

MORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

published monthly, except December

Meetings: 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7.30 pm

in St. Andrews Presbyterian Church Hall

Vol. 8 No. 9

SEPTEMBER 1992

WELCOME TO THE SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

From the 14th to the 19th September, Morwell Historical Society will present an exhibition of photographs to mark the Centenary of Municipal Government in Morwell. The exhibition, in conjunction with the S.E.C., R.S.L. and City of Morwell, will be held in the building in Tarwin St. formerly occupied by The Forum Shop.

An exhibition of our photographs will also be held on September 12th at Sacred Heart School to mark the Centenary of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Morwell.

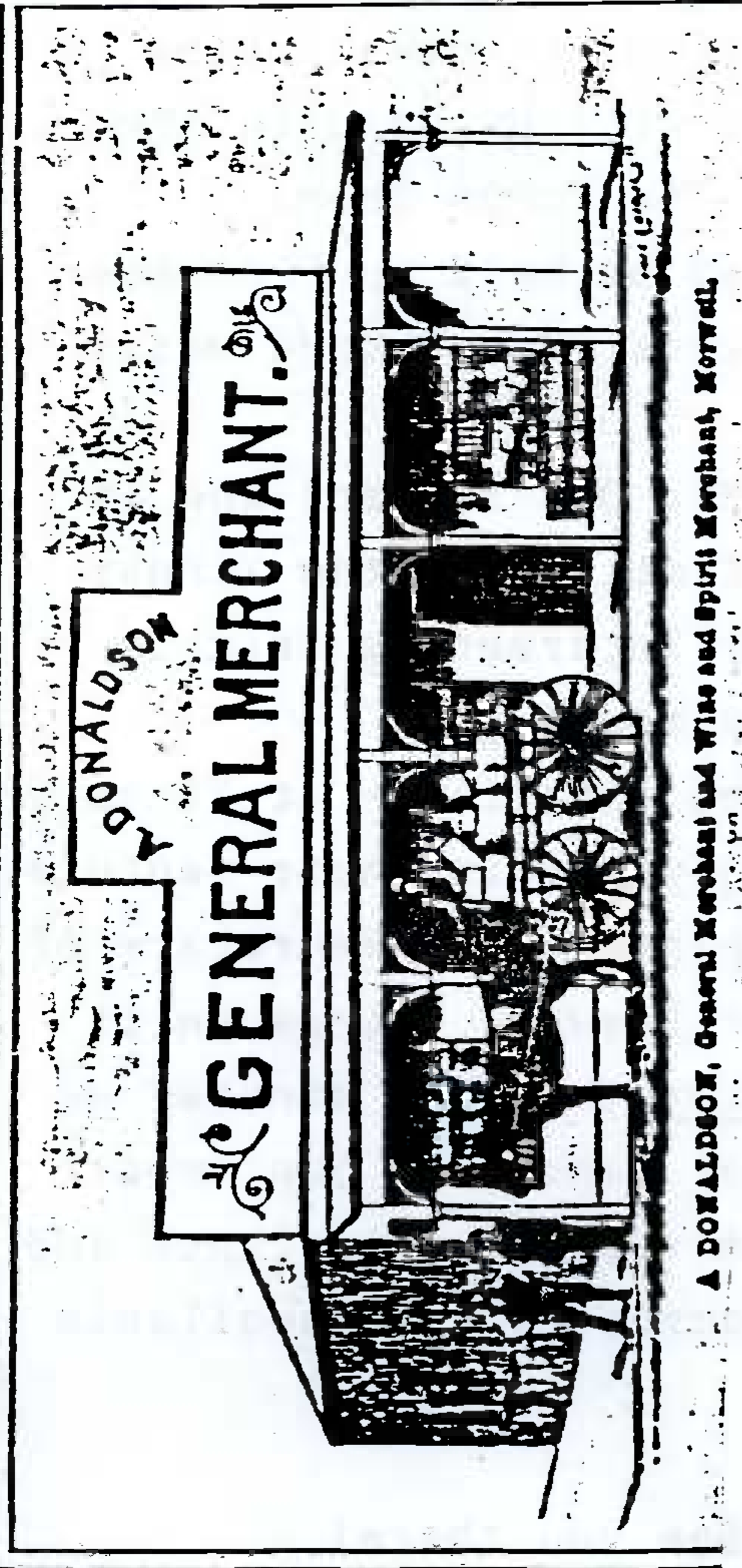
Guest speaker at our August meeting was Mr. Des Bennett who is a descendant of several well-known pioneer families of the Yinnar district. A cassette recording of Des's most interesting talk is available for loan to members who missed the meeting.

We welcome a new Historical Society in the district - at Yinnar - and we wish the members much success and enjoyment in their venture.

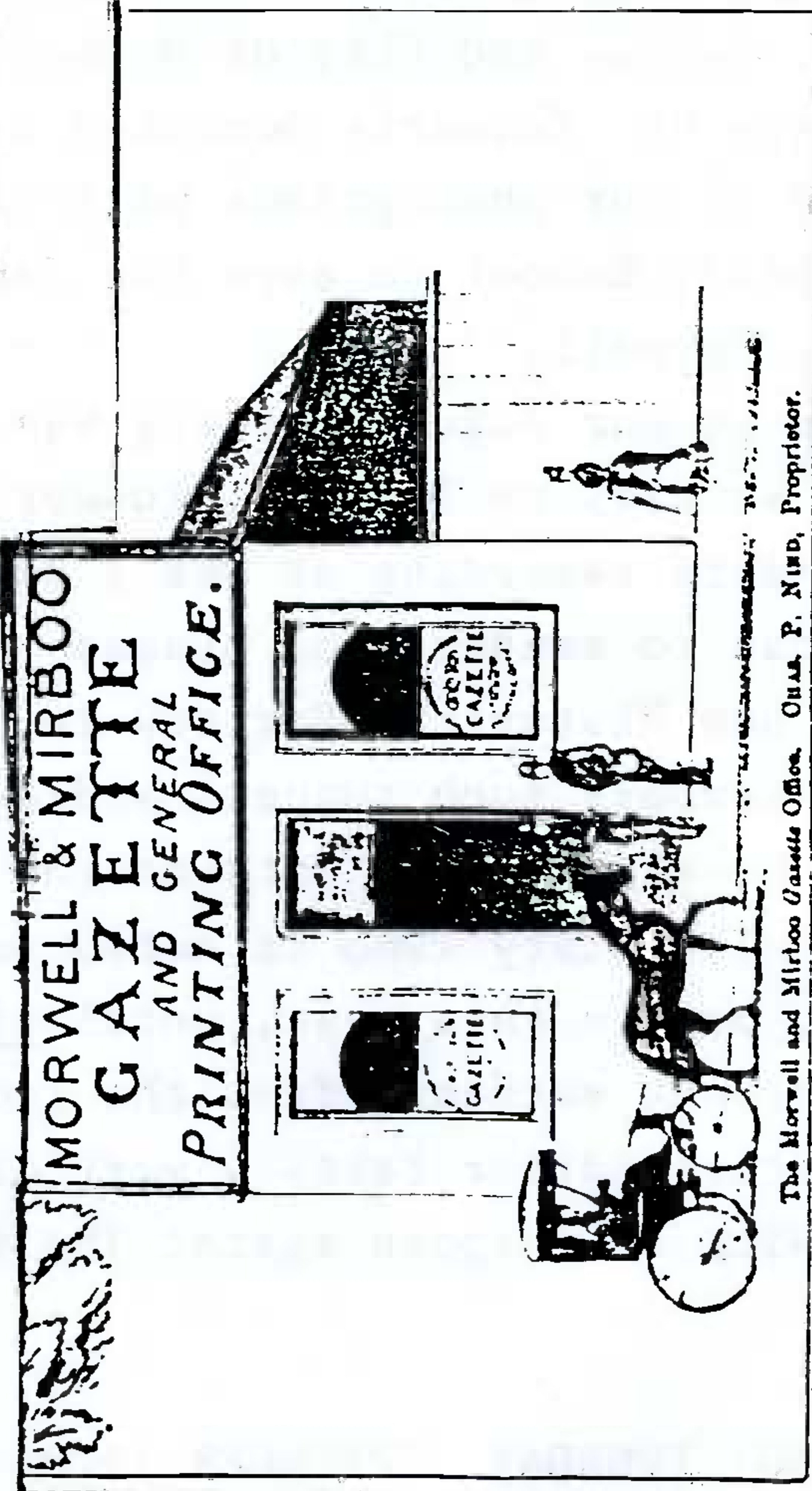
Due to gross dereliction of duty on the part of the Secretary of Morwell Historical Society (who is noted for leaving things until the last minute, or, in this case, until after the last minute) we are unable to present extracts from the local papers of September 1892. The Newsletter Editor takes a very dim view of this lapse and trusts that it WILL NOT happen again! The Secretary is unavailable for comment.

NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 15th. See you there!

Supplement to the "Morwell & Mirboo Gazette" Dec. 1889

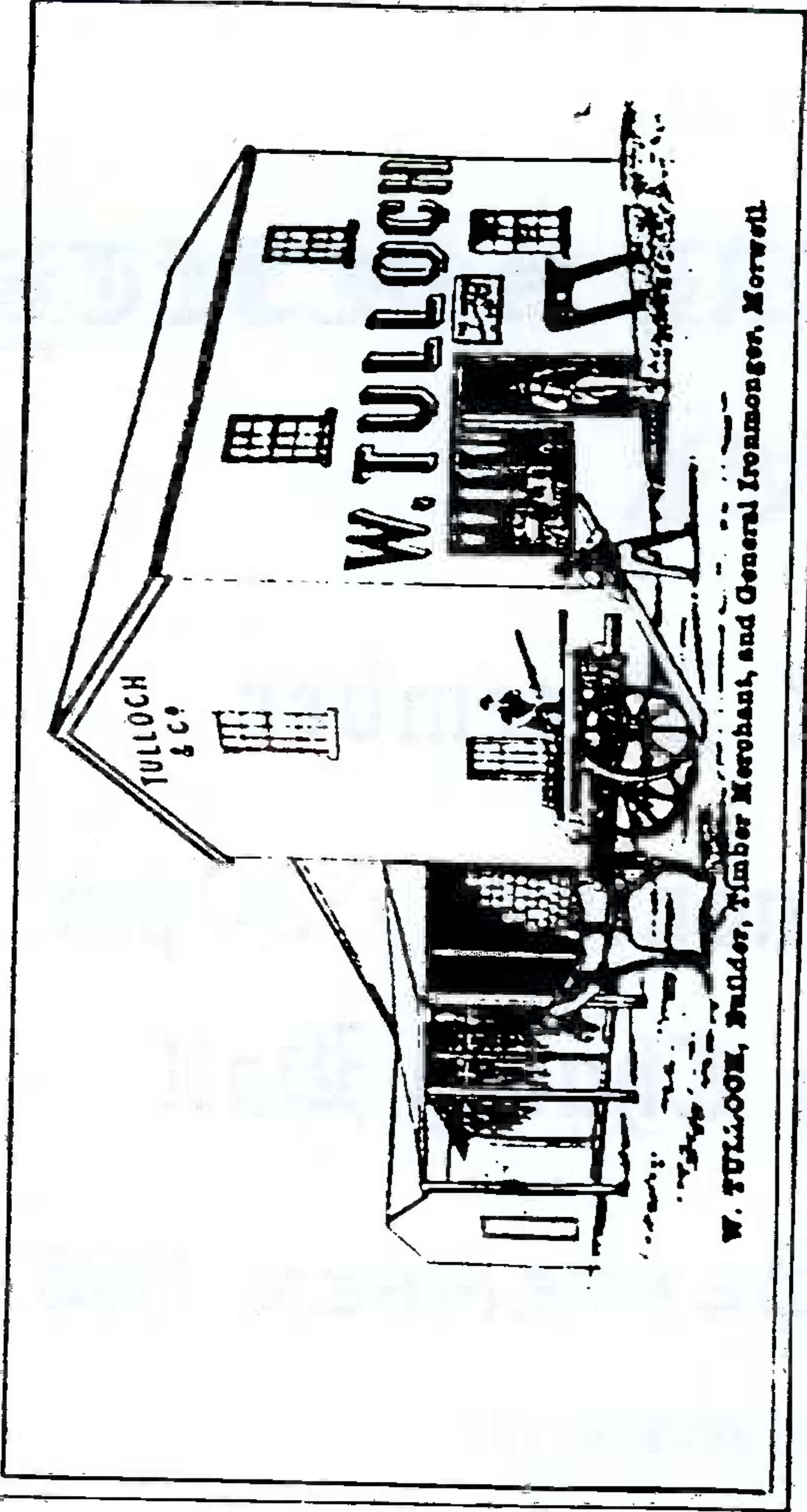


A DONALDSON, General Merchant and Wine and Spirit Merchant, Morwell.

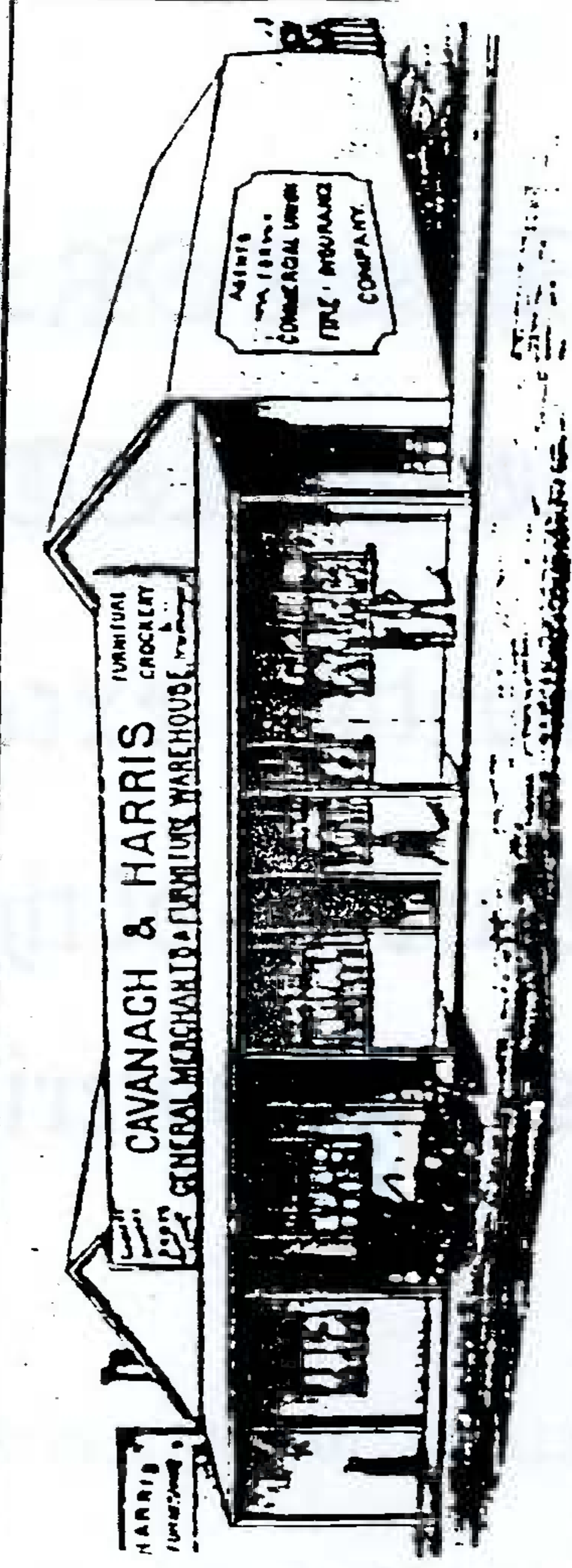


The Morwell and Mirboo Gazette Office. CHAS. F. NIND, Proprietor.

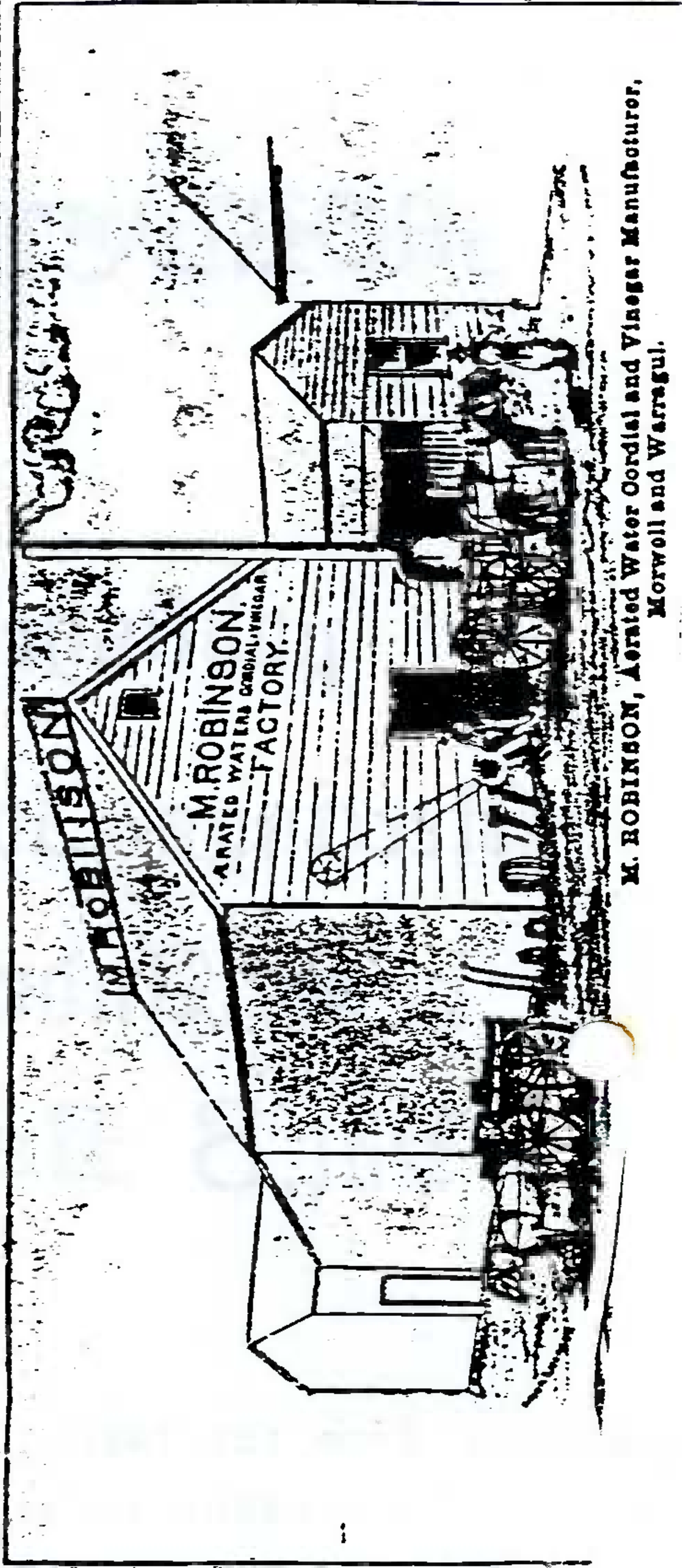
These sketches appeared in a supplement to the "Morwell & Mirboo Gazette" in December 1889. It was produced by a firm of Ballarat lithographers for the "Gazette".



W. TULLOCH, Builder, Timber Merchant, and General Ironmonger, Morwell.



CAVANAGH & HARRIS, Wholesale & Retail Grocers, Drapers, Ironmongers & General Produce Merchants, Morwell.



M. ROBINSON, Aerated Water Cordial and Vinegar Manufacturer, Morwell and Warragul.

Early Morwell.....by I.T.Maddern.

The First Morwell Shire Council, 1892.

The first meeting of the first Morwell Shire Council took place on Wednesday, 14th. September, 1892, at the Morwell Mechanics' Institute. There were six councillors - Donald Shaw, who was elected President; John English; William Murdoch; Michael Mulcare; John Murphy and Edmund Kelleher.

Donald Shaw (1832-1911) was born on the Island of Mull, Scotland, the son of Archibald Shaw (1795-1891) and Ann Shaw (nee McDonald).

Archibald Shaw brought his family to Australia, 1850-51, in the sailing ship "Ascendent", disembarking at Adelaide. Eventually he settled at Hazelwood on a property he named "Otterburn". Donald Shaw was the eldest son and the second child of his parents, the other children being Sally, Neil, Coll, John and Janet (or Jessie). The Shaw family was related to Governor Lachlan Macquarie, who also came from Mull, Scotland. Indeed, a nephew of the Governor, Murdoch Macquarie, 1820-1904, lived with the Shaw family for many years, and is buried in the Shaw family grave in Hazelwood Cemetery. Donald Shaw retired from the Council about 1900. Of the first six councillors, he is the only one whose family remains directly associated with Morwell.

John English was an auctioneer who conducted his business both in Traralgon and Morwell. He had represented Morwell (West Riding) in the Traralgon Shire Council, being first elected there in 1886. He was a keen supporter of the Separation Movement, which began in 1890, with the object of breaking away from Traralgon Shire. He was a member of the deputation that waited on the Minister for Public Works in February, 1891, to give evidence in favour of separation. He was the second President of the Shire, being elected in 1893 (August), but he did not complete the term, resigning in February, 1894. He seems to have retired altogether from the Council, that year, but eighteen years later, in 1912, his name appears again amongst those of the members of the Council, and he was elected President again for 1915-1916.

William Murdoch was the third President of Morwell Shire, completing John English's unfinished year from February to August, 1894. A child's grave in Hazelwood Cemetery - that of Neil Murdoch, died 26/7/1871, the son of William and Jane Murdoch - seems to indicate that the Murdochs were very early settlers in the district. William Murdoch missed winning a seat on the Traralgon Shire Council by the narrowest of margins, in 1885, when he tied for third place (Western Riding) with Mr. D. Forsyth, each receiving 150 votes. The Returning Officer gave his casting vote to Mr. Forsyth.

The First Shire Council - continued.

About 1888, William Murdoch, originally a farmer or grazier here, built the hotel known in Morwell as Murdoch's Hotel. Michael Mulcare, the fourth President, 1894-95, was a farmer, who owned the property now known as Brinsmead's. John Murphy was a member of the Council for the first years, 1892-94.

The Morwell Historical Society.....20/7/64.
Morwell.....by I.T.Maddern.

Early Council Business.

The first preoccupation of our Council in 1892 was the selection of staff to carry out the work of the Council. Mr. John McCoull was appointed as the provisional secretary, and applications were invited for the positions of Secretary, Engineer, Health Officer and for various other minor offices. At the next meeting, the following appointments were made:

Secretary and Rate Collector..John McCoull (Salary - £125);
 Engineer and Valuer.....Arthur C. Arney (Salary - £150);
 Health Officer.....Dr. William Moir (£10);
 Inspector of Nuisances.....Constable Johnson (£10);
 Dog Inspector and Collector of Dog Licences. Constable Johnson;
 (The constable was to retain half of the licence money collected);
 Treasurer.....Henry McIntosh (Colonial Bank);
 Pound Keeper.....Thomas Keogh.

Once the matter of staff had been settled, the Council could proceed with its main business, which then, as now, had much to do with the maintenance of good roads and streets. After all, the first name given to these local civic bodies had been Roads Boards, and although later duties were added to this primary one, the matter of good roads remained paramount.

It is in the secondary or comparatively minor Council business that most of our interest in these old records now lies.

For example, we know there was a eucalyptus factory in the area, because, in September, 1892, Mr. R. Mercer of the Maryvale Eucalyptus Factory asked permission from the Council to cut down certain types of trees along the Council's roads. He wanted the peppermint and blue gum trees.

At this same meeting (the Council's second meeting) it was decided "to take steps to get the Hazelwood Morass reserved for recreation purposes".

Early Council Business - continued 5.

In December, 1892, the Council received a letter from the Great Morwell Coal Mine Company with information about its briquette industry.

Two months earlier, attention had been drawn to the state of the coal mine road to Bennett's Creek. This may refer to an early coal mine, close to Jeeralang Junction, and the road to which reference was made, might have been the one we still know as Tramway Road. In one of the early maps kept in the Lands Department, a long strip, three-chains wide is marked with the caption that it was reserved for a tramway to the Excelsior Coal Mine. Apparently, the tram line was never built to carry coal, but there was one in existence later, to carry timber. In 1913, the Council decided to "draw to Mr. Collins' attention that he had not completed the tram line."

In 1892 also, the Morwell Tile and Pottery Company submitted prices of their drain pipes, no doubt hoping for Council business.

One matter of interest in the early minutes of the Morwell Council meetings is that of street lighting. In those days the streets were ineffectively lighted by kerosene street lamps.

The first reference to street lighting in Morwell occurs when Morwell was still part of the Shire of Traralgon. In March, 1886, tenders were called for tending the street lamps at Morwell for a period of twelve months. The contract was let to Mr. E. Gadd at £35 per annum, and the contractor had to provide the kerosene. The sum of £35 indicates that there would have been no more than five of these kerosene street lights in Morwell at that time.

In April, 1887, two more lamps were erected, one of which was at the north-west corner of the Church of England, which was at the corner of Chapel Street and George Street (extended.)

The next month, May 1887, three more lamps were authorised, one opposite the Methodist Church (in Church Street), one opposite the Presbyterian Church (in Elgin Street) and one near the home of Mr. Charles Pitt Mind, who was the editor of the Morwell newspaper.

Mr. P. Anderson, in July, 1887 followed Mr. Gadd as the street lamp contractor, and he was paid £6-17-6 per lamp, per year.

In 1897, Mr. W. Noy was the lamplighter and he was paid 2/4 per lamp per month, which seems to be a big drop in the rate of payment compared with the earlier figures. Later on again, Mr. Caddaye was the township lamp lighter for many years.

6 Early Council Business - continued

About 1910, there was some agitation in the township for the installation of a better lighting system. Mr. A. Green has an amusing story to tell of a pressure group of young men who claimed that with these new lights, the time could be read from a watch of a man in the street. Possibly it was such propaganda that led to the resolution in the Council in 1910 "that the Best lights be procured for the townships of Morwell, Yinnar and Boolarra." The first of these new lights appeared on the Ridge Road at the east end of Commercial Road leading to the old wooden bridge over the railway line. The young men in a cart were followed by a considerable crowd of citizenry to this spot when an outside watch, specially obtained for the occasion, was produced, and the time was duly read and announced.

At the end of 1915, a Mr. G. F. Walder interviewed the Council regarding a proposal to install acetylene street lighting in Morwell at a cost of £400.

In 1916, a payment of £100 was paid to Mr. G.F. Walder for street lighting at Yinnar.

Other matters of interest are the preparations for a welcome to His Excellency, the Governor of Victoria, Lord Stanley, and to Lady Stanley, in December, 1914; the registration of St. Hilary's Private Hospital (Nurses Smith and Mather) in 1915, and activities, such as recruiting, connected with the war of 1914-19. Here there is one particularly sad note - the Council's sympathy to Councillor Radburn in the loss of his son, killed at Gallipoli, 1915.



Above left: Donald Shaw. First President of Morwell Shire 1892-93.

Above right: First Shire Council 1892-93. William Murdoch, Edmund Kelleher, John English, John Murphy, Michael Mulkare, Donald Shaw (centre, seated). Also pictured are John McCoull (Shire Secretary) and A. E. Arney (Engineer)

Newsletter of the Centre for Gippsland Studies.

• **CGS On Air**

The CGS is going to air - well, almost. The ABC in Sale (3GI and 3MT) has asked us to help organise content for a monthly radio program on local history - interviews with authors of Gippsland histories, talks on heritage issues and interesting events in Gippsland history.

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- ★ Congratulations to Gloria Auchterlonie and Allan Box for mounting an impressive exhibition, 'Dad's War Stuff' at the Latrobe Valley Arts Centre recently. The exhibition featured enlargements of photographs taken by George Auchterlonie when he served as a lighthorseman in the First World War, and excerpts from his note books and diaries. Many of his possessions were on display: uniform, medals, luggage, kit. The exhibition presented a personal view of the war.
 - ★ A Yinnar and District Historical Society has been formed as a result of the Morwell City centenary celebrations. The new society is deciding whether to operate as a branch of the Morwell Historical Society, or as a separate society. For more details contact Phil Williams on 632165.
 - ★ Here is another another notice of the important exhibition of historic Gippsland paintings that will be on display at the Latrobe Valley Arts Centre, opening 11 December. Artists will include Eugen Von Guerard, Nicholas Chevalier, Jessie Trill, John Longstaff, Louie Rigall and William Dexter. The exhibition is not to be missed - mark it in your diary now!

BUILDINGS AND HERITAGE

Annual History Conference
Centre for Gippsland Studies

Saturday 28 November 1992
at Strathfieldsaye via Stratford

- 9.30 Registration
- 10.00 Welcome
- 10.15 Graeme Davison - What Makes a Building Historic?
- 11.00 Morning tea provided
- 11.30 Miles Lewis - Building Technology in Gippsland
- 12.15 Chris Johnston - Heritage Studies and the Consultant
- 1.00 Lunch - BYO or can be purchased from Perry Bridge Ladies as it is Open Day
- 2.00 Launch of 'Strathfieldsaye : A History and a Guide'
- 2.30 Tour of garden and inspection of homestead

Cost \$10 - this includes entrance to homestead



R.H.S.V. HISTORY NEWS

No. 131 SEPTEMBER 1992

ISSN 0157-5740

RHSV MONSTER STOCKTAKING SALE

We are clearing stocks of windcheaters, leisure shirts, postcards, books, *Victorian Historical Journals* and some VHJ Indexes at ridiculous prices. Don't pass up this offer - it's too good to miss.

EXHIBITION

WOORAYL SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Until 31 January 1993

From the Handknitters' Guild: "Bedjackets, Bootees and Balaclavas", a re-interpretation of the handknitting of the 1930s and 1940s, the golden age of knitting. Also a large room of memorabilia of "Wool in Woorayl". Mechanics Institute, Leongatha.

AUSTRALIAN ARCHIVES

The public searchroom and reference section of the Victorian Regional Office of Australian Archives is now located in the city and the Brighton searchroom closed. Details of the new location are:

Location: 2nd Floor
Casselden Place
2 Lonsdale Street (Cnr Lonsdale & Spring Streets)
Postal Address GPO Box 4325 PP, Melbourne 3001
Telephone (03) 285-7999
Fax (03) 285-7979

WOMEN IN SCIENCE - ARTICLES WANTED

The Science faculty of the University of Melbourne is seeking to publish a collection of articles on women in science (with the range of science being interpreted fairly broadly) as part of its 1993 programme to mark the centenary of the first women B.Sc. The collection would have both historical and contemporary articles and a Victorian focus.

Those engaged in research in this field who may be interested in contributing to this project are encouraged to contact Ms Sally Nicholls, Faculty of Science Office (03) 344-4393 or Dr Farley Kelly (03) 722-1304 AH.

WHERE TO PUT BURKE AND WILLS?

Proposed re-development of the City Square at the corner of Collins and Swanston Streets has raised the question of whether and to where the statue of Burke and Wills, currently on one side of the Square, should be moved. John White, author of *Burke and Wills - The Stockade and the Tree*, advocates that it should be moved to the gardens of the Royal Society, which backed the expedition of the two explorers. He considers it would be a historically correct decision, where the statue would be surveyed and enfolded within the surroundings out of which it evolved'. Its present position, he says, is grotesque, and he invites those who support a move to the Royal Society gardens to tell the Melbourne City Council. His monograph is available from the Humanities Department, Footscray Campus of the Victoria Technology, and was reviewed briefly in the August issue of *History News*.

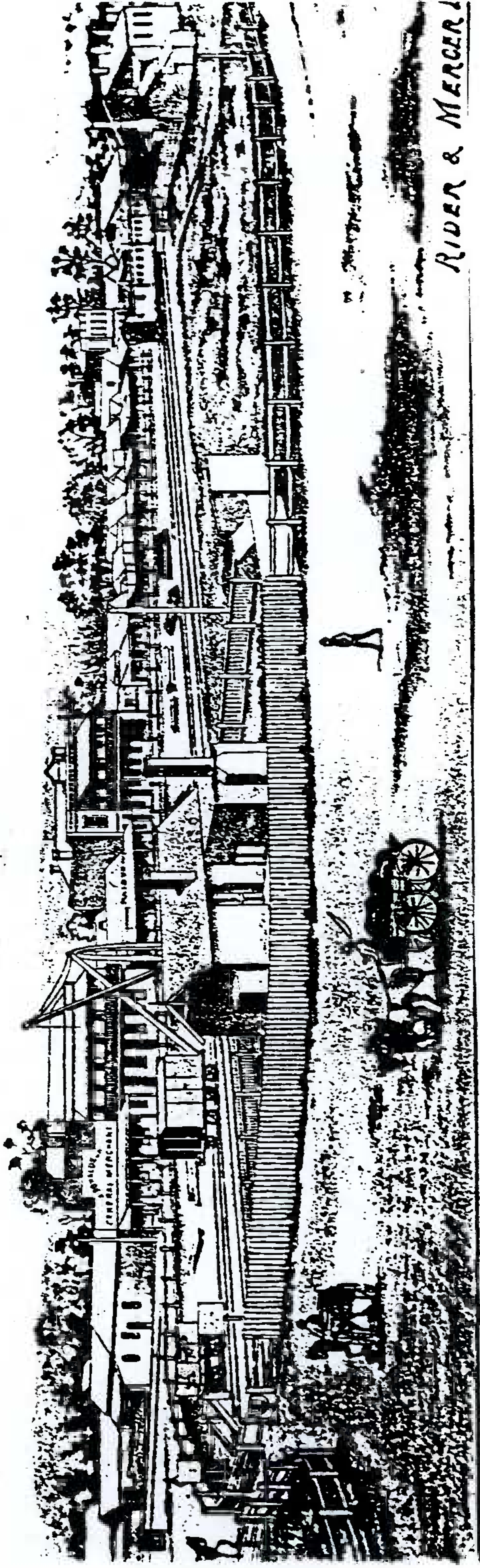
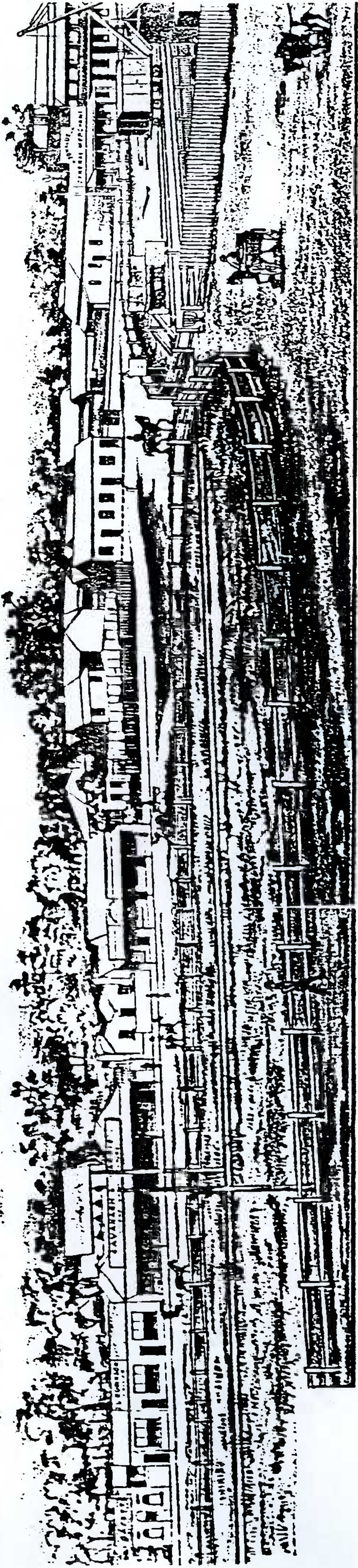
SHOULD WE PROTECT NED KELLY'S FATHER'S HOUSE ?

The Historic Buildings Council will hold an inquiry on 16 Sept. to decide whether to provide legal protection for a house once owned by Ned Kelly's father and said to have been Ned's childhood home. The inquiry will allow members of the public, the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, the National Trust and the Council of Adult Education to present information to determine the significance of the house at Beveridge. For further information: Lisa Vagg (03) 628 5448

A SPECIAL IS COMING

To help mark the 150th Anniversary of Melbourne City Council, which has given generous financial assistance, the Society is publishing a special issue of the *Victorian Historical Journal*. Professor Graeme Davison, Australia's finest urban historian, has organised and edited this enlarged and well-illustrated issue. It will, we hope, be posted with September's *History News*.

Chapter topics include: the social role of the City Council, the Town Hall as meeting place, street processions, the search for a square, the centenary celebrations of 1934, public gardens, health administration, the City Baths, Carlton's identity, Melbourne that might have been, and a chronology of Melbourne's history.



EARLY MORWELL - THE CHURCH ST. INTERSECTION AND COMMERCIAL ROAD 1889. From a Supplement in the 'Morwell & Mirboo Gazette' - December 1889.

If you cut out the two sections above and match up the arrows you will see the complete panorama as it was originally printed.