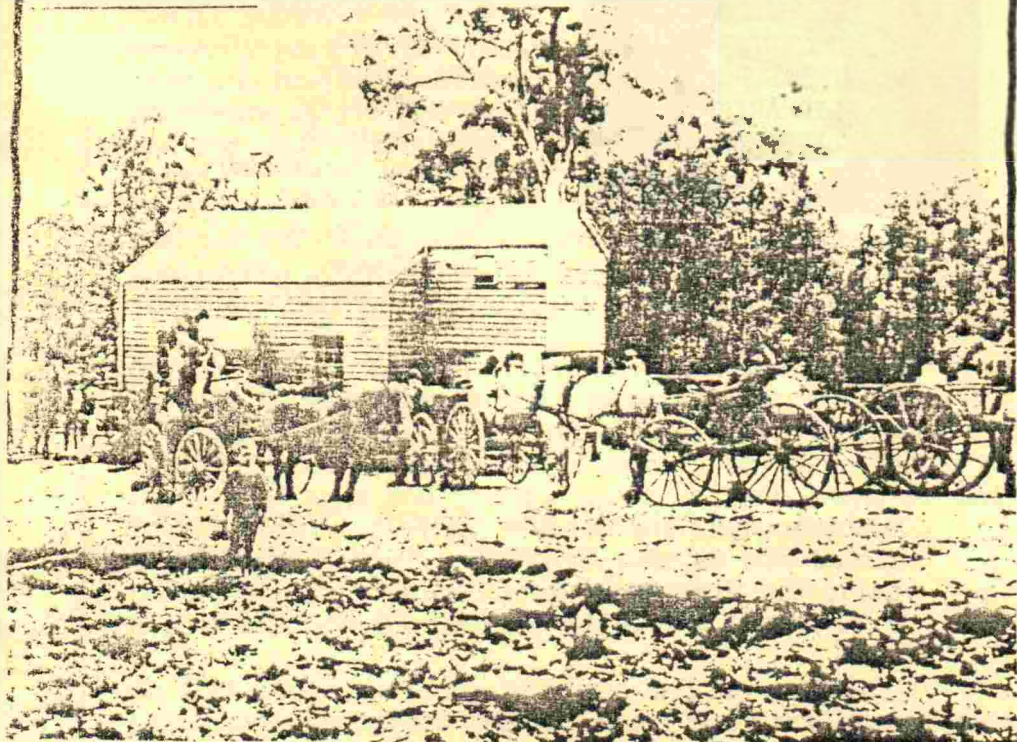


THE
MID GIPPSLAND
FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc.



Westbury Creamery c. 1900 (Moe Historical Society)

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1991

No. 57

OFFICE BEARERS FOR 1991-1992

CHAIRMAN:	Don Macreadie
1st V.CHAIRMAN:	David McInnes
2nd V.CHAIRMAN:	Glad Macreadie
SECRETARY:	Gay Rogers
TREASURER:	Anne Pawley
LIBRARIAN:	Jean McNally
LIBRARY ASSISTANTS:	Gwen Curnick Shirley Connaghan
PUBLICITY OFFICER:	David McInnes
PUBLIC RELATIONS:	David McInnes
NEWSLETTER:	Dawn Cowley
FUND RAISING:	Fiona Kemsley

Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of each month except December, at the Narracan Hall, Old Gipstown, Moe. The library opens at 7.00 pm and the meeting commences at 8.00pm.

Articles for this newsletter are accepted in good faith and, while every effort is made to ensure accuracy, the editor takes no responsibility for submitted items.

MEMBER PROFILE — GAY ROGERS

Gay is currently Secretary of our group, and has served as Librarian and one of our research officers in the past. She was born "after the turn of the century" in the Bush Nursing Hospital at Moe, and was raised on a farm at Tanjil South, which is probably part of the reason that she has an excellent knowledge of the Moe area and the district to its north.



She put this knowledge to good use by co-writing and publishing a centenary history of Tanjil South titled "Settlers and Selectors" (1987).

Gay has been a member of The Mid Gippsland Family History Society Inc. since its beginning, and along with genealogy has many other interests. These include: local history (particularly the Gippsland Goldfields area and the Moe district), "hacking around in the bush", writing, researching and books. Consequently, she is also a member of The Moe and District Historical Society, the Royal Victorian Historical Society and The G.S.V.

In addition to writing Settlers and Selectors, Gay painstakingly edited the war diaries of her grandfather J.M.Laidlaw, and included them in her first book "For King and Country". Not content to rest on her laurels, she is now working on two more publications: a history of the Jordan Goldfields, and a lone graves register for Victoria.

Among the names Gay is researching are: Laidlaw, Little, Williams, Went, Dickson and Tharratt.

The Greatest Co-incidence of all Time ??

by Rosemary Wigg.

On a recent visit to England I set myself the task of finding the origins of my g.g.g.grandfather John ROBBINS (my maiden name is Robbins) prior to a Robbins family reunion being planned for next year (1992). I had many other ancestors to find, but this was the most urgent and most intriguing. All I knew about him was that he served in the Battle of Waterloo (June 1815), that he had married, by licence, Jessie Palmer, in St.Margaret's, Leicester, on 14 June 1802, and that his son (my g.g.grandfather and also John Robbins) had emigrated to Australia in 1853 from Cranford St.John, Northamptonshire.

As Army records are kept at the P.R.O.,Kew, I proceeded to there and commenced my search - on the advice of the enquiry officer - with the medal rolls for the Battle of Waterloo. This took an entire afternoon and the result? - no John Robbins, but several other Robbins's. This I found a puzzle, as the story handed down was that "someone stole his pocket watch and was court martialled for it".

My next piece of research was at the Society of Genealogists, delving into my Somerset ancestors, where I had the unusual co-incidence of having one line of my mother's ancestors - the Priddle's - coming from in and around Crewkerne, and one line of my father's mother's ancestors coming from North Perrott. These parishes are right next door to one another!!!

I finished my day's research at 10 to 8 pm and was not about to leave before time (8pm), so I went upstairs to the third level to browse through the books there. There are thousands of books and manuscripts there - all the things which cannot be catalogued under "county" as they are in the middle level, where I was. Imagine my surprise when my eyes landed on a book titled "Marriage Licences of St.Margaret's Leicester". Then imagine my delight as I opened the page at the entry which read - 14 June 1802 John Robbins, a farrier in the King's 1st Dragoon Guards, and Jesse Palmer! Here, on a platter, was the very information I needed.

I checked with my list of regiments which fought at the Battle of Waterloo. Yes, it was there. How could I have missed his

name?

Instead of my planned research at the S.O.G. the next day, I hot-footed it back to the P.R.O. at Kew, and back to the enquiry desk. The answer - look at his discharge papers if you want to find his birthplace.

It wasn't quite that simple, but I did eventually find him, misfiled among the RO's and to my surprise found that, although the Regiment fought in the Battle, he couldn't have, as he was discharged in 1814!! It also gave me his birthplace as Wimsom, near Chard, Somerset - and I was expecting it to be in Shropshire!

I had no parish maps with me, so had to wait until I got back to the S.O.G. the next day to look at Somerset and find the location. Imagine how stunned I was to find it (spelt Winsham) right next door to Crewkerne!

So I have three consecutive parishes in Somerset "belonging" to three entirely separate branches of my family.

The irony of it is, that I have known, this long time, that the witnesses to my Priddle-Trenchard marriage in S.Petherton (also next door to Crewkerne) were both named Robbins and I thought nothing of it. I wonder were they, also, my relatives? Time will tell.

*Home, nowadays, is the place where part of the family waits till
the rest of the family brings the car back.*

- Earl Wilson

TASMANIAN RESEARCH

The Genealogical Society of Tasmania Inc. has the TAMIOT records. This is an index to headstone inscriptions and memorials transcribed from cemeteries from all parts of Tasmania. Cost is \$75.

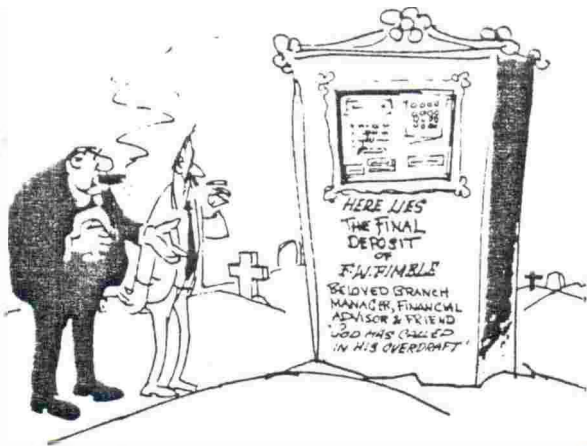
Available from: Sales and Publications
Co-ordinator, P.O. Box 60, Prospect, Tas. 7250.

Information provided by Shirley Connaghan.

LONDON BOUND??

My advice to anyone planning a visit to any of the many Record Offices in London - do your homework before you leave home! Bring a list of everything you want to do with you. If possible, read a book such as Joy Moulton's "London Repositories" to find out exactly where to find the records you want to look at and copy out the results. You will save a lot of time, as it takes a lot of time to get to these places - and to work out the "system" in each place. Time is at an absolute premium on any overseas trip.

- Rosemary Wigg.



"There, Crawley, lies a very great banker!"

The Bulletin, September 10, 1991

Christmas comes, but once a year is enough.

- Anon.

TASMANIAN RESEARCH

Launceston GST (Genealogical Society of Tasmania) has indexes to Births, Deaths and Marriages recorded in the EXAMINER.

Volume 1	1900-1910	\$20.00
Volume 2	1911-1920	\$25.00
Volume 3	1921-1925	\$15.00
Volume 4	1926-1930	\$17.00
Volume 5	1931-1935	\$20.00
Volume 6	1936-1940	\$25.00

Available from: Publications Officer, P.O. Box 1290, Launceston, Tas. 7250

Noted in Tasmanian Ancestry, Sept 1991. Info provided by Shirley Connaghan.

SCOTLAND - GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE.

Fees for searches and extracts.

- * Abbreviated certificate of Birth, Death or Marriage £8.50
- * Extract (full) of Birth, Death or Marriage or Divorce £9.50
- * Parish registers (pre 1855) and Census records (1841 - 1891) £12.00

** Overseas applicants should include airmail postage (57p). International Reply paid Coupons are NOT acceptable as payment.

Address: General Register House, Princes Street, Edinburgh. EH1 1EW.

Books

-WANTED - WILL PAY -

- *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony*
by Ernest Hemingway
- *The Caravan Passes*
- *Full Turn*
- *The Caravan Returns*
by Illeen Finlay

Contact: *Fiona Kemsley*
P.O.Box 82
Boolarra 3870
Ph. 056-696215



MORTALITY OF MELBOURNE

Since the opening of the Melbourne General Cemetery seven years ago, upwards of twenty thousand corpses have been interred there, of which ten thousand were children.

- from Gippsland Guardian
Nov.1860

...
LET'S VISIT A LONDON RECORD
OFFICE with ROSEMARY WIGG.

NEWSPAPER LIBRARY AT COLINDALE.
This place was very helpful,
once you got the hang of the
ordering system. I was able to
look at original bound volumes
of newspapers dating back to
1830 and to get prints of these
to be collected later. I got
prints from one newspaper on
film (1786), but their only
printing machine is not the
best and the result was not
very good. They have special
stands to put the heavy volumes
on so you don't have to lean on
them to read the top of the
page.

... ..
MARRIAGE AND IGNORANCE

From the last yearly report of
the Registrar of B.D.& M. in
Great Britain, we find the
startling fact that out of
318,684 persons who were married,
as many as 117,033 were so
deficient in the common ABC of
education as not to be able to
sign their name. We believe it
is in Prussia, where no man or
woman is allowed to contract
marriage without first giving
proof of his or her ability to
read or write.

- Gippsland Guardian
- Jan 1859



You Can Now Search Your Family History on CD-ROM

Victorians can now trace their family's
history in the State on CD-ROM

The Royal Melbourne Institute of
Technology's INFORMIT unit has produced
the database in conjunction with the Registry
of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

The database dates back to 1837 and
covers early parish church records from
1853 when the Government first took
responsibility for recording these events.

There is also an index to civil registrations
to 1888.

In all, there are some 1.7 million entries
for Victorians who lived a century ago.

The wealth of information contained in
the database, includes names, dates of birth,
death or marriage, names of parents, names
of spouse, location, etc.

The information provides the essential
starting point for genealogists researching
their ancestry and a point of reference for
those needing the more detailed birth, death
or marriage certificates held by the Registry.

The CD-ROM can also be used to give
a personalized view of Australia's history
by allowing students to research the growth
of their own town, or to follow the fortunes
of individual Victorian pioneers.

Even minimal amounts of information
can be linked together to identify a person.
No longer will your search be restricted to
a surname as the starting point. Knowing only
a given name and a place of birth will be
sufficient to find the record for an ancestor
you've been seeking for many years.

YOUR IRISH ANCESTRY

The Irish Tourist Board claims there are some five million people of Irish descent living in Australia. That's as many as the current population of the Shamrock Isle. Nine out of ten Irish who settled in Australia last century came as free immigrants, predominantly from the province of Munster, which includes such counties as Clare, Limerick and Tipperary.

Some 300,000 Australians have already begun tracing their Irish roots, some starting with genealogical societies in Australia and others writing to members of the Irish Family History Cooperative scattered through most of Ireland's counties. A good starting point is to write to Dublin's Genealogical Office, enclosing a fee equivalent to 10 Irish pounds; you will receive a kit including a questionnaire requesting the following information: name of ancestor, date of birth, place of birth (parish and county), parents' names, religion, occupation or trade, where married, date of departure from Ireland, children's names, burial place and any further salient information.

The Irish Tourist Board's Sydney office has a listing of family history research centres throughout Ireland plus a record of recommended members of the Association of Professional Genealogists. The Board has also published *The Heritage Trail* by Richard

Reid, a 55-page booklet dealing with Irish migration to Australia. Available, too, is a *Tracing Your Heritage* brochure which contains a map of Ireland segmented into counties with hundreds of family names listed.

In September 1992, an Irish Homecoming Festival will be held and the descendants of some 100 clans from around the world are expected. Festivities will be held throughout Ireland, including an international gathering of genealogists. Information on this event is available from All Ireland Introductions through the Sydney office of the Irish Tourist Board; this service produces a regular newsletter on tracing your ancestors. If you're more electronically inclined, the Heritage Corporation sells one-hour videos for \$49 which explore the roots of the most common Irish family names from Armstrong and Burke to Ryan and Walsh, with many a Murphy and O'Connor in between.

Further information is available from the Consultancy Service on Ancestry, Genealogical Office, 2 Kildare Street, Dublin 2, or the Irish Tourist Board, 36 Carrington Street, Sydney 2000. Ph: (02) 299 6177.

Heritage Corporation videos can be obtained from One World Films, 133 Dowling Street, Woolloomooloo 2011. Ph: (02) 356 2266. □

THE AUSTRALIAN MAGAZINE

LIME DRINK

(A Refreshing Drink, Especially While Within the Tropics)

A very agreeable drink may be made by putting in 2 cups of water, 1 tsp. lime juice, 2 tsp. vinegar, 1 tsp. sugar, and 3 or 4 raisins, and allowing it to stand for a few hours; or it may be used at once without the raisins.

(Hints for Intending Immigrants to Queensland "By One of the Steerage", Queensland Daily Guardian, 17 June 1863)

"Familiar in their Mouths as HOUSEHOLD WORDS."—SHAKESPEARE.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL

CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

N^o. 15.]

SATURDAY, JULY 6, 1850.

[PRICE 2d.

DESTRUCTION OF PARISH REGISTERS.

As the poorest man cannot foresee to what inheritance he may succeed, through the instrumentality of Parochial Registers, so in their preservation every member of the community is more or less interested; but the Parish Register returns of 1833 show that a general feeling seemed to exist in favour of their destruction. Scarcely one of them pronounced the Registers in a satisfactory state. The following sentences abound in the Blue Book: "leaves cut out," "torn out," "injured by damp," "mutilated," "in fragments," "destroyed by fire," "much torn," "illegible," "tattered," "imperfect," "early registers lost."

Thanks to the General Registry Act of William the Fourth, all such records made since 1835 are now properly cared for; but those prior to that date are still in parochial keeping, to be torn, lost, burnt, interpolated, stolen, defaced, or rendered illegible at the good pleasure of every wilful or heedless individual of a destructive organisation. Some time ago Mr. Walbran, of Ripon, found part of a Parish Register among a quantity of waste-paper in a cheesemonger's shop. The same gentleman has rescued the small but very interesting register of the chapelry of Denton, in the county of Durham, from the fate which once had nearly befallen it, by causing several literatim copies to be printed and deposited in public libraries. Among other instances of negligent custody, Mr. Downing Bruce, the barrister, relates, in a recently published pamphlet, that the Registers of South Otterington, containing several entries of the great families of Talbot, Herbert, and Fauconberg, were formerly kept in the cottage of the parish-clerk, who used all those preceding the eighteenth century for waste paper; a considerable portion having been taken to "sing a goose!"

Abstraction, loss, and careless custody of registers is constantly going on. Mr. Bruce mentions, that in 1845 he made some copious extracts from the dilapidated books at Andover, "but on recently visiting that

place for the purpose of a supplementary search," he says, "I found that these books were no longer in existence, and that those which remained were kept in the rectory-house, in a damp place under the staircase, and in a shameful state of dilapidation." The second case occurred at Kirkby Malzeard, near Ripon, where the earliest register mentioned in the parliamentary return was reported to be lost. "Having occasion to believe that the statement was not correct," Mr. Bruce states, "I persevered in my inquiries, and at length fortunately discovered the book, in a tattered state, behind some old drawers in the curate's back kitchen. Again, at Farlington, near Sheriff Hutton, the earliest registers were believed and represented to be lost, until I found their scattered leaves at the bottom of an old parish chest which I observed in the church."

Even as we write, an enquiry appears in the newspapers from the parish officers of St. Pauls, Covent Garden, addressed to "collectors" and others, after their own Registers; two among the most historically important and interesting years of the seventeenth century are nowhere to be found.

The avidity and dishonesty of many of these "collectors," or archaeological cockchafers, are shocking to think of. They seem to have passed for their own behoof a universal statute of limitations; and when a book, an autograph, or a record is a certain number of years old, they think it is no felony to steal it. Recently we were interested in searching the Register for the birth of Joseph Addison; and at the altar of the pretty little church of Milston, in Wilts, we were told that a deceased rector had cut out the leaf which contained it, to satisfy the earnest longings of a particular friend, "a collector"—a poet, too, who ought to have been ashamed to instigate the larceny. It is hoped that his executors—his name has been inserted in a burial register since—will think fit to restore it to its proper place at their early convenience.

continued →

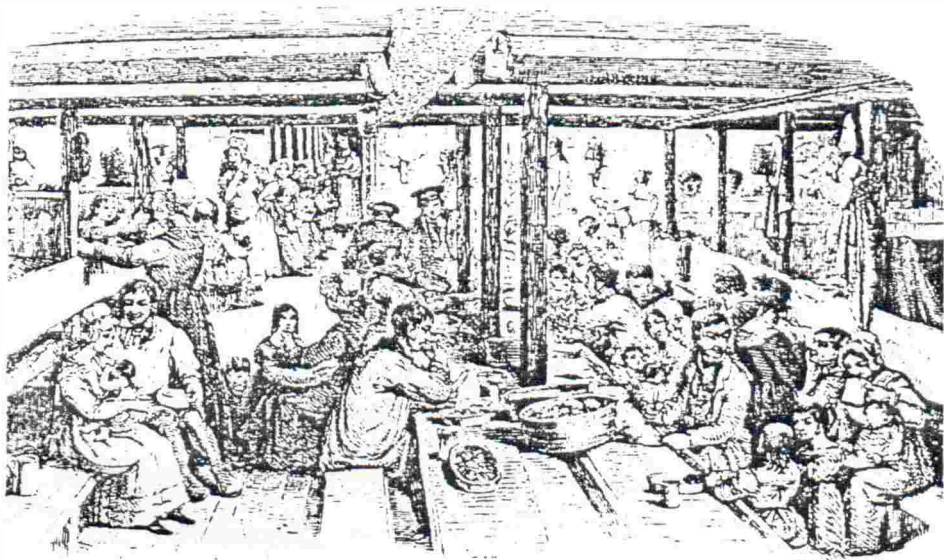
Mr. Bruce recommends that the whole of the Registers now deposited in parish churches, in rectors' coal-cellars, churchwardens' out-houses, curates' back-kitchens, and goose-eating parish clerks' cottages, should be collected into one central fire-proof building in London.

Innocent Mr. Bruce! While the great historical records of this land are "preserved" over tons of gunpowder in the White Tower of the Tower in London; while the Chancery records are feeding a fine, fat, historical, and uncommonly numerous breed of rats in the cellars of the Rolls Chapel; while some of the most important muniments existing (including William the Conqueror's Domesday Book) are being dried up in the Chapter-House of Westminster Abbey, by the united heats of a contiguous brew-house and an adjacent wash-house; and while heaps of monastic charters and their surrenders to Henry the Eighth, with piles of inestimable historical treasures, are huddled together upon scaffolds in the interior of the dilapidated Riding-School in Carlton Ride—can Mr. Bruce, or any other man of common sense, suppose that any attention whatever will be paid by any person in power to his very modest suggestion?

A BIT FISHY ?

From Gloucester Journal of
20th June 1763.

Last Tuesday, one Aldridge fisherman, at Arlington in this County, was choked by a small fish, which accidentally flipped into his throat, as he was going to bite it's head in order to kill it. He has left a widow and five small children.



Steerage emigrants at dinner.

(Illustrated London News, 13 April 1844)

Family saga

For wording on a tombstone, surely the 170-word inscription in the cemetery at Warragul, in Victoria's Gippsland, must be an Australian record. It reads like a family saga - the Leedam family saga.

Nobody can now be found in the West Gippsland district who remembers James or Mary Leedam - even the name Leedam is unknown. It would be interesting to know whether there are any descendants in Australia.

James's death at Warragul, just over 71 years ago, occurred 26 years after that of his wife at Buln Buln, which is a small township eight miles from Warragul.

The only obvious error in the long inscription on the tombstone is an "s" added to the name of pioneer steam engineer James Watt (1736-1819).

The cut-out brass lettering which overlays the flat tombstone is well preserved.

The Leedam saga reads:

"Erected to the memory of James Seager Leedam, born at Birmingham, England 27th April, 1832. Served his time at the Soho Foundry where they made the engines for the Black Sea and Baltic fleets. Died at Warragul 17th September, 1912.

Also his beloved wife, Mary Leedam. Died at Buln Buln 22nd December, 1886.

Also his beloved father, Stephen Leedam, born at Burton-on-Trent, died 1837, aged 40 years, who worked at the Soho Foundry.

Also his mother, Elizabeth Emily Leedam, died July 1871, aged 77 years. Interred at Handsworth Old Church.

Also his grandfather, John Seager, died 1836, aged 70 years. Was one of the first employees at the Soho Foundry, the first engineering works in the world, James Watts being the inventor of the first steam engine.

Also his beloved uncle, Sergeant Leedam, died 1853, aged 75 years, late of the Grenadier Guards, who served under Wellington in the Peninsula War, 1794, also at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. They charged Napoleon's Grand Guards and beat them".

- Australasian Post 1983.



JERICO ON THE JORDAN.

In December 1861, four prospectors: Owen Little, William Quinn, P.Sandford and Gilbert J.Jones worked their way from the Upper Goulburn diggings over the ranges to the south of the Divide, and into a valley where they discovered a river. This river was to be later named the Jordan by Owen Little - "it being such a hard road to travel". The area became known as the Jordan Goldfield. A town named Jericho soon sprang up, and was named such by a digger who noticed the similarity between the fern trees in the valley to those in an illustration on a page of the Bible showing Jericho with palm trees.

The discoverers of Jericho were each to receive £50 for their efforts in opening up a payable goldfield known as the B.B.Creek and the Jordan.

A letter in part to the Gippsland Times by Owen Little (4 April 1862) described early Jericho:- "We got a good payable prospect about 16ft sinking, since then the whole district has been rushed. The Jordan River is taken up for 15 miles - payable I believe for the greatest part; and numerous other creeks being opened every day. My claim is at the junction of one of these creeks and a level piece of ground. It is now a large township (Jericho). Everything is enormously dear, being obliged to be packed in from Jamieson - fifty miles. There is a large population of ruffians on these diggings, an unlimited supply of grog shanties, and of course plenty of fighting and rowdyism. We have built a hut of tree ferns, placed upright in the ground - it is most comfortable and pretty".

By July 1862 the scene was thus: "Jericho is situated on a flat of not more than two or three acres in extent, and is the most compact looking little township I ever saw. It consists of a main street, containing forty or fifty places of business of one sort or

another, and a line of habitations at the back of the left hand side; the town being situated on the left bank of the river. On either side rise precipitous and rocky ranges, their summit crowned with snow".

By 1864, Jericho had reached its peak - a correspondent from the Wood's Point Times printed this picture: "Jericho consists principally of the Court House and Police Barracks, the Camp Hotel and the Bank of Victoria in what may be called Bank Place, and of Poole's Golden Age Hotel at which there is a capital billiard table. Cadogan's Star Hotel and Hayes' Harp Hotel in the main street.

The stores are operated by Messrs Coutts, Benjamin and Rapiport, D.Quinn and Whitfield, with Whitfield's establishment also housing the Post Office. There are also a public school, a druggists shop, one butcher's and baker's establishment, some smaller business laces and private residences".

Also around this period there was Michael Prendergast's Shamrock Hotel of 20 rooms, one of tthe earliest, and the Niagra, with the Camp Hotel run by Charles Booth Alexander, hotelier, carpenter and unofficial undertaker. In addition there were a number of- "sloping gardens, the rich soil and the comfortable diggers homesteads which occur on either side of the Jordan, as well as a number of tunnels apparently put in for quartz reefs".

With some 1300 Europeans and a large population of chinese on the field, enormous wealth was to be gained by many lucky miners. The town was mostly supported through alluvial mining at which the Chinese made a good living, and by other major mining concerns such as: The Smile of Fortune Co. on B.B.Creek, the Emerald Reef, the Loch Fyne, the Haphazard and several others operating at a later date.

The town of Jericho was eventually surveyed in 1866 by the Surveyor General, Thomas Thompson, and at this stage an acre of land was set aside for a cemetery on a slope to the west of, and above the town.

In 1867 however, Jericho was entering a decline and its fortunes fluctuated for the remainder of the century. In 1873 the Chinese miners had outnumbered the Europeans as alluvial miners in the Jordan valley and continued to make a tolerably good living for their efforts.

In 1875, John Sadleir, former Victorian Police Officer, described Jericho on a visit there as "a decayed mining hamlet occupied by Chinese miners with a sprinkling of poor whites who seemed to have neither money or energy to seek a living elsewhere".

As the century drew to a close, mining had taken up a different form at Jericho when the Bennett family set up their hydraulic sluicing works on the Jordan river, known as Bennett's Jet Elevator Company. This was continued after the turn of the century by the Christie family who were connected to the Bennett's by marriage.

Lastly, in 1939, the bushfires of Black Friday destroyed all that remained of Jericho town, taking with it all mining, post office and other records that had been left in the town.

As with B.B.Creek, Red Jacket and other small former settlements in the area, blackberries continued unabated. The entire region falls into the Upper Thomson catchment area and is locked off to members of the public for eight months of the year by the MMBW.

Contributed by Gay Rogers.

Please address all correspondence to:

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P.O.Box 767, Morwell, 3840