

The Western Port Times

Grantville & Districts



Volume 4 Number 5

FREE

September 2021

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

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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/>
 Grantville History: grantvillehistory.com.au
 Hastings–Western Port Historical Society: <https://www.hwphs.org.au/>
 Inverloch Historical Society: <http://inverlochhistory.com/>
 Also: cv.vic.gov.au/organisations/inverloch-historical-society/
 Koo-Wee-Rup Swamp Historical Society:
kooweerupswamphistory.blogspot.com.au/
 Korumburra & District Historical Society: Janet Wilson 5657 2267
 or PO Bo 293, Korumburra 3950
 Lang Lang & District Historical Society: langlang.net/historical.html
 Leongatha and District Historical society: leongathahistory.org.au
 Phillip Island & District Historical Society: <http://pidhs.org.au/>
 Phillip Island Nature Parks, Churchill Island Heritage Farm Collection
<https://victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/churchill-island-heritage-farm#collection-records>
 South Eastern Historical Association: seha.org.au
 Western Port Historical Society Inc.: hwphs.org.au/
 Wonthaggi Historical Society: wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/
 Wonthaggi Genealogy Inc.: secretary@wonthaggienealogy.org.au

The Bass Valley U3A Local History Group is looking for photos and information on places of significance to our local history.

If you have anything you would like to share with us, we have the facilities to scan or photograph your items so they do not have to leave your possession.



From the *San Remo Times*, 7 February 1896, page 2

Local and General News

Poultry keepers in Kilcunda district will do well to see that their feathered friends are securely fastened up at night, as the foxes are beginning make their presence felt severely. One selector has had a number of promising young turkeys lost the number of their mess, and were found with their headless bodies in close proximity to their roosting house. About 3 o'clock on Wednesday morning last another resident had his peaceful slumbers disturbed by the landing of a number of birds on his roof, they having been disturbed by reynards* efforts to reach them from the roof of their roosting house.

Mr. Chas. Steinholdt of Kilcunda, has just had a nice commodious house erected on his block, were he intends carrying on dairying. He has splendid grass paddocks, and with the addition of a cream separator his undertaking ought to prove successful.

Mr. J. O'Meara, the genial host of the Bass hotel, has accepted tenders for the erection of a dwelling house on the Kilcunda heights. We believe it is his intention to retire from the present business to follow that of dairying.

The residents of Kilcunda are desirous that steps should be taken to have the present State school removed to a more central situation. The majority of the children have to walk from two to three miles, and several families do not attend on that account.

Both hotels and private boarding houses at Cowes are nearly full. The township is quite lively with visitors strolling about.

A new president is to be selected to-morrow by the Phillip Island Shire Council, in the place of ex-Councillor Dixon, who left some time since for West Australia, where he intends entering into business. Mr. W. Harbison has been returned un-opposed to the vacant seat.

The work in connection with the jetty at Cowes is making headway, and Mr. Richardsan [*sic*], the contractor, hopes to have it completed at an early date.

The children attending the Blackwood Sunday school, had an enjoyable day on the 29th ult., when they and their parents and friends held a picnic at Mr. Miles farm. Sports of various kinds were indulged in, and the affair passed off pleasantly.

The building trade shows some slight improvement all round the neighborhood. In

* A conventional name for a fox used in tales following usage in the old epic "Reynard the Fox." [Editor.]

Cowes there are several new places in course of erection. The energetic Mr. R. Anderson, is building an eight-roomed brick house in Cowes, in addition to which he has several houses already finished suitable for families who do not care to stay at hotels.

A peculiar double accident occurred on Monday last to a couple of young ladies named Miss E. Kennedy, second daughter of Mr. Kennedy of Blackwood, and Miss Allan of the same place. It appears that Miss Kennedy mounted a young, newly-broken horse, and although she had been in the habit of aiding it, the animal became restive, and threw her. She fell heavily on her head and became senseless. She was immediately carried into the neighbouring house of Mr. Moldoon [*sic*]. Miss Allan, on another horse, set off after the run-away, when, by a strange coincidence, she, also, was thrown, and very much shaken by the fall. A gentleman named Mr. Yule, who happened to be near, took her into Mr. Muldoon's. Both young ladies are now recovering from their tumble.

A ball in aid of the funds of the Peoples' Hall, Bridge Creek, will be held this evening at the place named. A varied programme has been provided, and also a good band. These attractions, and the low price of admission, is bound to ensure a good attendance.

The first number of the new school paper issued by the Education Department, for the use and instruction of State school children, was issued last month, and already 32,000 copies have been sold. This is more than was anticipated at the first issue, and a good profit has been realised. Mr. Elliott of the Newhaven school, speaks well of the publication.

A bazaar in aid of the funds of St. Phillips Church, Cowes, was opened on Friday the 24th ult., in the school room, and remained open till Monday night, and was well attended. Mr. Wilson opened the bazaar in the presence of a large number of ladies and gentlemen, and immediately afterwards business began on a brisk scale. Amongst the gifts was one of a pony from Mrs. Henty Wilson, which realised £3 10s. At the close of the affair it was ascertained that a sum of £46 had been realised towards liquidating the debt on the church.

FIRE! Buy a Spark Screen and avoid risks. McLeod's, Kooweerup.

From *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 10 March 1886, page 2: Jottings From Westernport.

Mail Matters

Bad Routes, Long Delays, and Possible Alternatives.

(Re-paragraphed for the sake of clarity.)

At a late meeting of the Shire of Phillip Island, a motion was tabled that the Secretary write to the Postmaster-general asking that mails be run between the Bass, Kilcunda and Griffith's Point. The report also states "in order to complete the circle of Westernport Bay."

It appears to me that in order to complete that circle a mail should be conveyed between the Bass and Griffith's Point and another between Griffith's Point and Newhaven. The circle then will be completed but I don't see how a mail between Bass and Kilcunda has anything to do with the circle, although there is nothing to prevent the residents of those places being able to exchange letters.

At present residents of the Bass, Griffith's Point and Newhaven have to suffer much delay if they wish to communicate by post, and it is a puzzle to me why they have suffered so long. Probably telegraphic communication has awakened them to the fact that quick communication is one of the means of advancement. Upon this subject I would draw attention to the following facts:

By the mail route via Dandenong, &c., mails should (via Postal Guide) arrive at the Bass at six p.m. on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturdays being 12¼ hours in transit. On the return journey they are made up at six p.m. of the same day and do not reach Melbourne till 1.15 p.m. of the following day.

Now mails to Griffith's Point via Hastings are delivered at 2.30 p.m. (sometimes earlier) every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. If this service was continued to the Bass letters should be delivered there at 3.30 p.m. or 2½ hours earlier than by the Dandenong route, and as the mail from Griffith's Point closes on the following morning at 8.25 a.m., residents at the Bass would have plenty of time to reply to letters (the present times being continued).

If the mail service via Dandenong on the down trip was altered to Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and the service via Hastings to Griffith's Point continued to Grantville, letters should arrive there about 5.35 p.m., 1½ hour[s] later than by the present route, and the places between

Grantville and Griffith's Point enjoy daily mail communication.

The time is not very far distant however when all the traffic of Grantville, Queensferry and the country surrounding those places will be conveyed by steamer via Settlement Point and Hastings, when residents will profit by a considerable saving of time and inconvenience.

From the *Leader*, Saturday 20 December 1879, page 13

Found Drowned

A magisterial inquiry was held at Queensferry, Corinella, on the 16th instant, before Mr. A. Stewart, J.P., on the body of Charles Cook. From the evidence it appeared that the deceased was engaged as a farm laborer by a Mr. Emery, of Fitzroy, to proceed to Mr. Isaac Emery, farmer, Bass River. He arrived at Queensferry by the schooner Tyro, Henderson, master, on the 14th. On the passage he appeared as if suffering from *deririum tremens*, but was quiet until passing Cape Schanck, when he seemed to be mad. He got better during the remainder of the passage, and on landing at Queensferry was handed 5s. by the captain, as instructed by Mr. Emery. He then proceeded for the Bass River, but returned again to the vessel about five o'clock in the evening, stating that he could not find his way; he appeared stupid, and, in answer to a question, stated that he was in Collingwood. He had tea, and went ashore, but returned again to the vessel about eleven o'clock at night. From his appearance it was thought advisable to place him under restraint in the hold, but by stacking timber on a cask he managed to escape during the night, and was found next day when the tide receded lying dead on the mud bank, within 100 yards of the vessel. Information was conveyed to Griffith's Point, 15 miles off, which is the nearest police station. Senior-constable Taylor proceeded at once to the spot, and conducted the inquiry. The decision arrived at was that the deceased was found drowned, but that there was no evidence to show whether it was by accident or intention. The necessity of a constable being stationed at Grantville has often been pointed out. It is but three miles from where this death occurred. The captain stated at the inquiry that if there had been a policeman near at hand he would have given the deceased in charge, which no doubt would have had the effect of saving his life.

From the *Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advertiser*, Friday 26 November 1915

The Troubles of the Ranger

More Assaults and Battery Alleged

The Shire of Phillip Island and Woolamai's ranger, Jas. Caughey, whose duty it is to keep the roads clear of stock, and also collect dog fees, appears to have a strenuous life. If he leaves cattle on the roads he and the councillors get into hot water for not impounding them and if he does take cattle to the pound, he has to run the gauntlet of ratepayers and irascible owners, who object to their stock being pounded.

At the council meeting on Monday, a letter was received from Jas. Caughey, ranger, complaining against Jas. McNabb, for rescuing five horses from him and also assaulting him. At the end of October he made a raid on wandering stock, clearing the roads around Bass. He went to Corinella and got 17 horses, 12 near McNabb's frontage, which he was taking to the pound. McNabb and his son Archie came after him at a mad gallop and forcibly took five of the horses. He told McNabb that he would have to pay the trespass fees, but McNabb said "You can go to -----, you and the Council."

"McNabb then rushed at me and struck me a severe blow on the head with a stick; he lost possession of the stick but struck me twice with his fist, McNabb galloped away, overtook his son and put horses in his paddock. I have the stick in my possession. My son Oswald was with me and witnessed the whole affair. I have not seen McNabb to speak to for many months, and have not had any quarrel in any way. You know that McNabb has been opposed to me lately on account of me impounding some of his cattle. I have not said anything to Mr McNabb. If the council will assist to prosecute I will give the solicitor all particulars to take immediate action."

The council on the motion of Crs Bowman and Lloyd, decided to support the ranger in prosecuting. Councillors remarked that the ranger appeared to be having a bad time lately.

The matter has been submitted to the Shire Solicitor, Mr W. S. Cook, and it is likely that legal proceedings will be taken in connection with it.

From the *Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advertiser*, Friday 4 February 1916, page 3: Lang Lang

Alleged Pound Rescue and Assault

At the Lang Lang Court on the 20th ultimo,

the long-talked of case of Caughey v. McNabb came on for hearing before Mr. W. W. Harris, P.M., and a bench of honorary justices. Complainant charged defendant with pound rescue and assault. Defendant admitted the rescue, but stated that the horses in question were never out of his control, and were, therefore, not legally seizable by the complainant, and such being the case could be taken from him. He denied the assault charge.

Mr. W. S. Cook appeared for complainant, and Mr. W. E. Brunt for defendant.

After hearing the evidence of Caughey and his son on the one side, and McNabb and his son on the other, the P.M. held that defendant had been out of control when the stock was seized. He, therefore, inflicted a fine of £3, with £5 5s costs, on the first charge, and £2, without costs, on the second charge.

From the *San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 5 June 1896

Opening of the Glen Alvie Hall

The Glen Alvie hall, which has only just been completed, was open *[sic]* with a concert and ball on Friday evening last, the attendance being very large. The building is constructed of wood and is 25ft x 35ft, with a small stage fitted therein, and is greatly adapted for entertainments of this kind. Mr. Scott occupied the chair and in a neat speech congratulated the residents of the districts for the efforts they had put forth and thus secured such a nice building. The musical part of the programme was greatly added to by the rendition of songs by Messrs. Parsons, Hadden, Parker, Hood, and Meadows, and Miss Allen; Mrs. Neill playing the accompaniments throughout the evening.

After the concert the hall was cleared for dancing, there being about 45 couples in attendance, when the ball was opened. The refreshments were handed round at midnight, and after full justice had been done to the inner man, dancing was again resumed and kept till daylight, when all returned home thoroughly satisfied with the opening of the new hall. The catering part of the programme was ably presided over by Mesdames Walker, Hodgkins, and M'Laren, whilst the music was supplied by Mr. Cadd. Mr. Trew carried out the duties pertaining to M.C. in an efficient and accomplished manner.

From the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 2 March 1881

Shire Of Phillip Island And Woolamai

Council Meeting. February 19th, 1881.

Present: Councillors West, Aldridge, Kidd, Norton, Misson.

Councillor Norton was voted to the chair.

Minutes of last meeting were confirmed.

From Treasury, applying for a return of all licenses issued. Information to be sent.

From T. J. Maidment, acknowledging receipt of part of his account for auditing expenses, and from Duffy and Wilkinson, solicitors, threatening legal proceedings if the balance of Mr Maidment's a.c. be not paid forthwith. Moved by Councillor West, seconded by Councillor Misson, and carried, that should Mr Maidment proceed so far, the Council's solicitor be instructed to defend the action.

From William Salmon, asking the Council to allow him and two others to expend five years' rates on the road from their selections.—Referred to the members for the Riding.

From Department of Public Works, pointing out that the Governor in Council had thought fit to refuse the prayer of the Corinella petitioners for another riding.—Received.—Councillors Kidd and Aldridge.

From Under Treasurer, requesting the usual rate returns, pointing out that they were not now compulsory.—Information sent.

From Messrs Clark and Co., offering their services as brokers to procure a loan for the Shire.—Received.

From Municipal Association, pointing out the danger of altering the style of municipal endowment. Received, and on motion of Councillors West and Aldridge, the Secretary to write to member for the district, requesting him to support the original plan.

Tenders were ordered to be called for works near McGrath's and also for cleaning out drains on Centre Road.

On motion of Councillors Kidd and Misson, the Clerk of Works to report at next meeting on the state of the drain near Gregson's land, Corinella; Clerk of Works also instructed to report on state of Bass' Bridge.

Payments to amount of £102 17s. were passed.

Tenders were accepted as follows—

Cont. 229 J. Murray ... £ 5 10 0

230 H. Kimberley 50 0 0

The Secretary was instructed to write to the Ballarat Anglers' Association asking them when they would have any fish to supply this Council with, and to Mr Kingsbury, of

Geelong, as soon as the reply from Ballarat is to hand.

Secretary was instructed to get the holes in the road from Salt Creek bridge to Gillespie's filled up by day labor.

Also to get a few panels of fencing erected at Shire Hall, to tie horses to.

Councillor West gave notice of motion for twelve chains forming and two rough culverts, to be done on Smith's road.

From the *Leader*, Saturday 1 February 1890, page 13

Bass Valley District

[From Our Correspondent].

Grantville, Wednesday.

As evidencing the fertility of the soil in the valley of the Bass, I measured some tomato plants growing in the garden of Mr. Geo. Stewart, J.P., one of which was the extraordinary length of 7 feet 2 inches. The plant was heavily laden with fruit in various stages of growth. The hop garden of Mr. Jno. Laurence, situate in the Bass Valley, presents a beautifully healthy and vigorous appearance at present. The laterals are throwing out strongly, and on some the burr is just appearing. It is surprising that, considering the proved adaptability of this district for hop growing, this industry has not been more largely entered upon, but the absence of a rapid and cheap means of getting produce to market has a strongly retarding influence. Strong hopes are entertained that in the coming railway bill a line will be included branching from the Great Southern line near Nyara [*sic*] or Loch and then down the Bass Valley. This line would do a vast amount of good to the settlers in the Jumbunna West, San Remo, Wonthaggi and Powlett River districts, especially to that large class engaged in dairying and fruit growing. The Jeetho and Jumbunna cheese factory, also in the Bass Valley, is experiencing a good season this year. The company were fortunate in securing the services of a cheese maker who worked for a number of years in the Briagolong factory. The factory is proving a boon to the dairymen around, and is a success financially. The Bass Valley cheese and butter factory, situate near Mr. Donald Munro's Bass Park estate, is making butter only, but I have not heard how matters are progressing.

From *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 23 March 1881

Phillip Island And Woolamai Shire Council

Saturday, 19th March, 1881.

Present: Councillors Turnbull (President), Stewart, Misson, Delaney, Norton, and Duffus.

The minutes of last meeting were read and confirmed.

Correspondence

From James Cuthbert, pointing out the best method of draining the road to Corinella.—On motion of Councillor's Stewart and Misson, the letter to be acknowledged with thanks, and Mr. Cuthbert to be informed that no funds are available at present.

From Under Secretary, appointing Mr Crump as electoral registrar.

Slaughtering licenses were granted to Messrs. Anderson and Bergmier *[sic]*.

A petition from ratepayers of Jeetho and Jumbunna, praying for a slight deviation of the road on Delany's hill, was read and referred to the Engineer for report.

Reports

Corinella Councillors in re Wm. Salmon's request for assistance to clear road from his selection, postponed for one month to permit of Clerk of Works reporting.

The Clerk of Works reported on a drain at Misson's in Corinella, stating that a good portion of the earth was thrown on to private property.—On motion of Councillors Stewart and Misson, Clerk of Works to report on position of Beck's fences at next meeting in conjunction with Mr Misson.

Also in re Barr's bridge, stating that the Woolamai end of the *[unclear word]* needed ten fresh piles and a new abutment.—Councillor *[unclear name]* moved, seconded by Councillor Misson, that the Clerk of Works get the necessary repairs effected at once.

Tenders were ordered to be called for clearing road to Fribb's corner in Jeetho from Flack's corner.

Permission was given to Mr Crump to act as electoral registrar.

Payment to the amount of £180 3s 2d were passed.

The tenders of H. Jenner, £3 11s, and S. Davies, £3 2s 3d were accepted.

The Secretary was instructed to make application for the sum of £150 granted to the Shire for building a bridge over the Bass river.

Councillor Turnbull, West, Delany *[sic]*, Norton, and Stewart were appointed a committee to bring up a report at some future date on the advisability or otherwise of constructing tramways instead of roads in Jeetho.

Tenders to be called for 12 chains formation and two rough culverts in Smith's road, Phillip Island.

The Council then adjourned.

From *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 18 May 1881

Phillip Island And Woolamai Shire Council

Saturday, May 14, 1881.

Present, M. Turnbull Esq. (President) Councillors West, Misson, Delany, Kidd, Duffus and Aldridge.

The minutes of last meeting were confirmed.

Correspondence

From Senior-constable Pipe tendering his resignation of the office of Inspector of Slaughteryards for Corinella.—It was moved by Councillor West, and seconded by Councillor Kidd, that it be accepted and Constable Murphy appointed in his stead.—Carried.

From J. Grant, requesting leave to dig a drain just along his fence.—Granted on motion of Councillors Kidd and Misson.

From John West, complaining that Constable Ardill had allowed his cow to die close to his house, and then hauled it a short distance away, thereby creating a nuisance to the neighbours. On motion of Councillors West and Duffus, the matter was referred to the Health Officer to take action.

From Shire of South Barwon, advocating a Permissive Toll Bill.—No action to be taken.

From Public Works, stating that the Engineer's certificate of completion of a bridge over the Bass River would be accepted.—Referred to the members of the Riding for reports at next meeting as also a petition from ratepayers of Jeetho and Jumbunna, praying for the erection of a bridge across the Bass River, near Isaac's.

From Arnall and Jackson, offering a large map of the Colony on a superior scale, with the boundaries of shires, &c., marked on it.—Moved by Councillor Turnbull, seconded by Councillor Kidd, that one at £3 5s. be obtained at once.

Councillor Turnbull then gave notice of motion to borrow the sum of £3000 on the credit of the Shire.

Pier Pressure

The Piers at Grantville and Queensferry

Ports, Provisions, Timber, Trade: the Rise and Fall of Grantville and Queensferry
Part One

by Geoff Guilfoyle

With additional research by Robert Glover

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

Grantville was not a natural port; few places on the eastern side of Western Port Bay could claim to be so. Sitting adjacent to a narrow channel, Corinella was one such township. It was also at the end of a peninsula and away from the main area of trade and population. Tenby Point, closer and also on a thin channel, was another but lacked much in the way of population until the 1970s.

Bass Landing suffered from the same defect, though, thanks to the efforts of Laurence Henderson, it did develop late in the 19th century into a minor port, useful for those living in the area and, more particularly, transporting timber from the mills in the hills behind Bass to Melbourne.

That left Queensferry and Grantville, two localities which in the 1870s enjoyed a growing population and sat aside the strategic Western Port Road (also referred to as the Main Coast Road) which ran from Cranbourne to Woolamai (Bass) and beyond.

Any jetties at Grantville and Queensferry, however, were affected by the tides which, when low, left exposed mud flats which extended for hundreds of metres beyond the end of any pier. Even at full tide, the eastern side of the bay admitted no large ships.

The story, however, is complicated, which brings us to Grantville's first pier, and very likely the first pier between Manton's Station (Tooradin) and Griffith's Point (San Remo): the Deep Creek pier.

The Deep Creek Pier

As has been pointed out before, the original Grantville, centred on the area around Deep Creek in the early 1870s, for some reason still not fully understood, migrated southward until by 1876 the main business area had settled south of Little Deep Creek (Colbert Creek) where it remains to this day. Before this happened, a pier was built where the eponymous creek flows into Western Port Bay.

Looking at the ruin today shows that, after allowing for erosion, it didn't extend for more than a third of its extent into the water. For much of its length it ran parallel to Deep

Creek, allowing small boats to sail or be rowed into the creek and away from the worst of any waves, which made loading goods and passengers easier. The sand bar which is present at the mouth of the creek today forcing the water to move around it wasn't there 150 years ago. The creek would have flowed straight into the bay.

The Deep Creek pier existed in September 1872 and likely well before. It appears in the first iteration of the map of Deep Creek done by surveyor, Edmund Colbert, earlier in the year. Its probable presence two years earlier could be a factor in why Colbert in his 1870 survey of future Grantville chose Deep Creek as the site rather than further along the coast in either direction. Possibly he believed that the future township would coalesce around the pier.

Who built it? One candidate is the Corinella Coal Mining Company (which, despite the name, has nothing to do with Corinella). Following up on Richard Daintree's geological survey in 1859, this company sunk a number of exploratory shafts on both sides of the Bass River near today's Almurta. In *The Corinella Coal Field* (*Argus*, 24 April 1867) a visitor to the workings tells an amusing tale of misjudging the tide and being stuck offshore in the mud. However, eventually...

A grateful feeling thrilled through us when the water touched the boat, and when at last it floated our craft into the creek, we jumped from it with a sense of gladness, compared to which the sensations on reaching land after the longest sea voyage must be mild indeed.

You'll notice that they landed in the creek, not on the shore of the bay, and the absence of any mention of a jetty.

To expedite the arrival and departure of people and material, could the Corinella Coal Mining Company have constructed the pier? The answer is...possibly; however...

It was digging test shafts and, although getting positive results at that time, had little capital to waste and would therefore be reluctant to build such a structure until the operation was put on a more permanent

(continues on Page 9)

Pier Pressure (continued from Page 8)

and commercial footing.

It is to be borne in mind that all these shafts are sunk for prospecting purposes, and are not to be used for working the mine should it be deemed in the end advisable to open up the coal-field.¹

Perhaps the pier had something to do with the wattle bark industry. Wattle bark (used in the tanning industry) was collected throughout Victoria right up until the mid-20th century. From the 1830s onward, Western Port and later south and south-west Gippsland was an important region for the trade. Henry Dowel, the purchaser of Lots 1 and 2 of Section A at Grantville in late 1876, was one such collector, albeit late in the game, dissolving his bark stripping partnership with Leonard Levy on 5 December 1885.²

There may even be a link to Deep Creek.

From the *Geelong Advertiser*, Friday 10 May 1844, page 2: The Route to Gippsland:

...On his return between Jamison's station and Bass River, he met Mr Hobson's party, which consists of two drays, besides the herd of cattle. Mr Hobson's party encamped at the Hurdy Gurdy Creek... Mr T. states that there is a good road over the ranges (between Bass River and Mr Chisholm's station), as fine and direct a road as any surveyor could have formed... On his making some enquiry touching this fine road, Mr Thomas was informed that it was made by some barkers; there being no drays in this part of the country, they were forced to draw their bark on sledges to the coast, which accounts for the pains they had taken...

Where to on the coast? Presumably where a boat could be safely brought in to haul away the bark. That place isn't between Kilcunda and Cape Paterson on the Bass Strait. Somewhere between Griffith's Point and The Gurdies, the placid waters of Western Port Bay, would be ideal. Possibly even Deep Creek.

So did a group of wattle bark collectors build the Deep Creek pier? While it cannot be entirely discounted, there is a superior candidate.

The First Sawmill?

Here's a question for you, especially those who know something of the history of the area. Who was the first sawmiller in the eastern Western Port Bay region? More specifically, the soon-to-be Shire of Phillip Island and Woolamai. The standard answer has always been Alexander Stewart of

Queensferry who started a mill near future Glen Forbes in 1874. This has been modified slightly in recent years to 1873. A better answer is shifting it from Alexander Stewart of Queensferry in 1873 to Alexander Stewart of Grantville in late (post-winter) 1872. A move of a few months and a few kilometres.

It is a better answer. It is also wrong.

From the *Alexandra Times*, 5 August 1876, page 3: Mornington and South Gipps Land No.3:

Nothing worthy of mention is met with till you reach Grantville, in olden times called Deep Creek. This place was formerly occupied for the timber trade by Messrs Woods and Miller, and conducted by one Thomas; but, I believe, strictness of law on the manager's part, and shortness of funds on the part of the firm, prevented this industry taking that stride which it is well able to do under favorable circumstances, as the district contains the best timber in the colonies. Since that time the late Mr Graham, of brewing notoriety, was owner;

"Timber trade" is vague, admittedly, but that "the best timber in the colonies" makes it clear the author is talking about a sawmill, with Miller and Woods (and later Graham) the owner, and Thomas the manager. No date, no details, just a mention that the venture was, if not abortive, at least operating well below its potential.

Is this the origin of the Deep Creek pier? It is very tempting to say so, and the wood was certainly on hand for its construction. Unfortunately, neither dates nor the pier are mentioned in the article.

Stewart Takes Over

With no dates for a timeline for the Woods and Miller sawmill (beyond it probably ceasing in early 1871), is there at least a location for the mill? Maybe. [See *Milling About* on page 17]

Is there any other information on the mill supported by primary source evidence? No, but it is certain that we have the name of one employee: Alexander Stewart.

He likely started as a worker of some sort under Woods and Miller and finished as the manager for Graham in 1871. Is there evidence to support this?

Yes.

It is found in the last line in the *Alexandra Times* quote, which I omitted for dramatic effect and present now:

Since that time the late Mr Graham, of brewing notoriety, was owner; his affairs
(continues on Page 10)

Pier Pressure (continued from Page 9)

here were conducted by Mr A. Stewart, and were wound up with satisfaction to all parties.

Thomas Graham, a noted brewer and wealthy man, of Collingwood, died in January 1871 – without leaving a will, but leaving two widows, one in Melbourne and (allegedly) one in England with two sons (his), the grieving Melbourne widow also (allegedly) having a living husband when she married Graham. The subsequent legal wrangling dragged on until July 1872.³

Additional evidence is seen in certificate 509 in the Births in the District of Cranbourne and Mornington register. It records the birth of Isabella Georgina Stewart on 11 January 1871 at Deep Creek. The father’s occupation is given as “timber merchant.”

Sometime and somehow in 1872, Alexander Stewart acquired the equipment from the now quiet mill and, depending on the scenario, moving it to a new location, went into business for himself.

When? Given the legal case wasn’t resolved until mid-1872, early 1872 seems implausible and mid-year (the middle of winter with all the problems that creates) doesn’t sound all that appealing. Starting up in spring for

six months of good weather and solid ground, does, providing fewer transport problems and maximizing profit.

Isabella Georgina Stewart is recorded on Certificate 4 in the Deaths in the District of Bass register dying on 16 December 1872 at Grantville. The father’s occupation is now “saw mill proprietor.”

With Alexander Stewart now owning a saw-mill, who comes next? The Brandrick-Johnson trial indirectly provides the name.

From the Argus, 25 November 1875 page 6. William Brandrick – I knew Mr. Stewart, a saw-mill proprietor. I had a difference with him about £7, which was collected to buy books for the school, and never paid over. I was next asked by some working men to assist them in starting a co-operative sawmill, as they could neither get stores nor money from Stewart. I also asked a gentleman to come down from Mount Macedon to start a sawmill.

Was this man’s name Faram, Gillbee, Lee, Lewis or Quiggin?

From the Alexandra Times, 26 August 1876, page 2: Mornington and South Gipps Land

(continues on Page 11)



The Deep Creek pier was approximately 600 feet long, started near the border of Lot 1, Section A, and ran alongside the creek. The land was likely more swampy then and the sand bar didn’t exist. Mangroves would have covered the shallows.

Pier Pressure (continued from Page 10)

No.4: ...and running this down you come to Lee's mill, which belongs to Quiggin, of Mount Macedon mill owning notoriety...

Quiggin it is, and with him Mutlow. But Faram, Gillbee, Lee and Lewis weren't far behind.

The sawmills and all the main players in the timber industry will be examined in a future *Western Port Times*.

After a stuttering start in the early 1870s, in 1873 the timber milling industry takes off with the produce carted to Deep Creek for shipment to Melbourne. For Quiggin at Almurta, this proved no insuperable problem. Stewart, however, was at Glen Forbes.

And that was a problem.

Queenferry's First Pier?

From the *Argus*, Wednesday 12 November 1873, page 9: Parliament Legislative Assembly: Notices of Questions.

Mr. A. T. Clark intimated that, on Monday, he would call the attention of the Minister of Lands to the destruction of the jetty at Grantville, Western Port Bay, and ask him what steps he proposed to take in the matter.

The context here is unclear. Has the jetty been destroyed or is Mr. Clark calling for its destruction or questioning the Minister's decision to do so? Was the Deep Creek pier built illegally or was considered unsafe? If already destroyed, was it by fire or tide or human action?

The jetty at Deep Creek, although of unusual construction (triple narrower pylons vs. dual wide ones), was clearly not unsafe, and even if illegal, its destruction would have led to outrage among the local residents, all the more so if an immediate replacement was not offered. The answer has to be that it no longer existed due to some calamity, such as a fire. Unfortunately, the record is quite clear that the Deep Creek pier was not destroyed in 1873, as will be shown later.

So what jetty is being talked about, and who built it?

There is only one candidate.

Alexander Stewart, at Glen Forbes, required a pier closer to the mill. It didn't need to be as wide or as well constructed as Deep Creek, just longer.

It isn't clear when Stewart made his move to Queensferry, but for practical reasons he also would have wanted a pier close to that location even while living at Grantville. So he built one himself somewhere at or near

Queensferry. As will be seen shortly, Alexander Stewart was not as gifted a builder as he was a sawmiller, and it is possible that this new pier quickly collapsed under the weight of the timber carted along it or was irreparably damaged by a fire or some other mishap.

Either way, after a few weeks or months Stewart was temporarily forced back to the Deep Creek pier.

Possibly Alfred T. Clark, the Member for Williamstown (1871-1887), was a friend of his, and he raised the issue as part of a push for a government pier to be built. Interestingly, Clark is listed in the Parliament of Victoria's *Remember Database* as a land speculator and company promoter.⁴

The Minister, in response, probably pointed to Deep Creek and replied that there was already a pier close by.

Stewart's Pier

Alexander Stewart, by now centring his activities on Queensferry and probably living there, built his second pier (assuming the earlier structure was his) towards the end of 1873 or, more probably, sometime in early 1874. Stewart could have even reused the timber from his first failed attempt and rebuilt the pier in the same location (again, assuming it was his), perhaps even using part of the original structure.

Judging by the remains, the new pier was a ramshackle affair. It may not even have been sturdy enough for a wooden tramway, given the following from *The Ballarat Star* (15 October 1874, page 2): *Mr Cohen to-day informed a deputation from Queensferry, Western Port, who were desirous of having a jetty constructed to utilise their tramway, that Estimates were closed for the year, and that they were consequently too late to obtain their request.*

An alternative explanation is that Alexander Stewart hadn't constructed the jetty yet, though the late date – October 1874 – is against this. Given that the tramway mentioned could only be from Stewart's mill, and his already well-deserved reputation for parsimony, this could all be a manoeuvre on his part to wrangle a free pier from the government.

That he failed in the attempt would have forced him to build a pier. This didn't stop him from trying for a sturdy government pier the next year. This deputation met the minister in May 1875 and received the usual political promise that he (Mr. Cohen) would look into

(continues on Page 12)

Pier Pressure (continued from Page 11)

the matter.⁵

Stewart's narrow jetty would have to do, and it did.

Quiggin seems to have continued to use the Deep Creek pier as the export point, possibly without, as yet, a wooden tramway running all the way to the pier. From the *Leader*, (19 Sept. 1874, page 20: Western Port): *A Grantville Junction Hotel sits on the line of the train, which forms the nucleus of a rising little town, and other buildings are located on regularly pegged-out roads about it.*

The "line of the train" probably refers to bullock teams coming down from the hills and following Deep Creek to the pier rather than commerce along the Western Port Road, at that stage, improving, but still a couple of years away from being an actual road. Given a team of bullock's negative impact on dirt roads, especially in winter, if he didn't have a wooden tramway in place in September 1874, Quiggin soon built one (later also used by Brazier & Co.) from the mill to Deep Creek, as reported by "P.M." in his piece in the *Age* (17 February 1877, page 7):

After leaving Cranbourne the condition of the road changed for the worse, and a disagreeable amount of jolting had to be endured. At about five o'clock p.m., however, the Grantville terminus was reached, and I was at liberty to descend from my lofty perch. Having had some refreshment, I inspected the one "lion" of Grantville, its jetty, along which runs an exceedingly well constructed tramway, connecting it with the saw-mills of Messrs. Brazier and Co., situate in the ranges, about three and a-half miles east of the township. Having duly admired the jetty, and still more the view of the bay from it, I returned to the hotel.

Growth

Both Grantville and Queensferry grew strongly in the 1870s. The clearing of the trees aided this prosperity, allowing the creation – with much effort – of farmland, most of which was given over to dairying or cattle fattening.* Grantville gained two hotels in addition to some speciality shops and services. Farmer and trader alike required access to markets and suppliers, and would have preferred a government pier to a privately owned and controlled one.

* Most settlers ended up clearing their blocks of trees on their own, a waste of potential timber but from their point of view it was preferable to waiting for the sawmillers to reach their land.

At the 9 June 1877 Council meeting, John Monk, Councillor for the Corinella Ward and the butcher at Grantville put the following motion:

*From John Monk, asking that seal of Council be attached to a petition to Commissioner of Customs, asking for a jetty at Grantville.— On motion of Councillors Kennedy and West request granted.*⁶

Nothing came of this, of course.

Failing a Government pier, how about fixing the one at Deep Creek:

*Councillor Monks moved that the Secretary communicate with the Government as to the necessity of improvements at the jetty at Grantville. (22 December 1877).*⁷

No? Then, again, how about a new one?

*The President reported that the deputation from the Council to the Minister of Public Works had waited on him, and had received a distinct promise that the Government would provide half the cost of making two bridges across the Bass river; also, to erect jetty at Grantville. (16 February 1878).*⁸

Members of the Shire of Phillip Island and Woolamai continued to push for a government jetty:

*...Councillor Turnbull moved seconded by Councillor Watson that the President, Councillor Turnbull, and Councillor Watson accompany the deputation, and also wait on the Minister of Public Works about the promised jetty at Grantville. (3 August 1878).*⁹

*...The Minister of Public Works also placed the sum of £550 on the estimates for the erection of a jetty at Grantville on their representation. (Early September 1878).*¹⁰

*Moved by Councillor Monk, and seconded by Councillor West that the Secretary write to the Minister of Public Works, requesting him to take steps to have the jetty at Grantville commenced at once, in order to enhance the value of the township allotment about to be sold. (30 November 1878).*¹¹

Thus at the end of 1878 the two piers in the area are still the now ageing "lion" of Grantville at Deep Creek and Alexander Stewart's narrow pier at Queensferry. The two main sawmilling operations are Brazier & Co. and Stewart.

What will 1879 bring?

*The Secretary was instructed to write to the Commissioner of Public Works in reference to the promised jetty at Grantville, and urge the matter on his attention. (22 March 1879).*¹²

The lack of Government urgency continued:

(continues on Page 13)

Pier Pressure (continued from Page 12)

This morning, Mr F. C. Mason, M.L.A., and Mr W. Stutt, introduced to the hon. the Commissioner of Customs, the president of the Shire of Mornington, Mr Peddle, Councillor Turnbull and other gentlemen, who asked that four small jetties be constructed at Grantville, Lang Lang, Queens-ferry, and Settlement points. After hearing the arguments advanced by the gentlemen present, Mr Lalor promised to have the matter enquired into... (11 September 1879).¹³

And...

A deputation from Phillip Island shire council was introduced on Wednesday to Mr. Cuthbert, Commissioner of Customs, by Messrs. Gibb and Keys, Ms.L.A., and requested that a sum of money previously voted for the erection of two jetties in Western Port, at Settlement Point and Grantville, might be placed upon the estimates for the current year... (9 April 1880).¹⁴

More of the same. In fairness to Cuthbert, he could point to the existence of a jetty already in place, namely the one at Deep Creek – or could he?

During the 21 June 1879 Council meeting, the following proposal was put forward and agreed to:

It was moved by Councillor Monk, seconded



The remnant of Alexander Stewart's rickety pier. Is this its first attempt or his second, and if the second, was this one built on the ruin of the first?

by Councillor Misson, that a letter be sent to the Commissioner of Customs showing what roads lead to old Grantville, with position of each, and the amount of traffic from them, and also suggesting that old Grantville be the proper place for the proposed jetty.¹⁵

Note the use of the phrase “old Grantville” which reflects the southward drift of the township from its original 1870 Deep Creek origin. But what has happened to the “lion” of Grantville? John Monk, who lived within a kilometre of it, and should therefore know, talks as if it no longer exists.

What was happening?

The answer is possibly found in the Argus of 7 September 1881 (page 8, Advertisements):

SAWMILL at Western Port for SALE, with tramways and jetty. John Quiggin, 141 Flinders-street west.

Quiggin was getting out of timber milling and the deal came with a jetty, the one at Deep Creek, now unused for timber export and likely hadn't been utilized as such for some time, perhaps as long as two years.

But there is another possible candidate which will be looked at shortly.

And what about Brazier & Co.??*

The answer comes in a slightly earlier advertisement, this one also in the Argus (19 April 1881, page 8) placed by John Dickins who was trying to sell the Grantville Hotel:

HOTEL for SALE.—GRANTVILLE HOTEL, Albion of Westernport. A sure fortune, to be sold a bargain, with first class plant, coach terminus, district P.O., main road, at foot of jetty...

What jetty? Presumably Deep Creek, which is nowhere near the hotel, but it is an advertisement, and truth in advertising was as nebulous a concept then as it is today.

However, it is probable that he wasn't stretching the truth, well, not about the jetty.

Brazier's Pier?

Walking the shortest possible distance from the site of the Grantville Hotel to the foreshore (possible in 1881 but not today), will place you near today's concrete boat ramp and decorative pier (decorative in that it serves no useful function and was built with none in mind). It is the boat ramp that is of interest, or rather, what may have been there over a century ago, any remnants buried

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*By 1880 it was more accurately Brazier's Mill, not Brazier & Co., Monks and Sawyer having ceased their involvement in the operation.

Pier Pressure (continued from Page 13)

under concrete.

It explains why the Deep Creek pier was no longer being used and possibly put up for sale, and why Council pressure on the Government seems to slacken for a number of years after early 1880. There was now a pier in the middle of “new” Grantville.

What sort of pier?

A narrow “Alexander Stewart” type, one dominated by a tramway running its length. But was it well built? Not according to a disparaging throwaway line by one visitor in *Along the Coast to Kilcunda* in the *Weekly Times* of 5 March 1881.

Grantville is built on the edge of the bay, to which there is communication by means of a ricketty [sic] jetty.

There is only one other direct mention of a pier at this time, and it comes via an unusual source: a work of fiction, albeit by an author who was clearly familiar with Grantville. In his 1882 story *By Slow Degrees*, Alexander Montgomery has this to say:

...from one of these mills, far up amongst the densely timbered ranges, a tramway led down to the beach, and ran out upon the wooden jetty, from which a couple of small crafts [sic] were busy loading the sawn timber. Hauling alongside this, Mucklebody landed me, and in five minutes I returned to the cutter with a letter...¹⁶

From the Grantville Hotel which was also the general store and post office. This is clearly not the Deep Creek pier from which, unless done at a sprint, it took more than five minutes to pick up a letter from the post office and return.

It is possible the pier in the *SAWMILL at Western Port for SALE* advertisement in the *Argus* is referring to Brazier’s pier. It depends on whether or not Jonn Quiggin held on to ownership of the plant and equipment when Brazier & Co. took over, in effect becoming the financial backer of the venture, or if Brazier & Co. bought him out completely. A second point is the nature of any financial agreement, mainly who kept what. Could Quiggin make a claim on any Brazier-built pier?

That September 1881 date for the sawmill sale advertisement points to the answer being “yes.”

And that is the total evidence currently for their being a pier in central Grantville in the late 1870s-mid1880s.

However, with the Deep Creek pier now abandoned by timber millers, Brazier needed

an outlet for his product and Grantville (now mostly located south of Colbert Creek) would have been a logical place, with the wooden tramline from the Shunt-off in the hills behind Grantville running down to Deep Creek altered to roughly following the present day Grantville-Glen Alvie road. (The very name “shunt-off” gives away the road’s origin as a tramway).

Finally, the boat ramp is placed at the end of a slight prominence into the bay which meant that a 300 foot jetty had more “reach” than one of a similar length built nearby, say, where the later government pier was constructed. Why was the government pier built in this slightly inferior position? Because there was a private jetty still in use in the better location.

This raises the question of the build date.

John Dickins made three attempts to sell the Grantville Hotel: 1877, 1879, and 1881. Page 3 of the 1 February 1879 edition of the *Leader* carried an advertisement offering the hotel for sale and boasting:

...one of the best businesses out of Melbourne, to which is attached store and post office, large billiardroom; coach terminus. Apply by letter or personally...

A major selling point would be a pier. He mentioned one in the 1881 ad but not this one (or in the identical advertisement in the 30 January edition of the *Argus*).

All the evidence strongly points to a Brazier pier being constructed in 1880, probably early in the year.

At the end of 1880 Grantville now had two piers, the fading, disused Deep Creek one and Brazier’s newer, if narrow structure, in central Grantville.

The Deep Creek pier is never mentioned again after Quiggin’s 1881 advertisement (assuming the Deep Creek pier is the one meant). Regardless of its ownership status, and although probably used by those living nearby, it was not maintained, likely hadn’t been for over two years, and would have eventually been dismantled as happened to the piers at Tenby and Bass Landing in the 1920s.¹⁷

That the *Along the Coast to Kilcunda* quote cited earlier didn’t mention the Deep Creek pier is an indication that in mid-1881 it may already have been dismantled or was declared unsafe and closed.

There is one problem with this scenario.

Joseph White in *100 Years of History* (page 63) has Brazier’s mill shutting down on 13

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Pier Pressure (continued from Page 14)

November 1880. This being Joseph White, no source is provided. However, there is a source still available which backs this date.

The 1880 Phillip Island rate book, compiled in January, shows Brazier's Mill in operation (page 103, entries 524 to 535). It shut down sometime between then and 22 January 1881 and the next rate collection survey.

It still coincides with the disuse of the Deep Creek pier and tallies with the 1881 Quiggin and Dickins advertisements, though the timeline is now considerably tighter unless the Council's calls for a jetty and deputations in 1879 and April 1880 are ignored.

While the 1880 meeting with Mr. Cuthbert might be dismissed, the years 1877-1879 can't be so easily explained away, particularly the 11 September 1879 deputation calling for *four small jetties be constructed at Grantville, Lang Lang, Queens-ferry, and Settlement points*. Would you call for the building of a small jetty if Brazier had just put up one, knowing that the Government would simply deny the request because there is a perfectly sufficient (for the moment) new pier there?

A Government Pier – At Last!

The much sought after Government pier was finally constructed, exactly where the Councillors so long advocating for one least expected – at Queensferry! Built in mid-1882 by Lawrence Mouat whose tender of £799 13s. 1d. proved successful.¹⁸

Alexander Stewart, it seems, had more clout with the Victorian Government than did the Councillors of the Shire of Phillip Island and Woolamai!

*Queensferry will soon be accommodated with a good jetty. Thanks to the energy and perseverance of Mr A Stewart, who was the founder of this central, and safest, shipping place on this side of Western Port bay...*¹⁹

Stewart's jerry-built pier simply couldn't cope, as recorded by an eyewitness the previous year:

The jetty is slightly over 100 yards long, and is built on piles driven several feet in the mud, which here constitutes the bottom of the bay. Owing, however, to the increase in trade, the jetty has now become much too short, and, besides, it is in such a dilapidated condition that a new one of a couple of hundred yards is urgently needed, this length being required to reach the necessary depth of water, so that vessels of a larger size than those now employed by Mr. Stewart may be enabled to

*get to the jetty, and, consequently, serve to accommodate selectors and others who may have goods to forward to or from Melbourne.*²⁰

A more cynical view of the new jetty came in the *Argus* later in the year:

*At Queensferry, where there is no water worth mentioning at low tide, a jetty has been built at a cost of about £800, and as there are very few settlers hereabout, it seems quite equal to the requirements of this side of the port.*²¹

With Queensferry now provided with a decent jetty, what of Grantville? As previously mentioned, calls for a pier persisted:

*Mr. Gibb, M.L.A., yesterday introduced to the Commissioner of Trade and Customs a deputation from Grantville, Western Port Bay, with a request that a jetty might be erected at Grantville at a cost of about £800... (20 Sept. 1883).*²²

And:

*The following amounts are included in the special votes in the estimates for 1884-5: —Jetty and approaches, Anderson's Inlet, £500; jetty and shed at Grantville, £600... (30 July 1884).*²³

And:

*...As an instance of the inconvenience felt by the want of a jetty, I may mention that Mr. M. Bowman, of Jeetho, had his clip of wool, 135 bales, sent to Dandenong, distant 45 miles, by waggon, thence by rail to Melbourne, rather than incur the risk and trouble of shipping at Grantville, which is only 10 miles from his selection. (31 January 1885).*²⁴

Once again, this raises the question of the Brazier's pier. For one reason or another, maybe a lack of repair, its narrowness, or the large volume of sea-borne traffic now docking at the town, by 1885 even the Government considered it inadequate.

Tenders were sought for a new jetty in January 1885 with the *Victorian Government Gazette* No.49 (15 May 1885, page 1272) announcing Laurence Mouat as the winning tenderer at £643. Curiously, in October, an additional £239 was added to the contract, for what isn't specified. Not the originally planned goods shed, as we shall see.²⁵

Finally, without much fanfare...

A Government Pier – At Last! (Take 2)

The Government pier at Grantville was built and officially opened...sometime in late 1885 or in 1886 to zero fanfare. The local and Melbourne press didn't seem to notice the construction and completion of the structure

(continues on Page 16)

Pier Pressure (continued from Page 15)

nor, if there was an opening ceremony, did they cover it.

The answer as to *when* may be found in the *Victoria Police Gazette* (July 29, 1885, page 214) under Miscellaneous Information which announces Constable E. M. Dixon of Grantville as Wharf Manager at Queensferry, Settlement Point and Grantville. Two of these were Government piers. Grantville wasn't and was therefore, presumably, as a private pier, not the responsibility of the Victorian Government. Unless, of course, it was the newly built Government pier being referred to and not the now obsolete Brazier's.

Negating this, the *Victorian Government Gazette No.76*, 9 July 1886, page 1972, in its *Maintenance of Jetty Lights* list does not include Grantville, suggesting there was no Government pier for which to provide a light. There is also that additional £239 added to the contract in October. If the pier was already in use, what was it for?

Regardless whether it was in late 1885 or sometime in 1886, Grantville finally had its long sought pier – minus the desired goods shed.

In Part Two next issue, Queensferry's decline will be examined and also the reason for Grantville surviving for much longer before it too faded.

Footnotes:

1. *The Argus*, 24 April 1867, page 5: The Corinella Coal Field
2. South Gippsland Heritage Study Volume 1: Thematic Environmental History, page 27. South Gippsland Shire, 2004; *Geelong Advertiser*, Friday 10 May 1844, page 2: Melbourne; *Victorian Government Gazette No.117*, 11 December 1885, page 3499.
3. *Leader*, Saturday 19 August 1871, page 22: Graham V. Graham; *Age*, Monday 22 July 1872, page 3: Graham V. Graham. But every other Melbourne paper (and many further afield) carried the story.
4. Parliament of Victoria, Remember Database. <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/about/people-in-parliament/re-member/details/24/413>. Viewed April 2021.
5. *Advocate*, 15 May 1875: City and Suburbs.
6. *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 13 June 1877: Phillip Island Shire Council.
7. *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 2 January 1878: Meetings of Local Bodies. Shire Council of Phillip Island and Woolamai.
8. *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 20 February 1878: Phillip Island and Woolamai Shire Council.
9. *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 7 August 1878: Phillip Island and Woolamai Shire Council.
10. *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 4 September 1878: Phillip Island and Woolamai Shire Council.

11. *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 4 December 1878: Phillip Island and Woolamai Shire Council.
12. *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 26 March 1879: Phillip Island and Woolamai Shire Council.
13. *Herald*, 11 September 1879, page 2.
14. *Age*, 9 April 1880, page 3: Phillip Island
15. *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 25 June 1879: Meetings of Local Bodies, Phillip Island and Woolamai Shire Council.
16. Serialised in *Border Watch* (Mount Gambier, S.A.), Saturday 18 November 1882, page 1
17. *Argus*, Saturday 18 October 1924, page 7: A Western Port Beach; *Argus*, 31 July 1925, page 17: Escaped Prisoner; *Age*, 31 July 1925, page 13: French Island Prisoner.
18. *The Ballarat Courier*, Friday 31 March 1882, page 3: Melbourne; *Argus*, Friday 31 March 1882, page 5
19. *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 26 April 1882, page 3: Grantville, Bass & Kilcunda.
20. *Weekly Times*, Saturday 26 March 1881, page 9: Along the Coast to Kilcunda
21. *Argus*, Thursday 13 September 1883, Page 11: The Cape Paterson and Kilcunda Coal Mines.
22. *Age*, 20 September 1883, page 6: Jetty at Grantville.
23. *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 30 July 1884: Jottings from Western Port.
24. *Leader*, Saturday 31 January 1885, page 12: Grantville and Jeetho Districts.
25. *Argus*, Saturday 10 January 1885, page 6: Advertising; *Geelong Advertiser*, Friday 23 January 1885, page 3; *Victorian Government Gazette No.3*, 9 January 1885, page 161; No.6, 16 January 1885, page 219; No.8, 23 January 1885, page 277; No.11, 30 January 1885, page 352; No.92, 2 October 1885, page 2769.

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From *Wise's Victoria Post Office Directory 1904*, page 988: Country Directory – Korumburra.

Milling About Problems With the Early Sawmill Timeline

by Geoff Guilfoyle

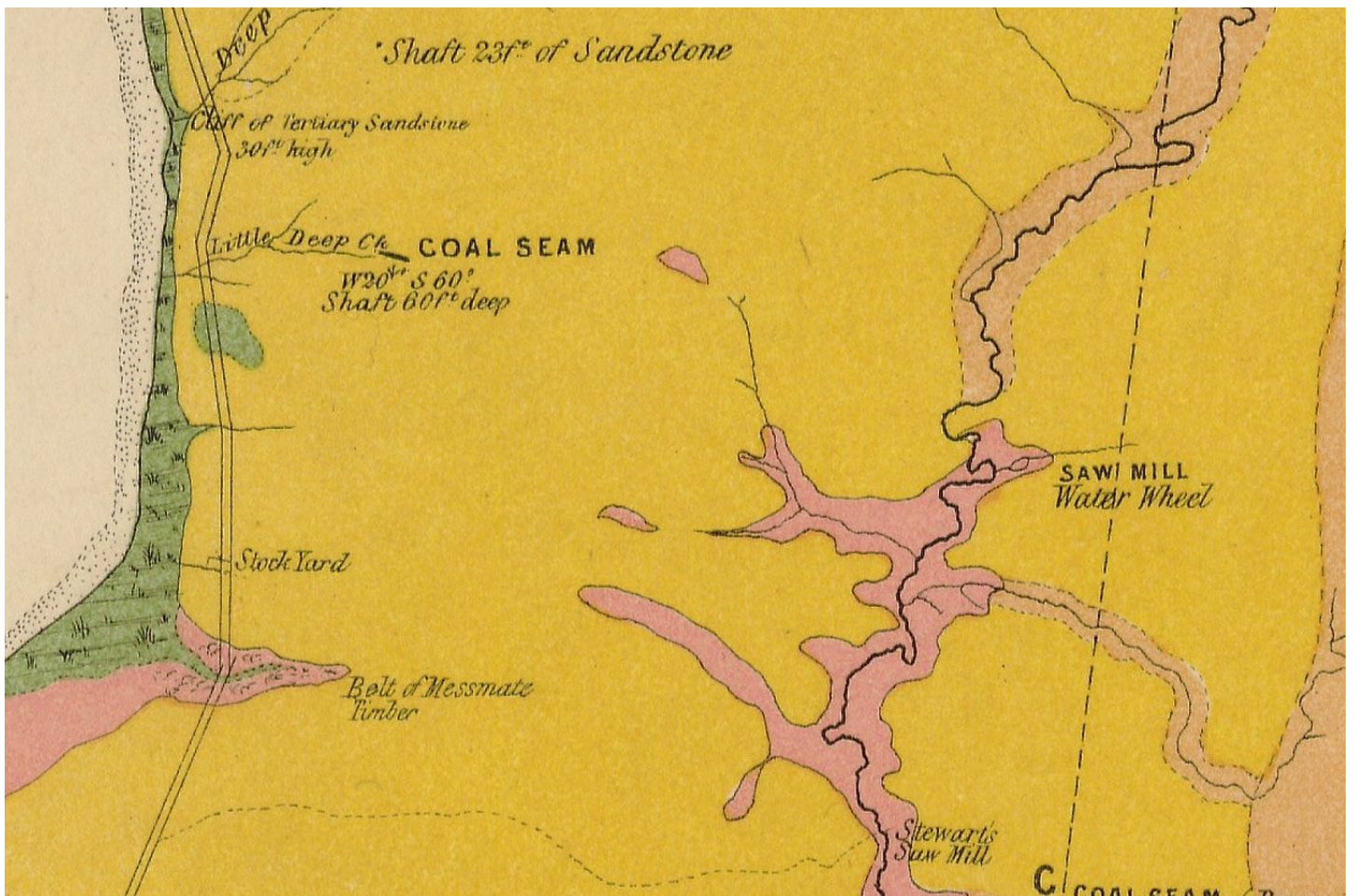
The Woods and Miller sawmill operated from around 1869 or 1870 to (probably) the end of January 1871 and the death of Graham. But where was the mill located?

The answer might be found in a geological sketch map of the Western Port and Cape Patterson coal fields done by mining surveyor Ferdinand M. Krause in...

And that's the problem: 1872 with a big question mark. If 1872, when? Probably not early in the year and the map might even have been done in 1873.

It is notable in that it shows a water wheel-powered saw mill on the Bass River near future Almurta and Stewart's saw mill near future Glen Forbes. There also appears to be what looks like a trail going from Stewart's mill to the Western Port Road though it might be some sort of boundary marker.

The fun comes in trying to reconcile what is on this map with what is known from other sources. There are three scenarios, none of which is entirely credible, which best fit the facts as currently understood.



Scenario One: This is a second half of 1872 map. The water wheel is the original Woods and Miller setup. But after Graham took over sometime in 1870, Stewart persuaded him to invest in steam-power to make the mill more efficient. Graham died before everything was ready and the project halted because of the court case over his estate. Stewart eventually got hold of the operation, abandoned the water-wheel (taken over by Quiggin) and relocated to Glen Forbes with the better equipment.

Scenario Two: This is a mid-1873 map. Woods and Miller were using steam-power from the start but in a bad location or the mill was badly run. Woods and Miller sold out to Graham who died before making any major changes. Stewart eventually gained control of the mill and moved everything to Glen Forbes and this is the mill Krause recorded, the location of the original being lost. The waterwheel was Quiggin's from the start, which explains why Quiggin's mill was never as efficient or productive as Stewart's steam-powered mill.

Scenario Three: This is a mid-1873 map. The Woods and Miller mill was on Allotment 158 (just north of Glen Forbes), but for some reason it was not paying. Stewart took over the operation in late 1872 and for some now unknown reason moved it a few kilometres to Allotment 162 (just south of Glen Forbes), establishing nearby Queensferry as an outlet for the timber. (This scenario implies that the Deep Creek pier was already in place with a general store, which is why Wood and Miller chose it as their base – as a cost-saving measure – rather than build a pier and accommodation at Queensferry).

An Alexander Stewart Mystery

by

Geoff Guilfoyle

Here is a question for you that sounds trivial but has important ramifications for our understanding of early Grantville: When did Alexander Stewart settle at Deep Creek (future Grantville)?

The answer is messy. It is made so by Brandrick vs. Johnston and Alexander Stewart being a common name.

The Brandrick vs. Johnson libel trial held in November 1875 is a great primary source, and the four main papers to cover it (*The Age*, *Argus*, *Herald* and *Kyneton Observer*) provide remarkably uniform summaries of the proceedings – which hints at a single common source – but vary slightly in places. This allows for “cherry picking,” that is, taking a statement or sentence in one paper not mentioned in the others, and by stripping it of its context and/or ignoring any evidence to the contrary, creating a scenario around it.

Take these lines from Alexander Stewart in the *Argus*, 26 November 1875 account: *I had a sawmill lately at Queensferry. I am a justice of the peace. In 1872 I was correspondent of the school there...*

“Ah-ha!” cries the cherry picker, “the school was at Queensferry not Grantville,” and from there writes what is basically historical fiction, ignoring all evidence placing the school at Grantville.

Here are the five pertinent quotes from the trial...

William Brandrick on the stand:

Cross-examined by Mr. Williams: Before keeping a school at Western Port had the management of a coal-mine; was overseer for Mr. Elworthy, butcher, at St. Kilda who also kept a farm. Had to attend to the boiling down of fat, collecting tallow and attending to dumb animals. After that he and his wife took domestic service with Mr. Jackson, at St. Kilda; then drove for Mr. Gunn, cab proprietor; then went to Western Port. (Age, 25 November 1875, page 3: Action For Slander).

But...

“I came out here in 1870.” (Argus, 26 Nov. 1875, page 6).

Alexander Stewart on the stand: *...plaintiff was manager of a coal mining company at Westernport when I first knew him. (Herald, 24 November 1875, page 3: Action for Slander).*

But...

I first knew plaintiff as teacher of the school

in 1872. (Argus, 26 November 1875, page 6).

And also...

“I have lived at Western Port for the last 10 years.” (Argus, 26 November 1875, page 6)

Lets start with the 10 years, which puts Alexander Stewart at Western Port in 1865.

The Victorian Births, Deaths and Marriages register has Annie Stewart born at Creswick in 1865 [record 14690/1865]. As Creswick is on the Ballarat goldfields, this probably tells us why Alexander and Elisabeth (Bessie) Stewart and family are there.

It is therefore improbable that Stewart was in Western Port in 1865. That 10 years, if true, sounds like a figure rounded upwards, which, after subtracting a few months from it, gives us the more probable date of 1866.

But wait! The *Argus*, 25 April 1868, page 4 has the following birth notice: *STEWART.– At Creswick, on the 23rd inst., Mrs Alexander Stewart of a daughter; both doing well.*

And the *Gippsland Times*, 17 April 1869 carries a list of shareholders in The Empress Gold Mining Company at Walhalla on page 2. Alexander Stewart, of that town, is listed as having 5 shares.

So he stayed on the goldfields of Ballarat until 1868 then went to the goldfield at Walhalla before settling at future Grantville sometime after April 1869 at the earliest.

For this to be the correct timeline you need to ignore two of the Brandrick trial statements. You also need to show that *these* Alexander Stewarts are the *same* Alexander Stewart as that living at Deep Creek in the early 1870s. (Given that Alexander and Elisabeth Stewart are not known to have produced a child in April 1868, that reference can be dismissed).

Can we put Alexander Stewart and his family at Western Port in 1866 or 1867? If yes, where in Western Port? Stewart had a number of choices available: Hastings, Corinella, Deep Creek, Woolamai (Bass), Griffith’s Point.

The answer is...uncertain.

This brings us to Brandrick as coal mine manager, in his own telling, and, according to Alexander Stewart, manager of a coal mining company.

There were no coal mines in the Bass Valley in the 1860s and therefore neither Brandrick or anyone else was in charge of an actual coal

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mine. "Mine" implies that mining is being undertaken and a product offered for sale. The Corinella Coal Mining Company along with the lesser players (and that was everybody else), dug only test pits to assess the chances for actual mining. This proved, of course, to be nil.

To what company's "coal mine" is Brandrick referring? Not that of the Corinella Coal Mining Company. Well, maybe one of these...

A deputation, consisting of representatives of the Latrobe, Corinella, Carew, Queensferry, and Bass (Blue Mountains) coal companies, waited on the hon. Minister of Mines... (Herald, 16 March 1869, page 2: Deputations).

And...

A deputation from the representatives of the Carew, Blue Mountains, Corinella, Queensferry, and Latrobe Coal Prospecting Companies was yesterday introduced to the Minister of Mines... (Argus, 17 March 1869, page 7: Deputations).

With the exception of the Corinella Coal Mining Co. which left a very clear record in the *Victorian Government Gazette* and the newspapers of the time, these other companies are a mystery. However the *Victorian Government Gazette No.38 6 August 1869* records the following mineral leases being extinguished after being granted in either May or August the year before.

Lease No.170, mineral, dated 11 May 1868; W.S. Edie; 584 acres; Bass River.

Lease No.172, mineral, dated 27th August, 1868; E.W. Reay; 640 acres; Bass River.

Lease No.174, mineral, dated 11th May 1868; O.B. Clapp and others; 640 acres; junction of Western Port and Deep Creek.

Lease No.177, mineral, dated 27th August, 1868; W. Gilfillan; 640 acres; Bass River.

Lease No.181, mineral, dated 30 April 1868; W. B. Brandrick and others; 488 acres, 1r. 1p.; Hurdy-gurdy Run.

Lease No.182, mineral, dated 30 April 1868; W. Brandrick and others; 601 acres, 3r. 28p.; Hurdy-gurdy Run.

Maybe in these leases you find the Bass (Blue Mountains) and Queensferry Coal Companies, small outfits doing some minor exploratory digging backed by government subsidies, and not getting positive results.

Um, spoiler alert – no, you don't.

This bit from the *Illustrated Adelaide Post* (14 July 1867, page 7) clears up the matter: *On 21st November, Mr. Brandrick, late manager of the Queensferry Coal Company examined the seam, and sent me the following information...*

Later on in the article it reports...

The Queensferry Company have, I under-

stand, temporarily suspended their operations, and there is, in my opinion, very little probability of success attending them if resumed.

Brandrick had already quit by this time. With the failure of the more impressive (and registered and capitalised) Corinella Coal Mining Company, the Government abandoned any support for these small-time operations.

But there is a problem. That report from Brandrick in the *Illustrated Adelaide Post* was sent in November 1866 but Leases 181 and 182 weren't granted until 1868. The company predated the leases, and Brandrick had left the Queensferry Company, and probably the area before July 1867.

For Stewart to have met Brandrick, he had to be in the area before that time. Unless Brandrick never left the area and stayed for the duration of the two leases, but by then he was no longer manager of a "coal mine" or "coal mining company."

And what to make of Stewart's *Argus* comment: *I first knew plaintiff as teacher of the school in 1872.*

And Brandrick's... *I came out here in 1870.* That is, he moved to Victoria in 1870. But it isn't clear where he moved *from* to Victoria.

He could have been in the colony much earlier, say, the early 1860s then returned to England, only to revisit Australia for extended visits during 1866-1867 and 1868-1869 or a portion thereof, to see what opportunity there was for coal mining in the Bass Valley – none – then went back home, finally migrating once and for all to Victoria in 1870.

In the *Age* (18 October 1861, page 1) there is a tantalising entry showing a W. B. Brandrick of Melbourne buying 5 shares in a gold mining company. There were doubtless more than one Brandrick in Melbourne at that time, but it is unlikely there were many sharing the initials W.B.

The shipping records have been pretty much fully digitalised but are hidden away behind the inevitable paywall, along with many other historical records, which can also be unlocked for cash. So there's a project for those with spare money – which isn't me – who wish to follow the peregrinations of W. B. Brandrick.

Brandrick *was* in England in early 1870 according to the *Weekly Times*. On page 7 of the 7 May 1870 edition entitled *An Immigration Dispatch*, a Mr. W. B. Brandrick described as "an old colonist, and the correspondent of the *Argus*" was helping arrange for the passage to Australia of "200 families and 84 single

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women accustomed to farm and domestic service." No mention of recruiting miners or of Western Port Bay or Kilcunda. He probably accompanied them to Victoria and then, perhaps...

was overseer for Mr. Elworthy, butcher, at St. Kilda who also kept a farm. Had to attend to the boiling down of fat, collecting tallow and attending to dumb animals. After that he and his wife took domestic service with Mr. Jackson, at St. Kilda; then drove for Mr. Gunn, cab proprietor; then went to Western Port.

In March 1872, selecting 85 acres.

Why is it important to determine when Stewart and his family arrived in Western Port and where they settled?

Because *when* and *where* goes a long way to telling you WHY. What attracted Stewart to Deep Creek? He wasn't young and single and out for adventure. He had a family to support. Therefore he would have arrived with some scheme in mind or to take up a prearranged job.

The next primary source is certificate 509 in the Births in the District of Cranbourne and Mornington register. It records the birth of Isabella Georgina Stewart on 11 January 1871 at Deep Creek. The father's occupation is given as "timber merchant."

This can mean a number of things, but fortunately we have that *Alexandra Times*, 5 April 1876 article. He likely started as a labourer for Woods and Miller, but was a manager by 1871. [See previous two articles].

That's why pinning down when he arrived in Deep Creek (and why) would be helpful. If it was 1868 to work for Woods and Miller then the Deep Creek pier could have been built anytime after that (or was constructed before his arrival). It also likely pushes back the opening date of the general store and further explains why Colbert chose to place future Grantville where he did in 1870.

So when did Alexander Stewart and his family settle in the Western Port Bay area, and was it immediately at Deep Creek or initially in another location?

At this stage, in summary, I'd usually offer a "best guess" based on the simplest explanation that makes the least assumptions and best fits the known facts.

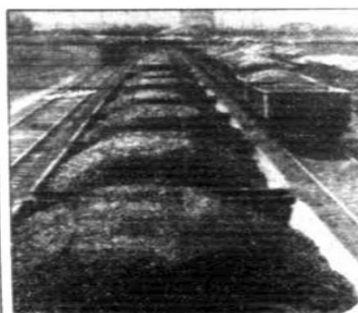
But I am no clearer now than when I started researching. The evidence is scanty and what does exist is contradictory. It will, for the moment, and probably much longer, remain a minor historical mystery.

And a fruitful field for the "cherry pickers."

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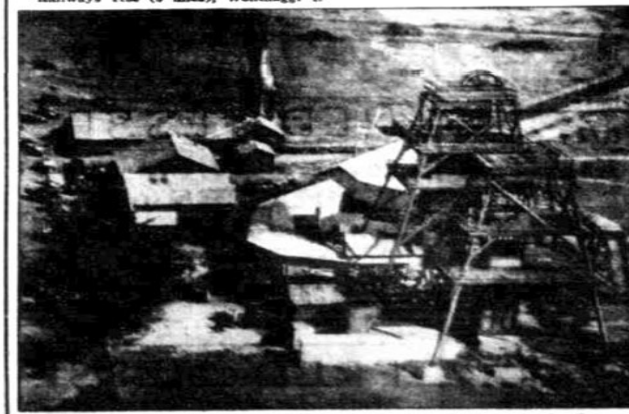
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