Final Issue.

The Morwell Historical Society News ......15th. August, 1975

This issue is merely a repeat of Volume 2, published in 1963, supplies of which had become exhausted. Republication of Volume 2 has now given us a reserve of 20 complete sets of the 13 volumes issued in yearly volumes from 1962 to 1974 inclusive. These sets will be kept in reserve for posterity.

Volume 2 .... 1962.

Table of Contents.

The first 11 chapters appeared, on the dates given, in the Morwell newspaper, "The Advertiser", from the 21st January to the 1st April, 1963. The remaining 37 chapters were circulated, on the dates given, to members of the Morwell Historical Society.

I. T. Maddern,
Morwell, 15/8/75

<u>Important Notice.</u>

<u>The Morwell Historical Society News is ceasing publication.</u>

Over the last few years, we have been fighting a losing battle against rising costs, and, in particular, the incessant sharp rises in postal charges. Since we started in 1962, the postal rates have risen by a thousand per cent.

We began with ten issues a year, a monthly publication from February to November inclusive. Then, we were forced into quarterly productions – in February, May, August and November, and finally into two issues a year – in May and August. But this last, biggest rise of all in postal rates ,on top of a very big increase last year, is too much altogether.

There is a bright side to the picture. We are very much indebted to the Latrobe Valley Express, which, for two years now, has been printing our weekly historical article in its Friday Week-End Reading issue. Although journalistic history is a little different from the usual text-book variety, it is still very important – and it is read by a vastly greater number of people. It could well be that the newspaper is providing a better history service, than the "News" which we have been struggling to produce, these last few years. Thank you, the Latrobe Valley Express.

<div align="right"><u>I. T. Maddern.</u></div>

The Morwell Historical Society News. Volume 2. 1963............. Page 1.

Re-published in 1975.

1.   John Irving, 1856-1894. First Head-Teacher, Morwell S. S.

The first head-teacher of Commercial Road State School, Morwell, John Irving, was 23 years old when he took up that position, in April 1879. He was a son of Robert Irving, who once conducted a bakery business at Boolarra, and after whom Irving Street in Boolarra is named.

John's sister, Barbara Irving, was the teacher at Hazelwood Ridge State School from 1880 to 1886. Then she married Mr. Norman Burnie. Their son, Dr. Alexander Burnie, has a practice in Melbourne, and is attached to the Alfred Hospital.

Another sister, Christina Irving, a pianist, taught music at Morwell for many years. In fact, the Irving family was a very gifted one, particularly in music. John Irving himself played the violin, and when brother and sister had practice nights together, some of the local people would gather outside to listen to an entertaining performance by the duettists. John Irving's son, Reginald Irving of Fairview Street, Traralgon, still has his father's violin, now well over 100 years old.

In 1880, John Irving married Ina (Georgina) Grant of Yinnar. When the Catholic School opened in Morwell in 1884, causing a big drop in enrolment at the State School, John Irving transferred to the new school opening at Boolarra. Accommodation troubles at Morwell (for the school residence was tiny and poor) as well as family reasons, may have played their part also in his application for transfer to Boolarra.

John Irving was an excellent teacher. He could entertain an audience with recitations as well as with his violin. He was a good horseman, and he was in charge of a small militia unit which he started at Morwell. At Boolarra, he won a Bronze Medal of the Royal Humane Society for his attempt to save the life of a house-keeper whose clothes had caught alight from a fire. The house-keeper died, and John Irving spent several weeks in hospital recovering from severe burns.

He died of Bright's Disease in 1894 at the early age of 38, and lies buried in the Hazelwood Cemetery. His wife and children returned to Yinnar for a short time, and then Mrs. Irving opened Irving's Boarding House in Morwell in order to make a living. Her place was on the hill in the vicinity of the present Catholic Church. Neighbours were the Donaldson family on one side, and the Dustings and the Rowells on the other. Mr. Reg Irving remembers that one of the Donaldson firls, Grace Donaldson, aged 18 years, was killed when thrown from a bolting horse, New Year's Day 1881.

Mr. Reg Irving has an excellent, enlarged photograph of his father, John Irving - a handsome, intelligent-looking man, a pioneer teacher and a highly-esteemed citizen of Morwell.

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2.   Commercial Road State School, No. 2136.

In the changes and enlargement of the buildings of the Commercial Road State School, we can trace five stages of development:-

1. Temporary Premises. The room in Tarwin Street, opposite the present site of Coles' Store, in which the school opened, 3rd. April 1879, was owned by Henry Breed of Traralgon, and was built as a temporary butcher's shop - to serve the railway construction-gang building the railway line in 1878, as a butcher's shop - a branch of Breed's Traralgon business. It was small, 14 feet by 12 feet, and could accommodate 25 to 30 children, whereas John Irving estimated the number of children of school age in the area to be somewhere between 80 and 100 children. He had this to say about the premises:-

"The room is well ventilated, as the upper part of the back wall is a kind of trellis work, through which the rain pours in, in winter, and through which the sun shines through rather strongly in summer".

2. A Portable Class-Room. A portable school-room was set up beside the original room in August, 1879, and a second was being considered, when the Board of Advice protested and urged the construction of a permanent and proper school on the selected site, further east along Commercial Road.

3. A Permanent School. The new school, 40 feet by 20 feet was erected by John Nichols at a cost of £308, and was occupied, 18th. August, 1880. One of the portable rooms was converted into a residence for which the teacher paid rent of £9 a year. A plan of the grounds at that time shows the school in the corner, as at present, though smaller, and not so close to the fences, with the residence one chain further distant east, and facing Commercial Road. At that time, a road - the continuation of George Street, separated the grounds from the Church of England block, where old St. Mary's Church was built in 1886.

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4. Extensions. In 1891-92 an additional room was added to the school. By 1895, the residence consisted of four rooms, but Thomas Ferguson, the head-teacher, had added two of these at his own expense, although he was able to sell them to the Department when he left towards the end of 1895.

5. A Brick Building. In 1906 the old buildings were replaced by "a handsome, new brick building," and the "shabby residence", known locally as the "Eyesore" looked even shabbier by comparison. The teacher in 1909, Mr. R. Dickson, would not live in it and purchased his own place. In 1911, the residence was sold for £15 and removed.

(Note 6. Further additions and changes). About 1966, further rooms were built parallel to Commercial Road. In 1973 the original brick rooms (or part of them) were demolished, and re-built as a store-room. It seems also that the main section of brick was constructed in the 1920's.

3. Charles Oxtoby Gilbert. 1829-1888.

Mr. C. O. Gilbert was one of the first men to establish a business in Morwell. This was late in 1878 or early in 1879. With his family he had arrived in Melbourne in March 1878, and a few months later he opened a general store in the village of Morwell.

There is in the possession of the Gilbert family a photograph of this early store, the site of which is now occupied by Sharpe's, in Commercial Road. The photograph shows a typical, low, early-colonial type of building, with quite a crowd on the verandah, obviously gathered there for some particular reason, such as to meet the train, or to collect the mail, or to have their photos taken, or more likely after some special meeting or church service. Some of the early Church of England services were held in Gilbert's store building. The men, women and children all look over-dressed, as was the fashion in those days, seeming to be encumbered by their clothes. A horse and a gig are at one side, and a pack-horse at the other, and a sign on the building bears the words, "Railway Store, C. O. Gilbert.

The adjacent building, which seems to be a continuation of the store, but which has no verandah, shows a man leaning against a door-post, and a sign above the door reads "V. R. Post & Telegraph Office". It has been said that the first post-office was at the railway station. If so, the one shown in the photo would be the second. The third was on the north-west corner of Tarwin and George Streets ; the fourth, built about 1896 was where the Commonwealth Bank now stands, and our last one is the present one at the corner of Princes Highway and Church Street, built in 19 . This photograph must be a very early one, perhaps as early as 1879, though more likely, about 1884.

The family belief that Mr. C. O. Gilbert came to Morwell towards the end of 1878 is born out by the records. For example, Mr. Gilbert's name does not appear on four petition lists between November 1877 and July 1878 (asking for the establishment of a school), but at the first land sale in January 1879, he bought allotment 10 in Block 2, where he established his home and his store. In the same month, 28/1/1879, he wrote a letter advocating that the proposed new school should be established "in the village of Maryvale" (that is, Morwell), and not a mile and a half away on the Ridge, where the disused Maryvale Ridge School was. The Commercial Road State School Register shows that Mr. Gilbert's children, Percy, Gerald and Harold, all enrolled at the new school, when it opened 3rd. April, 1879, and that the two older ones had previously attended the Maryvale Ridge School

The business closed when Mr. C. O. Gilbert died, 13/2/1888, and his sons took up farming. The Gilbert family have all been devout members of the Church of England. Records of the family - baptisms, marriages and burials - can be found in the registers of St. Mary's Church, Leicester, England. Could Morwell's Church of England have been named "St. Mary's" after this Leicester Church?

4.   Percy Astill Gilbert. 1868 - 1951.

Mr. Percy Astill Gilbert was ten years old when his parents brought their family from Leicester to Australia in March, 1878. His father died ten years later, just at the time the family was in the process of relinquishing the general store in Morwell to take up farming at Yinnar South.

Mr. P. A. Gilbert eventually retired to live in Morwell, for the last fifteen years of his life. He collapsed and died, 12th. December, 1951, while attending a service at St. Mary's Church of England, Morwell.

The obituary notices which the family has kept give some interesting sidelights on the story of Morwell's early days. For example, Mr. Gilbert had been a champion horseman in his prime, and several times he rode the 100 miles to Melbourne, on horseback, in the one day.

On the occasion of the opening of the newest section of the Morwell State School (Commercial Road) in 1949, he had the honour of being the senior old-boy present, having attended the opening of the school 70 years earlier.

One of the Anglican churches closely connected with the Gilbert family is the Church of the Holy Innocents at Yinnar South. This delightful little church, built in 1895, still kept in good order and still used, must be one of the smallest churches in Victoria. It can accommodate only a congregation of about 20 people. It is said that once, on the occasion of a special, anniversary service, a visiting choir so filled the whole church that the congregation had to sit outside.

Mr. P. A. Gilbert's older brother, Mr. Arthur Gilbert, wrote the chapter on the history of the Morwell Church for the book, "The Church of Our Fathers", which deals with the history of the Church of England in Gippsland.

Another brother was Gerald Buckley Gilbert, a well-respected teacher in the service of the Victorian Education Department. He began his teaching career as the first pupil teacher at Morwell State School.

One interesting feature of the story of the Gilberts is the way they have handed down names occurring in the family history. "Astill" was the maiden name of Mrs. C. O. Gilbert, the mother of Percy Astill Gilbert. (Members of the Astill family have played county cricket for Leicester)."Buckley" was the maiden name of C. O. Gilbert's mother, and hence, Gerald <u>Buckley</u> Gilbert was named after his paternal grandmother.

Mr. Jack Gilbert's farm,"Brocklebank", at Yinnar South, is named after his mother, who, before her marriage to Mr. P. A. Gilbert, was Miss Irene Brocklebank, a teacher at Yinnar South School. Another of their properties, "Rothley", is named after a town in Leicestershire, where C. O. Gilbert married Fanny Astill, 16/8/1859. No doubt the unusual name of "Oxtoby" also commemorates some person or some place connected with the family.

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5. The First Page of the School Register.

The first page of the register of the Commercial Road State School lists the pupils of the first year of the school's history, while it was still housed in the temporary premises in Tarwin Street, in 1879. About 20 families are represented in the enrolment of the first 60 children to attend the school. The first, or No.1 in the register, is Annie Henry, aged eight, daughter of <u>Robert Henry</u>, carpenter of Morwell, and first owner of the block of land on which our Town Hall now stands. Other children from this family were Margaret (13), John (11), and Jessie (7). Other families and their members enrolled were:

<u>Gilbert</u>.... Percy (12), Gerald (9), and Harold (5), were the sons of C.O.Gilbert, whose general store was on the site of Sharpe's drapery store today.
<u>Donaldson</u>...David (10) and Edith (6), the children of David Donaldson, another store-keeper, who had the corner store where Faulkner's is now.
<u>Collyer</u>....Bridget (14), Paul (7), and Joanna (4) were the children of John Collyer, hotel-keeper.
<u>O'Flaherty</u>.....Michael (8), Julia (6) and Edward (4) were the children of Roger O'Flaherty, cattle-dealer.
<u>Martin</u>.... Camilla (12), Hannah (10), Sarah (8) and Thomas (3) were the children of James Martin, boot-maker.
<u>McGaskill</u>...Sarah (10), Angus (8), and Peter (5) -the children of Donald McGaskill, line repairer.
<u>Jones</u>.......Martha (10), Jane (8), Annie (7), and Elizabeth (5) were the children of John B. Jones, line repairer.
<u>Keegan</u>......Rosanna (12), Philip (10), Anthony (6), and Thomas (5) were the children of Philip Keegan, gate-keeper.
<u>Purdue</u>......Lily (7) and George (5), the children of Edward Purdue,gate-keeper.
<u>Robinson</u>....William (11) and Thomas (9), sons of John Robinson, line-repairer.

From the surrounding district, a number of farmers enrolled children at the Morwell State School. They were:-
<u>Vary</u>...... Ellen (16), Arthur (13), Alfred (11), and Alice (6), children of Samuel
<u>Lindon</u>....Isabella (13), Charles (12), Newton (5) -children of Charles Lindon.
<u>Gorman</u>....Mary (11), Margaret (9), Eliza (7), Thomas (6) - children of Roger.
<u>Crinigan</u>...Rosanna (9), Edward (8), Elizabeth (5) - children of Edward Crinigan.
<u>Porter</u>....George (12), Margaret (10), Robert (9), Alexander (6), Agnes (5) -
- children of Robert Porter.
<u>Alliss</u>....Ada (11), John (9), -- children of John Alliss.
<u>Samuel</u>....Annie (9), Thomas (7), children of Lewis Samuel.
<u>Molloy</u>....John (10), son of Laurence Molloy.
<u>Minchinton</u>...Jane 14, child of Samson Minchinton.
<u>McGauran</u>.....Susan, child of Bridget McGauran, widow.

Morwell people not represented in this first school register would be the single people or young, married people like John Rintoull, the blacksmith, and Miss Zenna McCrorey, the nineteen-year old school-teacher who had been conducting the Maryvale Ridge State School until it closed in May, 1879. The new teacher of the new school, John Irving, who made the first entries in this first Commercial Road State School register, was a single man, aged 23. There would also be families, whose children were too young or too old to attend school.

We can recognize today, in this area, the names of some of the descendents of some of these pioneers, such as the Varys, the Gilberts and the Porters, but there could be many others, who have descended through a female line, and are not recognized because of the change of name.

6. .. .. Inspectors and Inspections.

Another source of information about the early days of Morwell and of the Morwell State School is the record of inspections of the school. The first name that occurs is that of James Holland, who reported on the Maryvale Ridge School in 1877, and who was concerned in the matter of choosing a site for the new school. Then followed Thomas R. Hepburn, 1879-1888, who has left us a rough plan of the area, showing the holdings of the various families and their distances from the school. William Hamilton, 1888, and Alfred Fussell, 1889, were in charge of the area for brief periods. Then followed T. W. Bothroyd, who made his interesting report in 1890 on the rapid growth of Morwell.

In 1903, the school was inspected by the Director of Education, Frank Tate, who, in his own time, achieved world stature as an educationist, and who is still recognized as one of the greatest teachers and administrators to have served Victoria. He was accompanied to Morwell by the Art Inspector, P. W. Carew-Smythe. The district inspector at that time was John McOwen.

The attendance figures at the times of inspection make interesting reading. Here they are for the first ten years, 1879-1888 -- 60, 78, 75, 57, 46, 67, 80, 78, 81. Though we can see there is a gradual tendency to increase, offset by lower figures 1882 -1884, probably due to the opening of the Catholic School, it is impossible to make any valid conclusions on those figures alone, since, in those days, the attendance of children was decidedly irregular. For example, we are told that the enrolment in 1881 was 110, whereas there were only 70 pupils present on inspection day. No doubt, the state of the roads would keep some children away on wet days. Some of the children were too young - under four years of age - to be expected to be regular attenders. Parents may have objected to overcrowding which was so common then, and which was certainly no encouragement to attend. Worst of all, and most important of all, the chief enemy might have been sickness, even epidemics of sickness. Communities were not as healthy as they are today. Minor ailments seem to have been perennial, while occasional epidemics of typhoid and diphtheria swept through an area taking an appalling toll of young lives.

It is a pity that, in the report of these inspections, the teachers are seldom named. However, in the report of 1888 by Inspector Hamilton, we learn that there were four teachers at work in one room - the Head Teacher, Thomas Ferguson; an assistant, Miss E. C. McVicar, another unnamed, and finally, the pupil teacher, Gerald Buckley Gilbert, who had been enrolled as a pupil in the school's first year, 1879.

7. ... Hotels and Houses.

The first settlers in this area, as in other areas of Australia, lived under the most primitive conditions, not far removed from the standard of the black man whose place they were taking. There was no dressed timber for building, no galvanized iron, or tiles, for roofs, no glass for windows, and no tanks for water. The first homes, therefore, consisted of the barest essentials for a shelter - four walls of vertical slabs, not always weather-proof, supporting a bark roof. The first hotels and schools were of the same pattern.

When Mrs. Perry, accompanied her husband, Bishop Perry, on a diocesan tour of Gippsland in 1849, she gave this description of the inn in which they spent the night at Moe: "Besides the amazing gaps between the slabs, the door of the room, which was also the door of the house, was about a foot too short both top and bottom. Our bedroom was a very narrow skillion with a black, earth-floor, all hills and dales, which stuck to our feet and dirtied the hem of my dresses. The window was a square hole sawn in one of the slabs."

We get a similar picture from Rev. Francis Hales, who stayed at
Fitchett's "Woolpack Inn" at Flooding Creek (Sale) in 1848. He wrote:
"This inn is a most wretched one, built of bark, lined with calico and rugs.
The room appropriated to the stockmen was next to the one I slept in, and when
they went to bed at 9.30 p.m., their language was so bad and so easily heard,
that I removed to another room, yet still their awful language was quite
distinct till they fell asleep".

Later, buildings of wattle and daub could have been more comfortable,
because they gave more privacy, with mud covering the crevices. Our name for our
wattle tree comes from the wattle and daub method of building. The real name for
the wattle tree is "mimosa", but the process of interlacing small branches and
twigs to form a frame on which mud would stick and set, was called "watling",
and the sticks themselves were called "wattles". The small mimosa trees provided
excellent wattles, and came to be called "wattling-trees", or simply,"wattles".

There were three well-defined stages in the building of homes by the
squatters (and selectors). The first home was a temporary one consisting of a
tent or a small, slab hut, in which a pioneering man could shelter. The second
was a more comfortable, though modest home, fitter for a man with a wife and a
family. If things went well, and the squatter became very wealthy, like the
Wilsons of the Wimmera, or the Dockers of Wangaratta, or the Crookes of Holey
Plains, a much more pretentious place was built, like Longerenong Homestaead,
or Bontharambo, or the Holey Plains Homestead, often double-storied, with slate
roofs, stone or tiled floors, wide staircases, many windows, spacious rooms,
and separate quarters for the servants.

8. .. The Homes of the Settlers.

The squatters were wealthy men and soon had comfortable,and even
luxurious homes. While travellers through Gippsland,in the early days, might
write in derogatory fashion of the inns and shanties where they stayed over-
night, they could mention favourably some of the private homes, such as Mr.
James Davis' brick house at Woodside, the "best house in Gippsland", and the
"comfortable homestead" of the Bennetts of Hazelwood Station.

The character of the country districts of Victoria changed completely
after 1871, when the leased land of the squatters was thrown open for purchase a
and settlement by small farmers. Most of the farmers that occupied these 320
acre selections (and sometimes much smaller selections) were in poor circum-
stances, although there would be some exceptions, such as relatives of the
squatters, and the squatters themselves, some of whom managed to acquire by
ownership much of the land they previously held on lease.

Steele Rudd in his stories,"On Our Selection", describes the poverty of
the life of many of these thousands of selecting families. He begins his stories
with a description of a selector's home:

"Dad didn't travel up with us; he had gone some months before, to put up
the house and dig the water-hole. It was a slabbed house, with a shingled roof,
and space enough for two rooms, but the partition wasn't up. The floor was earth
but Dad had a mixture of sand and fresh cow-dung with which he used to keep it
level. About once every month he would put it on, and everyone had to keep out-
side that day till it was dry. There were no locks on the doors. Pegs were put
in to keep them fast at night, and the slabs were not very close together, for
we could easily see anybody coming on horseback, by looking through them. Joe
and I used to play at counting the stars through the cracks in the roof".

It took years for most of these people to achieve a modicum of comfort
in their homes. After a time, the walls were lined with hessian covered with
wall-paper. More rooms were added; the bark or shingle roofs were replaced by
iron, and the water from the roof was run into tanks for the domestic water
supply. The lack of a water reticulation system retarded the raising of the
living standard, the addition of a bathroom, greater personal and general clean-
liness, and less sickness. It was not until 1913 that Morwell achieved a town
water supply.

Until a copious supply of water is guaranteed, there can be no hygienic
service such as sewerage, nor such comfort as a bath-room and a hot-water
service. The people of the pioneering days, and for two or three generations
after, for the most part, lived in houses without bath-rooms. In the best families
the requirements of cleanliness were served by a bath in a tub, once a week –
Saturday night. The best bedroom,or guest room, might have a wash-stand, with
wash-jug and basin, but the daily washing of hands and face would take place in
dish convenient to the tankstand. The kitchen was often separate from the house,
perhaps as a precaution against the total loss of the home by fire.

9.   An "Anniversary". 18/3/1963.

This series of articles on "Early Morwell" began exactly one year ago, on Monday, 12th March, 1962, and this is the 50th article in the series.

(Then follows a list of corrections of errors made in Articles No. 3, No. 29, No.30 and No. 45, but since these corrections have already been made in our reprint of Volume 1 (May,1975), there is no point in repeating them again.)

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10.   Houses of Old Morwell.(25/3/1963).

One of Morwell's oldest houses has just been demolished. It was the old Rintoull home at 33 George Street, situated behind the first blacksmith's shop, and built about 1879, when John Rintoull, the blacksmith, married Zenna McCrorey, the school-teacher. This small, four-roomed house was enlarged from time to time, and remained in the possession of the Rintoull family for the whole of its 83 years of existence, the last occupant being Miss Minna (Wilhelmina) Rintoull.

Commercial Road, or that section of it between Hazelwood Road and Tarwin Street, together with George Street, immediately behind it, were the first residential and commercial streets of the township. Generally, a trader who established his shop in Commercial Road would have his home in the same building, or else in a separate house behind it and facing George Street.

There are two other very old houses in George Street, on the opposite side from Rintoull's. One belonged to Jack Westley, and his daughter still lives there; the other was occupied by John Lowe, a wheelwright employed by John Rintoull.

The main road to Traralgon in those days was the continuation of Commercial Road as far as the Ridge, where the road crossed to the other side of the railway line by means of a wooden bridge, which was burnt down in the big bush-fire of 1944. The town tended to straggle along this road (Commercial Road) and some of the older houses of the town are found in this part.

In 1897, the house furthest east along this road was that of the Rowell family, and Misses K. and D. Rowell live there to this day. The house next door was occupied by Mr. Dusting, a saddler. This house became something of a derelict after the Dustings left Morwell, and, one night, when two men were camped there, the place was destroyed by fire, and the two men were burnt to death.

Irving's boarding house was on the corner now occupied by the Sacred Heart School, one of the boarders in 1897 being an early rector of the Church of England, Rev. Frewin. On the opposite corner (across White Street) was the residence of the store-keeper, David Donaldson. After that came the Catholic Presbytery, which had been built in 1895, when the Church was still at the old site in George Street. The present Church was built in 1902. (Further comment - The 1902 Church was demolished in 1970, and replaced by a more substantial building to suit the needs of a growing congregation).

A little closer to the township centre was the first Morwell Hospital conducted by Miss Townshend in a private residence (258 Commercial Road) at the instigation of Dr. McLean. The next house was occupied by Dick Date, the blacksmith, and then came the residence of Mr. Tatterson, the dentist. Finally, there was Tim Kennedy's place on the corner, originally built for Miss Nichol, one of the teachers at Commercial Road School.

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11.   Houses of Old Morwell (continued).

Commercial Road is the oldest street in Morwell. It is there, and in George Street that the first buildings - shops, hotels and houses, were erecteed. Tarwin Street must have been a very close second; or an equal first, because Breed's butcher's shop, which was also the first temporary home of the Morwell School, was in existence early in 1879. It was probably built in 1877, as the butcher's shop for the railway gangers building the line and railway station. Green's drapery store, with a residence beside it was built in Tarwin Street, perhaps as early as 1879. In those days, Tarwin Street was not cut off by the Morwell S.E.C. Brown Coal Project, but carried right on into the country. The two Misses Tonner, who conducted a private school (with boarders) in the 1880's and 1890's, had their home and school in Tarwin Street. One of the Misses Tonner was the organist for the Church of England.

Hazelwood Road was another important branch road. As its name implies, it was the way out to Hazelwood, and there were houses along this road, and in the side streets leading to it. Some of the old houses of Morwell still have underground tanks, the standard means, in those days, of securing a household water supply.

Off Hazelwood Road, in Ann Street, (named after Ann Keegan) lived another private-school teacher of the 1890's, a Miss King, whose sister was the post-mistress.

In those days, an allotment stretched from one street to the next, so, instead of having two houses, back to back, facing parallel streets, each allotment had only one house with a very long back yard. This, together with vacant allotments, gave the township a pleasant spaciousness, or, as the more city-minded of us would think, a very scattered appearance.

Another subsidiary road led over the railway bridge at the western end into Jane Street and out to the Old Coach Road, to Morwell West (or Morwell Bridge), and to the Latrobe River. One of Morwell's best-known, old homes is the old brick place in Jane Street, where Mr. J. B. Hoyle lived. There is a picture of this house in the Cyclopedia of Victoria, published 1905. This house was built for an Englishman named Cooper, who was engaged to a local girl. The parents of the girl did not look favourably upon the match; the engagement was broken off; and Cooper returned to England. The house was bought by a Mr. Robertson, a journalist on the staff of the "Morwell and Yinnar Gazette, but he suffered from bad health, and, on his death 7/7/1897, the property was acquired by Mr. J. B. Hoyle.

Other houses on the north side of the line, and not mentioned in previous articles, were the residence of Mr. Symons, a builder, in Buckley Street; the home of a family named Collins, who lived where Collins Street School is now; the house of Mr. Smith, who had an orchard property where the present Methodist Church now stands; and the house of Mr. Holloway, a boot repairer, who had the most easterly house in Princes Highway (that is, beyond Mr. Smith's orchard).

12. Moe and the Moe Swamp.

The early explorers and settlers who tried to find a way from Melbourne to Gippsland were baulked, not only by the rugged nature of some of the country, and the density of the scrub, but also by the water and mud of the morasses. The Koo-wee-rup Swamp was a barrier to anyone attempting to reach South Gippsland, and the Moe Swamp presented equal difficulties in the more northerly section. For example, in 1843, J. C. Tyers, who had been appointed Crown Lands Commissioner for Gippsland, made three unsuccessful attempts to travel overland from Melbourne to Port Albert, and finally travelled by ship, landing at Port Albert in January, 1844. We do not appreciate now how wet and sodden the low-lying areas were, but there are clear indications in the story of Gippsland, that such conditions had a considerable bearing on the comparatively slow development of the area. The roads tended to follow the ridges and the high land. For example, Surveyor McDonald, in 1862, found a new track to Melbourne, by following the ridges extending to the south of Moe. It was a good winter track since it avoided the mud patches and the swamps, but it could not be used for cattle because of this very reason – the lack of drinking water for the herds. Parts of McDonald's track are still used today.

Some of the descendents of the early settlers wonder why their forebears selected the rocky land of the hills instead of the fertile valleys. It has been modern drainage methods that have opened up the richer, low-lying land for settlement.

The Moe Swamp continued to be a trouble spot for more than 60 years after the first settlers arrived. The Cyclopedia of Victoria, published in 1905, gives a good description of the Moe Swamp and the floods that caused so much damage. The Moe Swamp extended for ten miles from Trafalgar to Moe. By 1905, the Government had already spent 80,000 pounds on a reclamation scheme, which had been only partially successful. In 1900, flood waters rose to the level of the tops of some houses, and herds of cattle and flocks of sheep were drowned. There was a similar disaster in 1903, when strong currents of water simply swept the cattle away. When the area was drained, some of the land fetched 20 pounds an acre.

The writer of the article in the Cyclopedia predicted a prosperous future for Moe, based on a thriving dairying industry, but, at the same time, he complained of the shocking state of the roads, which were almost impassable in winter. This applied particularly to the main road from Moe to Trafalgar, which ran close to the swamp, and parallel to the main drain. The population of Moe in 1905 was given as 400.

Henry Scott was the first squatter to occupy the Moe area, and it was at his inn that Bishop and Mrs. Perry stayed one night in 1849, on their way into Gippsland. No-one seems to know how Moe received its name or why that particular spelling was adopted. Mrs. Perry spelt it "Mowie", and Rev. Hales (1848) spelt it "Mouay". The article in the Cyclopedia of 1905 mentioned only one business place, a general store, conducted by Mr. A. J. McKenzie, who bought it from the original owner, Mr. A. Marshall.

13. The Haunted Hills.

The various stories of how the Haunted Hills received their name have one thing in common - that cattle are, or were, afraid to stay in the area. The two stories most commonly heard are neither very interesting nor convincing. According to one, subterranean hollows in the hills magnify the hoofbeats of the cattle and frighten them; the second merely affirms that for some unknown and mysterious reason, cattle will not stay in the hills at night.

The "Cyclopedia of Victoria",1905, has a more plausible account. It appears that an early drover was attempting to drive his cattle down a steep incline, when the mob suddenly stampeded, and fled terror-stricken into the neighboring scrub, where they immediately disappeared, and were never seen again. The drover maintained that an unearthly noise rising from the ground accompanied the bewitching of his cattle, and so scared was he, that he could never again be induced to attempt that route.

Later drovers declared that,at this same spot, their cattle became unmanageable, some were always lost, and from the opposite slope came the ghostly tramp of cattle - the cattle lost by the first drover. But when the opposite slope was examined, no evidence of cattle having been there could be found.

The details given allow us to reconstruct the story and explain the mystery. The "stampede" of the cattle was probably due to the steepness of the slope, forcing the cattle into a run; the ghostly tramp from the other side of the valley was merely an echo.

Instead of the quiet progress of a herd along a road, there was the thunder of flying hoofs, increased in volume as the opposite slope threw back its echoes. Possibly the cattle were scared - by the steepness of the slope. On the other hand, they may simply have veered off the road to check their headlong descent, and so disappeared into the thick scrub. Later drovers heard the echoes of their own animals.

People were more credulous in those days. In any case, we all like a good story, and support it with imagination if not with facts. Alcohol may have had some part in the story because drovers were amongst the hardest drinkers in a hard-drinking age. Perhaps the first drover had stayed overlong at the Morwell Bridge Inn before starting out on his journey over the hills to Moe. A lonely, superstitious man, in the eerie stillness of the Australian bush, confronted suddenly with the unexpected and what seemed mysterious, would not be likely to stay, investigate, and find out what had happened. He would return to the comfort, the company,and the solace of the inn. What better explanation for the abandonment of the cattle than that they had "mysteriously disappeared. The cattle may, or may not have been afraid, but the man certainly was. The name "Haunted Hills" was therefore applied by a superstitious drover, badly scared by his own interpretation of normal and natural occurrences.

14.......Coal.

It was known fairly early in the story of Gippsland that there were deposits of coal, which could be valuable, in the area. For example, in a survey map of the Parish of Morwell, drawn by George Thomas Jones, in March 1874, a strip of land, three chains wide is shown, stretching to the south and marked as reserved for a proposed tramway to the Excelsior Coal Mine, somewhere in the Hazelwood area. (However, this might have been part of a later survey, super-imposed on the earlier map of 1874).

Henry Godridge of Morwell is credited with discovering the first substantial coal bed in the Morwell area. After years of prospecting in his spare time, he found coal,reasonably near the surface, on the north bank of the Latrobe River, about six miles north-west of the township - or, in the region of what we know now as Yallourn North.

Within a few years, there were at least four distinct mining concerns, operating or attempting to operate, not counting the Excelsior Mine already mentioned. There may have been other ventures, but the following four are given in the Cyclopedia of Victoria:

1. Godridge's Mine,to operate which a Melbourne Syndicate was formed. Before much could be done, it was abandoned in favour of the second.
2. The Great Morwell Brown Coal Company Mine, more generally known as the Open Cut Mine, which was close to Godridge's at Yallourn North, and which was found by William Tulloch. After initial success, the company ran into difficulties and work stopped in 1899.
3. The Great Gippsland Company Coal Mine, which was in the same area as the other two, but on the other side of the loop line, and on land leased by Dr.L.L. Smith of Melbourne and Morwell. It was on low-lying land, and the sodden

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nature of the soil made operating conditions difficult.

4. The Maryvale Mine on land owned by Mr. Joseph Buckley. It was very close to the township, being approximately where the Ambulance Station is now. At this point a diamond drill provided by the Mines Department bored down 1,000 feet and showed over 800 feet of coal. The mine was leased by Mr. Buckley to an English company which ceased operations about 1892, but continued to hold the lease for several years after that.

From 1900 onwards, therefore, although it was known that there were vast quantities of coal at Morwell, there was no mining done until the State Electricity Commission was established in March 1919. The Commission began its work at Yallourn, and it was not until after the Second World War that coal was mined again at Morwell.

In the 1920's, the State Electricity Commission seriously considered moving the whole township of Morwell, in order to mine the very valuable coal deposits beneath it, but finally, the expense involved was considered too high. The Commission is now sorry that the move was not made then. To the east of Morwell, between Morwell and Traralgon, there is very little coal of any value, and,no doubt, the growth of the town will be in that direction.

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15. The open Cut Mine and William Tulloch, 1849-1919

Henry Godridge conducted the hotel at Morwell Bridge, and discovered coal on the north bank of the Latrobe River at Yallourn North. Then, about ten chains from Godridge's mine, William Tulloch found a more important deposit of brown coal, because it was more accessible. Since this coal occurred conveniently in the side of a steep hill, it could be worked quite easily with horizontal shafts at ground level - or by means of an open cut. When the earth was removed from the side of the hill, a face of coal sixty feet high was revealed.

Tulloch took a lease of the land and the Great Morwell Brown Coal Co. was formed to exploit the deposit. The Company built a loop line, 3½ miles long, to connect the mine to the main Gippsland railway line, and also a tram-line up the hill to take away the overburden soil. The Government of Victoria agreed to subsidize the building of the loop line to the extent of 5,000 pounds, if the Company produced briquettes. Loose coal was railed to Melbourne, and, for a time, the Company prospered.

Then trouble came from various directions. Tulloch advised the Company to import briquetting machinery from Germany, but unfortunately, this advice was not taken. The Otis Elevator Company sent their representative to Germany to obtain plans, and then built the machinery here, but it proved unsuitable. A fire destroyed the buildings of the mine. A second attempt to make a satisfactory briquetting plant failed. The Company had contracted heavy expenses in attempting to make briquettes, and yet had failed to qualify for the 5,000 pounds subsidy. Finally, the opening of black coal mines at Outtrim in the Korumburra area ended any demand for brown coal. The Company ceased operations in 1899, and went into liquidation in 1902. After some litigation, Tulloch retained the lease of the area, but relinquished it later.

William Tulloch was an active citizen of Morwell. He was born in the Orkney Islands, north of Scotland, and came to Australia as a child, in 1851, with his parents.

He went to school at St. Mark's School, Fitzroy, served his apprenticeship as a carpenter, and carried out contracts in Melbourne, the Goulburn Valley and in Gippsland. He came to live in Morwell in 1880, and was the contractor for the building of both the early big hotels of Morwell - Murdoch's Hotel, and McKay's Club Hotel.

About 1894, he gave up the building trade and concentrated on his many other interests - a fruit and vegetable mart next to where the Post Office is now (the eastern side), a news-agency, a hairdresser's and an undertaker's business. It was a kind of a family company, with one son running the news-agency, and another the hairdresser's.

In 1870, he had married a Miss Morrow of Melbourne, and their family consisted of four sons - Bob, Jim, Sam, and Jack, and one daughter, Christina. The Tulloch home was at the north-east corner of the Hazelwood Road and George Street intersection, now owned by Les Hare. The glass panel above the front door still bears the name "Orkney" - a reminder of the islands from which the Tulloch family came.

Further Comment,1975.   Mr. David Tulloch, Editor of the "Gippsland Times", Sale, Victoria, 3850, is a great-grandson of William Tulloch, 1849-1919.

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16. Archibald Shaw's Journal.

One of the oldest and most interesting families of Morwell is the Shaw family, represented by Mr. Donald Shaw of 77 Hoyle Street, Morwell. His grandfather, Archibald Shaw, was born at "The Leob", near Bunesson, in the Isle of Mull, Scotland. Archibald Shaw married Ann McDonald, also of Mull, in 1828, and they, with their six children - Sally, Donald, Neil, Coll, John and Jessie - emigrated to South Australia, 1850-51, and eventually took up land at Hazelwood.

Archibald Shaw kept a day by day diary during his voyage out. First, the family travelled from Mull to Glasgow by steamer, then from Glasgow to Edinburgh by train, from Edinburgh to London by steamer, and finally, the long trip from London to Port Adelaide, on board the sailing ship, the "Ascendent".

When the final complement of emigrants had been taken on board at Plymouth, to bring the total to 131 passengers, the ship left that port on Thursday, 3rd. October 1850, and arrived at Port Adelaide on Wednesday, 15th. January 1851, after a voyage of 104 days, without touching at any intervening port.

The non-stop type of voyage must have been the regular thing in those days, but it must have entailed carrying large supplies, with the possibility of short rations, perhaps for the whole journey. Indeed, in this instance, the passengers were glad to catch buckets of water during tropical downpours, for washing purposes, and to replenish drinking casts. Some very necessary medical supplies were exhausted by early in December.

Thirteen people died during the voyage - eight children, four women, and one man.

Generally, the diary is concerned mainly with entries dealing with the force and direction of the wind, the course of the ship, and the speed which varied, from one period of dead calm, to $11\frac{1}{2}$ knots at the best of times; and an overall average of about $5\frac{1}{2}$ knots was achieved. There were several periods of rough weather and high seas, the worst part of the voyage being the passage through the Australian Bight, an experience which is verified by most travellers today, despite our bigger ships and faster travel.

The Shaw family was related to the Macquarie family, who were also natives of Mull, and of whom the most famous member was Lachlan Macquarie, Governor of Australia (New South Wales) 1809-1821. One of the Governor's nephews, Murdoch Macquarie, lived with the Shaw family at "Otterburn", Hazelwood, and when he died in 1904, he was buried in the Shaw family grave in Hazelwood Cemetery.

17. The Swiss Family, Nadenbousch.

There was some Swiss migration to Australia as early as 1840, and this may have been due in part at least to Charles Joseph La Trobe, Superintendent of the Port Phillip District, 1839-1851, and Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria, 1851-54. Although La Trobe was English born, he was of foreign descent. He had travelled widely in Europe and both his first and his second wives were Swiss ladies. His first wife was Sophie de Mont Mollin, and she died in 1854. It is significant that viticulture, an important Swiss agricultural industry, was established in the Geelong area, a year after La Trobe assumed office.

The majority of the Swiss migrants who arrived in Victoria after that time started their career here by working in the vinyards. Some may have come out at their own expense; it is possible that others were recruited and brought out so that their expert knowledge could be used in the vinyards of Victoria.

Alphonse Nadenbousch, 1843-1925, arrived in Victoria in 1861 at the age of eighteen, and worked for over ten years at Mr. Dardell's vinyard, at Batesford, near Geelong.

As early as 1865, he visited the Morwell area, prospecting for a farm, and camped for one night under a gum tree about where Faulkner's store is now, but it was not till 1873 that he had the opportunity of selecting, at Hazelwood, a property which is still owned by the family. He was followed by his son, Ern Nadenbousch, who now lives in Hazelwood Road, Morwell.

Alphonse Nadenbousch married Bertha Deppeler, a member of another Swiss family, at Sale in 1873, the year he took up land at Hazelwood.

Switzerland is a country in which three different languages are spoken - French, German, and Italian. Alphonse Nadenbousch came from the French-speaking division as can be seen from his passport, issued to him, 12/11/1861, in which, "Le Conseil d'Etat de la République et Canton de Neuchatel, invite les Autorités civiles et militaires à laisser passer librement Citoyen Alphonse Jules François Nadenbousch, domicilié à Peseux, allant en Australie par la France at l'Allemagne."

The Deppelers, on the other hand, came from the German-speaking area. An obituary card issued in 1882 for Elisabetha Deppeler (probably Bertha's paternal grandmother) reads: "In tiefen Schmerze theilen wir Ihnen mit, dass Elisabetha Deppeler, geb. Rudolph, von Degerfelden in Ottenbach, in ihrem 71 Lebensjahre, vershieden ist".

The Deppelers also began their lives in Australia in the vinyards of Batesford. No doubt it was because Bertha and her husband Alphonse had ventured upon an independent life at Morwell, that her family came also to this area, ten years later, and bought their farm at Middle Creek, Yinnar South.

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18. John Barton Hoyle, 1860-1921.

John Barton Hoyle, 1860-1921, the son of Thomas Hoyle and Marion Hoyle (nee Barton) was born at Beechworth, Victoria, where his father was a coach-driver for Cobb and Co. At Beechworth, the boy received his education at the local grammar school, which was attended at the same time by a pupil, five years older, who was destined to become famous in the political world -Sir Isaac Isaacs, 1855-1948, the first Australian-born Governor-General of Australia.

Beechworth was in the Kelly Gang country, and it was near there, in 1880, when J. B. Hoyle was a young man of 20, employed as a coach-builder by Cobb & Co, that the Kellys murdered the informer, Aaron Sherritt. J. B. Hoyle used to tell his family that he and two companions had been threatened by the Kellys during a chance encounter, just before Sherritt met his death.

Although John Hoyle had served his apprenticeship as a coach-builder, his natural propensity was towards office and secretarial work. He lived at Mooroopna for about six years before coming to Morwell in 1890, where he set himself up in business as a valuator, and as a land and commission agent, with an office in Commercial Road, next to Brown's chemist shop (now Milner's).

The house where the Hoyle family lived from 1897 onwards can still be seen in Jane Street. It is the old, brick house on the east side of the street, two doors down from the Princes Highway, and still looks, from the outside, very much the same as it was pictured in the "Cyclopedia of Victoria",1905. This picture shows Mr. and Mrs Hoyle, and their daughter Rose, standing on the foot-path,outside their home.

Mr. Hoyle was active in many of the township's affairs, and was the secretary for a number of organizations, the most important of which was The Great Morwell Brown Coal Mine Co., and negotiations with the Government brought him into contact with such men as Sir Alexander Peacock, three times Premier of Victoria, Thomas Livingstone M. L. A. for Morwell, and G. H. Wise M.H.R. for Gippsland. Mr. Wise achieved cabinet rank as Post-Master General.

In 1889, John Barton Hoyle married Mary Powell,1868-1936, of the Goulburn Valley District, and Rose Hoyle was their only child. Rose Hoyle married a member of one of Morwell's oldest families, William Neil Shaw. In later years, and since her husband's death, Mrs. Shaw has lived with her son at San Remo. As a child,she attended,in turn, Miss Tonner's private school, Miss King's private school, and the Commercial Road State School. She remembers as fellow pupils at the State school, the two Robertson boys (sons of the head-teacher), one of whom became General Sir Horace Robertson, more generally known as "Red Robbie". After her school days, she helped her father in his office, and still has some of his secretarial books.

19.. The Porter Family.

One of the older generation of Morwell citizens is Mr. Arthur Porter, who now lives with his son, Mr. Robert Porter and his family, in Bolding's Road, about four miles south of Morwell.

The first of the Morwell line of Porters, Robert Porter 1839-1926, came to Morwell in 1874 and selected land on the eastern side of the Old Ridge Road to Yinnar. His wife's people, the Tolmie family, selected adjacent land, on the western side of the ridge, and their property included all that part of Morwell, south of McLean Street. It would have been more fitting to have called Wallace Street, Tolmie Street. Within the last ten years, the State Electricity Commission has taken over the whole area occupied by these two farms, and the Porter family has had to shift further out to their present place in Bolding's Road.

Robert Porter was born in Donegal, North Ireland in 1839, and emigrated to Victoria as a young man of 17 in 1856. First, he was employed in farming and in contracting work at Kyneton. Then he did further work by contract with the Victorian Railways, carting stone ballast for the Sandhurst (Bendigo) line, then under construction. After that, he had ten years of farming in the Malmesbury

area before he came to Morwell in 1874. He had married at Malmesbury in 1863, Margaret McPherson Tolmie, 1844-1886, and Mr. Arthur Porter is their youngest son.

The names of Robert Tolmie and Robert Porter both appear on early documents relating to the history of Morwell, and their properties are shown in early maps. In November 1877, Robert Tolmie's name headed the list in a petition for a school to be established in Morwell village, and he stated that he had two children who would attend.

In January 1877, Robert Porter, knowing that a school was to be opened at Maryvale Ridge, wrote a reference for Miss Zilda Graham, a teacher of a private school which his children were attending - but the appointment eventually went to Miss Zenna McCrorey. It is interesting to note that one of the Porter children was given the name "Zilda" - no doubt a tribute of respect to this early teacher by the Porter family. Zilda Porter married one of the Tulloch boys.

In the first pages of the Commercial Road State School register, the names of the older Porter children are listed as pupils - George Henry (12), Margaret ($10\frac{1}{2}$), Robert ($9\frac{1}{2}$), Alexander (6), and Agnes Grace (5). The oldest son, William, had apparently finished his schooling by then, James and Zilda were too young, and Ernest, Arthur and Fanny were yet unborn. No doubt the older ones had attended Miss Graham's private school, and then the Maryvale Ridge School until it closed in 1879. Indeed, all five of the children shown as pupils of the Commercial Road School in 1879, are recorded as having transferred from the Maryvale Ridge School.

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20.   The Squatters.
20.. The Exploration of Gippsland. The Work of the Squatters.

The honour of discovering Gippsland is usually accorded to Angus McMillan in his journeys 1839-1841, but,in fact, a few squatters had entered the region as early as 1835, and several had established stations at least on the outskirts of the area before McMillan appeared on the scene. No doubt, there was some penetration into Gippsland at this time, unrecorded then and forgotten now.

McMillan's exploring work was more important, better organized, more systematic and indeed covered a wider area, and it is just, therefore, that we should accept him as the greatest of the Gippsland explorers.

The pattern of settlement and exploration as seen in Gippsland is similar to that which occurred in many other parts of Australia. Squatters pushed out further and further from the fringe of the known into the unknown parts, until at last, the Government or some private body organized exploration work.

Gippsland was broached from the north-east - from the squatting runs just beyond the head-waters of the Murray and the Snowy Rivers. Since the arrival of the First Fleet at Port Jackson in 1788, and more particularly since Wentworth, Blaxland and Lawson crossed the Blue Mountains in 1813 (exactly 150 years ago), the area of settlement had gradually expanded from that point in all directions. By the early 1830's, cattle and sheep stations had been established on the Monaro (or Maneroo) Plains. Records exist of the following individuals or groups who crossed what is now the border of New South Wales and Victoria, before McMillan:

1. In 1835, George McKillop, James McFarlane, and Livingstone reached Omeo,which they called Strathdownie. The name of Livingstone was given to the creek on which Omeo is situated, and a near-by peak was called McFarlane's Lookout.

2. In 1838, Edward Bayliss discovered good pasture land at Buchan near the Snowy River, and he and John Rhodes Wilkinson took up adjoining runs there.

3. In 1838, Walter Mitchell, a nephew of James McFarlane, reached the Gippsland Lakes, returned to Omeo, and then penetrated as far as Currawong.

4. In 1838, Andrew Hutton of Nancutta Station, east of the Genoa River, with five men to help him, drove 500 head of cattle to Lakes Entrance, but hostile blacks forced him to abandon them there.

5. In 1839, when McMillan reached Omeo, he found that runs had been established there already by Messrs Pendergast, McFarlane and Hyland.

6. Later that year (1839), McMillan established a station at Ensay on the Tambo River and south of Omeo, but a man named Edmund Buckley had already settled ten miles further up the river. This man was the step-father of Patrick Coady, more generally known as Patrick Coady-Buckley, who at one time held Maryvale Station (1856-1872).

21. The Exploration of Gippsland...Angus McMillan, 1810-1865.

Angus McMillan, son of a Scottish farmer, was born in the Isle of Skye in 1810, and emigrated in 1837, arriving in Sydney, in January 1838. Within the next four years, he was to do very valuable exploring work in Gippsland and to earn the reputation of being the greatest of the Gippsland explorers.

He had arrived in Australia with letters of introduction to Captain Lachlan Macalister, who was also a native of Skye, and who was, at this time, one of the squatters of New South Wales. He made McMillan overseer of his cattle station at Monaro. It was because of the severe drought in 1838-39, and at the instigation of Macalister that McMillan began looking for cattle pastures in the southern tablelands.

Later, McMillan became a station-owner in his own right, settling at Bushy Park near Stratford. He died at Iguana Creek 18/5/1865 as the result of an accident.

McMillan was a good leader and a popular citizen. He had great natural courage and ability, was deeply religious and kindly, and befriended and protected the aborigines. It was from the blacks of Monaro that he learned of the well-watered pasture lands of Gippsland.

In 1856, a public dinner was given in his honour at Port Albert, and his portrait in oils, financed by public subscription, may still be seen in the council-chamber at Yarram. He was the first representative of South Gippsland in the Legislative Assembly of Victoria, (1858), but he had no love for political life, and withdrew from Parliament in 1860.

In 1864, he was requested by the Government to open up tracks from the Crooked River, near Dargo, to Omeo and Harrietville, and it was while he was completing that work that he met with the accident that brought about his death in 1865. His pack-horse slipped and fell on him as they were struggling up a steep slope. He tried to reach Sale to get medical attention but died at Iguana Creek on his way there.

He began the first of his series of journeys in May, 1839, with one aboriginal, Jimmie Gibber, chief of the Monaro Tribe, as his sole companion. In the vicinity of Buchan, he gained an extensive view of the East Gippsland area from the top of a mountain he named Mt. McLeod (now called The Haystack). But Jimmie Gibber was afraid of the "warrigal blacks" of this area, and McMillan was forced to return to Omeo, where stations had already been established (somewhat to McMillan's surprise). The whole journey had taken less than a fortnight.

Later that year, in September 1839, McMillan established an outstation for Mr. Macalister at Numbla Mungee (or Ensay) on the Tambo River. It was from Ensay, which he could now use as an advance base, that McMillan organized his more important journeys of 1840 and 1841 into the heart of Gippsland and to Port Albert.

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22. The Exploration of Gippsland. McMillan's Journeys 1840, and 1841.

McMillan's explorations can be conveniently divided into three sections, the first of which led to the setting up of the base station at Ensay, where he could stay, poised for an attack on Gippsland proper. The second stage was his journey into the heart of Gippsland, when he reached beyond Sale, and the final or third stage was his discovery of a satisfactory port on the Gippsland coast at Port Albert. None of this work was easy; success was gained only after several attempts.

The second stage began in the last week of 1839, when McMillan set out with Messrs Matthew Macalister and Cameron, and a stockman named Edward Bath to explore the plain country he had seen, some months earlier, from the top of Mt. McLeod, but the loss of a packhorse in an accident forced them to return. When the expedition began again, in January 1840, two black boys were added to the party - Cobban Johnny (or Big Johnny), and Boy Friday. After passing through some rugged country in the Upper Tambo region, they came to flatter land near Bruthen, and followed the Tambo River down to the Gippsland Lakes, which they reached on the 16th. January 1840. Turning westwards, they crossed, in turn, the Nicholson River, Mitchell River, and Avon River, and reached the Macalister River, which they were unable to cross. They followed the Macalister downstream past its junction with the Thomson River to the Latrobe River, close to the present town of Sale. It must have been a wet season, for at this point, the explorers found themselves blocked by an immense morass and by floods. They were forced to return to their base at Ensay, which they reached on the 31st. January, 1840, all their food supplies having been exhausted two days earlier. McMillan then returned to Monaro to report to Lachlan Macalister, who then advised him to look for a port on the Gippsland coast.

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The third stage, the search for a suitable port, began in July 1840. McMillan's party consisted of Lieutenant Ross of the Royal Navy, Matthew Macalister, Edward Bath, John McLaren and a black boy. They were forced to turn back when their way was barred by floods. In their second attempt they reached the hill called Tom's Cap and then were unable to proceed further because of the denseness of the scrub. Finally, with T. Macalister, four stockmen, and a black boy, McMillan forced his way through the scrub to reach Port Albert, on the 14th February 1841. By a strange coincidence, another party, who had come from Melbourne by sea, were in the same area with the same object. This second group landed at Port Albert about a fortnight after McMillan. Thus, Port Albert was discovered twice in the month of February 1841.

In May of that year, McMillan's bullock driver, James Lawrence, drove a dray all the way from Sydney to Port Albert.

The way was now open for squatters to surge into Gippsland. There was ample fertile land, and a port from which to export their cattle.

23. The Exploration of Gippsland. Paul Edmund de Strzelecki,1797-1873.

Strzelecki is the second greatest of the Gippsland explorers, but whereas McMillan was looking for pastures and was therefore reticent about his discoveries lest rival squatters jumped his claims, Strzelecki was looking for honour and glory, as well as for scientific discoveries, and made his exploits known immediately.

Strzelecki was born in Poland of parents who were poor but of good family. However, he had no claim at all to the title of "Count" which he used for the greater part of his life. He was an intelligent man, well educated, interested in the sciences of mineralogy and geology, and he was a popular figure in society. Little is known of his early life, except that he left Poland for personal reasons. (He had attempted, unsuccessfully, to elope with his girl friend). He lived for a time in Russia and then in North America, South America and New Zealand, before coming to Australia,1839-1843, and then made England his home for the rest of his life.

In the United Kingdom, he continued to distinguish himself in public service, notably as a most efficient officer of the Food Relief Organization during the "hungry forties" in Ireland, when two million Irishmen died through the failure of the potato crop in successive years. For this work and for other services, he received several honours, including a knighthood, so that at last, the legitimate title of "Sir" replaced the fictitious one of "Count".

In Australia, he is remembered as one of the early discoverers of gold, and for his exploring work, mainly in Gippsland, but also in Tasmania, and in the Bass Strait Islands.It was he also who climbed and named our highest mountain, Mt. Kosciusko, so named after a Polish national hero.

Strzelecki joined an expedition organized by James Macarthur of "The Vinyard", Parramatta, and was quickly acknowledged as the leader, which,in fact, he was in every way. Even on the physical side, his great strength enabled him to bear the privations of a terrible journey much better than his colleagues could, and he encouraged, helped and protected them. The other members of the party were Macarthur himself, James Riley, who was only 19 years old, a fine, aboriginal character called Charlie Tarra, and Strzelecki's personal servant.

Before beginning the journey proper, Strzelecki climbed and named Mt. Kosciusko. This was on the 7th. February 1840.

From Walwa on the Murray, the party travelled by way of Cudgewa Creek, Benambra, Mt. Gibbo, Mitta Mitta River and Lake Omeo to the Tambo River and McMillan's Ensay Station, which they reached 27/3/1840. Matthew Macalister directed them along McMillan's track to the Latrobe River. The party headed for Corner Inlet, but the difficulties of the Jeeralang Mountains forced them to abandon their horses and baggage, to reduce rations drastically, and to make for Westernport instead, which they reached utterly exhausted on the 12th May 1840. At times they had been unable to advance more than two miles a day.

24. Mapping the Gippsland Coast.

Captain Cook may be given the honour of first sighting the Gippsland coast, since, on the 20th April 1770, he landed at Point Hicks (now identified as Cape Everard) on the eastern tip of Gippsland.

The next incident is connected with the beaching of a leaking ship, the "Sydney Cove" at Preservation Island in the Furneaux Group off the north-east corner of Tasmania. A party,which included Hugh Thompson and W. Clarke, attempted to reach Sydney in the ship's boat, but the boat capsized near Cape

Everard. The party scrambled ashore 15/3/1797 and succeeded, with infinite difficulty, in walking to Sydney, along the coast.

For nearly 30 years after Cook, and for ten years after the first settlement in Sydney, no attempt was made to explore the Gippsland coast line. Indeed, it was thought that Tasmania was part of the mainland, and that there was no separating strait, no coast-line to explore.

The first white men to discover Bass Strait may have been fourteen escaped convicts. They stole a boat at Sydney and sailed south with the idea of finding the beached "Sydney Cove", of repairing the ship, and then, sailing away to European civilization. They landed on an island near Wilson's Promontory. When the food supplies began to run out, seven of the fourteen slipped away in the boat with the remaining provisions, and abandoned their companions. Bass discovered the stranded convicts in January 1798, took two of them on board his whaleboat, and set the other five on the mainland with provisions to help them make their way back to Sydney, overland. This little group was never heard of again.

Bass did more than any other man to chart the Gippsland coast. On that voyage of 1797-1798, he passed Cape Howe on the 20th. December 1797, continued westward along the coast, sighted and named Wilson's Promontory 2/1/1798, discovered and explored Western Port 5/1/1798, and on the return journey, entered and named Corner Inlet. He made several other landings on the coast on his way back to Sydney.

In December 1898, Bass and Flinders definitely proved the existence of Bass Strait by sailing along the north coast of Tasmania, reaching the western extremity of that coast 9/12/1898.

In December 1800, Lieutenant James Grant became the first man to take his ship through Bass Strait from west to east. He left from England in March 1800, and passed through Bass Strait in December, naming some of the islands in the vicinity of Wilson's Promontory.

Lieutenant Murray sailed from Sydney 12/11/1801, entered Western Port 14/2/1802, and continued further west to gain the honour of discovering and exploring Port Phillip Bay.

A Frenchman, Emanuel Hamelin, who was in charge of the second ship of Baudin's expedition, became separated from his leader's ship, and he also did some survey work in Western Port in 1802.

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25. The Wreck of the "Clonmel".

Tasmania was first settled in 1802, and no doubt, from then on there was much activity in Bass Strait and more frequent contacts with the Gippsland coast.

After Melbourne was founded 1835, fairly frequent sea communication was established between Sydney and Melbourne. It was a time when disasters at sea were much more frequent than now. For example, in 1838, the ship "Sarah", on its way from Sydney to Melbourne, disappeared without trace. There was a story current in the 1840's that a white woman was held in captivity by the blacks. It is possible that some woman did survive from the "Sarah" and was picked up by a Gippsland tribe. Among those lost in the "Sarah" were Henry Howey, his wife, family and servants. This is the man who had bought, in 1837, a block of land now in the very heart of Melbourne, for 120 pounds, and whose name is still used to designate the building there - Howey Court.

Shipping is safer now, partly because metal hulls are stronger than wooden ones, partly because ships are bigger, but mainly because engine power gives a captain greater control over the elements.

On the 30th December 1840, the mail-boat "Clonmel" set out from Sydney on her second voyage to Melbourne. It is said that the captain thought that Wilson's Promontory was an island, and was looking for a passage between it and the mainland. In view of the mapping work done by Bass and others, this is scarcely credible. At all events, the ship did keep too close to shore and was wrecked in the shallow waters of Corner Inlet 2/1/1841. No lives were lost and all on board were landed safely at Snake Island. From there, six men with D.C. Simpson in charge, sailed the boat to Melbourne, 200 miles away, to seek help. Two relief ships were sent to bring the passengers and mail to Melbourne.

About this time, there was much interest in Melbourne in the story Strzelecki had to tell of his Gippsland journey in 1840, and the interest was heightened by the Clonmel incident. A group of squatters - Messrs Hawdon, Orr, Rankin, McLeod, W.A. Brodribb, Kinghorne, Kirsop and Dr. Stewart - formed "The Gippsland Company" with the express purpose of establishing stations here. They chartered the vessel "Singapore" and left for Corner Inlet 6/2/1841. For a fortnight they probed the coast without finding a suitable landing place.

At last, using their long-boat and two smaller boats from the "Clonmel", they discovered a navigable channel leading to two rivers, which they named Albert, after the Prince Consort, and the Tarra, after their valued aboriginal companion, Charlie Tarra.

They unloaded their horses and stores, built a small cottage, called their settlement Port Albert, and divided their party into three. Stewart, Orr and Rankin returned to Melbourne in the "Singapore"; an overseer (McFarlane) and three men were left at Port Albert to protect their property and claims; and the remaining five squatters with Charlie Tarra explored the country a little more, and then returned overland to Melbourne. Charlie Tarra led the party along a route approximating to the present Princes Highway, a track he had already traversed a few months earlier – in late 1840 – when he and Riley returned into Gippsland to look for the horses abandoned by their Strzelecki party in the Jeeralang Ranges. This time, they crossed the Morwell River, close to the present site of Morwell, and they named it the Kirsopp River, after one of the five squatters in the group.

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26.   Minor Explorations, 1840 and 1841.

Hard on the heels of Angus McMillan and Strzelecki came a number of squatters, who, in their search for good, new pastures, were necessarily and incidentally, carrying out further exploration work. Before giving the details of some of these excursions, let us list them in order of occurrence. They were:
1. June to August,1840..James Riley, John Rutledge and Charlie Tarra.
2. July, 1840 .. Edward Bell, Aleck Hunter, Archibald Jamieson,and the
                        black boy, Pigeon.
3. February to May,1841..W.A. Brodribb, Kinghorne, Kirsop, McLeod, McFarlane,
                        and Charlie Tarra.
4. May to June,1841..A.E. Brodribb, Hobson and Barker.

Group 1.   In June 1840, James Riley, one of Strzelecki's party, together with John Rutledge and Charlie Tarra, left Melbourne to search for the four horses abandoned by Strzelecki in the Jeeralang Ranges, two months earlier. They followed a route, roughly approximating to the present highway, found only one of the horses alive, and returned on their tracks to Melbourne. This small group may be said to have pioneered the present Princes Highway.

Group 2.   In July 1840, Edward Bell with Aleck Hunter, Archibald Jamieson, and the black boy Pigeon, started for Gippsland from the headwaters of the Goulburn River. Travelling through very difficult country for eighteen days, the party reached the upper courses of the Latrobe River. From there, Hunter and Jamieson pushed on to reach promising plain country, before the whole party returned over the ranges to the Goulburn.

Group 3.   The Gippsland Comany of squatters who had discovered Port Albert (a fortnight after Angus McMillan) in February 1841, divided into three parties. Some returned to Melbourne in the chartered boat "Singapore" (to lessen the hire charges for the ship); four men remained at Port Albert to protect their interests; and the third group set out to explore the country further, before returning overland to Melbourne. This group consisted of five squatters – Messrs Kirsopp, William Adams Brodribb, Alexander Kinghorne, Norman McLeod, Malcolm McFarlane, and the black fellow, Charlie Tarra. They penetrated to the Gippsland Lakes, and then to the Brodribb River, before turning back and heading for Melbourne. Travelling along the north bank of the Latrobe River, they were in the vicinity of Traralgon on the 2nd April,1840. They named the next river the Kinghorne (now, the Tyers River), crossed the Latrobe in the vicinity of the present town of Morwell, gave the name of Kirsopp to the river now called the Morwell River, and after great difficulties reached Melbourne.

Group 4.   In May 1841, Albert Eugene Brodribb, Edward William Hobson, and Dr. Edward Barker, with four black boys, travelled from Mornington Peninsular to Port Albert along the Latrobe Valley route, and returned through South Gippsland.

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27.   W. Odell Raymond, 1842.

The dry seasons in New South Wales which had turned Angus McMillan's attention to the land to the south,in 1838, continued until 1842, for we find the same pressure of drought forcing Mr. Raymond of Wellington Station, to send his son, W. O. Raymond, with a flock of sheep, to look for pastures in Gippsland. After a journey of four months, he reached the Mitchell River in June 1842. Other squatters mentioned by Raymond as travelling into Gippsland at this time,

or already there, were A. E. Brodribb, Messrs Curlewis, Loughnan, Taylor, F. Jones, Macalister, McFarlane, Pearson, Cunningham, Reeve, and Dr.Arbuckle.

Raymond is of particular interest because of the information he has left us in a letter written at this time. He reported that there were, in Gippsland in 1842, 7000 cattle, 100 horses, 35,000 sheep, 177 men, 24 women, and 17 children.

In August 1842, Raymond, A. E. Brodribb, Pearson and a black boy set out for Melbourne by way of Westernport. Here is his account of the journey:

"We took with us ten days' provisions and two pack-horses, but,owing to the denseness of the scrub, we found it impossible to bring the horses further than the first day's journey of about 14 miles. Consequently, we shouldered our packs (blessing the informer who said this was an eligible route) and with great difficulty, made about four miles that day.

For fourteen days, during ten of which it rained without ceasing, we could never exceed eight miles in one day. On the fifteenth day, we got into lower and less broken country, the scrub continuing, and with water up to our knees. Our provisions, with the exception of a little flour and tea, were all exhausted. We managed to exist on what the blackfellow could get in the shape of two pheasants (lyre-birds?), five monkeys (koalas?) and a parrot. In this way we lived for eight days, at times so exhausted that when we walked a mile or two, we were quite done up, suffering severely from the cuts we got walking through the scrub, our clothes and our boots being almost completely torn off us. It was to our great joy, on the eighteenth day, that we made Western Port, where we were picked up by Mr. Surveyor Smith, who is surveying the coast, and who kindly conveyed us in his boat to Mr. Jamieson's, and thence to Mr. Menton's, from where we made Melbourne, after a journey on foot of 22 days."

The great explorers blazed a few,direct trails through Gippsland. The squatters and settlers who came after them filled in the details of the geography of the area, by probing into the unknown territory beside these main tracks, making up at last,the complete picture. There must have been other epics like Raymond's journey, but unrecorded then,they are unidentifiable now.

28.   Sealers and Whalers and Squatters.

Although the Port Albert area,from 1841, became the site of the first townships in Gippsland (Port Albert, Alberton and Tarraville) some settlements had been established before that year, both in Gippsland proper and on the fringes of Gippsland. They were squatting stations. This was the usual sequence in the pastoral areas of Australia – first a few squatting stations, and then the villages. There were stations at Omeo in the east and at Bass River in the west as early as 1835, and Angus McMillan had established Ensay, for his employer,Lachlan Macalister,in 1839, and Bushy Park on the Avon River for himself in 1840.

Long before that time, the coast of Gippsland had accommodated quite a number of temporary settlers or visitors, who were engaged in sealing and whaling, and who set up depots along the coast line in the more sheltered spots like Western Port Bay and Corner Inlet.

The sealers and whalers built themselves temporary huts or villages of huts, erected boiling-down works, and even planted small crops of wheat and maize. Similar activities were taking place along the coast,west of Port Phillip Bay, – at Port Fairy, Warrnambool and Portland. Indeed, the Dutton family claim that some of its members preceded the Hentys at Portland, and no doubt they did, but in the same temporary way that others were doing all along Victoria's coast. Sealers operated in Bass Strait from 1800 onwards.

By 1830,the ruthless slaughter had practically exterminated the seals along our coasts, and ended the sealing industry there, but the hunting of whales went on. Temporary whaling stations extended along the coast line from Western Port Bay to Mallacoota and Gabo Island.

The earliest station in West Gippsland was established by Samuel Anderson at Bass River,in 1835, where he planted and harvested wheat in 1836. This man discovered Anderson's Inlet, the Tarwin River, and the outcrop of coal at Cape Patterson. He was joined in his squatting ventures by his brothers, Dr. Hugh Anderson in 1837, and Captain Thomas Anderson in 1844.

However, it was from the settlements in the east of Gippsland that Morwell was first reached. The stations established there are given in the following year-by-year list:

1835..James McFarlane at Omeo B, or Mt. Pleasant.
1837..John Pendergast at Omeo B.
        Edward Buckley at Tongiomungie.

    1838..T. M. Moore at Tibbutt.

        John McLoughlan at Dellickmore.

        Edward Bayliss at Gelantipy; J.R.Wilkinson at Buchan.

    1839..Patrick Coady Buckley at Tongiomungie and Ensay.

        Angus McMillan at Ensay (for Captain Lachlan Macalister).

        Messrs Pendergast, McFarlane and Hyland at Omeo.

    1840..Messrs Harvey and Howden at Gelantipy and Buchan, respectively.

        Angus McMillan at Bushy Park.

29.　Squatters, 1841-1844.

    After the journeys of McMillan and Strzelecki, and after the discovery of Port Albert, the most attractive part of Gippsland for those wanting to establish squatting stations, was the section between Port Albert and the Gippsland lakes. The most imortant road was the track to Flooding Creek (Sale). When, a little later, a practicable route overland from this area to Melbourne was found, the track from Port Albert to Rosedale was developed, making a triangle of main tracks – Port Albert to Sale; Port Albert to Rosedale; and Sale to Rosedale. Rosedale became the third most important township, after Port Albert, the gateway into Gippsland, and Sale, the "heart" of the pastoral area.
    The stations that were established between 1841 and 1844, and the men who established them were:-

    1841..Edward C. Crooke at Hinnomungie; Helen Pearson and her son, William
        Pearson at Kilmany Park;
        James McFarlane at Heyfield; Francis Desailly at Fulham;
        William Bradley at Kirkenong.
    1842..W. Odell Raymond at Strathfieldsaye; Ben Boyd at Suggan Buggan;
        George and Walter Lewis at Holey Plains.
        George Lewis at The Heart (Sale)(managed by Mr. McLennan).
        John King (a grandson of Governor King) at Fulham.
        Fred Jones at Lucknow; J. M. Loughnan at Lindenow.
        John Reeve at Snake Ridge (which included the site of Rosedale)
        Messrs Hughes and McIntyre at Gelantipy.
    1843..John Foster at the Heart; John Campbell Fraser at Glencoe.
        Captain Lachlan Macalister at Clydebank and Marley Point.
        John Stevenson at Wangrabelle (on the Upper Genoa River).
        E. W. Bayliss at Merton; W. Scott at Erinvale.
        Patrick Coady Buckley at Coadyvale.
        Archibald McLeod and his son, John E. McLeod at Ensay.
    1844..Robert Thomson, R. Charles and B.A.Cunninghame at Clydebank.
        Lieutenant D.Parry-Okeden at Old Rosedale; John King at Dutson.
        James Rentoull at Shallow Inlet and at Loy Yang.
        David Jones at Deighton No.1, and T.Blackburn at Deighton No.2.
        Octavius B.Sparkes at Swan Reach; Charles Lucas at Carthead.
        P.C. Buckley at Tarra Creek; Andrew Ewing at Lake Tyers.
        Mashfield Mason at The Meadows and at Woodside.
        Captain L. Macalister; and Dr. Arbuckle at Tinambra.
        Archibald McLeod and John McLeod (son) at Bairnsdale.
        William Bennett and Albert Eugene Brodribb at Hazelwood.
        E. W.Hobson at Traralgon.

30.　Traralgon and the Hobson Family.

    It was Edward William Hobson who, in February 1844 took up the Traralgon Cattle Run for his brother, Dr. Edmund Hobson, and became, in a sense, a host for other squatters like Hugh Reoch, the Meyrick brothers, Alfred and Maurice, and their cousin, Henry Meyrick, and Brodribb and Bennett, who were interested in getting land in Gippsland.
    The Hobson family is quite important in our Australian history. Edward Hobson and his brother Edmund were both born at Paramatta, N.S.W. but were brought up in Tasmania. A cousin of their father was Captain William Hobson, who was at one time Captain of the "Rattlesnake" and did some surveying work in Port Phillip Bay. Hobson's Bay takes its name from him. Later he was the first Governor of New Zealand.
    The family held cattle stations at Kangerong, near Arthur's Seat; at Tootgarook, between Rye and Port Nepean; and further east, at Tarwin Meadows, near Inverloch. The present town of Rosebud is named after the family schooner, which was wrecked in 1840, in that vicinity.

It was from his station bases in the Mornington Peninsular that Edward Hobson made his incursions into Gippsland. With Dr. Barker, A.E. Brodribb, and four aboriginals, he tried to find a practicable cattle route from Port Phillip Bay to Port Albert. They found the North Gippsland terrain difficult and unsuitable, but their return route along the coast seemed to be more promising. Indeed, Hobson (with others) used this southern track to bring his animals in to Traralgon Station in 1844, but on the journey he lost 240 cattle and two horses. Hobson built for himself a little cottage on the eastern bank of Traralgon Creek, near its junction with the Latrobe River. Rev. Francis Hales visited Hobson there in 1848, and Bishop and Mrs. Perry stayed there, for a few days in 1849.

Edward Hobson married his cousin,Marie Napper, in 1846, and she became the first woman to live at Trralgon. Two children were born - Edward in 1847, and Margaret, who lived only 11 weeks, in December, 1848.

When a regular track to Melbourne was established, Hobson's Bridge, which was the first name for Traralgon (the township) became an obvious stopping place. Presumably it was the Hobsons who gave the cattle run, and therefore, the township, the name of Traralgon, but we do not really know. Mr. W. J. Cuthill who is the authority on the history of Traralgon, says the name is a combination of "tarra" and "algon" meaning "The River of Little Fish".

Edward Hobson left Traralgon in 1850. He was the manager of the station, not the owner, who was his brother, Dr. Edmund Hobson. Dr. Hobson died in 1848, aged 33 years, greatly mourned by the people of Melbourne, where he had helped to establish the Melbourne Hospital.

In 1853, Traralgon East, and West, were taken over by Turnbull and Purve

31. Charles James Tyers, 1806-1870.

Charles James Tyers, in his capacity as Commissioner of Crown Lands for Gippsland, played an important part in the story of the early days of this part of Victoria. He received the appointment in 1843. From then on, land-seekers had to apply to him for their runs.

Tyers was born in London in 1806, was educated at Christ's Hospital School - the famous school for poor but promising boys - and joined the Royal Navy in 1828. He came to this country in 1837 on board H.M.S. Alligator, which spent two years on a survey of the north coast. In 1839, he left the Navy to join the colonial service. One of his first tasks was to determine exactly the line of the 141st. meridian of longitude, the boundary between Victoria and South Australia. He did some survey work in the Portland district, laid out part of the town of Portland, and in 1842 was appointed Commissioner of Lands for the Portland Bay district. The next year 1843, he was transferred to the Gippsland district, where the rush of squatters had made some sort of control urgently necessary. Later, he was appointed Resident Manager at Port Albert, the base from which he performed his Gippsland work. He retired in 1867, and died in Melbourne in 1870. In Gippsland, there is a small township, a river, and a lake named after him.

His career in Gippsland began with his difficulties in reaching Port Albert in 1843. With his police party, some aboriginals and some white men, he first tried the North Gippsland route but was barred by floods. Having learnt of the journey that Bell, Hunter and Jamieson had made to Gippsland from the vicinity of Mansfield, he tried that route, but could not find a way over the mountains, and lost his horses. For his third attempt, he took the South Gippsland route, but was again faced with impassable floods. Finally, he was forced to go by sea, and landed at Port Albert in January 1844.

He set to work immediately to assert the control of authority and to inspect the district. In February 1844, he was at John Reeve's station at Snake Ridge (Rosedale), where Edward Hobson met him and obtained the Traralgon Run. A few months later, A.E. Brodribb and Bennett secured Hazelwood, and the next year, Thomas Gorringe got Maryvale.

The police party that Tyers had left behind in Melbourne, at last got through along the South Gippsland track, closely followed by Edward Hobson, Hugh Reoch and Brodribb and Bennett, with some herds of cattle. In November 1845, a party of the Black Police blazed a trail from Hobson's Bridge to Dandenong. This cut the journey down to three days.

In March 1847, Tyers changed the route slightly to keep south of the Latrobe River, and built bridges over the streams. In parts it was only a bridle track, but eventually it was improved to become,in 1865, the famous Coach Road.

The first official record of the name"Morwell" occurs in Tyers' journal, where he wrote the name "Morewill River" in February 1844. We think it was Tyers who named the Morwell River, after the Morwell Rocks, Tamar River, England.

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32. The Names of Places.

The naming of places in Gippsland occurred over three distinct periods
of time. The coast line was known long before there was any penetration inland,
and hence, some of the names of the coastal features belong to the earliest
group of names - to the period beginning with Captain Cook in 1770.

The second period is that of the explorers or exploring squatters, who
made their way into Gippsland from New South Wales, from Port Albert on the
coast, from Melbourne, and from the headwaters of the Goulburn, and who named
the mountains, the rivers and the lakes.

The final period is that of settlement and the establishing of town-
ships, like Sale and Rosedale, overlapping to some extent the period of
exploration.

Strzelecki named Gippsland after Sir George Gipps, Governor of New
South Wales, 1838-1846, unaware,perhaps, that McMillan had already called the
area "Caledonia Australis (or South Scotland). Gippsland is the happier name,
and that is probably the reason why it was retained.

Captain Cook and the men of the"Endeavour" were the first men
to sight the coast of Gippsland. Point Hicks, now called Cape Everard, was
sighted by Lieutenant Zachary Hicks, 20th. April, 1770.Other points named by
Cook were Ram Head, and the most easterly point of land in Victoria, Cape Howe,
so named after Richard Howe, first Earl of Howe, and Treasurer of the Navy.

Bass was the next navigator in the area, and he followed the coast
along as far as Western Port Bay,which he discovered and named in January,1798.
The name was given for an obvious reason - it was the most westerly point
that had been reached along the coast up till that time. Bass had named the
promontory, "Furneaux Land" thinking it was a part of the group of islands
discovered by the Frenchman, Furneaux, but,after his return to Sydney, he and
Flinders suggested to Governor Hunter that it should be called "Wilson's
Promontory", after a merchant friend of theirs in London. It was Flinders
who first used the name "Corner Inlet".

The first ship to sail through Bass Strait from west to east was the
"Lady Nelson", in December 1800, under the command of Lieutenant Grant.
Grant made a running survey of the coast, naming Cape Bridgewater, Cape Nelson,
Cape Liptrap, Cape Otway, and Portland Bay, and most of the islands in the
vicinity of Wilson's Promontory. In the same vessel ("Lady Nelson")
Lieutenant Murray, with his first mate, Lieutenant Bowen, discovered and
entered Port Phillip Bay, 14th. March, 1802.

No doubt, the sealers and whalers who operated along the Victorian
coast from 1898 onwards, named some of the places on which they landed.

33. The Names of Mountains, Rivers and Lakes.

The second group of names, those given mainly by the early explorers,
date from 1835. In the following list, the date of the naming is given, when
known, together with the explorer responsible, with the addition of any other
information of interest:-

Livingstone Creek, and Mt. Livingston (1835 - McKillop). McKillop was the
    leader of a three-man party, the other two being Livingstone and McFarlane.
McFarlane's Lookour. (1835- McKillop)
Mt. McLeod (1839 - McMillan). It was named after McMillan's uncle, General
    McLeod, a famous soldier. It is now called The Haystack.
Lake Victoria (1840 - McMillan). Named after the young Queen Victoria.
Nicholson River (1840 - McMillan). Named after Sir Charles Nicholson, Speaker
                    of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly.
Mitchell River (1840 - McMillan). Named after Sir Thomas Mitchell, explorer
                    and Surveyor-General of New South Wales.
Clifton Morass (1840 - McMillan). Named after Clifton Station, N.S.W. held by
                    McMillan's employer, Lachlan Macalister - or after
                    McMillan's horse, also called Clifton.
Avon River (1840 - McMillan). Named after a river in Scotland. There are
            several Avon Rivers in the United Kingdom and in Europe. It is said
            that "avon" is the Celtic word for"river".
Mt. Wellington (1840 - McMillan). Named after the Duke of Wellington.
Macalister River (1840 - McMillan). Named after Lachlan Macalister.
Brodribb River (1841 - W.A. Brodribb).
Thomson River (1840 - McMillan). Possibly after Sir Edward Deas Thomson,
        Colonial Secretary of New South Wales.

Bruthen Creek and Bruthen (1840 - McMillan). An aboriginal word suggested by
Cobban Johnny (Big Johnny), one of McMillan's guides.
Latrobe River (1840 - Strzelecki). Named after Charles Joseph La Trobe,
Superintendent of the Port Phillip District 1839-1851, and Lieutenant-
Governor of Victoria 1851-1854.
Perry River (1840 - Strzelecki). Named after the Assistant Surveyor-General.
Lake King (1840- Strzelecki). Named after Admiral Philip Parker King, a son of
Governor King, and Australia's first admiral.
Lake Wellington. Named after the Duke of Wellington.
Tyers, Tyers River, Lake Tyers. Named after C.J. Tyers, Commissioner of Lands.
Mt. Angus and Mt. Ewen. Named after the two sons of Angus McMillan.
Gippsland (1840- Strzelecki). McMillan had named the area Caledonia Australis,
but Strzelecki suggested Gipps Land after Governor Gipps.

34. The Names of Mountains, Rivers and Lakes.

As a general rule, the early squatters named their stations after places
in their home lands, or after people, or they used aboriginal descriptive names.
Sometimes, the name of the station eventually became that of the township which
grew up there.

Strathfieldsaye is an interesting example of naming. This station was
taken up by Odell Raymond in 1842. It was called Strathfieldsaye, after the
Duke of Wellington's estate in England. This was a particularly suitable name
for a station which bordered on Lake Wellington, which had been so called after
the great Iron Duke. Perhaps some member of the Raymond family had served under
the command of Wellington in the Napoleonic War.

Rosedale township lies in the area of the old Snake Ridge Station, not
Rosedale Station. But Rosedale is a prettier name than Snake Ridge, and besides,
the township of Rosedale is not on a ridge. David Parry-Okeden, who occupied
Rosedale Station, adjoining Snake Ridge, had married Rose Dutton, and it is after
her that Rosedale Station, and therefore Rosedale township, are named.

Bairnsdale is a corruption of Berinsdale, which is the name Archibald
McLeod gave to his station which he occupied in 1844. It is named after the
Berinsdale estate of the McLeod family in the Isle of Skye, Scotland.

Kilmany Park, Heyfield, Fulham, Glencoe, Clydebank and Merton were all
named after places in the United Kingdom.

Loy Yang (pronounced "Low Yang"), occupied in 1844 by James Rintoull, is
an aboriginal word meaning "big eel". Apparently the conger eel, or large variety
of eel, was prevalent in Gippsland streams in those early days.

Coady Vale was named by Patrick Coady Buckley after his real surname,
Buckley being the name of his step-father.

Sale, originally known as Flooding Creek, took its new name at the time of
the first land-auction there in 1851. However, it was not called Sale because of
the auction, but in honour of General Sir Robert Henry Sale, the hero of the
Battle of Jellalabad in Afghanistan, who was mortally wounded in 1845, at the
Battle of Moodkee.

Packenham is another town which took its name from a war hero. Colonel
Pakenham was killed in the Crimean War, 1854-1856, about the time the Gippsland
town of Pakenham originated. Packenham is also a village in Suffolk, England.

Trafalgar and Waterloo were obviously named after the sea battle of
Trafalgar (1805), and the land battle of Waterloo (1815) but perhaps not directly
so. They probably received these names when the railway came through, and the
new stations may have been named after the two London stations. Waterloo was
later changed to Yarragon.

Port Albert, Alberton and Tarraville, Gippsland's first townships (1841)
took their names from the two rivers, the Albert named after Prince Albert,
Queen Victoria's consort, and the Tarra, named after Charlie Tarra, the black
man who proved invaluable to several exploring parties.

Warrigal is an aboriginal word meaning "wild".

Drouin. It is said that this town is named after a Frenchman of that name,
who discovered a new process of extracting gold from its ore.

Maffra is said to have been named after a small town, Mafra, in Portugal,
where Wellington quartered his troops for some months while preparing for his
successful Peninsular Campaign in 1912, against Napoleon's forces. But it is
thought that the name did not come directly from the Portuguese township, but
from a squatting station or an outpost of a squatting station in N.S.W.

Boolarra. Aboriginal for "plenty".

Callignee. Named by the first settlers after a place in Ireland.

Le Roy. is said to be named after a local farmer's son, Roy Lee, reversed.

35. Morwell and District Names.

Hazelwood Station 1844, and Maryvale Station 1845, were the first stations occupied in the Morwell area. It is only recently that the origin of these names has been discovered.

The squatter partners at Hazelwood were Albert Eugene Brodribb and his brother-in-law, William Bennett, the husband of Lavinia Ann Zenobia Hasell Brodribb. Mrs. F. E. Austin of Mirboo East, a descendent of the Brodribbs, has a printed copy of the Brodribb family tree, going back for several centuries. In this record, the full name of Mrs. Bennett is given, as shown above. It seems obvious that William Bennett named the station after his wife, using her fourth name Hasell, and, indeed, in the early records, Hazelwood is spelt Hasellwood.

Thomas Gorringe was a single man when he first took up Maryvale Station in 1845. C. I. Du Ve who wrote an interesting little history of Rosedale about 1910 states quite categorically that Hazelwood was named after Mrs. Bennett and Maryvale after her eldest daughter Mary, the first two white women to live in the Morwell area.

Morwell took its name from the Morwell River, which in turn took its name from the Morwell Rocks in the Tamar River, England, or from the river port Morwellham, or from the old Morwell Abbey, whose old manorial estate along the Tamar River, Devon included both the Morwell Rocks and Morwellham. C. J. Tyers was the first to use the name Morwell River, which he did in his first official report, February 1844, a month after taking up his position as Commissioner of Lands for Gippsland. Probably something about the Morwell River reminded him of the Morwell Rocks of the Tamar River in Devon.

Driffield was the name given by Samuel Vary to the pre-emptive section of the old Merton Rush Station, he was able to retain. The Vary family came from Driffield in Yorkshire, England. The name of the English town is a corruption of "dirt field".

Yinnar is an aboriginal word meaning "woman", and maybe a cognate word to "gin". It may be then, that Yinnar refers to the first white woman to live out there – Mrs. Hazel Bennett.

Billy's Creek was named after William (Billy) Hillier, who with Nicol Brown, was the original occupier of the Scrubby Forest Run. Billy Hillier lived, died and was buried on the bank of Billy's Creek. We think he died some time about 1870.

Moe took its name from the Moe River and the Moe Swamp, but no-one really knows how the name originated. We are told that it is quite a common surname in the Scandinavian countries, so possibly it is named after some such family. The spelling might indicate this also, because no Englishman would normally spell the sound of "Moh-ee" as Moe.

Hernes Oak. There is a passage in Shakespeare's "Merry Wives of Windsor" in which reference is made to "Hernes Oak" where cattle were bewitched. What more suitable name for a place in the Haunted Hills than Hernes Oak, obviously given by some Shakespearian scholar with a nice sense of humour.

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36. The Aborigines.

There is no colour question in Australia as there is in the United States and in South Africa, but we are no more virtuous on that account, nor less culpable than the white peoples of those countries. What has happened here is that the aborigines have almost died out, or rather, have been pushed out by our invading forefathers.

Judged by modern standards, the annexation of this land to the British Crown, the claim that every acre of it belonged to our government for disposal, the complete disregard for any rights of the blacks, was naked aggression against the native people. But this attitude – that the white man was the inheritor of the earth, was the common attitude of the civilized nations, who were also the powerful nations of the earth. What happened in Australia happened in many other places also. The Spaniards, for example, in a series of actions, remarkable both for the bravery and the perfidy of the Spaniards, executed the rulers of Mexico and Peru, plundered those countries of their gold, and occupied the land. The Portuguese, the Dutch, the French, the English and other nations as well as the Spaniards, seized native territories in America, Africa and Asia. The British in Australia were not so bluntly brutal. They began with a small and seemingly unimportant settlement, which very nearly failed to survive. There was no clear idea, at first, of conquest. The acquisition of the land was by gradual and slow infiltration. They, themselves, were hardly aware that they were taking over a whole continent for their own use, any more than the aborigines were aware that they were losing a whole continent.

There are several reasons why the aborigines have died out completely in Tasmania, and why their number on the mainland has dwindled from an estimated population of 300,000 in 1788 to a mere 46,000 in 1947.

When the white people took their hunting grounds from them, the blacks were forced out into the less favoured areas, which could not provide sustenance for their normal number. We took the fertile lands and left them the deserts.

Secondly, diseases which white men brought with them and unwittingly introduced into the black communities, killed off these people in hundreds. Possibly we have built up greater resistance in our bodies to certain diseases. More likely, even simple illnesses can become fatal, where care and attention and treatment are primitive.

A third cause was the deliberate massacre of natives by the more unscrupulous members of the white race. In some instances the blacks were shot like vermin; even worse, sometimes the food handed out, apparently in friendship, was treacherously laced with poison.

Some authorities believe that a main cause of the dying out of the aborigines was the breaking down of their own culture through contact with the whites. Without the old standards and disciplines, they became a lost people, without purpose, and without the will to live.

37.   Conflict with the Aborigines.

There never was a war between the native black inhabitants of Australia against their white invaders, but there were numerous outbreaks of violence from both sides, arising mainly from the objections of the natives to the loss of their hunting grounds (and sacred grounds), and to the objections of the white men to the stealing of their cattle and sheep. No doubt, there were also many personal acts of provocation suffered by the blacks, and perhaps the whites, leading to retaliation and counter-retaliation. It must have been very difficult for the black man to understand that food so readily available from the squatter's flocks, could not be taken by him as he took the kangaroo and other native animals. Sometimes, the blacks' methods of stealing sheep had an original and amusing side. In those days, a shepherd had a kind of portable hut, not much bigger than a box, which could be conveyed from place to place, and into which he could crawl at night for rest and shelter. Sometimes, a group of blacks would sneak upon a shepherd in his hut, tip it over, entrance downwards, and while some sat on the box to keep the shepherd imprisoned, the rest could take away all the sheep they wanted.

Occasionally, a whole flock of sheep would be driven away, and the blacks, with the unthinking cruelty of practical but primitive people, would break the legs of the sheep to prevent them escaping. It was an elementary method of preserving meat supplies.

Attacks by the natives began in the very first year of settlement, in May 1788, when two convicts were murdered, and continued at odd times and places until 1900, and even later. Some of the later attacks, such as those of the Governor Gang in 1900, seem more in the nature of bushranging than a holy war against the white man. Indeed, the story of the Governor Gang is similar to that of the Kelly Gang, in that these bushrangers were simply criminals, who used fancied or slight grievances as an excuse to carry out crimes they were eager to commit.

Tragedies occurred in every State in Australia. One of the best known is the spearing of the explorer Kennedy in Northern Queensland. Kennedy, only 30 years of age at his death in 1848, had been the assistant of C. J. Tyers, just before the latter's transfer to Port Albert in 1844.

The worst tragedy in Victoria was the "Faithful Massacre" in 1837, in the Benalla area, when a group of shepherds employed by William and George Faithful, was ambushed. About twelve of the eighteen men were killed.

Almost always there was retaliation by the white men, with harsh, and sometimes indiscriminate, wholesale slaughter inflicted. The authorities themselves, were inconsistent. Sometimes they sent out punitive expeditions; at other times, they protected the blacks. In 1838, Governor Gipps sent a number of white men to stand trial for murdering blacks, and seven of them were duly hanged.

38. Cooperation by the Aborigines.

More remarkable than the sporadic hostility of the blacks to the white men who were robbing them of their heritage, was the help they gave to the whites in their own dispossession. On the whole, the Australian aborigines were not very warlike; they were more inclined to be friendly, well-disposed people. Had they chosen to do so, they could easily have driven out the first white adventurers.

Right from the beginning of our story, there have been instances of friendliness on the part of the natives, mixed with some natural fear and mistrust, which a resourceful white man could easily allay. In 1796, Flinders amused them by cutting their hair, while his companion voyager, Bass, repaired their tiny boat - and dried out their gun-powder, just to be on the safe side. Bass, himself, on his whaleboat journey along the Gippsland coast in 1798, went ashore on every possible occasion, and reported later that, "the men, though thieves, are kind and friendly".

Often the blacks succoured the white men lost and helpless in the Australian bush. King, the survivor of the Burke and Wills advance party, was fed and saved by the blacks. William Buckley, the convict who escaped from David Collins' party which landed near Sorrento in Port Phillip Bay in 1803, lived with the blacks for 32 years before being found again by white men. Even in comparatively recent times, two German airmen, forced down in a remote area in the north of Australia, were kept alive by the natives.

There are some fine examples of courage, loyalty, and faithful service given by blacks as members of exploring parties, the two most notable being Wylie with Eyre in 1841, and Jacky-Jacky with Kennedy in 1848.

It was from the natives that Angus McMillan learned of the good pasture lands in Gippsland, and a Monaro native, Jimmy Gibber guided him on his first journey in 1839 to Ensay on the Tambo. For his next venture, in 1840, McMillan took two blacks with him, Cobban Johnny, chief of the Omeo tribe, and Boy Friday. McMillan later described Cobban Johnny as "a fine, stalwart, noble-looking man".

The most famous black man in the stoty of Gippsland exploration was Charlie Tarra, whom McFarlane brought with him from New South Wales to join Strzelecki's expedition in 1840. His work with at least three expeditions was invaluable, and he well deserved the honour of having the Tarra River named after him. Black troopers, stationed at Narre Warren, formed an important part of our early police force. They escorted Tyers in 1844, and Bishop Perry in 1850, in their journeys into Gippsland.

The natives made excellent horsemen, station hands and stockmen. In our time, we have seen great sportsmen amongst them, like Doug Nicholls, the footballer, famous artists like Albert Namatjira, and great soldiers like Captain Reg Saunders.

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39. The Aborigines of Gippsland.

It has been estimated that there were originally about 3,000 blacks in the Gippsland area, most of them centred round the lakes, and along the river systems, and the sea fringe. Because of the geography of the area, they formed a group somewhat isolated from their fellow blacks in other parts of Victoria and Australia. Food supplies and water were plentiful; they did not need to live lives quite so nomadic as those tribes in the hotter, drier and less bountiful areas.

There seems to have been one tribe, the Kurnai, occupying the whole of Gippsland, and, according to Charles Daley, in his book, "The Story of Gippsland, there were five sub-divisions of this tribe.

(a). The Brataualongs lived between the Latrobe River and the coast.
(b). The Tatungalongs were gathered round the Gippsland lakes.
(c). The Krauatungalongs stretched along the coast easterly from Lakes Entrance.
(d). The Brabralongs were found along the Tambo, Nicholson and Mitchell rivers.
(e). The Bryakaulungs were on the north side of the Latrobe River, and along the Avon, Macalister and Thomson Rivers.

The little township of Briagolong is obviously named after this fifth sub-tribe.

There were significant differences in social structure between the Gippsland tribe and other tribes in Australia. In some ways, they were freer and more advanced. Dr. Clive Disher of Strathfieldsaye says that women of the tribe had practical equality with the men, at least in the councils of the tribe.

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Dr. Disher's family has occupied Strathfieldsaye continuously since 1869. His maternal grandfather, Rev. F.A. Hagenauer, established in 1861, and within the boundaries of Strathfieldsaye, the Ramahyuck Mission Station. He was a notable protector of the aborigines.

The thousands of blacks dwindled quickly to hundreds, as the white man took over the land, and all but disappeared completely. The late Walter Firmin, in his very interesting manuscript record of the early days at Yinnar, says that there were no blacks left in the area when his family arrived at Scrubby Forest in August 1874. And yet, there is indisputable evidence that they were numerous enough when the first white men arrived there in 1844, only 30 years earlier. Mr. E. Nadenbousch of Morwell has a small collection of native stone axes and implements, turned up by the plough as the land was being worked at Hazelwood.

Henry Meyrick has left an account of a blackfellow hunt, which took place in 1845 or 1846. He mentions that his cousin Maurice Meyrick, and Thomas Gorringe of Maryvale Station, refused to fire on the blacks. He added that he, himself, could not shoot blacks "just for the fun of it". The unfortunate implication is that many others could, and did.

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40. Scrubby Forest.

If you drive out of Yinnar towards Morwell for half a mile, turn off just before Middle Creek and on to the Driffield Road, and travel for less than half a mile along this road, you will see on your left-hand side, a gate bearing the name "Scrubby Forest". This was the entrance to Scrubby Forest Homestead, the headquarters of a cattle run, which extended for an indefinite distance south of Middle Creek and Boundary Creek (the boundary of Hazelwood) and which had the Morwell River as its western boundary, and Billy's Creek as its eastern limit. The homestead, therefore, was right in the north-western corner of the run, which site gave it the advantage of being as close as possible to civilization. The homesteads of the three other stations – Hazelwood, Maryvale, and Merton Rush, were fairly close together, strung along the Morwell River, from three to five miles further downstream from Scrubby Forest. In 1870, Samuel Vary took up a section of Merton Rush, and his residence on the western side of the Morwell River, opposite McMillan's Hazelwood homestead, made the fourth dwelling.

Nicholas Brown and William Hillier, 1850-1869, were the first holders of Scrubby Forest Run. They eventually had a disagreement and divided the run into two, with Brown taking the western half between the Morwell River and Middle Creek, and Hillier taking the eastern half between Middle Creek and Billy's Creek. Billy's Creek was so named after "Billy" Hillier, who built for himself a hut there, and stockyards, and was buried on its bank, when he died perhaps about 1870. For a time, there were the remains of the hut, of a garden round the hut, and some old furze bushes, which Hillier had planted, it is said, as some sort of protection against the blacks who had been a little troublesome in the early years.

Brown did not live on his section, or if he did, not for long. He had a hotel and coach stables at Shady Creek, grew feed for horses at Scrubby Forest, and carted it to Shady Creek to supply Cobb and Co's horses. Brown suspected that his wife was being unfaithful to him, and shot dead "Billy the Postman" (William Lawton), a young man who pack-horsed the mail between Shady Creek and Walhalla. Nichol Brown was sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment for murder in 1868. When he was released in 1887, he came out to a different world in which the squatters had given place to the selectors.

The O'Hara family, employed by Brown, occupied Scrubby Forest Homestead for some years, and a road close by is still called O'Hara's Road today. In those days, there were plenty of dingoes in the area, and also great mobs of kangaroos.

John Shiels occupied Scrubby Forest 1869-1874, the period when the squatters began to lose their vast areas held on lease, and the first selectors began to settle on, and work their blocks. John Shiels had come to Scrubby Forest from Rosedale. His two sons, Frank and Harry, were notable horsemen, able to handle the wildest mounts. Frank Shiels, in 1872, was the first settler to select land at Scrubby Forest. He was followed by James McDonald, 1873, and George Firmin in 1874.

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41. George Firmin, 1832 - 1912.

George Firmin, the son of Joseph and Hannah Firmin (nee Porter) was born in Essex, 1832. In January 1852, he married Maria Geale (1835 - 1919) in a very famous, old church, St. Martin's in the Fields, Trafalgar Square, London. During that year, perhaps attracted by the news of the gold finds in Australia, he set sail for Victoria in the "Windermere", a vessel of 589 tons, and disembarked at Geelong on Christmas Eve, 1852. Two other Firmins had travelled out on the same ship, Alfred aged 26 years, and Elizabeth, aged 36. Perhaps they were an older brother and sister.

George's wife, Maria, came to Australia two and a half years later, in 1855, on board the "Kent", a vessel of 997 tons. With her were her mother, Mrs. Frances Geale, aged 54, her brother John, 23, her sister Frances Geale, aged 27, and her baby son, George Firmin junior, born 23/11/1852. The other ten children of George and Maria Firmin were all born in Victoria - Frances (Mrs. C. Morrell), Alfred, Emily (Mrs. G. Bond), William, Walter, Annie, James, Elizabeth, Jessie and Ellen.

George Firmin made straight for the Ballarat gold fields, but he soon recognized the importance of the carrying industry, gave up mining, and put his small capital into bullocks and wagons. For the next 20 years he was a carrier. He was not, therefore, immediately concerned with the grievances of the miners at Ballarat, but he was an eye-witness of their rebellion at the Eureka Stockade in 1854.

He moved to the Cranbourne, Narre Warren area of Gippsland about 1863. From his base there, he carted supplies from Oakleigh, the railway terminus, to the gold miners at Tanjil, and to the copper miners at Cooper's Creek near Walhalla. In fact, he was the first carrier to pioneer a bullock wagon track to this copper mine, and carted the first load of copper ore from the mine to Port Albert. He was still in the carrying business, probably as a side-line to his farming, when the Gippsland railway-line was being put down. He carried the piles for the construction of the railway bridges over the Morwell River, and also the Latrobe River between Rosedale and Sale.

In August 1874, he took up a selection comprising the homestead area of Scrubby Forest, 11 years before Yinnar came into existence as a township. The Firmin family have taken a prominent part in the life of Morwell and Yinnar, ever since then. Stan Firmin is a great-grandson of old George and Maria Firmin.

George Firmin was a member of the Traralgon Shire Council, and then of the Morwell Shire Council, after the severance in 1892. He and Edward Kelleher were the first representatives of Morwell in the Traralgon Shire Council. In 1892, he was elected to the first Morwell Shire Council of six members. In 1899, he was the Shire President, and during that same year, he and his wife took a holiday trip back to their native county of Essex, England.

42. Walter Firmin, 1863 - 1943.

Walter Firmin was 11 years old when his father, George Firmin brought him to Scrubby Forest in August 1874. Many years later, in 1933, when Walter Firmin was 70 years old, he did something of great importance. He sat down and recorded for all time, the story of his arrival at Scrubby Forest, the names and the life of the early settlers here, and the beginnings of Yinnar.

George Firmin, with two of his sons (Walter and a brother) travelled in a bullock wagon from Narre Warren to Scrubby Forest in August 1874. They arrived at the Hazelwood side of Middle Creek, but were unable to get their wagon across, because there was no vehicle bridge. They managed to patch up an old horse-bridge there, and to get a horse across with sufficient supplies to camp for the night. These three members of the family were the advance party to establish some sort of a home before the rest of the family could be brought.

They spent the night at "Old Scrubby House", about half a mile distant from the crossing, "the only clear spot on that side of the creek". The next morning, the two boys were sent across the creek to round up the bullocks, and they were angrily intercepted by John Macmillan of Hazelwood Station who pointed out that they were trespassing on his land. Here, we have an example of the common antagonism of those days between the old squatter, jealous of his rights over the land he had leased for so long, and the pioneer settler, eagerly grasping the chance the new land laws had given him of taking up a selection. The times were difficult for settlers in so remote a place as this, with rough tracks as the tenuous link between the farmer and the city markets. Once, George Firmin sent the boys to Dandenong market with a wagon load of pigs - and the journey took 12 days.

None of the country between Scrubby Forest and Port Albert had been occupied by either squatter or settler. O. P. Whitelaw blazed a bridle trail, still known as Whitelaw's Track, from Scrubby Forest to Port Albert in 1874, the year the Firmins arrived.

Rosedale was the nearest centre for supplies, and Morwell Bridge was the nearest post-office. This meant about a ten mile ride for the boys to get the mail. Sometimes they made a little pocket-money by collecting the mail for the other settlers too.

Shire councils had insufficient revenue to tackle the huge but necessary task of building roads, so the settlers had to help themselves. For example, they made a road from Middle Creek to the Tarwin River, even building the bridges.

The construction of the main Gippsland railway-line,1877-1879, was of vital importance to the selectors. At last, they could transport and sell their produce. Walter Firmin married Mary Jane Hopkins, but his wife died early, leaving him with two daughters, Ellen (Mrs. R. P. Meadows) and Alice (Mrs. Frank Smith), both of whom still live at Yinnar.

43. Selectors South of Morwell.

The squatters did not own their huge cattle runs, but merely leased them for a fee of 10 pounds per annum. A succession of Land Acts from 1869 onwards changed this system of land tenure to one in which selectors could choose and buy selection blocks of 320 acres at a cheap price and for a small deposit. Selectors began to carve out farms for themselves from the squatter holdings, but the squatters were granted what was known as their pre-emptive rights, or entitlements to buy some of the land they had been leasing. This was a reasonable provision because the squatters had done the first,pioneering work, had developed their leased lands, and had built their homes, station outbuildings and cattle yards there. Frequently, a squatter was able to retain more of the land than the law intended by getting members of his family to apply for selection blocks, or through the device of "dummying", which was simply an arrangement with some other person to buy a selection for him in that other person's name. Of the last squatters in the Morwell area, John Macmillan remained as owner of Hazelwood Estate and Samuel Vary still owned Driffield - sections of their old stations.

We can imagine that the land close to a good, permanent water-supply, and close to the main tracks, would be the first to be snapped up. For example, there must have been a track from Scrubby Forest Homestead (near what is now Yinnar) to Morwell Bridge, which was the nearest post-office and a stopping place on the Old Coach Road, a track which must have followed the Morwell River all the way. Walter Firmin says that soon there was a number of dwellings scattered along this line. Another line stretched towards Bennett's Creek and towards Traralgon. The following is the list of early selectors remembered by Walter Firmin:-

1. At Hazelwood:... John Macmillan; John O'Hara; James McDonald; John Sillcock; C. Sillcock; F. Amiet; W. Daly; Paul Applegate; Archibald Shaw; and Messrs Nadenbousch, McFarlane and Bolding.

2. At Scrubby Forest:...Frank Shields; George Firmin senior; John Quigley; Henry Wicks; W. Francis; John Cahill; John Geale; Mr. Deppeler; George Firmin junior; David Sullivan; Richard Richards; S.A. Coleman; M. A. Nelson.

3. At Merton Rush:...Samuel Vary; D. Williams; D. Jones; J. Dow; Thomas Hopkins; Mr. Witholtz; Mr. Writson; Mr. T. Walsh.

4. At Boolarra (about 1879-1880):...Messrs Penaluna; Amiet; Hall; Primrose; Kelleher; Gleeson.

5. At Budgeree:...Messrs Elliott, Morrell; Grant; R. Brewster; Payne; Hall.

This is an interesting list, but it may not be complete or exact. It is a little difficult at this point in Walter Firmin's notes to determine exact locations and to decipher the correct spelling of the names.

44. The New Year's Day Picnics.

It was not long after he arrived here in 1874 that George Firmin began organizing a community picnic each year, held on New Year's Day, on the Ridge Road which used to run from Scrubby Forest Homestead to Morwell, emerging at the bridge over the railway line, about three-quarters of a mile on the Traralgon side of Morwell Railway Station. This road was exactly what its name said it was - a road along the top of the Hazelwood-Maryvale Ridge, keeping high and dry above the wet, muddy, boggy lower sections of the area.

Walter Firmin wrote in 1833 that the picnic ground was "on the Ridge Road, opposite the residence of the late Mr. and Mrs. Geale, and where Mr. A. Ronald's woolshed is now".

George Firmin would ride from house to house on his horse "Bawley", to remind the people of the district about the picnic and to invite them to come. It was a happy, local-community gathering, simply organized and with simple pleasures, until strangers from outside the locality began to come, uninvited, to convert the picnic from an informal "family gathering" to a sports meeting, and to change the whole spirit of the thing. At one of the last of these picnics, there was a challenge race between John English and John Blair, two champion sprinters of that time. George Firmin lost all interest in its changed character, and then turned his attention to organizing a picnic race-meeting at Lavinia Park, Yinnar, and this became the forerunner of the Yinnar Racing Club.

A tragedy occurred on one picnic day. Miss Grace Donaldson, a girl of nineteen, the daughter of David Donaldson, storekeeper of Morwell, was riding to the picnic in the company of Ben Langford of Moe, when her horse bolted. She was thrown against a tree and received fatal injuries. The headstone over her grave, not far in from the main gate, in Hazelwood Cemetery gives the date of this picnic and this tragedy - 1st. January 1881.

An interesting chapter could be written on picnics and their place in the social life of our early, pioneering communities. Until about 30 years ago, one of the great events of the year in the western area of Victoria was the Ballarat Picnic, to which special trains ran from as far as 100 miles away and more. Probably the Ballarat Picnic began in a small way similar to the New Year's Day picnics here. George Firmin may even have borrowed the idea from Ballarat, since he had lived there for a number of years in the 1850's. Another common feature of rural life used to be a yearly school picnic, organized by the local school committees.

The death of Grace Donaldson on the first day of 1881 reminds us also, that in those days, when the horse was the power unit of the pioneers, there were frequent accidents, many injuries, and some deaths through the use of horses.

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45. District State Schools.

Since this State separated from New South Wales in 1851, there have been three eras in the history of Victorian State Education. They were:

1. __1851 -1862,__ when control was vested in two Boards of Education. Their schools, the national schools and the denominational schools, were subsidised by the Government.
2. __1863 - 1872,__ when the Board of Education replaced the dual system of control. Its common schools were also subsidised by the Government.
3. __1873 - onwards.__ The Great Education Act of 1872 made education free and compulsory, and this, in effect, placed upon the Government the obligation to establish State schools wherever they were needed.

All the State schools in the Morwell district started within this third period because the population was so sparse until the middle seventies, that no school was needed until then. About the time of the Education Act, the large holdings of the squatters were taken from them and given to the selectors. In place of a squatter with his family and a small group of station hands, the countryside was suddenly populated with a host of selectors and their families. The children of a squatter might be sent away to the cities for their schooling, but as a general rule, the only education possible for the children of the selectors was through a State school.

The numbers of the State schools were given in chronological sequence, so that we can always estimate pretty accurately the year in which any one school was opened. There were about 1200 schools operating before 1872. The numbers of the schools opening between 1873 and 1876 ranged from No. 1201 to 1800; between 1877 and 1879 from No 1801 to 2200; between 1880 and 1885, from No 2201 to 2700; and so on.

The schools that were opened in the Morwell district betwwen 1876 –
the date of the first school, and 1900, when the pattern of the new settlement
had been established, were:-

1. No. 1768...Hazelwood Ridge School ....October 1876.
2. No. 1945...Maryvale Ridge School.....................August 1877.
3. No. 2022...Maryvale East (or Bennett's Creek) School........ 1878
4. No. 2136...Morwell State School (Commercial Road)....April 1879
5. No. 2382...Hazelwood North State School..............March 1881
6. No. 2419...Yinnar State School.......................June 1881
7. No. 2433...Driffield State School.................September 1881
8. No. 2439...Morwell Bridge (Morwell West) School......October 1881
9. No. 2631...Morwell North State School....................... 1884
10. No. 2730...Yinnar South State School.................January 1886
11. No. 3004...Jeeralang State School.......................... 1892
12. No. 3349...Jumbuk State School............................. 1899
13. No. 3350...Eel Hole Creek (Hazelwood South) School......... 1899.

Maryvale Ridge School closed in May 1879, and all of its pupils
transferred to the Morwell School. The present Yinnar South School is about
2½ miles further south than the original school, which was burnt down in the
bushfires of 1898.

46.   The First School.

About four miles out from Morwell, on the left-hand side of the road
that runs to Yinnar, back on to the new Hazelwood Cooling Pond, and sheltering
beneath a few, old pine-trees, is a building now used as a residence, but
which was once both the school and the teacher's residence of the first school
in the district – Hazelwood Ridge School. Against the front fence is a small,
low building, which used to be the buggy-shed, built by the teacher, John
Sullivan, about 1903, and used by him to house the buggy which he needed to
take him from there to the other half-time school, Driffield School. When John
Sullivan left Hazelwood Ridge School in 1906, he sold his buggy-shed to the
School Committee, who wanted it for a shelter shed for the pupils.

In 1876, long before there was any thought of brown coal and the State
Electricity Commission, the road to Yinnar from Morwell ran along the ridge.
A rough plan of this road in 1876 shows the school site to be exactly where the
old building still stands. From that point, the present road to Yinnar follows
the old route, but the section from there to Morwell has disappeared –
obliterated by the mighty works of the S.E.C.

The first move for a school was made by a petition from the families
in the area in 1876. Inspector Holland reported favourably, listing the
following families who would be served by the school:- the Firmin, O'Hara, Amiet
Applegate, Geale, McGauran, Johnston, Heesom and Richards families. He expected
an enrolment of 35 children, and reported that the local people had provided an
excellent building, constructed of wattle and daub, white-washed inside and out,
36 feet long by 18 feet wide, partitioned to make a teacher's apartment, and
with a roof of sawn, iron-bark shingles, the whole building costing £52 - 9 - 0.
The residents offered this building to the Department on condition that the
Department would provide a floor, the furniture and a teacher.

In his reminiscences, Mr. Walter Firmin says that Mr. Heesom built the
school for £6. Presumably he meant that Mr. Heesom was paid £6 for his work.

The first teacher appointed was Mrs. Marie Mathison, formerly Miss
Perrottet, and soon to be Mrs. Cook, for she left after four months to marry
the teacher at Poowong.

Inspector Holland could have been no architect, because the teachers
found his "excellent building" uninhabitable. On her arrival in October 1876,
Mrs Mathison found the floor wet and muddy, the chimney place a mere mud-
puddle. Others called it uninhabitable, no good, and of little use. The water
from the shingled roof was black and unfit to drink. By the end of 1880 a new
school was built with the teacher's quarters (three rooms) attached. This must
be the present building we can still see beside the Yinnar Road.

Some of the early teachers at Hazelwood Ridge School were:-

1876-1877..Mrs Marie Mathison	1902.......A. B. Keagle
1877-1880..Mansfield Arthur Nelson	1902-1903..John Sullivan
1880-1886..Miss Barbara Irving	1906.........Bergin Tipping
1886-1896..Miss E.M. J. Waldon	1906-1908..William McLoghlan
1896-1900..Roland Greaves	1908-1910..Margaretta H. Gough
1900-1902..Herbert J. Gaffney	1911-1914..Violet Anderson.

Hazelwood Ridge School soon ran into difficulties through lack of pupils. The reason for this decline is easy to find. When it was opened in 1876, it was the only school in the district, and served a wide area. Soon, it was ringed about with other schools that restricted its recruiting area, and took away its pupils. By 1894, the attendance figure was so low that it was made half-time with Yinnar South. This latter school was completely destroyed by the bush-fires of 1898. For four years Hazelwood Ridge School was again full-time, but reverted again to half-time from 1902-1908, on this occasion with Driffield School. Another bush-fire destroyed Driffield School in 1908, and the attendance at Hazelwood Ridge rose from 18 pupils to 28.

The school was finally closed in 1945, the last two teachers being Alfred H. Miller, 1929 - 1940, and Leonard F. Foxcroft, 1940 - 1944.

47. Yinnar State School, No. 2419.

The school at Yinnar preceded the township of Yinnar by three or four years. Those people who petitioned for a school in the area in 1879 did not know that in 1885 a railway would be built from Morwell to Mirboo; that there would be a station at Yinnar, and that the growth of a village there would be inevitable.

The men to sign the petition in October 1879 were - Thomas Hopkins; Henry Wicks; Richard Richards; George Firmin; John Dow; John Quigley; John Cahill; William Francis; John O'Hara; David Jones; and David Williams.

Henry Wicks and George Firmin both offered a site for a school, and Henry Wicks and John Quigley were each willing to lease a small building to the Department at a rental of 8/- a week as a temporary school building. However, the new school was started in June 1881 in a portable building erected on an allotment on Henry Wicks' land.

There was great activity in the area as the prospect of a railway line being built became a certainty, and as plans for the growth of a township were made. There was a suggestion of moving the school from what was likely to be a valuable commercial site, but eventually there was no great change. But there was a big rise in the school enrolment. A little later, in 1899, the teacher, Thomas Holland, asked that two private rooms attached to the school as a teacher's residence be converted into class-rooms to accommodate the increased number of pupils. Enrolment at that stage was 53 pupils.

A new school was built in 1908, and this building is substantially the same as the one we have today. During its construction, the Mechanics' Hall was used as temporary premises. The cost of the new school was £485.

The first teacher at the school was Catherine Kemp, a member of one of the families in the district. Here is a list of some of the teachers at the school:-

1881 - 1885..Catherine Kemp	1935 - 1940.. Thomas E. Mortimer
1886 - 1900..Thomas Holland	1944 - 1949.. G. H. Treyvaud
1904.........E. Williams	1953 - 1960.. M. E. Duncan
1904 - 1905..Miss K. Bolger	1961 - 1966.. Desmond J. Hackett
1905 - 1906..George McLean	1967 .. Maxwell H. Brown.
1906 - 1916..R. Lethbridge	
1929 - 1933..Joseph Crabtree	

In the records of the school, there is spasmodic correspondence concerning a teacher's residence. Apparently the accommodation provided at the original school was rather meagre, and Thomas Holland preferred to occupy a private residence adjacent to the school. Miss Bolger also used a private residence - possibly the same one that Mr. Holland had had. However, Mr. Williams asked for a Departmental house in 1904, and one was built in 1906.

48. Morwell District Squatting Stations.

Hazelwood.

1844-1856..Wm. Bennett & A.E.Brodribb.
1856-1860..Wm. Bennett
1860-1872..John Macmillan

Maryvale

1845-1851..Thomas Gorringe
1851-1856..Archibald McMillan
1856-1872..Patrick Coady Buckley

Merton Rush

1850..?   William Westrop Waller
1857..?   William Farley
1870-1872..Samuel Vary

Scrubby Forest

1850- ? ..Honey & Bourne
1857-1868..W. Hillier & N. Brown
1868-1872..John Shiels