

The Western Port Times

Grantville & Districts



Volume 6 Number 5

FREE

September 2023

Contents:

Local and General News

From *The San Remo Times*, September 1897.

on Page 3

Phillip Island Shire Council

An account of the 29th February 1884 Council meeting.

on Page 5

Jottings From Western Port

Commentary from a Phillip Islander on events in the Shire in late 1883.

on Page 6

Bush Fire At Lang Lang

In 1914 on the west side of the Lang Lang River.

on Page 6

Lang Lang Police Court

James Caughey vs. James McNab was the main case at the 26 January 1916 session of the Police Court.

on Page 7

French Island Village Settlements

An 1896 vision of French Island as an agricultural area growing abundant potatoes, other root crops, wheat, barley, oats, etc.

on Page 8

San Remo Fishing Jetty

Two short 1941 reports on a plan to extend the jetty at San Remo.

on Page 8

Almurta

A short account of a social and dance at Almurta in July 1917 in aid of the British Red Cross Fund.

on Page 8

Down South Gippsland

A 1903 trip to south Gippsland through Lang Lang to Grantville and Corinella and ending at Korumburra.

on Page 9

Ghost Towns

A 1953 letter calling for the revival of the now much diminished township of Grantville. (It would take 50 years, but wish granted!)

on Page 11

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.

* * *

Closer Settlement Board

Dissent in 1921 between the Closer Settlement Board and the Shire of Phillip Island and Woolamai regarding the issuing of bonds for land.

on Page 11

The Wonthaggi Club Appeal

After a successful appeal in 1953, the Wonthaggi Club is now raising funds for local hospitals.

on Page 11

Loch v. Leongatha

An account of a one-sided football match played in June 1914 in wet and muddy conditions.

on Page 12

Beacon Displaced

An angry letter to the *Argus* by Arthur Peck who run aground due to misplaced navigation beacon in January 1925.

on Page 12

Young Folk

A selection of letters to "Uncle Ben" and "Aunt Connie" of the *Weekly Times* from children in the district between the 1890s and 1920s. Part one of four.

on Page 13

The McLeod Prison

A bold experiment in prison reform or an outdoor camp that encouraged escape? Many of the locals inclined towards the second view – not without reason. Part one of seven.

on Page 16

The Western Port Times.
PHILLIP ISLAND AND BASS VALLEY ADVERTISER.

Published in Grantville, Phillip Island, San Remo, Flinders, Hastings, Altona, Newberry, Fowling, Quensberry, Kari, River Park, French Island, Warragul, Jambunna, and Lang Lang.

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1897

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Demand on advertising space necessitates the holding over till next issue many items of interest.

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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 Inc.: <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
 Wonthagi Historical Society: wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/
 Wonthaggi Genealogy Inc.: secretary@wonthaggi-genealogy.org.au

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From the *San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 3rd September 1897, page 2.

Local and General News

We have received some correspondence, supposed to come from Cowes. As no name is attached to it, it is consigned to the waste-paper basket.

The San Remo Court of Petty Sessions will be held on Friday next, the 10th inst.

The Phillip Island Shire Council will hold their usual monthly meeting on Saturday, the 11th inst., when the election of President will take place. It is rumored that Cr. Daly will be the chosen one for the ensuing year.

The Rev. Herbert E. Potter will conduct Church of England service at the Shire Hall, San Remo, on Sunday evening next at 7 p.m.

Messrs. Alex. Scott and Co. will hold a clearing sale at Mr. A. Aldridge's, San Remo, on Wednesday next, commencing at 12 o'clock sharp, when they will offer the whole of his household furniture and effects, 70 head mixed dairy cattle, horses, sheep, pigs, poultry, hurdles, etc. Also on the same date they will offer 2 acres of land adjoining Mr. Bonwick's residence and two blocks of land opposite the Police Station, San Remo. Luncheon will be provided.

Messrs. Joseph Clarke and Co. will hold their usual monthly sale at Bass on Thursday next, when they will offer horses, cattle, sheep, etc.

Constable Edwards, of Cowes, is in charge of the San Remo police station while our local constable is away on his annual leave.

Bible class and choir practice will be held in the Grantville Hall on Tuesday next. Bible class and choir practice will also be held at the Fern Hill church on Wednesday evening.

The Queensferry Ministering Children's League will hold an entertainment in the Queensferry hall on Thursday next, the 9th inst.

In a paragraph in our last issue it was stated that a brickyard had been started at Ryanston. It should have been Goodhurst.

The estimated population of Victoria is 1,190,504, only 141,146 less than New South Wales.

Tenders are invited through our advertising columns for the carting of butter from the I.X.L. Butter and Cheese Factory, Bass, once or twice per week (if required) to Lang Lang railway station for Mr. C. F. Bates, Bass Park, Bass.

In connection with the Wesleyan Church on Sunday next, Mr. R. P. Peters will preach at Kilcunda at 3 p.m. and Mr. John Kerr at Sunnyside at 3 p.m.

Messrs. Pretty Bros, have completed their contract at Anderson's Hill, and the new culvert is an improvement on the mud hole that has been there for so many years.

Mr. Cleeland's many friends will be pleased to learn that he is about again, and his shoulder is progressing as favourably as can be expected.

Also

From the *San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 10th September 1897, page 2.

We have received some correspondence re Cowes disturbance. As it is likely to be ventilated in Court to-day, we will hold it over till next issue.

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

The Phillip Island Shire Council will hold their ordinary monthly meeting to-morrow (Saturday), when the President for the ensuing year will be appointed.

In connection with the Wesleyan Church on Sunday next, Mr. R. P. Peters will preach at Fern Hill at 11 a.m. and Sunnyside at 3 p.m., and Mr. W. Peck at Queensferry at 7.30 p.m.

Dr. Jones's wife and family arrived at San Remo on Saturday last, and he has taken up his residence at the house lately occupied by Mr. Pickersgill, where he will receive patients.

The quarterly meeting of the Bass and Kilcunda Home Mission Station will be held at Sunnyside on Monday, the 20th September, at 12.30 p.m.

The Trucanini was engaged on Tuesday morning crossing a mob of sheep from Newhaven to San Remo for Mr. Harbison.

Mr. Atkinson, of Kilcunda, sustained a severe loss during last week in the death of a 3-year old horse through getting caught in a barbed wire fence in Mr. Hollins's paddock. The poor animal must have suffered terrible agony, being literally cut to pieces.

Bible class will be held at Glen Alvie (Blackwood) on Tuesday evening next.

The Kilcunda Young Men's Christian Mutual Improvement Society will meet at the residence of Mr. Glanfield, junr., on Wednesday evening next at 8 o'clock.

There was an unusually large number of people in San Remo on Wednesday on account of Mr. Aldridge's sale, which was largely attended.

(continues on Page 4)

Local and General News (continued from Page 3)

Mr. W. Monger, of the Blackwood, has sold his selection to Mr. W. Price, the price paid being £450. This is considered a very satisfactory figure.

It is with regret that we have to record the death of an old journalist in Mr. Thomas Wright, proprietor and editor of the "Southern Mail," Korumburra, who died suddenly at Bendigo on Monday.

Mr. G. W. Mitchell, of Korumburra, has consented to become a candidate for the Mornington electorate. Mr. Mitchell has stated that he will support the Turner Government.

Also

From the San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser, 17th September 1897, page 2.

It is noticed that several of the neighboring shires who reduced the officers at the time of the municipal crisis have not as yet taken any action in raising their salaries to the original figure, although now being in a position to do so. It is hoped that as the financial year has commenced that it will be one of the first steps to do so.

The Rev. Herbert E. Potter will conduct Church of England service at the Shire Hall, San Remo, on Sunday evening next at 11 a.m.

The quarterly meeting of the Bass and Kilcunda Home Mission Station will be held at Sunnyside on Monday, the 20th September, at 12.30 p.m.

Mr. J. Hoddinott, of San Remo, trucked 120 bullocks at Lang Lang last week for transport to his Bonegilla Park Estate. Mr. Hoddinott has been purchasing a lot of cattle all through the district lately.

Our local constable arrived back in San Remo on Monday, after his holidays, and resumed duty on Tuesday.

Bible class and choir practice will be held at the Grantville Hall on Tuesday evening next, and at the Fern Hill Church on Wednesday evening.

Dr. Jones performed an operation on Mr Nicholson, of San Remo, on Saturday last for the removal of some large lumps that were growing on his head. Mr. Nicholson is progressing well since the operation.

The San Remo Band of Hope children will give a musical entertainment at the Shire Hall, San Remo, on Wednesday evening next, commencing at 8 o'clock punctually. The children, who have been practising for the last few weeks, are thoroughly proficient in their several parts, so the public may

expect quite a treat. The admission is free, and all are invited.

The Swan arrived at Cowes on Friday, and sailed again this week.

Messrs. Baxter, Graham and Kilduff, have rented the sawmill of Messrs. Kennedy and Nicholson at the Blackwood, and intend to go into the work in a thorough business-like manner. They are going to cart the timber to San Remo in bullock drays, and then ship it to Melbourne. As the timber is of first-class quality it will no doubt be eagerly sought after in the metropolis. Messrs. Kennedy and Daly arrived with the first consignment of two loads at San Remo on Wednesday. We wish them every success in their new venture.

In connection with the Wesleyan Church on Sunday next, Mr. John Kerr will preach at Sunnyside at 3 p.m.

Mr. Downward, M.L.A., will address the Mornington electors as follows:—Rye, Friday 17th September, at 7.30 p.m.; Dromana, Saturday, 18th, at 7.30 p.m.; Lang Lang, Monday, 20th, at 7.30 p.m.; Grantville, Tuesday, 21st, at 3 p.m.; Bass, Tuesday, 21st, at 7.30 p.m.; Powlett Hall, Wednesday, 22nd, at 7.30 p.m.; San Remo, Thursday 23rd, at 3 p.m.

It is rumored that another candidate is likely to contest the Mornington electorate, a Mr. Robb (nephew to the later contactor Robb).

Also

From the San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser, 24th September 1897, page 2.

In connection with the Wesleyan Church on Sunday next, Mr. Walter will preach at Kilcunda at 3 p.m.

Bible class will be held at Glen Alvie (Blackwood) on Tuesday evening.

The Kilcunda Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society will meet at the residence of Mr. W. Glanfield, junr., on Wednesday next, 29th inst.

As will be seen by our advertising columns Mr. J. H. Morgan will open at the premises lately occupied by Mr. Denny, at Queensferry with an entirely new stock of drapery, groceries, ironmongery, and general produce. Goods will be sold at Melbourne prices, with the carriage added.

Mr. Downward, M.L.A., will address the Mornington electors as follows:—Somerville, Friday, 1st October, at 7.30 p.m.; Hastings, 2nd October, at 7.30 p.m.; Flinders, Monday,

(continues on Page 5)

Local and General News (continued from Page 4)

4th October, at 7.30 p.m.; Cranbourne, Wednesday, 6th October, at 7.30 p.m.; Loch, Thursday, 7th October, at 7.30 p.m.

In our last issue it was stated in the council report that the total arrears were £1451 12s., which should have been £117 12s. 7d. The outstanding accounts were £228 6s. 5d.

Thursday, 14th October, is the date fixed for the Parliamentary General Elections. Writs will be issued on Tuesday, the 28th inst.

While Mr. Baum, of the Blackwood, was proceeding home with a load of produce from San Remo during the week he had the misfortune to break the axle of his spring cart, necessitating his getting a fresh conveyance to bring him to his journeys end.

Captain J. Russell, of the Salvation Army, is travelling the district collecting for the Self Denial Fund. Donations will be received at this office.

* * *

From the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Friday 12 March 1884.

Phillip Island Shire Council

Friday, 29th February 1884

Present: Councillors Stewart (President), Clarke, Smith, Turnbull, Aldridge and West.

The minutes of last meeting were read and confirmed.

Correspondence

From E. Blaikie, hon. secretary to Cowes Free Public Library, thanking Council for donations to building fund of that Institution.—Received.

From Water Supply Department, re land proposed to be reserved in connection with reservoir at Kilcunda.—Plan of the required land to be forwarded by the Secretary, and Department to be informed that the reservoir is now almost completed.

From W. Denne, L. R. Brown, Tulloch, McKinnon, and A. Misson, asking for extension of time on their contracts.—Granted.

From Thomas Bergin, applying for slaughtering license.—Granted.

From Messrs. Potter, King, Bergmeir and others, asking that clearing be done on road at north end of Pender's allotment, Bass.—Referred to the Clerk of Works for report.

The Clerk of Works reported as to culverts requiring repairs near Goodie's, on Newhaven road.—To report further at next meeting.

The Clerk of Works also reported, with reference to clearing required on Emery's

road, that the work would cost about £14.—Tenders to be called for next meeting.

Tenders were also ordered to be called for about twenty chains of table draining on Vicker's road, in accordance with the report of the Clerk of Works.

The Clerk of Works reported that the decking of culverts on road between Anderson's and Cleeland's properties at Bass required to be replaced by new decking of sawn timber.—Tenders to be called.

The Clerk of Works reported with reference to Emery and Caldwell's contract for fencing culverts that it had not been completed, and what was done was not done satisfactorily.—Received.

The Secretary was instructed to write to the Oriental Bank requesting to be allowed an overdraft of say £500, should such be required.

In committee the following tenders were accepted:—Contract 314, Queensferry road, S. Uprichard, £12 10s.; contract 318, W. Pickersgill & Co., forming &c. Cape Patterson road, £111; contract 319, P. Quinlivan, forming &c. on Cape Patterson road, £88 0s 6d; S. West for purchase of old roller at Cowes, £1; contract 317, George Coates, repairs and additions to Bass Bridge, £272 12s 3d.

A rate of 1s in the £, in accordance with notice given, was struck on the ratable property of the Shire, said rate to be payable from date on the motion of Councillor West, seconded by Councillor Aldridge.

The Secretary was instructed to bring up at next meeting a report of all minutes, correspondence, &c., in connection with mining leases held in the Shire.

On motion of Councillor Stewart, seconded by Councillor West, the plans furnished by the Shire Engineer of deviation roads in the Corinella riding were formally adopted by the Council.

The Secretary was instructed to insert notices in Government Gazette and local paper, and that plans be left open for inspection for forty days at the Shire Offices.

On the motion of Councillors Turnbull and Aldridge, tenders were ordered to be called for forming at Woolshed Creek, and for clearing at east side of Bridge Creek.

Tenders were also ordered to be called for 30 chains forming on Clarke's road, between Harvey's and Clarke's.

Councillor West gave notice of motion for erection of twenty panels fence at Newhaven Stockyard.

The Council then adjourned.

From the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 2 January 1884.

Jottings From Western Port

Fortiter. Fideliter. Feliciter.

The municipal Association of Victoria having invited suggestions from the different Shire Councils to be forwarded prior to the 20th proximo I hope they will arrange for their meetings to be held about full moon. All Shire Councils should meet at least once every four weeks, and no mistake could be made in dates when full moon approaches.

What is being done about telegraphic communication to Western Port? It is almost time more action was taken, and I have been informed that more pressure would carry the point. Phillip Island is interested on the subject, yet I believe that communication as far as Griffiths' Point would meet present requirements, and would be within an hour and a half of Cowes at a pinch. The result of the last deputation was that an amount was placed upon the estimates (£2500) to carry out the undertaking, but for some unexplained and mysterious reason, when placed before the Postmaster General it was struck out. A deputation comprised of inhabitants between Cranbourne and Griffiths' Point, Phillip Island, and shareholders in the different coal companies should be sufficient.

Some time ago application was made by Messrs. Arnall and Jackson to the Shire of Phillip Island for suggestions and information as regards the beauties of the Shire with intention to print a pamphlet. The idea was good, and worthy of being carried out for the advancement of the locality. From the fact that the same Council some time ago spent a large sum of money for having photographic views taken to be exhibited in the last Melbourne exhibition not meeting with counter outlay on the part of those most interested in the encouragement of visitors (*viz.*, the hotel proprietors), I think the Council were justified in declining the outlay; much to my regret and I believe of others. Those watering places which are made known to the public by advertising and other means deserve to advance and be freely resorted to. I notice an advertisement of three columns in a daily paper of last week. Can it be believed that a member of the Press hailing from the city of Ballarat stated that he did not know there was such a place in Victoria as Phillip Island, and although he had heard of Western Port and its Bay, until he had visited it he did not know of its beauties and salubrity, and

I doubt if he would have visited on the late occasion but for the trip of the Commissioner of Trade and Customs brought about entirely by the W. P. Coal Co. and their connection with Ballarat.

If *Eagles of the Australasian* had been on Cowes jetty on Saturday, the 22nd inst., when a number of passengers landed from the steamer Eclipse in the teeth of a stiff breeze from the north-west and a heavy squall of rain, he would not have said that "Christmas does not come with biting cold," for it was that same, and a rousing fire in the evening was welcome. Whilst I write the weather promises to be fine and warm.

It speaks well for our locality that on Saturday last the number of excursionists was so great that the ordinary Schnapper Point coach had to be used at Frankston for their conveyance, besides the 30-passenger coach now in use. I notice that an unusual number of passengers went to Griffiths' Point, probably with the knowledge of the additional accommodation afforded there, and that if the weather is too bad for out of door enjoyment they can amuse themselves at billiards, Mr. Fraser having very judiciously obtained a license for his table.

From the *Lang Lang Guardian*, 18 February 1914, page 3.

Bush Fire At Lang Lang

On Saturday a bush fire broke out on the west side of the Lang Lang River, and, burning much valuable pasture, threatened the homestead of Mr Cochrane, which, however, was saved from destruction. Driven by a strong northerly wind the fire crossed the river, and made a tremendous conflagration in the tall ti-tree scrub, also taking in its sweep some hundreds of acres of grass. Mr Blake's haystack was saved after a severe engagement with Mr Smith, and a band of fire-beaters were in readiness to safeguard Mr Smith's stacks. Crossing the road the fire swept over Mr Misson's leasehold and entered block 14, where there was a fine feast for it in the ti-tree and the scrub and saplings which had been felled for clearance. On Sunday the fire crossed McDonald's Track, and threatened the township, but, was easily checked, while it was prevented from entering Mr R. Henderson's paddock.

Note: This is a companion piece to the report in *The Western Port Times*, September 2021, page 5.

From the *Lang Lang Guardian*, 26 January 1916, page 3.

Lang Lang Police Court

Thursday — Before Mr W. M. Harris, P.M. and Messrs Carson and Henderson, Js.P.

E. Cogle v. A. R. McAdam, debt. £7 7s 7d—
Order for amount and 18s 6d costs.

Jas. Caughey, ranger for the Phillip Island and Woolamai Shire, proceeded against Jas. McNab on a charge of rescuing five horses at Corinella on 29th October, 1915, which were seized for the purpose of being impounded. A charge of assault was also preferred by Caughey against McNab. Mr Cook appeared for plaintiff, Mr Brunt for defence. It was decided that both cases should be taken together.

Defendant pleaded not guilty.

H. Bonwick, secretary Phillip Island and Woolamai Shire, gave evidence as to the appointment of the ranger.

Plaintiff deposed that he was ranger for the Phillip Island and Woolamai Shire, and part of his duties was to impound cattle off the roads. On 29th October he went to Corinella with his son, aged 13 years, both being on horseback. They seized 17 horses which were on the road, 12 being along Mr McNab's fence and 5 further along the road. Defendant and his son came up, defendant being in front and his son behind. Defendant galloped past and cut five horses out. Witness said "You will have to pay the trespass fees." Defendant told him to go to h—. He then turned and galloped back and struck witness with a short stick, and before he recovered he was struck twice again. Defendant then galloped away. Witness called him back and went to see what was being done with the horses, and found he was putting them into his paddock. He wanted to fight, and said, "You won't have such an easy win as you had at Wonthaggi." Witness took 8 horses and put them in the pound, and showed the pound keeper his head, went to the police station at Bass, but the constable was not at home. The horses did not collide, and had never had a word with defendant over a previous impounding case. He did not follow defendant and threaten him in any way, and did not say he had the council behind him and would make it hot for him.

To Mr Cook—The horses were grazing in a lane indicated in plan. There were no signs of their having been recently driven. From the time the horses were mustered till the time defendant rode up might have been

half an hour.

Oswald J. Caughey, son of last witness, aged 13, said he remembered Friday, 29th October, when he went with his father impounding at Corinella, in the direction of McNab's. Witness brought five horses out of the lane. They did not look as if they had been recently driven, and were not sweating. Witness took them to the main road, and his father went away and brought a good many back and started driving them towards the pound. McNab came amongst the horses and took five of them away. Archie McNab was behind. He saw McNab rush at his father, and strike him over the head with a stick. Witness and his father went back and saw McNab putting the horses he had taken out of the lane into his paddock. He wanted father to fight, and father said if he touched him he would hit him with the stirrup iron. Father said he would summons him, and he said he wouldn't have such an easy time as he had at Wonthaggi.

To Mr Brunt—The lane was clear. Nothing was wrong with the horses when I saw them. I never heard McNab say the horses had got away from him in the lane.

Jas. McNab deposed that on the 29th he went over to Tenby paddock to gather up some of his horses, and brought them to the homestead. The horses were in the homestead, and his son took one up and was taking the balance to Tenby paddock. At the gate on the lower road one of the horses got cut with barbed wire, the horses got away, shot up the road. He saw someone driving horses down the road and found it was the ranger. Witness said "The horses belong to me, and you have no right to take them." He asked witness to pay the trespass fees because they were his horses.

Archibald McNab, son of witness, said they were taking the horses back to Tenby from the home paddock on the morning of the 29th, and the horses broke away in two divisions. Witness went after one division and turned them back to the homestead paddock. He saw a man coming with some horses and found it was Caughey. They cut the five horses out. The back gate was open and the horses went in. His father had not had a stick in his hand. All he saw was the two horses ridden by his father and Caughey,

(continues on Page 8)

Lang Lang Police Court (continued from Page 7)

colliding in the middle of the road.

To Mr Cook—When I saw the ranger he was half a mile away. Father had the horses under his control half an hour before.

The P.M. said the horses were unlawfully on the road unless they were driven or ridden, or moved along. They were therefore subject to being seized and impounded. It was unfortunate for McNab that the ranger should have come along at that particular moment, and the horses seemed to have been there sufficiently long to give the ranger the right to impound them. It was a proper legal seizure, and defendant's right to forcibly rescue them was taken away. He should have paid the fees and reported the matter to the Council. Instead he had lost his temper, and taken the law into his own hands. He would be fined £2 for assault, and £3 for illegally rencuing the horses, the costs being £5 5s.

From the San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser, 7 August 1896.

French Island Village Settlements

The settlers on French Island have, after an experience of about three years on their holdings, proved the capability of their land to grow to perfection crops of many kinds. They are gradually gaining conveniences which they have hitherto been without. A State school has been opened, and a local J.P. appointed, and they are hoping to get better means of postal communication than now exists. The Island has land which grows excellent potatoes and root crops of all kinds, as well as wheat, barley, oats, maize, etc. The settlers grow their own milk and butter, and get a little wool from small flocks of sheep. More families would be welcome; and [at] a meeting of settlers held at Mr. David Winslades's house on the Star of Hope Association, on 30th July, the following resolution was passed, and ordered to be communicated to the press:—

That this meeting of settlers is desirous of making known to the public the good progress made by the settlers on French Island, and of inviting other families to settle amongst us on the blocks or Crown lands for village settlement purposes now available.

A resolution was also passed stating that wire netting was needed very much to keep off the rabbits that infest the Crown lands.

Jetty Extension Sought

From the Argus, Wednesday 1 October 1941, page 2.

San Remo Jetty

Representatives of Victorian Fishermen's Association were told by Sir George Goudie, Public Works Minister, yesterday, that he was awaiting a report from the chief engineer of Ports and Harbours on the need for jetty extensions at San Remo.

The minister said he was impressed by the case put by the deputation for a 100ft. extension of the jetty to provide extra berthing for fishing boats.

From the Age, Wednesday 1 October 1941, page 9.

San Remo Fishing Jetty

Seeking an extension of the San Remo jetty by 100 feet to provide more berthage for the fishing fleet, a deputation from the Victorian Fisherman's Association and the local progress association was introduced to the Minister of Public Works by Mr. McKenzie, M.L.A., yesterday. Sir George Goudie said he was impressed by the representations. The Chief Engineer of Ports and Harbours had inspected the jetty, and his report would be acted upon when it came to hand.

From the Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advertiser, Friday 13 July 1917, page 4.

Almurta

On Friday night, July 6, in aid of the British Red Cross Fund appeal, a highly successful social and dance was held in the Almurta Butter Factory, which was profusely and beautifully decorated for the occasion by many willing lady helpers, and photos of the Almurta soldier boys were arranged on the walls.

An energetic committee, with Mr. J. Walker, secretary, made complete arrangements. The Chair was capably filled by Mr. J. Sweet.

The singing of the school children, who had been prepared by the head teacher (Miss Black) in the small amount of time at her disposal, was most delightful. Very appreciative items were also given by Mrs. Finlay, Mrs. O'Keefe, Miss Chapman, Miss Garry, Messrs. Telford, D. Craig, R. and G. Finlay.

During the evening Mr. C. F. White gave an address on the origin of the Red Cross.

The dance music and ample refreshments were provided by the ladies.

The proceeds, including donations, amounted to about £17.

From the *Bacchus Marsh Express*, Saturday 16 May 1903.

Down South Gippsland

(By R. Lidgett Jun.)

(Re-paragraphed for the sake of clarity).

Where misty clouds and tender
 Hang o'er the valleys green,
 The sunlight's gleaming splendour
 Lights up the hills between;
 Where tree-ferns, tall are growing,
 The mangrove and the heath,
 The virgin soils are flowing
 With fortunes underneath.

During the last two or three decades, energy and enterprise have gradually been overcoming the difficulties and disadvantages under which the heavily timbered country of Gippsland has been placed; and it is only natural that a steady and continuous rise in the commercial value of the land should follow in their train.

In almost every instance where labour has been wisely directed, and capital intelligently invested, the land has doubled, and sometimes trebled itself in value, simply because the carrying capacity and productiveness of the soil have been enormously increased.

The salubrity of the climate during the greater part of the year, together with the certainty of a generous annual rain fall, have no doubt made Gippsland more popular in the eyes of settlers than it otherwise would have been had other parts of the State been less subject to the awful distresses of drought; and this fact is doubtless responsible to a certain degree for the great enquiries for land in this district, and the appreciative rise in its commercial value during the last year or so, when the condition of things in the northern parts of the State was wretched in the extreme.

The primeval parts of Gippsland, however, have not been transformed into sheep and cattle walks without much suffering, cruel hardships, and excessive toil and labour – labour which not only gave no direct return, but which caused many of the early pioneers to become disheartened, and finally give up in despair.

Fortunately Victoria has always been able, to provide men with a true-born love for bush life, and honest toil, and when one settler became disheartened another was ready to take his place, and reap the benefits of his predecessor's labours, and in this way the wilds of Gippsland have been slowly converted into what may be termed the meat-supplying

district of the metropolis. Although the land is only partly cleared, its carrying capacity is really something wonderful. What it will be in the future, when the axe ceases to ring, and the last tree has fallen (if that is possible) is a matter for conjecture.

During the latter part of April last I took a run down the great southern line, the trip from start to finish teeming with interest. After leaving behind the agricultural district of Cranbourne, and the busy station of Dandenong, one gets his first glimpse at Koo-wee-rup of what can be accomplished by energy and enterprise.

What was, only a few years ago, a dreary swamp, unfit for habitation, is now a stretch of productive land, which, for root crops, cannot be excelled. The soil is of a rich black colour, something like that of the Pentland Hills, but as it contains a greater percentage of sand it is more friable, and more easy to work.

The ground is, of course, practically level, and ploughing operations were in full swing, the work being done with 3-furrow ploughs, containing a seat for the driver, and drawn by four horses.

At Monomeith large fields were sown with rape and turnips for the purpose of providing winter feed for sheep; but beyond this very little of the soil has ever been broken up with the plough.

At Lang Lang I took a coach drive of 12 miles due south to Grantville, and then a further drive of 5 miles to Corinella.

The road, for more than three-parts of the journey skirts Western Port bay, and in many places is little more than a bush track. The rate of travelling was very slow, and there was plenty of time for reflection on the advantages of living in a district where the state of the roads was beyond reproach as compared with what the settlers have to

(continues on Page 10)

Down South Gippsland Way (continued from Page 9)

put up with in Gippsland. Nevertheless the drive was a novel and pleasant one, for it was here where

*The ti-tree holds with pride the palm of place,
Disporting blooms of sweet perennial grace,
And in the dark'ning shadows underneath
Blush silently the white and crimson heath.*

Grazing and dairying are the principal industries engaged in all around Grantville, the latter being carried on with much the same success as it is in the Marsh district but under different conditions.

Most of the settlers separate their milk the cream being purchased by Melbourne companies, whose conveyances visit the farmers two or three times weekly for the purpose of collecting their cream. When each waggon has a load, it is taken to the railway station, forwarded to Melbourne, and the butter manufactured there. Payment, of course is made according to the butter fat which the cream contains.

This system of collecting the cream is giving entire satisfaction to all concerned, and is worthy of consideration by the directors of the Myrniong factory. In the hilly districts, where it is impossible for conveyances to travel in the winter months, the milk is sledged to creameries built in convenient places by the same Melbourne companies, and one cannot help but admire the facilities which these companies offer the farmer for disposing of his produce.

Between Grantville and Corinella, black coal exists in fairly large quantities, and some four or five years ago a strong company was formed to work the mine, and forward the coal to Melbourne. As no railway station was near at hand, the company decided to build a line from the mine to Queensferry, where a pier was erected, and then send the coal to Melbourne by boat. This was accomplished at considerable expense, but after sending away several consignments it was found that the boats were unable to get alongside the pier, owing to the depth of water, even in high tide, being insufficient to carry the boat.

The project was therefore a failure, and the company not being able to raise any more money finally abandoned it. The engine and trucks are still lying at Queensferry, mortgaged up to the hilt, while the line is gradually going to wreck and ruin. It is stated, however, by local residents that had the line been laid to the Bluff, or Settlement Point, the results

would have been altogether different. Evidently there is no hope of the mines being re-opened until it is done by the Government.

Plenty of good fishing can be had off the coast at Corinella, and duck of all descriptions, swan, plover, herons, pigeons, and snipe, are plentiful.

The horses used for harness and saddle work are, as a rule, of a weedy description, and are perhaps best described by "Banjo" Patterson in "The Man from Snowy River." In fact the status of the stock generally is not very high, but as each town or district has established its own A. & P. Society it is considered that a spirit of friendly emulation will be produced which will lead to improvement in that direction.

On returning to Lang Lang, I proceeded down the line to Korumburra. The country beyond the former station is undulating, and quite in contrast to the level stretches passed through the day previous. The trees – which have all been ring-barked – are exceedingly tall and straight, and the soil is particularly fertile.

It is seen at a glance that the ground has only been sufficiently cleared to permit of carrying on grazing and dairying pursuits, the smaller trees have been cut down and burned, while the larger ones are left standing, to be dealt with in the future.

Nearly every valley has a small stream of water flowing through it, and this is no doubt due in a large measure to the inability of the dead trees to transform the moisture in the soil into sap and green leaves. Occasionally a small strip of country is seen which has not heard the ring of the settler's axe, and it gives one an idea of what the early pioneers had to face several decades ago.

Tree ferns and undergrowth of all descriptions, which have never seen the sun, were growing everywhere in rich profusion, while the immense trees are so perfectly grown, and so close together, that one wonders how room could be made for the first tree to fall. Nothing could be more picturesque than these small uncleared patches of ground.

*When the skies are flushed with crimson,
And the dew is on the grass,
Softly shines the morning's dim sun
Through the tall trees as we pass.
Backwards fall the amber tresses
When the winds begin to blow,
Ever shedding sweet caresses
On the smiling flowers below.*

(continues on Page 11)

Down South Gippsland Way (continued from Page 10)

The coal mines at Korumburra add very materially to the wealth of the town, which is a growing centre, as well as providing employment for a large number of hands. A visit to the mines is generally a pleasant novelty, but as I arrived on the day on which the Bendigo miners passed through to take the place of the strikers at Outtrim – which is some seven miles south of Korumburra – very little information was obtainable, owing to everybody in connection with the local mines being in a fever of excitement.

I originally intended to go as far as Leongatha, but as the fevered state of the community was some what unpleasant, I decided to return, having satisfied myself as to the fertility and carrying capacity of the land, and the uselessness of anyone settling there unless prepared to face a lifetime of toil.

* * *

From the *Dandenong Journal*, 6 May 1953, page 11.

Ghost Towns

Sir,—A lot has been written in the daily Press of late about the old mining town of Walhalla and efforts for its revival. What about Grantville, on Westernport Bay—50 years ago one of the most thriving towns of its size anywhere in Gippsland; today practically off the map. In 1903 it had one of the best general store anywhere—J. T. Paul's, Sinclair's Drapery, Monger's Printing Office, "Westernport Times", Hunt's Saddlery, Smith's Boot Shop and Repairs, Williams' Blacksmith, Hades' Bakery and Butchery, Shipping Office, Hardingham's Coaches daily to Lang Lang, first-class hotel run by the late W. B. Lang, police station and Court House, hall, saleyards, one of the best fat cattle markets in Gippsland, racecourse and recreation reserve, Post and Telegraph office, and two local fruiterers. It only wants some enterprising guest-house keeper to start and an enterprising firm of auctioneers to commence sales again to bring Grantville back again. It is on the main Highway to San Remo and Inverloch, Dalyston and Wonthaggi. It has fishing and boating facilities, is adjacent to French Island, Cowes and Corinella. It only wants a start. Everything is still in the district except timber. I can recall when schooners used to trade regularly from Grantville to Melbourne.—Yours, etc., "J. H. P.", (Tooradin).

From the *Age*, Friday 15 July 1921, page 8.

Closer Settlement Board

Payment in Bonds Refused

Archie's Creek.—At the meeting of the shire of Phillip Island and Woolamai councillors were sarcastic at the expense of the Closer Settlement Board. In reference to the acquisition of Kennedy's Bass Park Estate, at Bass, which the Government took steps to acquire compulsorily, the council was informed that as the vendors would not accept Government bonds no further action would be taken in regard to purchasing the land.

Cr. Steenholdt said approximately £100 had been spent in valuing this property. Why did not the board say at first that it was going to pay in bonds? It must have known that bonds would be given. Then the vendor could have said at the first, before any expense was undertaken, whether he would accept or not. The vendor, who intended to subdivide and fence off into dairy farms, was delayed and put to great inconvenience by the action of the board.

Cr. Hollins stated that the time of the council and the valuers had been wasted.

It was stated that some of the Government valuers did not even go over the property.

Cr. M'Fee said the whole proceedings were farcical. People in Government positions seemed to be suffering from swelled heads. They got positions by seniority instead of merit.

From the *Argus*, Friday 19 February 1954, page 7.

The Wonthaggi Club Appeals

The Wonthaggi Club, which raised £680 for the Children's Hospital last year, is busy on another appeal. It is the "Popular Motorist" competition, the proceeds of which are for the Wonthaggi and Children's hospitals. Club member Cliff Osborne (photo below) presents club president Tom Johnson with a bicycle to boost the fund.



From the *Great Southern Star*, 2 June 1914, page 2: Football.

Loch v. Leongatha

Leongatha's Inglorious Display

(Re-paragraphed for the sake of clarity.)

The Leongatha team journeyed to Loch on Saturday, and once again were badly defeated. The afternoon was not all that could be desired for football, and the ground was in a slippery state, and the creek adjoining the ground did not tend to a good exposition of the game being given, as the ball had to be continually fished out of the water, the consequence being that the leather soon became in a very sodden and heavy condition.

The visitors did not nearly have their full strength, but, nevertheless, that was no excuse for their wretched showing, which was about the poorest exhibition that they have displayed this season. In fact, with very few exceptions, their play was of a character not equal to that shown by a team of third-raters, and, judging by the form shown by some of them in this match, it would have been far better if they had not been on the field at all. If they give one or two displays like Saturday's the public will soon lose confidence in them altogether, and they will find themselves at the bottom of the premiership list.

Loch have not as strong a combination as they had last season, but they seemed to revel in the going on Saturday, and, as the play was of the scrambling order all through, they beat their lighter opponents pointless. They shone out well in marking, which was exceptionally good considering the heavy state of the ball. Their ruck play also was of no mean order, and their strength in this department of the game was in marked contrast to that of the visitors. As usual, the visitors relied too much on individuality, and this somewhat accounted for their defeat. The play needs very little description, as Loch had the measure of their opponents after the first term, and after that they piled on the points.

The first quarter was fairly even, but Loch were the first to score, and had the best of the general play for a while. They opened their account with a point, which was quickly followed by another. The visitors replied with a couple of behinds, and then Loch got the ball within range, and McDonald put up their first goal. The visitors worked the ball well in front, and a point was the outcome. Leongatha kept up the attack, and C. Drowley registered their first and only goal. The home

team worked the ball well in front, where Furz was handy, and he notched their second goal. The visitors had several opportunities to score during the last few minutes of the term, but the best they could do was add three behinds, whilst Loch replied with one.

The second quarter belonged to Loch, who quickly increased their lead, and two goals were registered by Furz and Belfrage, and five behinds were also added, whilst their opponents' tally remained unaltered. The *[third]* term was also greatly in favor of the home team, and Furz again scored a goal for them, and three behinds were also registered, the visitors again failing to score.

The home team demonstrated their superiority more than ever in the last quarter, and Crosbie, Hansen and Furz kicked goals for them, whilst the visitors' tally remained unaltered. The best man for the winners was undoubtedly Stan Uren, who played a great game. Other who did good work were Belfrage (2), McLean (2), Furz, Crosbie and McDonald. For the losers Elliot and Bert Drowley were the best, while Gunnensen, O. Bright, C. Drowley, Cochran and Mathews also shone out at times. The game was in charge of Umpire Hempel, who kept the players well in hand. Scores:—

Loch, 8 goals, 11 behinds (59 points).

Leongatha, 1 goal, 6 behinds (12 points).

From the *Argus*, Tuesday 6 January 1925, page 13.

Beacon Displaced

To The Editor Of The Argus.

Sir.—I shall be obliged for space in your columns to inquire who is supposed to notify the proper authorities when a beacon or buoy is misplaced or lost? My reason for asking is that when trying to get into the little port of Corinella, at Settlement Point, Port Western, while looking for the black beacon, which is shown on the chart, and is described in the sailing directions, I grounded my yacht on a rocky shoal. Sending the dinghy out to sound, the position of the beacon was located about 30 feet away, the beacon being overturned and broken two feet below low water. At present this is a menace to strange craft entering the port, for with a three knot flood tide a vessel striking this beacon could easily be lost, and without its aid it is almost impossible to find the channel. Local fishermen naturally know the danger, and give it a wide berth.—Yours, &c., Arthur Peck
Jan. 5.

YOUNG FOLKS

From the *Weekly Times*, 1 July 1893.

An Excellent Beginning

Grantville.—Dear Uncle Ben,—This is the first letter I have written to you. I have collected 8s. 4d. for the Children's Hospital. Will you kindly forward it to the hospital? I and my four brothers hold up our right hands for Cousin Cora's proposition. We all like the letters very much, and will be sorry when the compositions cease. I go shooting sometimes, and will write about it if you would like me to. I got my certificate when I was twelve years old. I have two brothers, and a sister named Naomi. We have a nice flower and vegetable garden, I will write about our pets another time. I enclose a pressed piece of maiden hair fern for you. With love to you and Aunt Connie, I remain, your affectionate nephew, Walter George, aged thirteen years and six months.

[Well done, Walter. Thank you for the pretty maiden hair. Write about your pets.—Uncle Ben.]

From the *Weekly Times*, Saturday 20 June 1896, page 8: Our Letter Box.

Ocean and Bay

Bass Saw Mills, 19.5.96.—Dear Uncle Ben,—This is the second time I have written to you. It is very hilly where we live. Our house is built on the side of a hill, and we can see the Southern Ocean on one side of us, and Westernport Bay on the other side. There are lots of birds about here—the laughing jackass, the parrot, the lyre-bird, and many small birds. Since I wrote to you last the Inspector has been at our school, and I passed into the forth class, and my brother Jack passed into the second class. I have a sister going to school now, and she is in the upper first class. Her name is Johanna, and she is seven years old. I have two brothers and two sisters besides these, and their names are Willi, Katie, Jim and baby Alice. I got the second prize for my exercise book at the Grantville Show. My sisters and brothers often get me to read the "Young Folk's" page for them, and they like it very much. From your affectionate nephew—Nicholas Fitzgerald.

Part One of Four



From the *Weekly Times*, 13 February 1897, page 8.

At Cup Time

Bass Sawmill, 39th January, 1897.—Dear Uncle Ben,—I have not written to you for a long time. I am sending back my collecting card with the sum of £1 14s 9d. I would not have collected so much only I went to Melbourne at Cup time with my father, and

I got some from people that he knows. I paid for the postal notes myself. I like cousin Davie Russell's portrait very much, and I would like to go hunting with him. I hope you will be pleased with my collection. I will write to you some day and tell you a little about the sawmill if you would like to hear. With kind wishes to Aunt Connie, Cousins Connie and Florrie, not forgetting yourself. I remain your affectionate nephew,—Nicholas Fitzgerald.

[You have done very well, my boy and we shall be glad to hear about the sawmill.—Uncle Ben.]

From the *Weekly Times*, Saturday 7 May 1898, page 8.

About the Sawmill

Bass Sawmills, 17th April, 1898.—Dear Uncle Ben,—I will now tell you something about the sawmill, as I promised you. There are sixteen men working at the mill, one benchman, one carrier out, one puller out, one handle-man, one engine-driver, one assistant with the engine-driver at the little bench, one spotter, one blacksmith, four horse drivers, two fallers, and two tramway layers. The logs are drawn to the tram by horses, and then into the mill on the trucks. They bring the timber on trucks to the Bass landing, a distance of six miles, and from there to Melbourne and Geelong on the Tyro and Little Angelina. I am now in the sixth class at school, but I think the work is very hard. I was very sorry when our teacher, Miss Farquharson, went away. We have five cats and a dog, whose name is Tip. We have twenty-three fowls, but only two or three are laying now. My father, Jack and I went to the Bass river, which is about four miles from our place. I caught six blackfish and an eel, but my father and Jack caught

(continues on Page 14)

Young Folk (continued from Page 13)

none. The Bass township consists of one hotel, a Mechanics' Institute, a Post Office, a butcher's shop, and a few private buildings. I remain, with kind love to Cousins Connie and Florrie, Aunt Connie and yourself, your affectionate nephew, Nicholas Fitzgerald.

From the *Weekly Times*, 5 November 1898, page 13.

Five Years Old and Helps Mother

Corinella, 30th September, 1898.—Dear Aunt Connie,—This is the first time I have written to you. I hope you will accept me as one of your many nieces. Maudie and Bertie and I go to school; Maudie and I are in the third class. I shall be ten next November, Maudie is eight, and Bertie is seven. I have a little sister, her name is Essie. She is just five. She is a dear little thing. Every day she helps mamma to wash up. She does not go to school yet. We have a parrot; his name is Joey. We have two little white pigs. I have got a nice mare; she is so pretty. I ride her sometimes. She is a dark chestnut, with a white star. Her name is Jessie. I had my photo taken with my hand on her, and Bertie is holding her. My father is breaking in six young horses. He has got four more to handle, but they are too young to ride yet. We have a nice orchard and flower garden. Dear Aunt Connie, will you please send me a collecting card, and I will try to collect something for the cot. We have some sheep; I have one with a long tail. With love to you and Cousins Connie and Florrie, and Uncle Ben. From your affectionate niece, Stella Bothwell.

[Tell Essie that I am glad she tries to help her mother.—Aunt Connie.]

From the *Weekly Times*, 14 January 1899, page 13.

Don't Play with Tomahawks

Hawthorn Park, Bass, Western Port, December, 1898. Dear Aunt Connie,—This is the first time I have written to you, and I hope you will accept me as one of your many nieces. I was twelve years old on the 20th of last September. I am not a good writer. I have the top of the forefinger on the right hand cut off. My brother Frank cut it off when we were playing with a tomahawk. My father has been taking "The Weekly Times" for about six months. I like reading the "Children's *[sic]* Column" very much. I have five sisters and four brothers. I have one sister and two brothers going to school. Our school teacher's name is Mr Gray, and we ail like him very well. Bass is a very pretty place; it has a

river flowing through it. It has a church, mechanics' institute, creamery, and two stores. We send our milk to the creamery every day. We are milking 37 cows, and get 85 gallons of milk. Our gardens look very fresh after the rain. I would very much like you to send me a collecting card, and I will try and collect a little for the poor sick children in the hospital. With love to Uncle Ben, Cousins Connie and Florrie, not forgetting yourself.—I remain your affectionate niece, Kate L. Misson.

From the *Weekly Times*, Saturday 17 June 1899, page 13.

In the Bass District

Bass Sawmill, May, 17th 1899.—Dear Uncle Ben,—It is a longtime since I have written to you. We have all had sore eyes lately. I thought I had escaped, but I've got them at last, or rather, I should say, they've got me. I got a prize at Christmas for highest marks in the sixth class. It is a nice book, and is called "Young England." Jack also got a book for regular attendance. The weather is very unsettled at present. Please send me a collecting card, and I will try and collect a little for the Cot. There were races at Grantville last Wednesday, but there was a very small attendance. Grantville is situated about seven miles from the Bass. It comprises an hotel, store, post-office, Mechanics' Institute, blacksmith's shop, shoemaker's shop, police station, besides many private houses, some of which are situated on hills, and they look very pretty. There are rifle butts a little way from the township. With love to all, your affectionate nephew,—Nicholas Fitzgerald.

From the *Weekly Times*, Saturday 22 July 1899, page 13: Our Letter Box.

A Cat For The Cot!

Glen Alvie, 4th July.—Dear Aunt Connie,—I am returning my collecting card with the amount I have collected L2 3s 3d. It is not very much, but it will help a little. I hope I have not kept my card too long but it has been so wet I could not go out. Nelly Edwards came with me one Saturday, and we went to five houses a good distance apart, and only got 3s 6d, but we were promised more, and got it afterwards. It is twenty years since my father came to Gippsland, and he had to cut tracks through the scrub to get to his place, but now it is all open and there are nice roads to drive about on. There are a few big hills about here, and plenty of mud just now. The cows are all dry now, except one

(continues on Page 15)

Young Folk (continued from Page 14)

or two that are milking all the winter. This is a great dairying district. Everybody milks cows, and has separators, and sends the cream to the factory. Dear Aunt Connie, will you please publish the names of the kind friends? Everybody I asked gave me something. One lady I went to had not any change, so she offered me the cat. Please, Aunt Connie, am I entitled to a certificate? I must conclude now with love to Cousins Connie and Florrie, Uncle Ben, and yourself.—I remain, your loving niece, Jessie Michie.

[You have made a good collection, Jessie, and are entitled to both the Legion of Honor and the Cot Certificate. The certificates will not be sent out till L400 has been raised.—Aunt Connie.]

From the *Weekly Times*, 10 November 1900, page 13.

After the Mutton Birds' Eggs

Cowes, Phillip Island, 18th October, 1900.—Dear Aunt Connie,—How kind of you to send me that nice certificate. Thank you very much for it. I was greatly pleased with it. We all thought it very pretty. Dear Auntie, I have been a long time thanking you for it. The hot weather has started already down here. The grass is looking nice and green. We have three cows in milk, and we have two little calves. One is a white one, and we call him George White. We have an all red bull, and we call it Sir Redvers Buller. The farmers have finished sowing their chicory. Mutton bird egging will come in next month. We are going out to try and get them. It is fine fun pulling the eggs out with a piece of wire on a stick. Generally, the birds only lay one egg. If you come out there you will find eggs on the surface of the sand early in the morning. Young mutton birds will be out at Easter. Here is a riddle for my cousins:—Why is the Prince of Wales like 15s? There are such a lot of shells, sea eggs and seaweed down here. There are over 80 children going to school here. We have a Sowers' Band down here. We have sent all our things up to the Sowers' Band Exhibition. We do not know if we are going to have any more, as the war in China is very bad. I think the Sowers' Band work is very nice. We know two missionaries who have been in China—Miss Mort and Miss Nicholson. When we last heard of them they were safely in Japan. With love to Cousins Connie and Florrie, and Uncle Ben, not forgetting yourself, I remain, your affectionate niece, Dessie [*Bessie?*] Matthews.

From the *Weekly Times*, 24 November 1900, page 13.

An Interesting Letter

Allendale, Grantville.—Dear Aunt Connie,—As I enjoy reading the “Young Folks” page, I thought that I would like to write a letter too. We live at Almurta, a place nine miles from Grantville. There were some lovely fern gullies, but the bush fires destroyed most of them. We have only a butter factory, a store, and a Church of England, so you can see by this that Almurta is not a very large township. My sister Eva plays in the church. Most of the people here have large dairy farms, some of them milking from fifty to one hundred cows. We have a good cricket club, called the Glen Alvie Club. My brother Will won a gold medal for the bowling average last season. We have also a rifle club. Football, however, is the favorite pastime with the boys of this district. There is great rivalry between our team and an other called Rynstone [*sic*]. They played one great match for L10 a-side, our boys coming off victors as usual. We have to walk three miles to school over very hilly country. We are all very fond of our teacher (Mr MacDonald). There are about seventy children going to the school. We have a pupil teacher and a sewing mistress. We had a ball in aid of our prizes on the Prince of Wales's birthday. We sometimes go to the beach at Kilcunda, which is situated on the Southern Ocean. The scenery along the coast is very beautiful, the most interesting features being some very large caves and a large rock called the “Eagle's Nest.” They are not very far from Inverloch. My sister is teaching me music. We are learning a very pretty duet, called the “Sultan's Grand March.” I would like you to send me a collecting card, and I will try and collect something for the little sufferers. With love to Cousins Connie and Florrie, Uncle Ben, and yourself. I remain, your loving niece,—Maggie Allen.

[You write very nicely, Maggie, and we hope to hear from you again. The riddle you sent has been given and answered in another part of “The Weekly Times.” Send us another next time.—Aunt Connie.]

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The McLeod Prison

Part One: 1916-1917

The McLeod prison farm opened in 1916, initially as a tent village, on the south east side of French island on the site of a failed pine plantation. In 1921 the Penal and Gaols Department acquired 480 acres of this land for occupation by "indeterminate sentenced" prisoners. The aim was to rehabilitate the inmates by teaching them rudimentary farm skills on a self sustaining farm living in an open air environment. Timber cabins housed the prisoners until 1946 when concrete cells were built. The prison closed in 1975. In 1977 the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation took over about 147 acres (58 ha.) of the original camp and ran the place as a recreation camp until 1995, leasing it in the early 1980s to the McLeod Prison (French Island) Tourist Resort Pty. Ltd. who struggled to make a go of it. Most recently it operated as an eco-farm until it was bought in 2017 for \$4 million by a Chinese-based company with plans (so far unrealised) to turn it into a major tourism operation.

From the *Argus*, Friday 24 March 1916, page 6.

Prison Reform

Afforestation Scheme

As a result of his visit to French Island on Wednesday, the Chief Secretary (Mr. McLeod) is convinced that a suitable area can be secured for the employment of prisoners in afforestation. Mr. McLeod has now under consideration a scheme for the employment of first-offenders, on forestry work, on a prim farm, and in trade operations. He announced yesterday that he intended to strongly recommend at the next meeting of the Cabinet that an area near the creek be set aside for prisoners, and that hut accommodation be provided for about 15 persons. On the site selected by him it would be possible to grow vegetables for the camp, and the prisoners could attend to gardening, besides their forestry work. He considered that provision for about 15 would be sufficient to give the scheme a trial. Additional accommodation could be provided at a later stage, if it were thought desirable to employ more prisoners in afforestation.

From the *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate*, Saturday 15 April 1916, page 11.

Prison Labour

An interesting new departure is involved in the decision of the State Government to employ prisoners in afforestation work at French Island. In the early days of the State it was usual to sentence prisoners to periods of hard labour on the roads, and gangs of convicts were often to be observed engaged in this class of work. Hitherto the main objections to utilising prison labour on public works appear to have been two. One was competition with free labour; the other the cost of supervision. We have had our so-called experts fortifying their local knowledge by inspections of all the principal prisons of the

Empire, but somehow, perhaps owing to the perfection of our own system, these visits never appear to have produced more than voluminous and more or less interesting reports which have gone to swell the archives of Government departments, but do not appear to have had any practical result. It is a little singular that this particular experiment should have been made during the regime of Mr. McLeod, the oldest, and as some think, the most conservative member of the Ministry. This is not the only innovation either, for it has been determined by the Cabinet that a number of first offenders, who are detained in the Castlemaine Gaol, shall be taught trades on the lines of the junior technical course of the Education Department. It may be that many of these men would have kept straight had they been equipped with technical training when they entered on the battle of life, and in the principle of better late than never, it is as well to try and make up the deficiency.

From the *Bendigo Independent*, Friday 9 June 1916, page 4.

Prison Reform

French Island Work.

Melbourne, Thursday.

Arrangements have been made by the Intermediate Sentences Board to transfer 24 good conduct prisoners to French Island. A selection will be made by the board of prisoners whose conduct has shown that they may be trusted under control less strict than that of gaol. The prisoners will be employed on forestry work. A building has been erected with separate sleeping cubicles for each man. The Chief Secretary, Mr. McLeod, says that the conditions of French Island are such as will give the experiment of employing prisoners in useful work in the open air a fair trial. The men will be close to a good beach where they will bathe. They

(continues on Page 17)

The McLeod Prison (continued from Page 16)

will be paid for the work they do, the money being accumulated and given to them on their release. The Intermediate Sentences Board is very hopeful that the prisoners will respond to the more humane treatment, and will lose the criminal taint inseparable from gaol life.

From the Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advertiser, Friday 16 June 1916, page 2.

French Island

The State Cabinet has approved of Mr McLeod's proposal that a start shall be made by transferring 24 good conduct prisoners from gaol to French Island. The board is to select the men who have shown that they may be trusted outside the prison's walls. These men will be employed in forestry work on French Island. A building with separate sleeping cubicles, is being erected for the accommodation of the prisoners. Mr McLeod states that while the scheme is as yet in the experimental stage, the Indeterminate Sentences Board was hopeful that the selected prisoners would respond to the more humane treatment rendered possible by the open air conditions at French Island. This plan of improving forests has already been adopted in New Zealand.

From the Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advertiser, Friday 23 June 1916, page 2.

Convicts at Western Port

A Menace To Public Safety

Our San Remo correspondent write:—

It is to be feared that the establishment of a settlement of good conduct prisoners on French Island to be employed in planting forests will not prove an unmixed blessing. There have been no convicts in Western Port since 1820, and when they left everybody hoped the last had been seen of an undesirable class. Every one admits that the Government is to be commended for spending money on afforestation and endeavoring to make the inmates of goals self supporting. But what guarantee is there that the good conduct prisoner is a reformed man whose predatory instincts have been eradicated! It is often found in gaols that the best conducted prisoner is the greatest villain of the lot, who is shamming repentance with the object of getting his sentence reduced. The settlers on French Island may welcome Government expenditure in their midst, but the other Western Port settlements in close proximity will possibly take a different view of the

matter. The ordinary discipline of the warders is likely to be relaxed, making escape from the island easy.

From the Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advertiser, Friday 11 August 1916, page 3.

San Remo

There are now ten convicts employed in forestry work on French Island. The residents say that they have excellent facilities for escape. But the prisoners are good conduct men and are supposed to have given their word of honor that they will not misbehave. As there is well known to be honor among thieves, the authorities are naturally satisfied.

From the Lang Lang Guardian, 27 September 1916, page 2.

French Island

Tree Planting Finished

The season's work of tree planting on French Island has been completed, and under the management of the Forester, Mr Brown, an area of about 2000 acres has been dealt with. This is very much in excess of the ordinary season's work, and in fact about 100 men have been employed in the work of afforestation during the term alluded to. Included in the list of those employed were 13 prisoners, and their employment on the island has so far given satisfactory results. During the summer these men will be employed in the work of clearing in view of next season's planting. They are at present encamped at McLeod's Settlement, on the south of the island, and it is now intended to build permanent quarters for the men there. Otherwise Mr Brown's staff during the summer will consist of an assistant and a boat man. In all about 5000 acres have been planted with trees, and this barren island in years to come will form one of our national sources of timber supply.

From the Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advertiser, Friday 29 September 1916, page 3.

San Remo

New regulations gazetted last week provide a scale of wages for the prisoners employed in forestry work on French Island, the object being that they shall be possessed on their release of the means of making a fresh start in life. The men will be credited for every day at work with pay on a graduated scale, payment for the highest grade being 2s per day; second grade 1s 9d; third 1s 6d. In many of the English Counties the pay of an agricultural

(continues on Page 18)

The McLeod Prison (continued from Page 17)

labour is 12s per week without board or lodging, and he often brings up or drags up a family of nine children on it. In happy Australia the "good conduct convict" receives 12s a week with free board and lodging. It will be a better day for the taxpayer when every convict within walls is made to earn his own living in goal, thus relieving the Government of the cost of his upkeep.

From the *Lang Lang Guardian*, 22 November 1916, page 2.

Fatality on French Island

Mr Edward Hickey, one of the warders in charge of the prisoners on French Island, who sustained severe injuries to the spine in attempting to dive from the jetty on the island on the 12th inst, died on Friday morning. Dr Langley was in attendance upon him, and his parents and wife were also with him in his last sad hours. The body of deceased (who leaves two children aged respectively 12 and 10 years) was conveyed to Wangaratta for interment on Saturday morning. At a magisterial enquiry before Mr E. Cougle, J.P., a verdict was returned to the effect that death was caused by pneumonia and paralysis, due to a broken spine, the result of a diving accident. The deceased was a splendid physical and moral stamp of a man, and his melancholy end was the cause of great sorrow on the part of those who knew him, which was heartily shared by the prisoners, with whom he was a great favorite.

From the *Leader*, Saturday 16 December 1916, page 24.

Prison Reform

Settlement At French Island

Board's Exciting Experience

Some nine months ago the Chief Secretary, Mr. D. McLeod, acting upon a recommendation of the Indeterminate Sentences Board, decided to inaugurate a prisoners' reformatory settlement at French Island. Considerable initial difficulties have yet to be overcome, but the promises of success are said to be most encouraging. The men have been excellent in their behavior, a good spirit is shown, and the work in the way of afforestation is highly approved by the authorities. There is little doubt that if properly managed and directed the scheme will prove successful in every way, and will bear out what "*The Age*" and "*The Leader*" have contended for many years past—that scientific criminology properly applied will bear the very best fruits, be helpful to the prisoners, and productive to

society.

Among the initial difficulties, however, are the means of communication: the settlement is entirely cut off from the mainland, without even a telephone, the need for which was made apparent by the unfortunate accident which resulted in the death of one of the wardens recently. The communication by transit depends absolutely upon a motor boat which is used by the Forestry department for conveying plants, trees and provisions to and from the island. The motor, which is almost a derelict, has not been overhauled for some considerable time, and has frequently delayed the landing of provisions upon the island, besides jeopardising the lives of the men in charge.

A few days ago the members of the Indeterminate Sentences Board, Messrs. S. Manger (chairman) and Dicker, accompanied by the inspector-General of Prisons, Colonel Freeman, visited the settlement for the purpose of inspection. They found considerable progress had been made, the principal drawback being the want of proper means of transit, as alluded to above. Whilst deliberating at the settlement, however, the member had little idea how the deficiency would be demonstrated to them in the dangerous manner before they reached the mainland.

The settlement is at the far end of the island, and involved a water trip of about eight miles. At the time of departure (about 5 p.m.) a storm broke over the island, and the motor boat was with difficulty hauled alongside the impromptu jetty. When the boat had reached about half the distance to the mainland the engine failed, which it has been repeatedly doing for the last month or six weeks, and the party was at the mercy of the wind and the current. Efforts were made for a considerable time to effect repairs, without success. Darkness had come on, and the position of the party was precarious, if not dangerous. The chairman of the board has probably never yearned for a "dry area" more than that night. The officer in charge decided that recourse would have to be made to the small dinghy accompanying the boat, and after considerable delay the anchor was dropped and the dinghy requisitioned. Only two oars were available, the boat was overweighted and was leaking badly, and the tide was settling strongly against the rowers, who could not be relieved, as it was impossible to change places without fear of the dinghy capsizing. For some considerable

(continues on Page 19)

The McLeod Prison (continued from Page 18)

time no progress was made, but after rowing for three hours the party arrived off what is known to the local identities as Sandy Point. The difficulty of getting ashore, however, was at once evident. The tide was ebbing, and some quarter of a mile of slush and mud has to be negotiated before the party could consider themselves safe. Three members of the party divested themselves of their clothing and plunged into the water. Efforts were then made by means of ropes and planks to secure a reasonably safe passage for the members of the board, one of whom came to grief in the slush with all his clothes on! All the difficulties of landing were gradually overcome, and the party trudged about six miles through the bush to Lang Lang, from whence they motored to Melbourne, where they arrived about 3 o'clock in the morning. The members of the board speak highly of the initiative displayed by the forestry officer, Mr. Brown, and the whole experience is considered to be a great reflection upon the inaction of the persons responsible for looking after the motor boat. It is nearly two years since it was overhauled, and repairs have been requisitioned for some considerable time, but nothing has been done. If the settlement is to be successful, more reasonable means of transit is, in the opinion of the board and the inspector-general, imperative.

From the *Argus*, Friday 2 February 1917, page 9.

Forestry For Prisoners

Operations at French Island

The experiment of employing prisoners of good behaviour on forestry operations at French Island has proved successful in the opinion of the Chief Secretary (Mr McLeod) who in company with the Minister for Forests (Mr. Livingston) visited the settlement on Wednesday. Mr McLeod stated yesterday that about 20 prisoners were now at French Island and he thought that with very little additional expenditure provision could be made for 50. He intended to discuss questions affecting the settlement in the Indeterminate Sentences Act. The experiment had been so successful that probably the settlement would be made permanent and extended. The prisoners, who were at present in tents, were now erecting a row of cubicles for their accommodation and a messroom and kitchen would be built afterwards. The work done was very satisfactory and would do credit to any carpenter, and it was probable that a workshop would be fitted up so that the prisoners might learn

the trade when they were not engaged in forestry work or gardening. At present only a few acres were permanently reserved for the settlement but it was probable that he would apply for the permanent reservation of an area of from 800 to 1000 acres. All the men were well satisfied with their conditions and performed their 48 hours work a week cheerfully. Only one prisoner had failed to appreciate the system. He had apparently found the life too strenuous and had asked to be sent back to goal.

Mr. Livingston intimated that 1,000,000 pine and other trees would be planted at French Island by his department this year. One million pines were added to the department's plantation on the island last year.

From the *Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advertiser*, Friday 18 May 1917, page 3.

San Remo

The San Remo lock-up is to be removed to French Island, where there are convicts. The "jug" had a soft time during its 35 years' service in San Remo, for not more than half-a-dozen culprits were ever inside it.

From the *Lang Lang Guardian*, 26 September 1917, page 2

Concert and Dance at French Island

A few of the residents of Lang Lang paid a visit to French Island on Monday evening last, when a concert and dance was given by the prisoners on the Island. The local party enjoyed themselves, and returned early on Tuesday morning. The items for the concert were given by the prisoners, and the music for the dance was supplied by Messrs Bennett and Wiseman.

From the *Age*, Monday 1 October 1917, page 7.

Three Prisoner Escape

Leave French Island In A Boat

The Criminal Investigation department was informed yesterday by Mr. Quirk, officer in charge of the McLeod Penal Settlement, French Island, that three prisoners escaped from the settlement between 9 p.m. on Saturday and 1 a.m. yesterday. They stole a boat, the property of the Forestry department, and landed at Lang Lang. From there their movements are uncertain, but it is believed that the prisoners have arrived in Melbourne. They are all described as criminals who are undergoing indeterminate periods of imprisonment. A description of the men, as officially supplied, is as follows:—

(continues on Page 20)

The McLeod Prison (continued from Page 19)

Arthur Hayes, 27 years. 5 feet 5½ inches in height, fresh complexion, brown hair, grey eyes; dressed in a blue sac suit, short trousers. He is serving two years' imprisonment.

Leslie Hill, 26 years, 5 feet 5 inches in height; fresh complexion, brown hair, grey eyes; wearing a black suit. Serving 2½ years' imprisonment.

Norman Pierce *[sic]*, 23 years, 5 feet 5¼ inches in height; fresh complexion, black hair, brown eyes; dressed in blue sac suit. Serving six months' imprisonment.

The men had been engaged, along with other prisoners from various parts of the State, in forest tree planting at French island. Investigation is being made by the police as to the whereabouts of the escapees, but up to an early hour this morning they had evaded recapture.

From the *Herald*, Saturday 20 October 1917, page 4.

French Island Escapees Remanded Until Friday

Norman Pearce and Arthur Hayes, who escaped from the penal settlement on French Island, on September 29, were charged at the City Court today with having escaped from custody. They were remanded until Friday.

Detective Naphthine said: In company with Detective Brophy and Detective Nation, of Adelaide, I arrested Pearce and Hayes last evening. They were prisoners on French Island, and on the night of September 29 they escaped, obtained a boat, and rowed four miles to the mainland.

From the *Geelong Advertiser*, Friday 2 November 1917, page 6: General News.

French Island Prisoners

In the Melbourne City Court yesterday Norman Pearce and Arthur Hayes were charged with having escaped from custody at French Island.

Evidence was given by George F. Dicker, Secretary of the Intermediate Sentences Board, that Hayes and Pearce were prisoners at the Reformatory Settlement on French Island. In 1914 Hayes was sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour, on a charge of attempted house-breaking, and had been declared an habitual criminal. Pearce had been sentenced to six months' imprisonment on each of three charges of housebreaking. The sentences were made concurrent, and he was ordered to be detained in a reformatory prison during *[sic]* the Governor's pleasure. James Clark, senior warden in charge of the settlement, said that Hayes had been trans-

ferred to the inland in May, and Pearce in July. He had last seen them on the evening of September 29th. Hayes had been sent to the house of James Brown, of the Forestry Department, and Pearce should have retired to his cubicle at 9 o'clock. James Brown said he missed Pearce on the morning of September 30th. Witness had left his boat tied up on the island, and on the following morning he found it on the mainland about three miles away. The footprints of the three men led away from it into the sand. Detective Naphthine gave evidence as to the arrest of the two men in Flinders-street. Pearce said they had got away about midnight, and Hayes added that they had a rough time getting across. Both accused were committed for trial. Mr B. Hoare, who appeared for the accused, said with a smile: "I have just been reminded that I have forgotten to ask for bail for my client." "I did not know you donned the robe of a jester," remarked Mr. T. O'Callaghan, J.P.



(Top) Undated, but almost certainly 1946 view of the wooden cabins and the building of their replacement (middle and bottom photos). Source: Public Records Office, VPRS 10516/P0001. French Island Penal Settlement – Corinella