids. The bride was gowned in cream silk, twentieth century style, trimmed with chiffon, wreath and veil decked with sprays of orange blossom. The bridesmaids wore dresses of cream voile and chiffon, and carried shower bouquets, gifts of the bride's mother.

There were a very large number present to witness the interesting ceremony. After the nuptial knot had been tied the Wedding March was played by Miss Thomson. An adjournment was made to the residence of Mr. Wilson, brother of the bridegroom where about 50 guests sat down to a sumptuous *[sic]* wedding breakfast laid out in a large marquee. In the evening dancing was indulged in by a large number who had assembled to wish the happy couple "Health, wealth, and prosperity." Mr. and Mrs. Wilson left for Melbourne en route for Sydney. The bride's travelling dress was brown voile, with hat to match.

A large number of presents were received by the young couple including several cheques and a family Bible from the church authorities as this was the first wedding celebrated at the Krowera church.

From the *Age*, 2 October 1937, page 5: To-day's Bride

Crawford and Syme

A gown of magnolia satin embossed with chenille flowers, will be worn by Miss Winifred Helen Syme, youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Melton Syme, of "Braidswood," Nyora, and of Orrong-road East St. Kilda, for her marriage this afternoon to Mr. Colin Crawford, eldest son of the late Mr. R. C. Crawford, of Yoorhooga, Corinella, and of Mrs. J. A. Agar. The ceremony will take place at Melbourne Grammar School Chapel, and will be followed by a reception at Tudor Court.

The bride's sister, Miss Jean Syme, and Misses Honor Mitchell and Carol Morrison, will attend her. Mr. Alex. Harris will act as best man, and Messrs. Tony Blair and John Crawford as groomsmen.

From the *Great Southern Advocate*, 15 November 1906, page 5

Brazil and Collins

On the 31st October, Mr. J. Brazil, of Yinnar, Gippsland, was married to Miss Kate Collins of "Erindale" Woodleigh. The wedding took place at St. Vincent's Church, Loch. The Rev. Father Keating officiated, and celebrated Nuptial Mass before the ceremony.

The bride wore a white silk and wreath veil, and was given away by her father. The bridesmaids were Miss Collins and Miss Sis. Broderick, the former's dress being a pretty shade of grey voile, and the latter's cream silk. The bridegroom's gifts were:—Gold ring and gold brooch respectively. To the bride gold chain and cross set with pearls. After the ceremony, breakfast was served at "Erindale" the residence of the bride's parents. In the evening, a large wedding dance was held, and at which a great number of guests were present. The bridal party left to catch the afternoon train en route for Geelong. A large number of very pretty and useful presents were received.

From the *Dandenong Journal*, Wednesday 27 October 1954, page 7: Personalia

Jeremiah and O'Meara

Of Gippsland interest will be the marriage of Miss Estella Freda O'Meara, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. T. O'Meara, of Ardoch, Almurta, and Mr. Geoffrey Keith Jeremiah, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. M. H. Jeremiah, of Gembrook Rd., Pakenham, which will be celebrated at Scots' Church, Dandenong, on 6th November, at 3 p.m. The Rev. J. A. Finlay will officiate.

From the *Age*, Saturday 11 September 1937, page 26.

Mr. John Denham

Mr. John Denham, whose death occurred at a private hospital in Ringwood on Wednesday, was a colonist of 79 years, having come with his parents to Victoria from Scotland in the ship Donald McKay in 1858. He lived in Cranbourne during his youth, and later took up dairy farming at Kooweerup. He was an Ayrshire breeder and cheese maker for some years, and subsequently had a store, butchery and bakery. He was rate collector for Cranbourne shire for nine years. He acted as a judge at Grantville and Dalyston shows for a number of years, and was a former captain of Tooradin Rifle Club. He lived at Cowes, Phillip Island, until twelve months ago. He has left a widow, four sons and a daughter.

From the *Weekly Times*, 7 September 1929, page 44: Wonthaggi and Dalyston – a Progressive Dairy Farming District

Wonthaggi 1929



The Dalyston Wonthaggi Butter Factory



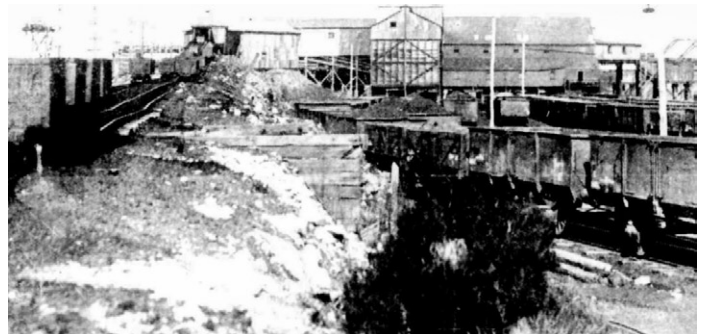
Panorama of Wonthaggi



Bright Avenue, Wonthaggi



The Post Office



Main brace, State Coal Mine

Also from 1929...



Above: Entrance to McBride tunnel, State Coal Mine, March 1929, showing mine entrance with tracks carrying coal trucks running into mine; notices above mine entrance regarding explosives. Photo: State Library of Victoria. Donated by Roger Mulligan via the Dept. of Infrastructure, 2006.

Above right: State Coal Mine, Wonthaggi, March 1929. View towards wooden buildings on timber supports, rail line carrying coal trucks running into buildings, poppet head in front of buildings, mounds of dirt or slag on right. Photo: State Library of Victoria. Donated by Roger Mulligan via the Dept. of Infrastructure, 2006.



* * *

From the *Mornington Standard*, Saturday 29 October 1904, page 2: Crib Point.

The Tree Fought Back

Mr Thompson, sen., of French Island, met with a rather serious accident on Thursday, 20th inst., whilst in the act of pulling down a tree with a forest devil. The ropes broke, and Mr Thompson was struck and thrown heavily to the ground, being rendered unconscious for some time. Although still weak, he is progressing favourably.

From the *Leader*, Saturday 19 June 1880, page 2

A Trip To The Bass Settlement

[By Our Travelling Reporter]

(Re-paragraphed for the sake of clarity.)

The open country about the mouth of the Bass River, on Western Port Bay, was settled in very early times, but a few miles back from the coast there is a heavy forest with dense scrub, which was, until four years ago, considered wholly unfit for either the selector or the squatter. The discovery made some ten years ago, that the Gippsland scrub about Brandy Creek grew upon exceedingly rich soil, and the rush for selections in that region which took place shortly afterwards, when Dr. Dobson, Professor Strong, and other professional men endeavored to get blocks without complying with the residence clause, was destined to bring about a wonderful change in the Bass country.

The Brandy Creek land, which is now represented by the thriving townships of Buln Buln, Warragul and Drouin, was rapidly taken up for many miles on each side of the railway line, and soon it was found that there was no land left for selection near enough to the line to be any value in a country where the difficulties of road-making were so great. It was known, however, that the same tract of rich country extended southward to near the coast.

A number of enterprising selectors therefore began to turn their attention to reaching it from the Western Port side, and, following up McDonald's track, a Government surveyor's track, which had been cut from near the Bay to Morwell, succeeded, about four years ago, in forming a settlement on the river, about twenty-four miles in a straight line from its mouth. The tide of selection soon flowed into this channel, an unbroken extent of good land stretching to the east and south as far as it was followed, and the settlement became known by the name of Poowong and Jeetho.

It was to reach this now Bass settlement that I set out from Drouin one day last week on horseback, in company with a resident of the district. About two years ago the boundaries of the settlement from the north and the south so nearly joined that a blazed track was made through, by which the Gippsland railway could be reached, and in course of time a dray track was cut through the scrub by the selectors at great cost. Upon the understanding that the selectors were

willing to finish the laborious and expensive work they had commenced, the Government called for tenders for the carrying of a tri-weekly mail by coach along this route — a cheap way, the settlers think, of getting mail roads.

At about half-past eleven on a fine morning we left Drouin to go to Poowong, which is fifteen miles distant in a direct line, but twenty miles by the selectors' track. There had not been a dry day for a fortnight, and we were encouraged before starting by accounts of floods and accidents which had occurred the day before, owing to the creeks being up 5 feet over the road. The floods had subsided during the night, and we were in no danger of drowning, but the roads were so bad that the accounts of them we had heard came far short of the reality. Mud, swamps and "gluepots" continued all the way without any change, except that which consisted in getting worse and worse as we proceeded.

After travelling about ten miles, we arrived at the Longwarry Creek, where we found it necessary to feed our horses for half-an-hour to keep them in heart for the worst part of the journey, which was yet to be gone through. Clifton's Hotel, at which we halted, is not a pretentious establishment, being only a slab hut with bark roof and earthen floor; but it is appreciated by travellers along this track as a convenient resting-place and a point at which all the news as to the state of the roads and the progress of the different wayfarers can be ascertained.

Here we learned that the day before the Longwarry Creek had been running 5 feet deep over the road, that the coach had broken down, and that Clifton's small barrel of beer had been left in the bush some miles back. The coachman had left the waggonette, which he called the coach, and ridden one of the horses on to Poowong with the mail. I was not surprised that the coach had broken down, but I was astonished that it had been attempted to take a conveyance over such wild country. Nearer Drouin we met several selectors with pack horses, and this means of carriage, I learned, was the only method available during the long winter to the settlers of the scrub country. On my way

(continues on Page 13)

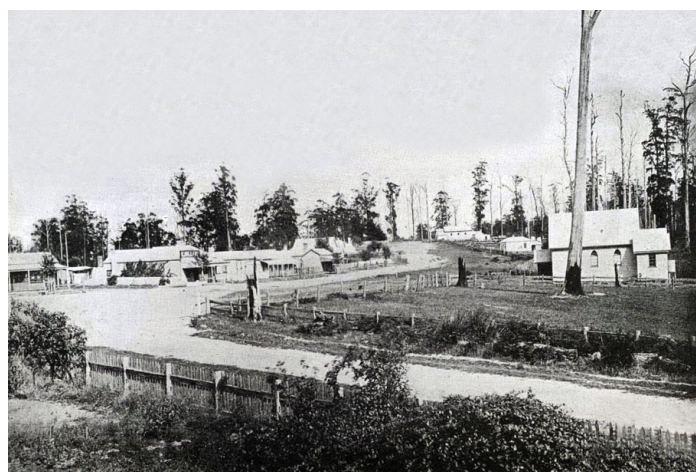
A Trip To The Bass Settlement (continued from Page 12)

back I met the coach with three passengers aboard stuck in the middle of a swamp, one of the horses being down in the mud. The coachman got the horse up, but I feel sure he would never get the coach out.

Before reaching Longwarry we met a clergyman who the day before had attempted to walk to Poowong on some pastoral duty, but who had been compelled to abandon the undertaking and take shelter in a selector's hut, owing to the state of the roads. He was "roughing it in the bush" in earnest, and he only told us his profession when we, taking him for a selector, asked him where he had "pegged out."

Hurrying on, our horses much refreshed by the feed and the half-hour's rest, we plunged and struggled through the remaining ten miles of the journey, arriving at my companion's residence at about half-past six. Owing to the height and denseness of the timber, darkness had set in about an hour before; but we did not suffer much from the want of light. The hazel scrub had been entered a few miles back, and it was therefore impossible to get off the track, while as to the trench of puddle which we had to plough through, we had to trust entirely to the horses, even in daylight, and the darkness did not affect them, while it hid dangers from us.

The difficulties of travelling where it takes seven hours to go twenty miles are extraordinarily great, and the character of the country may be judged when in obtaining such a road a circuit of twenty miles was made in order to reach a point only fifteen miles distant. It is necessary to state, however, that the road, which is cut through the scrub and forest, was decided upon partly owing to the settlements of the north and south nearly joining at Longwarry, and that



Poowong, 1895

it is now known that a better track might have been obtained if an almost straight line had been followed.

What attracts people to such a place? One would think that some rich goldfield had been discovered, and that the hope of making immense fortunes had induced adventurers to rush to the scene; but it is not often that the wish to possess 320 acres of land makes men willing to contend against such extraordinary difficulties. The wonderful fertility, however, of the hazel with the fact that the climate is moist, and the district is less than 70 miles from Melbourne, has developed a spirit of enterprise and adventure which it was considered nothing but a gold discovery could call forth. Some men always sink a "shicer" at the diggings, and some men have the misfortune to peg out bad land in the best of districts.

Along my route I observed a patch of fertile land at King Parrot Creek, three miles from Drouin, a more extensive tract at Musk Creek, four miles further on, and an extensive stretch of fine scrub country along the Longwarry Creek, ten miles from Drouin, while the scrub land of the Bass was reached about three miles before arriving at Poowong, but all the intervening country is poor. It consists of a messmate forest, with a poor grey soil covered with heath, or a hard kind of grass called cutting or spear-grass. What such land was selected for I do not know; it has been taken up all along the track, and it looks as if some of those obliging individuals who show selectors land at so much per block have been working upon the inexperience of many who had caught the land fever. There is scarcely an unselected block along this road, and, in some cases, expensive houses and improvements are being put upon the land by townspeople who have saved some money, and have hit upon a quick and sure way of getting rid of it.

"Is this scrub land as good, after all, as they say it is?" This question is often asked, and is frequently replied to unfavorably by those who either know nothing about it or argue like the fox about the grapes. From frequent visits and careful observation in different parts of the hazel scrub country, I am quite satisfied that the soil is exceedingly rich, and that the moistness of the climate adds materially to its value. Taking its climate, soil and nearness to Melbourne into account, I have no hesitation in saying that in no part

(continues on Page 14)

A Trip To The Bass Settlement (continued from Page 13)

of the colony would a form of cleared land, with good railway or road communication, be more valuable than in this scrub, not excepting Tower-hill itself, which is saying a great deal. I speak advisedly, however, and I have been in all parts of the colony worth visiting.

The Bass is second to none of the scrub districts, yet there is no part of the colony where a selection would be worth less at the present time for the purposes of getting a living. The land has to be cleared, roads have to be made, and in the meantime as high as £12 per ton has to be paid for the carriage of supplies to some parts of the settlement, while even from the front selections on M'Donald's track the carriage is more than the value of farm produce. The bricks in some of the chimneys have cost 3½d. each, and one is surprised to find that there are such things as pianos and sideboards at Poowong.

Townships do not flourish in the present state or the district, as supplies are limited to the minimum, and the selectors lay in during the summer nearly all that is required for the winter blockade. Poowong consists only of an hotel, two general stores, and a school, but other business places are found in different parts of the settlement, the difficulty of travelling causing people to range themselves around a number of small centres. The population, however, of the district is large, every available selection being taken up for twelve or fourteen miles towards the south and east. In the parish of Poowong 47,000 acres have been selected, and in the adjoining parish of Lang Lang 20,000 acres, while in Jeetho, on the south side of the river, the land taken up amounts to 87,000 acres. The tract of rich scrub land is known to extend to the southward within a few miles of the coast, and westward until it joins the Moe and Tarwin country.

Settlement reached its southern and eastern limits about two years ago, when it was found impossible to penetrate further from M'Donald's track, but the land at the back is quite as good as that already taken up, a fact which I had the opportunity of observing during a summer trip from the south. It is estimated that immediately adjoining the present settlement there is an area of about 300,000 acres of fine scrub country awaiting the making of roads or railways to render it available for selection.

The big trees of Gippsland have attained

considerable fame, and the summer excursionist to the Sale plains or the ti-tree-fringed lakes asks, "Where are these immense trees?"

Saplings a little over a foot in diameter may be seen at Warragul 150 feet in height, and there are also some thick trees about 300 feet high; but to see the immense giants of the forest, with a 60-foot girth, you must go to the north, towards Neehrim, or south from the Moe, where I have not been. I saw nothing so large at the Bass. The trees are much the same as about Warragul, varying from a foot to 10 feet in diameter, and extending to a height of from 80 to 300 feet. In some places they are very close together, growing straight like a crop of gigantic rushes, and in others the large ones are one or two chains apart.

The main forest is white and blue gum, but there is also a quantity of wattle and blackwood, the trees being about 2 feet in diameter. Everywhere the space between the trees is occupied by a dense hazel scrub from 20 to 30 feet in height, but mixed with musk tree and blanket tree, these three kinds of scrub being sure indications of rich soil, while there is a lower undergrowth of cathead fern, a no less certain witness to the fertile quality of the land.

To clear the land thoroughly at once would cost fully £30 per acre, but for about £3 per acre the scrub can be got rid of, and artificial pastures produced on the spaces between the large trees, while it is expected that time will sufficiently decay these to render the process of finally clearing the ground much cheaper than at present. Grazing does not now pay, and as butter, cheese, or bacon cannot be carried to market through the want of roads, the selections, while expensive to work, are producing nothing. The selectors were encouraged to carry on upon the understanding that a liberal amount of money would be spent by the Government to making roads, but faith was broken with them, and they were forced into local government with a low subsidy before even one main road was made to the district.

A railway is now the only hope of the selectors. The difficulties of road making are so great that there is no hope that the rates will be sufficient to come near meeting the requirements of the case. There is no stone, and although there is an abundance of timber, both tramways and plank roads are considered to be as expensive, while not nearly so efficient, as railways. It is further

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A Trip To The Bass Settlement (continued from Page 14)

pointed out that if a short railway line be made from some point on the Gippsland railway to tap the Bass district and accommodate the intervening occupied country, settlement will be rendered permanent, and there will be ratepayers to make main feeding roads, but that without such assistance the settlement will have to be abandoned.

I quite endorse these sentiments, and I find that many who have spent the savings of a lifetime upon their selections have resolved to abandon the enterprise if they fail to get the promise of a railway among the next batch of lines made. Most of the selectors have put on more than the required £1 per acre improvements in the hope of getting some return from the land. The majority have expended nearly £1000 per block, and some have laid out from £2000 to £3000. If a railway is not made, those who have expended large sums, and can afford to hold, will "mummy," and the others will sell out to capitalists, who will mummy until a change comes over the circumstances of the district. "Mummyism" is a term used to distinguish from dummyism, a system which has already begun, and which threatens to become general. The "mummy" holds his land, but does not work it, finding this unprofitable; but, having got his lease, he is content to pay his rents while living in some other part of the colony, in the hope that his neighbors, the Government or somebody will make roads and railways to enhance the value of his land.

The selectors as a class are not "mummies," but men who, with more or less capital, have gone to the scrub country to live and carry on agricultural pursuits. They will, however, if some assistance is not given, be compelled to leave the district and hold the land in an unproductive state, or sell at a sacrifice to speculators who can afford to bide their time. A railway would not only make the settlement permanent, but would open up the extensive area of rich scrub beyond; and the revenue thus obtained would pay for the line twice over. That the traffic of the line would pay will not be disputed when it is to accommodate rich country, with a wet climate, comparatively near the Melbourne market, not to speak of the timber supply, while the line could easily be continued to the Kilcunda coal mine if necessary.

The selector of scrub land in the truest sense helps to add a new province to Victoria, for the land he pays the State £1 an acre

for, and increases the wealth of the country by improving and cultivating, is utterly worthless until he takes it up. It pays no revenue even as a squattage; by selection, it is as truly added to the colony as if it were reclaimed on the sea coast. The selectors hold that, as the Government professes to be desirous of promoting settlement upon the land, it should not scruple to make a short railway, which would certainly pay, and would enable a highly deserving class of men to maintain possession of the holdings upon which they have already spent so much, and at the same time open up a new field for selection.

* * *

Body at the Back Beach

From the *San Remo Times*, 21 October 1898, page 2.

Dead Body Found At Phillip Island At The Back Beach

A dead man was found on the Back Beach, Phillip Island by one of the residents who was on the rock on Saturday last. The body was supposed to have been washed off a passing steamer and appeared to have been in the water about a fortnight and was a man of about 5 feet 7 inches in height, stout built, dark complexion, black hair and whiskers, dressed in a chesterfield coat, dark tweed trousers and vest, white shirt, black tie, balmoral boots, the features were decomposed beyond recognition. The only articles found on him were two pairs of scissors, one of which was a combination of folding scissors and penknife blade, with case, in a vest pocket. A white silk handkerchief was also found worked in one corner A.B.C. As yet the body has not been identified by any relative.

From the *San Remo Times*, 28 October 1898, page 2.

Body At Back Beach, Phillip Island

The dead body reported to have been found on the Back Beach, Phillip Island has been identified as that of Alexander B. Clerk of Grattan Street, Hawthorn. It was thought that he washed off a passing steamer, but it has been ascertained that he left Melbourne on 1st October at 8.10 a.m. for Stoney [*sic*] Point reach [*sic*] Cowes about mid-day. After partaking of refreshment at the Isle of Wight Hotel, he started to walk to the Back Beach, and was seen about 2 o'clock on the road, but was not seen alive afterwards. It is supposed that he fell off the cliff.

The Minor Sawmillers

With apologies to Julius Caesar...

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

Part One: Joseph Lee.

(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.

The Woods & Miller sawmill was the first established on the eastern side of Western Port Bay. Alexander Stewart followed in 1872, most likely in the second half of the year. So who was the third?

It depends – the default assumption being yes on both points – on whether the Woods & Miller sawmill was on Lot 155C at Almurta and was the one taken over by Quiggin and Mutlow. As this is merely a change of owner and not a new mill, the third spot is still to be claimed.

Was it Brazier, Monks and Sawyer? This trio established their mill in early 1875, probably in January. Nope. Joseph Lee and Alfred Selman beat them to it by about six months, placing them third. It is about their only distinction.

In 1866, there was an interesting case heard in the Woodend Police Court, one covered by the *Kyneton Observer* (4 October, page 2). The actual details of the lawsuit are not important. More pertinent is the line: *The Mills had been leased to Addison and Currer, at a weekly rental, for whom the timber was delivered, and the defendant was sought to be made liable for the amount claimed by a promise or guarantee given to plaintiff by Mr Selman, who was believed to be a partner with defendant.*

“Believed to be a partner...” Assuming this is the same Selman as the Alfred W. Selman who turned up at Queensferry in 1874, and there is no reason to think it isn't, then this sums up his relationship to the timber industry at Western Port. Like John Quiggin (but far less successfully) he's there in the background. You get the sense that like Quiggin (but far less successfully) he's the money man; the silent partner.

Joseph Samuel Lee, on the other hand, worked at the “coal face.” In 1868 he and Erasmus Lambrick ran a timber business in Victoria Street, Hotham, the partnership being dissolved on 17 February 1869. Lee continued on as a sole trader until... *About half-past nine o'clock flames were suddenly seen*

shooting out of the upper portion of a two-storied wooden building used as a carpenters' workshop, on the premises of Mr. J. S. Lee, saw-mill proprietor, corner of Chetwynd and Victoria streets. The yard in which the building was situated contained a large quantity of sawn timber, and that of course attracted the flames. They also extended to a two-storied wooden building just at the corner of the two streets named. In this Mr. Lee kept a shop for the sale of ironmongery, paperhangings, oils, and other goods. The stock was hastily bundled into the street, and the building was soon a burning mass.¹

Lee seems to have tried to continue to trade as a means of recouping his losses, unsuccessfully, either bringing in, or having creditors bring in, a trustee to administer his estate in January 1873. On the 16th and 25th of the month, C. S. Ross & Co., under instructions from the trustee, Andrew Kerr of James Port & Co., sold off most of Lee's remaining holdings. Lee managed to retain the actual land in Victoria Street and held onto it until at least 1875.²

It is not known what attracted Lee to the eastern side of Western Port Bay. He has no known connection to John Quiggin, Alexander Stewart or anyone else involved in the nascent milling industry at the time. This is also true of Alfred Selman. Presumably their experience in the timber industry drew them to this promising area.

Lee appears to have settled at Queensferry first, initially leasing the 20 acre Crown Allotment 90. When did he arrive? It has to have been before mid-1874 for reasons which will be looked at shortly. Selman's arrival date is harder to determine. However, he too ensconced himself at Queensferry and in April 1875 was leasing 40 acres of, probably, Crown land, almost certainly in the form of 2 x 20 acres lots (or close enough to it). At some stage this was converted from leasehold to freehold and the 1878 Phillip Island

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The Minor Sawmillers (continued from Page 16)

rate book (entry 494) has him owning 40 acres, presumably the same two probably adjoining 20 acre (or close to it) blocks. The rate books, as is their wont, unhelpfully give no indication of where this land was, and when coupled with various cartographical material, it becomes even more confusing. Assuming they were adjoining, by process of elimination, the allotments were possibly 199 and 198A or 198 and 198A. Or not. He lived somewhere in Queensferry from sometime in 1874 or 1875 to sometime after April 1878, and that's where I'm going to leave it.

At some date before August 1874, Lee and Selman started a sawmill and then won a Victorian government contract to supply "fifty-six bluegum spars for telegraph posts." This would earn them £177. [See below]. Compare this to Quiggin and Mutlow who at the same time were tasked with supplying "two hundred and fifty bluegum spars for telegraph posts, making them £802 10s. Lee and Selman were also in competition with Alexander Stewart at Glen Forbes. Given what came next, the Lee and Selman mill clearly struggled from the start.

But not so much that when the government moved Lot 90 from leasehold to freehold on 12 February 1875 Lee purchased it. Probably. The trouble is the purchase date on various cartographical material says 3 August 1875. The 1875 Phillip Island rate book, however, has him owning it in April of that year [entry

363]. Given that the announcement of the sale of the land was not in the usual government format or wording, though the term "sale" is clearly stated, something else may be going on.³

As a sign of things to come, Selman dissolved the partnership with Lee on 25 January 1875, over six months but well under a year after it was formed. For some reason, notice of this didn't appear in the *Argus* until Thursday, 1 April 1875, in the advertising on page 7. The mill continued with Lee now sole owner.

In the Phillip Island rate book for the year, the NAV (Net Annual Value) for Brazier & Co., Alexander Stewart, and J. S. Lee is £100 each (entry 483-485), which indicates some equivalence in size and scope of their respective operations. Except it doesn't. The council is probably calculating by the size of the land holdings and the presence of an operational mill, and not the number of men employed and the mill's productivity. A "one size fits all" mentality.

As if to deliberately confuse modern readers, the government advertised Lot 90 for sale by auction in the *Victorian Government Gazette No.46* (2 July 1875, page 1286). Lee purchased it and it is this date that the cartographical material mentioned previously records, that is, 3 August 1875.

So take your pick: he purchased Allotment 90 either in February or July 1875.

From Lee's point of view it was all for nought as he was broke by November and back in Melbourne. The land was sold, possibly to John Whitfield or Samuel Nicholson, both of whom make their debut at Queensferry in the 1876 rate book (and Whitfield for just that year).⁴

Joseph Samuel Lee recovered, starting the saw-milling firm of J. S. Lee & Sons at Duck River in Tasmania (north of today's Queenstown on the west coast). One son, William, was a member of the Zeehan Town Board; Joseph Junior was the secretary of the Duck River Progress League, and son, George, a J.P. Their father died in Kew, Victoria, in September 1906. The body was returned to Tasmania and buried at Zeehan.⁵

Problem. Where in Western Port was Lee's mill located? This is an important point and the answer isn't as clear as you might think. Here is what the main primary source has to say on the matter.

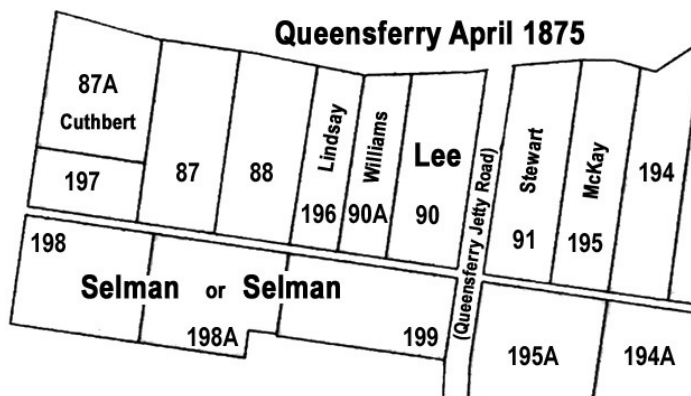
From the *Alexandra Times*, Saturday 26 August 1876, page 2: Mornington and South Gipps Land No.4: ...Accessing the tramway

(continues on Page 18)

CONTRACTS ACCEPTED.—(Series 1874-75).

For what purpose Contract is required.	No. of Contract.	Particulars of each Tender.	Amount.	Name for Approval.	Has Contractor previously.	Charge.
1050. Works, &c.	6	Erecting new Government offices, Eastern Hill, Melbourne	£ s. d. 139,767 19 10	Turnbull and Dick	Yes*	Loan Item No. 1873.
1051. Post Office	...	Supply of fifty-six bluegum spars for telegraph posts	177 0 0	Lee and Selman	...	} Exten Di 74.
1052. Ditto	Supply of two hundred and fifty bluegum spars for telegraph posts	802 10 0	Jno. Quiggin	...	

From the *Victorian Government Gazette No.53*, 7 August 1874, page 1488.



The Minor Sawmillers (continued from Page 17)

round a place called "The [unclear word]", you touch what is called Lee's tramway, and running this down you come to Lee's mill, which belongs to Quiggin, of Mount Macedon mill owning notoriety. No work has been carried on at this mill during the last twelve months, for what reason I do not know, as the timber is of excellent quality and the proprietor had that patent for turning out [unclear word] which is used principally for tallow, [unclear word] and [unclear words]... superior workmanship [unclear words] for furniture, &C., should have entitled him to a handsome remuneration. But the old grievances of this world came to pass here. Without money brains count for nothing...

Later on in the article, the author, going by the *nom de plume* of "Traveller" says this: *On my return I went by the tramway (Stewart and Lee's) to Queensferry, where it terminates.*

If Lee's mill was indeed owned by John Quiggin, then it has to be Allotment 155C. This is a problem, as the period in which Lee was active, mid-1874 to mid-1875, co-incides with the later stages of Quiggin and Mutlow, still very much in operation. The tramline from this mill ran to Grantville and terminated at, or near, the Grantville pier at Deep Creek. Yet "Traveller" has it as "(Stewart and Lee's) to Queensferry." This makes sense if you lived at Queensferry, which Lee and Selman did. It wouldn't make sense if they lived at Grantville, which they didn't.

Additionally, as already mentioned, the contract we know about was for spars for telegraph poles (a typical saw mill product), not tallow (which isn't). The sentence is unclear. It is possible that it actually says tallowwood. "Traveller" does suggest that the enterprise foundered due to lack of money, which seems to fit the situation after Selman's withdrawal from the partnership. This raises the question that if it was John Quiggin's mill, why isn't he backing Lee instead of Selman?

The answer is that "Traveller" isn't talking about 155C. It is another site that Quiggin held too briefly to appear in the Phillip Island rate books, but it is recorded elsewhere.

What does the main secondary source, Joseph White's *100 years of History* (Shire of Bass, 1974) have to say?

...While the tramway was in the course of construction another sawyer named Lee obtained a license for a sawmill site on Crown Allotment 147. On this site he erected a sawmill in 1875, and commenced operations. His sawmill was connected to Stewart's tramway

and Lee used this tramway... Lee operated his sawmill until 1877 when he was to sell out to another sawyer named John Quiggan. John Quiggan sold out to Forman and Gilbee. These men sold to John Lewis. Lewis continued to operate this mill until the 30th September 1880 when he closed down and abandoned the site...

As usual White is fumbling at the edges. In fairness to him, even now it is difficult to figure out what is going on. If you ignore White's dating (which should be the default position as White is very rarely correct) and assume Forman is Faram, then this does provide a hint as to what is going on. The actual transfers and date ran thus: Quiggin to Gillbee (16-11-1877) and Gillbee to Lewis (12-7-1878).⁶

This is actually a problem which will be dealt with in part two when Faram, Gillbee and Lewis are covered. White's only contribution to the debate is mention of Allotment 147. Was Lee's mill on Allotment 147?

No, though it was Allotment 147 adjacent. This problem will also be examined fully in part two when dealing with Lewis.

Regardless of whether Lee's mill was on 147 or close by, any tramway would, by necessity, need to tie into that of Alexander Stewart. This could be a subsidiary reason for the failure of the mill. Stewart would have seen Lee 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 reputation of Alexander Stewart, whether fair or unfair, these were probably high, but not excessive enough to encourage Lee to construct his own fully independent tramway.

But this is all just a guess.

Though Joseph Lee has departed, Alfred Selman isn't quite finished with Western Port and will return in part two. He will be joined by Henry Gillbee, Arthur Faram and John Lewis.

Oh, and John Head will definitely make an appearance.

Three men who won't be joining him are S. R. and C. Groom who, while even less important than Selman, are part of the Stewart/Crump & Grant story, and William Pezet, who is tied to Laurence Henderson and the Woolamai Sawmill Company Ltd.

But, keep reading because after the footnotes I take another look at what Joseph White says about Henry Gyles Turner in *100 Years of History*, and ask the question: why would anyone quit life as a rich merchant city banker for an uncertain future as a sawmiller at rural and underdeveloped Western Port?

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The Minor Sawmillers (continued from Page 18)

Footnotes:

1. *Age*, 18 February 1869, page 1: Advertising; *Melbourne And Suburban Directory For 1870*, Sands & McDougall, 1870, page 724; *Advocate*, Saturday 16 March 1872, page 7: Two Fires at Hotham.

2. *Argus*, Monday 13 January 1873, page 2; Saturday 25 January 1873, page 3; 5 February 1873, page 3; *Melbourne And Suburban Directory For 1875*, Sands & McDougall, 1875, page 904.

3. *Argus*, Saturday 6 February 1875, page 10: Government Advertisements; Corinella, County of Mornington [cartographic material], C246(3) L918, Department of Crown Lands and Survey, 1885; Parish of Corinella Sheet 1, page 2 of 3, 2453-1, Division of Survey and Mapping; Corinella, County of Mornington [cartographic material], Sheet 1, Department of Crown Lands and Survey, 1973.

4. *Victorian Government Gazette No.84*, 19 November 1875, page 2187; *Age*, 22 November 1875, page 2: Law List—This Day; Phillip Island rate book 1876, entry 396 and 399. Neither appears in the 1875 book.

5. *Examiner*, Friday 28 September 1906, page 6: Mr. J. S. Lee; *North Western Advocate and the Emu Bay Times*, Friday 21 September 1906, page 3: Zeehan; *Births, Deaths and Marriages, Victoria*: Registration number 9636/1906.

6. *Victorian Government Gazette No.114*, 16 November 1877, page 2167; *No.69*, 12 July 1878, page 1676.

Henry Gyles Turner

Banker, writer, historian, patron of the arts...and sawmiller?

Henry Gyles Turner arrived in Melbourne from England on 4 December 1854 and, having a background in banking, joined the Bank of Australasia, moving on to be General Manager of the Commercial Bank of Australia in 1870. The C.B.A. suffered heavy losses in the depression of the early 1890s, but under Turner's guidance it slowly recovered and he retired in his 70th year, devoting himself to writing history.

He is the author of the two-volume *History of the Colony of Victoria*, published in 1904. At various times in his life he was President of the Chamber of Commerce, President of the Shakespeare Society, President of the Trustees of the Public Library and of the National Gallery of Victoria, and held numerous other offices with a large variety of institutions. But the highlight of his life was undoubtedly owning and managing a sawmill on the Bass River...

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 thought to be Crown Allotment 158A. (Joseph White, 100 Years of History).

Um, no. Probably not the famous Henry Gyles Turner. Probably not any Henry Gyles (or Giles) Turner. But is it possible that a H. G. Tuner was a sawmiller on the Bass?

The answer is...weird.

It all depends on where Grenville Bay is.

So where is Grenville Bay?

It didn't, and doesn't, exist in Victoria.

From 1863 until 1994 there was a Grenville shire, found south-west of Ballarat with its population consisting primarily of the former gold mining towns along the Glenelg Highway. Being inland, it was nowhere near the sea. It was also nowhere near a large lake. The noun 'bay' has a number of meanings, none of which stand out as applicable in this instance. The use of 'bay' here seems to imply a watery inlet.

Could 'Grenville Bay' be what is known in the printing industry as a typo?

It isn't as though the *Victorian Government Gazette* hasn't made them before, such as the extradition treaty between the Colony of Victoria and a South American country known as the Republic of Equator (10 September 1886 edition).

So could Grenville Bay possibly mean Grantville Bay?

Possibly. The names are similar. Is there a Grantville Bay?

Sort of. Maybe. Possibly. At least in the mind of some in the Victorian Government or bureaucracy of the 1880s.

Grantville Bay may have referred to the area in Western Port Bay from Jam Jerrup to

(continues on Page 20)



Grantville Bay. Possibly. Rob Glover of the Grantville Local History Group half-seriously calls it the Hurdy Gurdy Bight in honour of the fictitious Wigan Company of non-existent coal miners [see Volume 4 Number 7: November 2021: The Wigan Company], whereas the author of this piece favours Pioneer Bay Bight after the mighty township of Pioneer Bay which for some reason continues to allow him to reside there.

Henry Gyles Turner (continued from Page 19)

Tenby Point. This nomenclature appears on no known map of the era, or any time before or since. It was likely an informal usage that never became official. Conversely, it may have been an official designation from the start that died through lack of use.

Or it just may be a typo and a horrible distortion of some genuine if obscure place on the coast somewhere in Victoria. Greenvale Bay? Grendel Bay?

There is one other piece of evidence. The *Victorian Government Gazette No.9*, 5 February 1875, page 223, lists *Stewart, Alexr., Sawmill, Grenville Bay, £16*. Unfortunately, Alexander Stewart is such a common name that this proves little. It is, however, suggestive.

Turner's license came later, in edition *No.34*, 28 April 1876: *2103M, H.G. Turner, Grenville Bay, 3 acres, £16*.

Interestingly, both Stewart and Turner were required to pay the fee at Melbourne, not Bendigo or Geelong. That would place any mill in the eastern half of Victoria.

But the 5 February 1875 *Gazette* also lists on page 223 John Quiggin's two licenses, both 3 acres, both on the Bass River. Grenville Bay for Stewart, Bass River for Quiggin.

Six years after his April 1876 license, Turner shows up on page 165 of the *Victorian Government Gazette* (27 January 1882 edition), his sawmilling license being renewed. He is still listed as being from Grenville Bay. John Quiggin appears 7 lines above this entry. His sawmill is again on the Bass River.

Let us, for a moment, assume that H. G. Turner did indeed receive a license in April 1876 and that it was for a Bass River site. Joseph White suggests Allotment 158A as the location of Turner's mill. It is a good choice.

The 3 acres of land abutting the Bass River could, depending on the scenario, have been the site of the Woods & Miller sawmill, later taken over by Stewart who then abandoned it and moved a few miles south. Stewart's mill was Crump & Grant's by the end of 1875 and the abandoned Allotment 158A could have been taken over by Turner.

The evidence?

None. Turner's activities would have generated some primary source material, of which

exactly none is extant (or two if you include the Grenville Bay references). The Phillip Island rate books have no record of him; he doesn't show up in any Council meeting minutes of the period, nor does he appear in any other secondary source (admittedly few deal with the area's timber industry).

Unfortunately, there is simply not enough evidence to show that Henry Gyles or any other Turner ever had anything to do with sawmilling at Western Port, therefore I cannot include him amongst the minor sawmillers.

* * *

From the *Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advertiser*, Friday 26 March 1915, page 2

Clearing Land by Explosives

Successful Demonstration

Almurta, Thursday

A very successful demonstration of tree and stump grubbing by explosives took place on Mr. H. Somerset's farm at Almurta on Thursday of last week. Cr. M. J. McMahon, of Wonthaggi, representing Messrs. Dalgety and Co., agents for Nobel's Glasgow explosives, conducted the demonstration in the presence of a number of district landholders. He was assisted by Mr. H. Somerset. Cr. Steenholdt was a keenly interested spectator of the work.

Stumps 2ft. to 3ft. in diameter were picked out at random and holes bored under the roots, plugs of Nobel's gelignite were put in and well tamped. The charge was fired by safety fuse and the stump uprooted and shattered. One gentleman present picked out a stump which appeared to the uninitiated [*sic*] to be a hard nut to crack. However, Cr. McMahon and Mr. Somerset brought their expert knowledge to bear on the subject, with the result that after the charge was fired the stump was lifted clean out of the hole and turned over, successfully proving the value of explosives as an aid to land clearing.

The cost of uprooting and shattering stumps varied according to size, from 10d to 1s 3d, a fraction of the cost of grubbing them by hard manual labor with pick, axe and shovel. Work was done in a few minutes by the scientific means of Nobel's gelignite, which would take a man half a day or a day to do.

Not only is Nobel's gelignite useful for blasting and shattering stumps, logs, and trees, but it is an economic agent for subsoiling.

This explosive may be obtained from Messrs. Ryan and Co., store-keepers, Dalyston.

182	John Quiggin : saw mill ...	3 0 0	Bass River ...	"	4 0 0
2824	George Ramsden : water supply ...	0 0 16	Princes Bridge ...	"	13 0 0
			Lagoon		
2634	George Searle ...	0 2 0	Richmond ...	"	6 5 0
568	Michael Smith ...	0 0 32	Albert Park ...	"	3 15 0
2702	W. Simpson : brickmaking ...	3 0 0	Drouin East ...	"	2 10 0
2823	Thorburn Brothers : sawmill ...	3 0 0	Bullengarook ...	"	3 0 0
2822	Thorburn Brothers : sawmill ...	3 0 0	Bullengarook ...	"	3 0 0
2824	H. G. Turner : sawmill ...	3 0 0	Grenville Bay ...	"	4 0 0