

Mining a Rich Lode: The Making of the Springdallah Deep Lead Goldfield Communities

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ABSTRACT

Although little material evidence survives other than mullock heaps and the occasional ruined building, a large body of archival documentation exists to help reveal the history of the deep lead gold mining communities at Springdallah. This thesis reconstructs the discovery, rise and progress of that goldfield, 30km south-west of Ballarat, through a study of family formation and community building, facilitated by micro-study tools including prosopographical and genealogical databases. At its prosperous and productive peak in the 1860s and 1870s, the communities relied totally on the mining industry for their existence.

This thesis positions the alluvial deep lead gold mining industry firmly within the long but disparate historiography of Australian, and particularly Victorian, gold seeking. Unlike the many regional histories that celebrate the growth from goldfields to city status, it focuses on the miners who worked the deep leads of buried river beds, and how they and their families effected material and social change to benefit the communities they created.

The findings of this thesis reveal that, in contrast to the strong Cornish presence on many Victorian goldfields, miners at Springdallah came mainly from northern England, south-west Ireland, and the lowlands of Scotland, often with extensive kinship networks. The study demonstrates that this network of communities attracted workers, usually with coal and lead mining experience, who had skills suited to conditions in the deep lead alluvial gold mining industry. According to the findings of this thesis, miners gained power within the Springdallah communities by becoming members of committees, councils, and boards of local and wider institutions.

This study found that the Springdallah families were youthful, adapted well to their changed circumstances, were agents of change within their communities, and quickly took advantage of Victorian land legislation, particularly the 1869 Land Act, to take up farming properties both locally and in the north and east of the State.

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

Except where explicit reference is made in the text of the thesis, this thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma. No other person's work has been relied upon or used without due acknowledgment in the main text and bibliography of the thesis.

This is to certify that the thesis is less than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies, footnotes and appendices.

Signed

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Date *8 December 2015*

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I thank the staff and volunteers for their generous help at libraries and archives, including the Public Record Office Victoria, at both North Melbourne and Ballarat, the Ballarat Mechanics Institute, the Ballarat Historical Society at the Gold Museum, the Linton Historical Society, and the Ballarat Catholic Diocesan Archives. My thanks also are extended to the many family historians who have willingly shared publications and other information about their ancestors who lived in the Springdallah area.

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Editorial Notes

This thesis has been written and formatted to meet the requirements of the History Discipline in the School of Education and the Arts, Federation University. For source citation, the discipline requires candidates to use the Chicago note system with a bibliography. The online edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* (16th edition) was used as the reference for this system.

The School of Education and the Arts also requires candidates to comply with *How to Present Your Thesis: A Practical Guide to Requirements in Form and Style* by Catherine Pilbeam (Ballarat: University of Ballarat, 2005). For additional guidance on non-bibliographic conventions, such as capitalisation and hyphenation, the thesis has been guided by the Commonwealth of Australia's *Style Manual for Authors, Editors and Printers* (Canberra: John Wiley & Sons, 6th edition, 2002).

Name of Professional Editor: Lyn Moore

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MEASUREMENT CONVERSION CHART

Length

1 inch (in) = 25.4 mm

1 foot (ft) = 305 mm

1 yard (yd) = 0.91 m

1 mile (ml) = 1.61 km

Area

1 square mile = 2.59 km²

1 square mile = 640 acres

1 acre (ac) = 0.405 ha

4 roods (rd) = 1 acre

1 rood (rd) = ¼ acre

40 perches (p) = 1 rood

Troy Weight

This was the measure used for gold. Confusingly, it used the same names as avoirdupois weight to refer to different qualities. It consisted of 1 ton (2000 lbs - short ton) = 907 kg

1 pound (lb) = 12 ounces (oz) = 373 g

1 troy ounce (oz) = 20 pennyweights (dwt) = 31.104 g

1 pennyweight (dwt) = 24 grains (gr)

Money

1 pound sterling (£) = 20 shillings

1 shilling (s) = 12 pence (d)

Volume

1 gallon = 4.5 litres

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

PREAMBLE

A macadamized road snakes its way between lush paddocks grazed by black cattle and woolly sheep, beneath a cloudy pale blue sky. Away in the distant south-west a low mountain range is densely covered with the olive green foliage of an ironbark forest. A solitary homestead passed by the road has nestled among the shrubbery for 160 years, hidden at the end of a long driveway.

The traveller following this strip of tarmac for its full length will cover eight kilometres, not knowing from the landscape that it passes through the sites of two major gold mining townships of the 19th century, Piggoreet and Happy Valley. The sites of smaller mining settlements may also be found along the same road. Their mellifluous names include Golden Lake, Dreamers Hill, Lucky Womans, Derwent Jacks, Grand Trunk, Brownsvale, and Exchequer. Disturbed ground, mullock heaps, eroded gullies and gold-mine detritus such as broken bricks and rusting iron give barely a hint of the reality of the lively communities witnessed by gold-miners and their families, who once made their homes in the settlements that were accessed by this road.

Among the concealing brambles and long grass, there are clues to a past when horses pulled coaches crowded with travellers along the road between the small communities of this goldfield in the years before the coming of the railway. In Springtime the pink ladies, agapanthus, daffodils and snowdrops flower on the almost forgotten township sites of Happy Valley and Piggoreet, and on the many allotments surveyed in the 1860s and 1870s to provide homes for miners and their wives to raise their families.

Led on by the ribbon of road, the traveller meanders along a sleepy side track lined by red gums and barbed wire boundaries, glimpsing the patches of cobbles that remain as a reminder of busier times. In a broad valley a string of waterholes shine in a muddy riverbed that curves sinuously between slopes of grassy green. The old plank bridge was once tramped by men trekking daily to their places of work among and below the tall poppet heads, blacksmiths' and carpenters' shops, engine houses and puddling machines.

On a hill to the south, an overgrown lane ascends to an empty brick school building where teachers once listened to rows of children chanting their tables and alphabets. Those long departed pupils sat in wooden classrooms overlooking the

workaday bustle of the township, surrounded by the din of the mining companies: the shouts of mining men passing on information and direction, the warning blasts of mine whistles, the thumping of many steam engines, the rhythmic ringing of the hammer on metal in the forges, the churning and creaking of machinery, the rumbling of coach and wagon wheels, and the general clamour of sounds from life in a thriving goldfield community.

This quiet road once passed dozens of wooden public houses, their crowded verandahs leading into bar rooms, concert and dancing halls, and sometimes into a dozen or more rooms providing accommodation and dining. Drunken carousing, anger, and violence have left no echo. The equally crowded weatherboard churches, once filled with men, women and children, their voices raised in song and prayer, are also silent now. No clue survives to show where the court house and police station once stood, nor the site of the free library and public hall. No ruins stand to identify the main street with its stores filled with ironmongery, candles, canvas, tubs and buckets, and the aroma of freshly baked bread. The white painted shop fronts that once lined the main street, where busy shoppers bought their daily provisions, exist now only in illustrations.

The traveller, having lingered on a journey through imaginings and reflections of events and people long gone, now comes to the end of the old roadway, and moves on to join the main road back to the big city.

CONTEXT AND SCOPE

Entitled “Mining a Rich Lode: The Making of the Springdallah Deep Lead Goldfield Communities”, this thesis identifies and investigates the functional, social and economic nature of this network of nine settlements, now vanished and almost forgotten. The network of settlements is representative of Victorian deep lead goldfields communities at their industrious peak in the 1860s and 1870s. Close to Linton township, the settlements of Springdallah were part of the extensive span of goldfields industry along the Woody Yaloak Creek, south-west of Ballarat and south of Smythesdale and Scarsdale gold mining townships. The location of the Springdallah goldfield and its nine communities in relation to the rest of Victoria is shown in Figure 1.

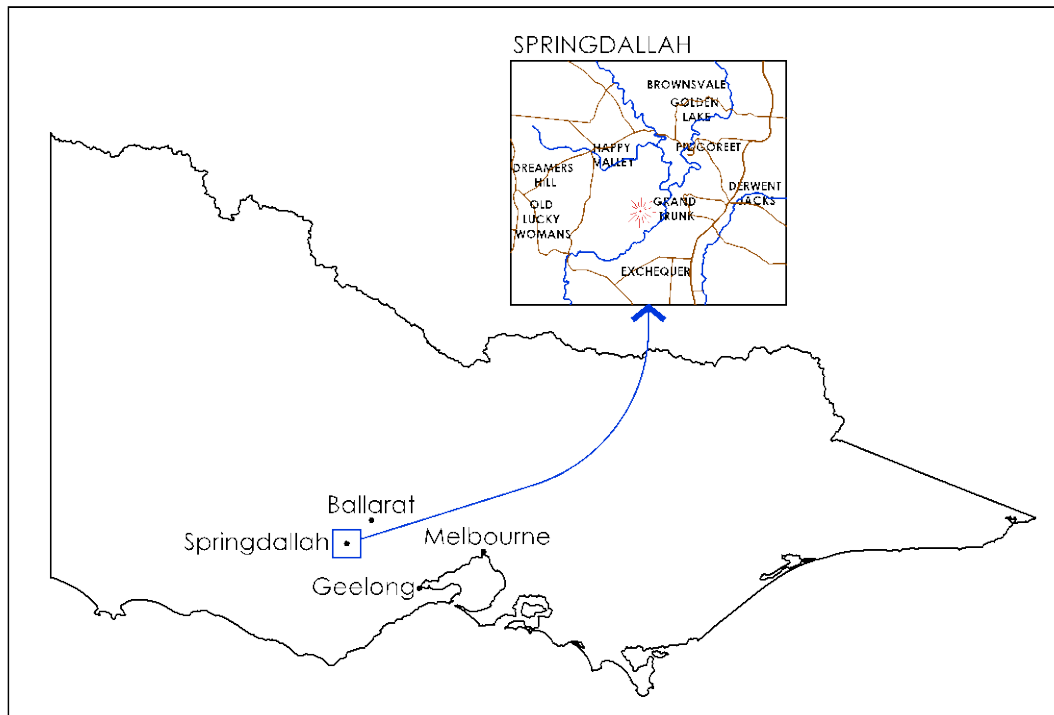


Figure 1. Nine communities of the Springdallah goldfield sited within Victoria

(Map courtesy of Stephen Hunt)

This thesis asks: “What was the nature of the network of nine communities that made up the Springdallah goldfield during a period of deep lead alluvial mining in the 1860s and 1870s, and how did the populations of those communities function in terms of their social, cultural, domestic and economic life?” Those questions are answered by the reconstruction of the goldfield, comprising a number of small communities whose existence relied totally on the gold mining industry. The study is placed within the context of a long and varied historiography of Australian, and particularly Victorian, gold seeking. Questions of economics, demography and employment can be more adequately responded to when studies such as this reveal, for instance, whether the Victorian Land Acts enabled residents to consolidate and settle on the land they had previously worked as miners, or whether they migrated to other goldfields and farmlands to continue wages work or other employment.

The Springdallah goldfield was one of many rich auriferous areas of Victoria discovered and mined in the second half of the 19th century. Stretching 8 km from east to west and 7 km from north to south, between Linton and Cape Clear, it was approximately 30 km south-west of Ballarat. Three commercial centres, Piggoreet, Happy Valley, and Golden Lake, serviced a network of communities that sprang up in the valleys and associated high ground created by the Spring, Springdallah and Woody Yaloak creeks,

and were at their peak between approximately 1860 and 1880. Each centre had smaller satellite settlements nearby, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The network of communities on the Springdallah goldfield

Piggoreet	Happy Valley	Golden Lake
Grand Trunk	(Old) Lucky Womans	Brownsvale
Exchequer	Dreamers Hill	Derwent Jacks

The major commercial centres servicing the network of communities were Piggoreet and Happy Valley from the early 1860s, and Golden Lake from the early 1870s. However, the gold mining companies were spread across and throughout the Springdallah goldfield so that the whole network, as shown in Figure 2, is the focus of study.

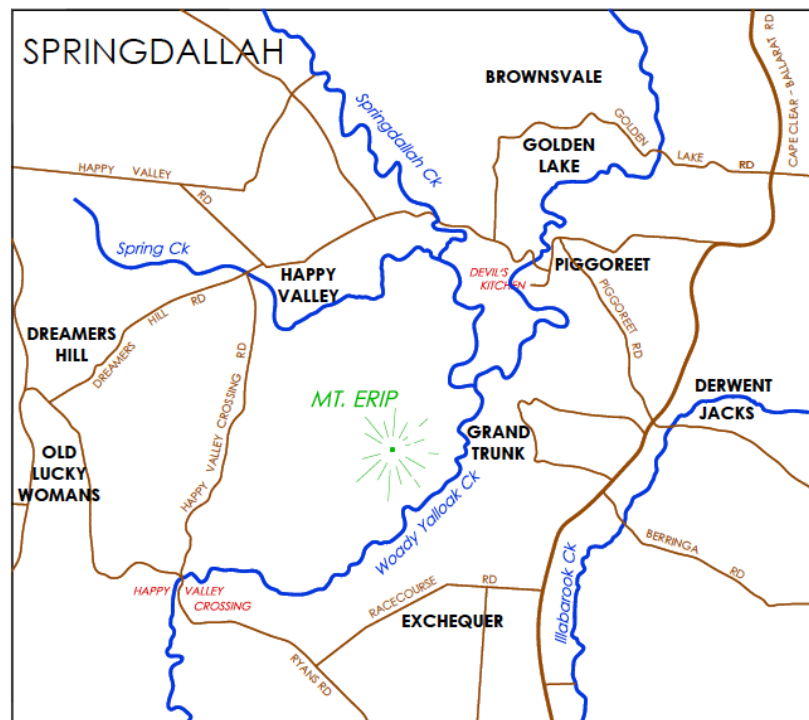


Figure 2. Network of nine communities on the Springdallah goldfield

(Map courtesy of Stephen Hunt)

During at least the first two decades of the network’s existence, there was fluid movement by many individuals and families between and across the nine communities. Men and youths travelled, usually on foot, to work at mines both within and beyond their own districts, and some families changed their places of residence frequently, while others remained for many years at the one site. But always there were important connections between the various workplaces and commercial centres that made up this goldfield, of which Mt Erip was the pivot.

PURPOSE AND RATIONALE

Deep lead mining companies developed after the famous shallow alluvial gold rushes of the early 1850s and contributed to the settlement and the creation of community. Families started to dominate in a society that had been mainly single miners during the initial gold rush period. This thesis argues that, following the community theory of German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies first espoused in print in 1887,¹ and despite many goldfields histories having been written, there is a lack of research into rich Victorian goldfields communities that comprised large numbers of families whose livelihood depended upon the deep lead mining industry. The lack of comprehensive studies revealing the symbiotic relationships between families residing at their industrial workplace on the mid-19th century Victorian goldfields, limits the extent to which we can fully understand the place of goldfields history in the creation and development of Australian society. Consequently, a knowledge gap exists in vital understandings of family and domestic life, and community and working life on rich deep lead Victorian goldfields. The purpose of this thesis is to help fill that gap by providing a detailed reconstruction and examination of the communities of Springdallah during the prosperous peak period of deep lead alluvial mining in the 1860s and 1870s.

THEORY

Theories of history are in a constant state of flux as theorists influence and challenge one another to re-evaluate or confirm previous thought and writing. Philosopher Leopold von Ranke in the early 19th century focused the attention of historians on a new, ground-breaking concept of archival research and the analysis of historical documents, a profound improvement on the previously accepted approach of simply assembling known facts.² The French *Annales* school of thought made further contributions in the 1920s by theorising that history should be framed as a series of investigative questions rather than as a mere narrative.³ The *Annales* movement also confirmed the academic validity of micro-studies of villages.

¹ Ferdinand Tönnies, *Tönnies: Community and Civil Society*, translated and edited by Jose Harris. (Oxford: Cambridge University Press, 2001; first published 1887). 17.

² Von Ranke is widely regarded as the founder of source-based history.

³ H.R. Trevor-Roper, "Fernand Braudel, The *Annales*, and the Mediterranean," *The Journal of Modern History*, 44, no. 4, (1972): 470.

Edward Hallet Carr, in contending that history is a social science, “a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialogue between the past and the present”,⁴ theorised that historians construct their versions of the past by interpreting the available material. The influential social historian Edward Palmer Thompson theorised that members of the working class were not just the victims of history, but actually helped to make history.⁵ His writings demonstrated that through their life-experiences, ordinary people exercised political power. The extent to which theoretical perspectives such as these have been accepted over the years is reinforced by their seeming so self-evident to the modern researcher. These theories made a profound impact at the time of their promulgation, an impact that continues into the present, an example being the ongoing influence, even after more than 60 years, of Hoskins’ promotion of fieldwork and its importance in studying local history.⁶

The theory that underpins this historical study is social and cultural, influenced by the new social history discussed above. It is apparent in the works of historians E. P. Thompson, Lawrence Stone and other historians influenced by the *Annales* school, and by Australian historians such as Weston Bate, Graeme Davison, Charles Fahey, Janet McCalman, Barry McGowan, Alan Mayne and others, whose work will be discussed within the literature review of Chapter 2. The theoretical perspective is symbolic interactionism, and the chosen research design is embedded in the epistemology of social constructionism.⁷ The interaction between the past and the present, inherent in this approach, was applied through use of source documents that record many aspects of the lives of inhabitants of the Springdallah communities of the period. These were interpreted to create a picture of events and people.

Many modern historians, influenced by philosophers and theorists such as those referred to above, have become advocates of a history from below or micro-history approach. Consequently, the methodology used to develop the Springdallah goldfield thesis grows from the schools of thought that have led to a historiographical shift over two centuries. This study embraces the new social history approach, with its emphasis on

⁴ E.H. Carr, *What is History?* (London: Penguin Books, 1961), 29.

⁵ E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*. 2nd ed. (Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1968).

⁶ W.G. Hoskins, *The Making of the English Landscape*. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1988).

⁷ Michael Crotty, *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process*. (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1998), 5, 42, 72.

the experiences of ordinary people in the past, who lived through an extraordinary period of social change in Australian, and particularly Victorian, history. The methodology of this study was chosen for its ability to analyse source material relating to individuals living on the Springdallah goldfield in great detail, but within the context of a wider knowledge of the period and society to which the study relates, as proposed by the British historiographer John Tosh.⁸

Apart from the comprehensive databases and the documentary narrative sources, Hoskins' "walking the landscape as a method of historical reinterpretation" played an important part in this research project.⁹ The mullock heaps, dams, ruined dairies, sheds, cottages and houses, fence lines, the surviving Happy Valley school building (used for many years as a barn) and the paddocks dotted with springtime-blooming bulbs, all contribute to the undocumented evidence of past human occupation.¹⁰ Garden argued that, compared with Aboriginal burning and hunting and European farming impacts "the gold rushes and mining brought swifter and more intense devastation to local ecosystems as well as widespread degradation of native forests and water systems".¹¹ There is ample evidence of gully erosion and subsidence throughout Springdallah, such that despite the passing of more than a century since the mining companies operated, nature has not yet been able to repair the damage. Maps, plans and surveys, rich with detail to be scrutinised and analysed, provide important information about the cultural landscape and contribute a prominent layer of detail in conjunction with pictorial evidence, such as photographs of Tibbits' paintings of the Piggoreet West homestead, Golden Lake store, Porter's Brownsvale hotel, and McLean's Happy Valley boot and shoe shop.¹²

⁸ John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: aims, methods and new directions in the study of modern history*. 5th ed. (Edinburgh: Longman-Pearson, 2010), 119.

⁹ Hoskins, *English Landscape*, 210.

¹⁰ Jane Lennon, *Case study of the cultural landscapes of the Central Victorian goldfields, Australia: State of the Environment Technical Paper Series, Natural and Cultural Heritage*. (Canberra: Department of the Environment, 1997), 9.

¹¹ Don Garden, "Catalyst or Cataclysm? Gold Mining and the Environment," *Victorian Historical Journal* 72, no. 1-2 (2001): 29.

¹² William Tibbits, *Piggoreet West Homestead*, photograph Linton Historical Society; *Golden Lake Store*, c. 1872, private collection of Mr Charles Watters; *Residence of Mr D. Porter*, 1868, <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/167665509>; *McLean's Boot and Shoe Shop at Happy Valley*, courtesy the late Max Standish.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology informing the design of this thesis influenced the method choices of prosopography and family reconstruction. Linked to historical ethnography the methodology is best suited to interpretive methods that use databases for analysis of extensively detailed data. Analytical study of documentary evidence can help reveal what the townships and mining workplaces looked like when fully functioning; where the people had come from and went to; how their families experienced their daily lives; the extent to which the communities of different religious beliefs, countries of origin, social status and occupational experience were homogeneous; and whether their lives had improved economically and socially as a result of their years at Springdallah. The methods of prosopographical and genealogical databases, used with other primary sources were able to help reconstruct family, community and working life at Springdallah, a Victorian goldfield that has not previously been investigated.

In order to reconstruct this network of communities, it was necessary first to understand the cultural and historical perspectives that informed the project. When Donald F. Mackay wrote the abstract to his thesis on the northern New South Wales Rocky River goldfield in 1953, he lamented the lack of case histories of Australian goldfields. He noted that “generalisations about the goldfields and their effects on the country’s development must remain of doubtful validity until a number of studies of this kind have been made”.¹³ He was writing at a time when the localised study of Australian history was almost non-existent, and little was being studied about the Victorian goldfields; this study is therefore a contributing case study. Although local history has flourished in the 60 years since Mackay’s work, there is still a lack of studies about how goldfields communities worked and lived, as historian Alan Mayne attests.¹⁴

Many rich primary research sources have survived, many in statistical formats, and others in narrative text such as letters and reports, which revealed much of social and historical importance about the gold mining communities in the period under study. The

¹³ Donald F. Mackay, “The Rocky River goldfield, 1851-1867”. MA Thesis. The University of Melbourne, 1953, iii. Handle [<http://repository.unimelb.edu.au/10187/11254>], accessed 15 May 2013.

¹⁴ Alan Mayne, “Family and Community on the Central Victorian Goldfields,” in *Gold Tailings, Forgotten Histories of Family and Community on the Central Victorian Goldfields*, ed. Charles Fahey and Alan Mayne. (North Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2010), 238.

datasets that included more than 6,000 entries from vital statistical nominative sources are described in Table 2.

Table 2. Primary sources from which the databases were compiled

Source type Date range	Area source relates to	Type of source document	Source document repository at the time of this study
Births 1864–1882	Springdallah	Certificates	Originals held privately by a family living at Piggoreet.
Deaths 1864–1882	Springdallah	Certificates	Originals held privately by a family living at Piggoreet.
Burials 1864–1882	Springdallah	Registrations	Originals held by Cemetery Trusts at Smythesdale and Linton.
School 726 1863–1882	Piggoreet	Registrations	Original held by Ballarat Historical Society, Gold Museum.
Shareholders 1863–1882	Springdallah	Listings	Published in the Victorian Government Gazettes online; CD database index compiled by Marion McAdie.
Mining 1861–1870	Springdallah	Reports in 10 Volumes	Original Dicker's Mining Records held in Ballarat Mechanics' Institute library.
Probate 1863–1882	Springdallah	Digital images	Published online for the years 1841–1925 on PROV website.
Vaccinations 1864–1882	Springdallah	Registrations	Photocopy of original document held by Woody Yaloak Historical Society
Baptisms 1861–1882	Springdallah	Registrations	Photocopies of originals held by Linton Historical Society.
Marriages 1875–1882	Springdallah	Index only	Typed manuscript index held by Linton Historical Society.
Newspapers 1852–1882	Springdallah	Digital images	Geelong, Melbourne, Ballarat newspapers on Trove.
Newspapers 1852–1882	Springdallah	Reports and articles	Ballarat newspapers on Trove and at Ballarat Mechanics' Institute.
Shire Records 1863–1882	Springdallah	Minutes	Grenville Shire minutes, VPRS 7232/P2, held by BAC, PROV.
Licences 1865–1882	Springdallah	Registrations	Piggoreet Courts, VPRS 4442/P0, at BAC, PROV.
Cause Book 1865–1882	Springdallah	Court records	Piggoreet Court Records, VPRS 1370/P0, held by BAC, PROV
Coroners' Inquests 1852–1882	Springdallah	Inquiries into deaths	Originals, VPRS 24/P0, held by VAC, PROV, North Melbourne.
Fire Inquests 1852–1882	Springdallah	Inquiries into fires	Originals, VPRS 407/P0, held by VAC, PROV, North Melbourne.
Land 1865–1882	Springdallah	Selection files	Originals, VPRS 439/P0, VPRS 624/P0, VPRS 627/P0, held by VAC, PROV, North Melbourne.

Source type Date range	Area source relates to	Type of source document	Source document repository at the time of this study
Maps, plans 1852–1882	Springdallah	Parish plans and maps	Originals held at libraries, archives, on-line and privately.

Note: PROV = Public Record Office Victoria; VPRS = Victorian Public Record Series; BAC = Ballarat Archives Centre; VAC = Victorian Archives Centre.

Areas of investigation that tended to develop from the source data included how the network of nine communities interacted with each other; the impact of different cultural, geographical, religious, employment and social backgrounds and classes on community life; and how the deep lead mining industry impacted on the Springdallah community.

DATABASES

The methods used to recreate the Springdallah network of communities involve a means to synthesise qualitative and quantitative sources, to carefully analyse the results, and to critically interpret and make reasoned conclusions. Details transcribed from extant documents that record aspects of the life histories of families were entered into prosopographical and genealogical databases, which enabled links to be made and meanings to be extracted through statistical analysis.

The Springdallah study is ideal for the purpose of investigation because it is limited within a geographical boundary; had a manageable population in terms of size; and demographic queries arose naturally about where the population came from, the occupations they undertook while living at Springdallah, the longevity of their residence, and their connections with the mining industry, and land selection and purchase within the district. Analysis of the data revealed information about the miners' backgrounds, the skills they brought with them, and how those skills were reflected within and outside the communities in which they lived.

One effective method used to achieve the aims of this thesis is prosopography, by which structured biographical data is collected, specifically targeting the attributes of people's lives that are common to the group under study,¹⁵ in this case the members of the Springdallah communities. The nature of a prosopographical database depends upon the individuals comprising it having at least one shared feature. In this study, they were individuals living within the Springdallah goldfield who were dependent for their

¹⁵ Katharine S.B. Keats-Rohan, Olga Borymchuk, and Jacquelyn Fernholz, "Prosopography Research." *Modern History Research Unit, University of Oxford*. Accessed April 10, 2013. URL: http://prosopography.modhist.ox.ac.uk/course_syllabuses.htm.

sustenance on income derived in one form or other from the deep lead gold mining industry.

The prosopographical aspect of the Springdallah study was important because of the large amount of primary data available for analysis about the individuals in the population, an essential feature of a prosopographical database, as described by the noted historian Lawrence Stone.¹⁶ The method involved creating, assembling, analysing, synthesising and interpreting an extensive database from a number of datasets of information entered into spreadsheets.¹⁷ That database was created mainly from data compiled in usually handwritten format that was generally tabular, such as birth, marriage and death certificates, and baptism and marriage church registrations, and burial registrations, court records and vaccination lists. Each column in the spreadsheet was a variable. Fields such as surname and forename were required, with other variables such as event dates, occupation and miscellaneous discrete details depending on the type of record from which the database was built. The importance of each source was evaluated originally to determine its value to the study, as recommended by Tosh.¹⁸ Nominal and other identifying fields provided the evidence to link any given individual to others in order to show kinship relationships. Each person was identified as an individual and care was taken to avoid confusion with another person bearing the same personal and family name. Occupation, age and birthplace, for instance, are possible suppliers of clarifying detail, according to historians who support the approach,¹⁹ and this proved to be so in the case of Springdallah.

Demographic information such as gender divisions, percentages of places of origin, age groups and so on were easily computed, along with other information such as occupational status, marriage place and age at marriage. Janet McCalman and her research team, in the “Founders and Survivors” ARC Research Project have highlighted

¹⁶ Lawrence Stone, “Prosopography.” *Daedalus* 100 (1971): 46-49, quoted in Donald J. Winslow, “Glossary of Terms in Life-Writing, Part I.” *Biography* 1:1 (1978), 75. <http://muse.jhu.edu/>. Accessed June 9, 2013, 46–49.

¹⁷ R.J. Morris, “Database and Spreadsheet,” *Research Methods for History*, edited by Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire, 141-166. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 151.

¹⁸ Tosh, *Pursuit of History*, 141.

¹⁹ Sonja Cameron and Sarah Richardson, *Using Computers in History* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 104.

the burgeoning importance and use of individual-level population data available from historical records, such as those listed above.²⁰

Representative families living and working in the nine communities that made up the goldfield were reconstructed through use of a second database that helped to reveal their family connections, occupations, places of birth and marriage, details of death and burial, and other kinship and demographic patterns. Selection of the families depended upon evidence of their presence in a range of documents, indicating their longevity as members of the Springdallah communities, including registration of the birth of at least one child at Springdallah,²¹ enrolment of their children in local schools, and involvement in social and cultural activities. A database program called Family Tree Maker (FTM)²² provided the means by which the myriad details were systematically organised by computer software, linking individuals within families across generations. The FTM management system stored and organised the 130 family networks compiled in this study, some of which had dozens of connected families.

The family case studies that FTM produced were supported by, and also supported, the analysis of data in the Excel spreadsheets that formed the prosopographical database. Standardising the entries taken from the handwritten registers and entering them into the database often required comparison and reference to certificates of other entries from families with the same surnames, and also to the indexes to births, marriages and deaths. Common differences appeared in names, for instance when the same woman was recorded in different entries as Ann, Anne, Annie, Anna, or Hannah. Similarly, birthplaces of parents varied frequently, as when a father might name his small birth village in Durham in one certificate, for instance, and in another would give the name of the nearest town. Checking with the 1851 census online at Ancestry.com, or the baptism entries on the FamilySearch website helped resolve the standardising problems.

Transcription of many documents and papers was the highest priority action in this approach, mainly from handwritten forms, letters, reports, registers, certificates and similar sources, which had been collected and stored, usually as public records.

²⁰ James Bradley et al., "The founders and survivors project." *The History of the Family* 15:4 (2010). Accessed February 26, 2013. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.hisfam.2010.08.002>.

²¹ A birth registration was essential for provision of evidence about places of birth and marriage of parents, dates and ages for computation of approximate birth years, and evidence for relationships.

²² Family Tree Maker, Mac 3 Platinum (Saint Ives, Cambridgeshire, UK: Avanquest Software Publishing Ltd., 2014).

Topographical and geological maps, township and parish plans, allotment surveys, titles memorials, and Google Earth have also formed essential sources to provide information about the Springdallah goldfield. These sources included original documentation from the land selection files, wills and probates, and shipping records in the collection of the Public Record Office Victoria.

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

There were some limitations to the usefulness of source material. For example, the Grenville Shire rate books have not survived for any years prior to 1896, so values of tenements and land could not be found for the period of study. A further limitation related to the Australian census records, of which only the statistical results were retained when it was government policy to destroy the enumerators' reports.²³ In addition, the published census results are not comprehensive for any of the nine communities of Springdallah: Happy Valley and Piggoreet had only incomplete records during the period 1851 to 1881, while no data was available in any years for the other areas of Springdallah.²⁴

Issues regarding perceptions of facts arose when accessing local history publications, such as that written in 1926 by William Hall Robertson (1871–1960),²⁵ in which some unsubstantiated claims were not capable of confirmation because records have not survived. Robertson wrote from personal experience and from information passed on to him by word of mouth, often about matters that he could not have known himself, being only a child at the time they occurred.²⁶ Consequently, the potential value of the information contained in the publication was compromised, and could only be made use of where other sources confirmed the detail. Furthermore, Robertson appears to have chosen not to reveal events at Piggoreet and Grand Trunk, the only parts of Springdallah included in his book, which might have been sensitive to his 1920s

²³ Australian Privacy Foundation, "Consultative Processes Pay Dividends. The Case of Census 2006," *Privacy Law & Policy Reporter*, 11, no. 6 (2005): 175. <http://www.privacy.org.au/Papers/Census0503.html>.

²⁴ Angus Watson, *Lost and Almost Forgotten Towns of Colonial Victoria. A Comprehensive Analysis of Census Results for Victoria 1841-1901* (Melbourne: Angus B. Watson & Andrew MacMillan, 2003).

²⁵ William Robertson, comp., *History of Piggoreet and Golden Lake* (Creswick, Victoria: Jim Crow Press, 1989).

²⁶ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 5655, Bessie Robertson, born 1875 at Brownsvale. This was the earliest record of the Robertson family at Springdallah.

readership, such as problems caused by alcohol or other evidence of community dysfunction such as suicide or lawlessness.

OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

This chapter, the first in the thesis, sets the scene with a preamble that provides a comparison between the physical environment at Springdallah at the present time and a reflection on its history. This introduction then reviews the context and scope of the thesis, presents the purpose and rationale for the study, provides the theoretical perspective, and discusses the methodology underpinning the methods used to research and reconstruct the Springdallah goldfields for analysis. It discusses the research methods, including the use of both a prosopographical and a genealogical database. Chapter 2 provides a critique of the research that has been published and that has contributed to the historiography of goldfields society. It discusses previous research into goldfields communities at grassroots and community levels, highlighting publications that have dealt with the cultural landscape, demographic issues and the role of prosopographical research approaches. Much of that literature has informed this thesis, challenged concepts already held, or been a catalyst to new ideas.²⁷ From early writers, often expert in their field, a generalised understanding of what happened on the central Victorian goldfields has been gained.²⁸ A current gap in the historiography is discussed, to be responded to by this thesis.

The third chapter introduces the pre-gold period, beginning with an explanation of how gold came to be where miners found it and the understandings that facilitated its finding and extraction in the 19th century, matters that can only be known by studying the geological formation of the region in which Springdallah lies. The arrival of humans into the landscape forms the latter portion of Chapter 3. Before gold was mined, the land was occupied by the *Wathawurrung* people for tens of thousands of years, but their lifestyle and cultural schema had experienced traumatic upheaval with the arrival of Europeans

²⁷ Barry McGowan, *Dust and Dreams: mining communities in south-east New South Wales*. (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2010).

²⁸ R. Brough Smyth, *The Goldfields and Mineral Districts of Victoria with notes on the modes of occurrence of gold and other metals and minerals*. Facsimile edition. (Melbourne: Queensberry Hill Press, 1979. Originally published, Melbourne: Govt. Pr., 1869).

along the south-eastern coast of Australia from the 1830s, after which pastoralists, mainly from Scotland, occupied the land at and around Springdallah.²⁹

This leads to the fourth chapter in which the means by which gold was discovered at Springdallah is explored and discussed. Although most Australian goldfields townships resulted from serendipitous discoveries, the first half of Chapter 4 argues that the discovery of the Springdallah goldfield was the result of a systematic, carefully planned strategy by a consortium of businessmen. The objective of the Geelong Gold Exploration Committee, formed in mid 1852, was to find a payable goldfield closer to Corio Bay than to Melbourne. The exploration party of five men was led by an extraordinary ex-convict, Herbert Swindells, whose published reports ultimately resulted in nine goldfields communities being created on the Woody Yaloak and Springdallah creeks.³⁰ Chapter 4 closes with a discussion of the shallow alluvial gold rushes and their effects on Victorian demography, the innovations and expansions of mining technology, and the experiences of diggers on the early goldfields.

The migration and settling experience for gold seekers whose aim was to share in the riches to be found in the new Colony of Victoria, and who found themselves settling more permanently at Springdallah, is covered in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 concentrates on the work environment of those living in the Springdallah communities during the period when the countryside changed from creek-meandering, hilly bushland interspersed with sheep-grazing paddocks to a populated district with roads, bridges and commercial infrastructure. This was when the mining companies were set up to gain the gold lying in deep leads of the old, buried streams. Technological, economic and general working conditions and experiences that were associated with this period are explored; for instance, the impact of changes in work experience for once self-employed shallow alluvial diggers who had become wage-earning miners employed by deep lead gold mining companies is examined.

In Chapter 7 the thesis looks more closely at the three townships of Piggoreet, Happy Valley and Golden Lake, with their smaller satellite settlements, examining the

²⁹ Patrick McGrath and others, *The Story of Browns and Scarsdale*. Edited by John West. (Melbourne: Scarsdale Old Boys Reunion, 1912); Ralph V. Billis, and Arthur S. Kenyon. *Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip*. 2nd ed. (Melbourne, Victoria: Stockland Press, 1974).

³⁰ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, July 28, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91930248>.

infrastructure, institutions, achievements and the difficulties that confronted the communities. The first section of the chapter is an overview of the whole Springdallah network of communities, followed by three sections relating specifically to the commercial hubs that made up the goldfield. The men, women and children in those communities of poppet heads and shrieking whistles, their homes and relationships, the state of their health and wellbeing, and their daily experiences are made plain, supported by conclusions from statistical analysis based on nominal records entered into the database. Conclusions are drawn and the contribution of this thesis discussed in Chapter 8, and further discussion points to the future, with the hope that this thesis will encourage more extensive studies of the lesser-known goldfields communities in Victoria.

CONTRIBUTION

This study makes a significant contribution to the body of knowledge about Australian history, specifically in a period of high gold production when the population increased at a spectacular rate and Australian, but in particular Victorian, society became fully established. This was a significant period in the development of Australian rural life, with gold mining cities and hinterland communities supporting the growth of the major cities of the coast and regional areas. It was the gold production, not just from the large and wealthy cities like Ballarat and Bendigo but also from the plethora of outlying goldfields communities, that financed the architecturally arresting, wide streets of Melbourne, Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo, flanked by buildings designed in classical European tradition. This particular study, through an innovative and integrated methodology, analyses sources to provide useful conclusions. This study is therefore an important contribution to goldfields historiography, given the lack of goldfields studies that have applied the methodology of prosopographical database structures to analyse a combination of quantitative and qualitative data. Further significance of this study lies in its contribution to current knowledge for local government planners when mapping an historic goldfields landscape, as an aid to its interpretation and protection in the planning schemes of local councils, and in particular the Golden Plains Shire.

CONCLUSION

This study aims, by use of the mixed methods discussed above, to “call from the back of the stage the anonymous crowd,”³¹ that exists in the local historical studies of place and time of the mid-19th century goldfields. It provides new perspectives and insights into goldfields families and communities at the height of deep lead gold mining. This thesis takes a different approach from that of many other historical studies of mining and the central Victorian goldfields. It focusses on individuals and their place in both the family and the workplace, the family and its place in the community, mining from the perspective of its role within the community, and the community as part of a network that makes up a successful, productive goldfield. As Fahey asserted, “Both deep leads mining and quartz reefing promoted the growth of towns and cities, and transformed the demography of the goldfield”.³² The Springdallah goldfield, as reconstituted in this thesis, is an important case in point.

A balance was maintained between secondary source use for qualitative research to provide the narrative, and primary source use for transcription into spreadsheets to assist with creation of databases to enable analysis of the data. The study strongly avoids any sense of a “scissors and paste” approach to historical research,³³ as primary documentation was the source of the data that was analysed and synthesised, enabling conclusions to be formed. The outcome is the reconstruction of a network of communities, set within the context of the physical landscape and its hidden treasure-trove of gold, the work environment within which the miners extracted that gold, the families and domestic backgrounds of those miners, and the industry that sustained each community.

The methods used allowed for a relational, multidimensional evaluation of the families and individuals on a deep lead goldfield such as has not been previously attempted, at least within the Ballarat region. Much of the textual narrative literature for this thesis is contemporaneous and primary, such as newspaper reports used in

³¹ C. MacLeod and A. Nuvolari. “The Pitfalls of Prosopography: Inventors in the Dictionary of National Biography,” *Technology and Culture* 47, 4 (2006), 776.

³² Charles Fahey and Alan Mayne, *Gold Tailings: Forgotten Histories of Family and Community on the Central Victorian Goldfields* (North Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2010), 8.

³³ Geoffrey Blainey, “Scissors and Paste in Local History,” *Historical Studies Australia and New Zealand* 6, no. 23 (1954), 339-56.

conjunction with Thomas Dicker's reports of gold mining companies, their specific locations and yields, their physical descriptions (including equipment and buildings) and their development.³⁴ The analysis and interpretation of such data reveals as nearly as possible the functional, social and economic nature of the network of communities that made up the Springdallah goldfield at its peak, with an emphasis on the working lives of families.

Important questions to help understand the experiences of families existing on a deep lead goldfield were identified when planning the database and selecting the appropriate primary sources for data. As Gunn and Faire concluded, "it is methods that produce knowledge, not 'research' in the abstract sense".³⁵ To what extent that knowledge has been successfully conveyed in publications and other forms of communication will be discussed in Chapter 2, which takes the form of a review of the historical literature.

³⁴ Thomas Dicker, *Dicker's Mining Record, and Guide to the Gold Mines of Australia, and Guide to the Gold Mines of Victoria; showing the Bearings, Depths, Thicknesses, Dips, and Underlies of the Auriferous Lodes; the progress and cost of works in operation; containing also a variety of valuable interesting and statistical information*, 10 vols. (Melbourne: Thomas Dicker, 1862-1870).

³⁵ Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire, eds. *Research Methods for History* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 4.

Chapter 2: SETTING THE SCENE

INTRODUCTION

Within the study of Australian history, the impact of the discovery of gold, particularly in Victoria, has provided academic research topics of high interest over many years. Even while the diggers were still arriving in their droves, writers and photographers and artists were recording their responses to what they perceived to be an historic event that would have profound repercussions in the newly independent colony. In the years since, historical commentators have produced many publications on the subject, which have viewed it from many angles and are replete with questions both answered and unanswerable. For the modern historian, it is essential to reflect upon the many studies that have been researched and published to date. With hindsight, some critics have found shortcomings in earlier works, questioning a lack of emphasis on what have become issues of importance to the present-day scholar, such as feminist perspectives, environmental degradation and ethnicity. Even writing styles of the past have been faulted by those who judge according to modern tastes. Yet, it is the gradual improvements built on those studies, the teasing out of those investigations, that has produced many of the fine works of more recent years. By reflecting upon those thought-provoking writings, historians, whether they agree with the perspectives or not, have been stimulated to debate, compare and investigate further. The result has been a richer and more wide-reaching body of knowledge and set of understandings about our past. This chapter looks at historiography as it relates to the goldfields of Australia, and in particular Victoria, in order to discern how the overall issues of importance to this thesis have been dealt with over time. It considers how goldfields historiography has adapted to social emphases, how it has revealed community and the workplace, and how methodology and the methods employed have made use of modern technology.

HISTORIOGRAPHY

The literature that informs this thesis was critically evaluated to determine the purpose it can serve, in terms of both its validity and its limitations. One of the earliest and most impressively wide-ranging works was that of mining engineer, geologist and civil servant, Robert Brough Smyth. Published in 1869, his industrial and technological history included geological, chemical, geographic and demographic viewpoints, while

homing in on specific details about individual mines and goldfields.¹ Like Serle's history of the Victorian goldfields during the all-important decade from 1851, which recounts many important aspects of the story of mining, it was an overview of his subject matter. Both works tended to broadly generalise the experiences of the working men with little mention of family situations and focused on the development of gold mining as an industry.² Australian goldfields' industrial history has been fully revealed in the mammoth work undertaken by Blainey, but again, the all-encompassing exploration of the subject is too large to include intimate coverage of small goldfields and the experiences of the individuals and families that inhabited them.³ The approach of such histories was of the time: broad sweeps across historical issues in which little was revealed of the individuals and families of the gold mining community that actually comprised the Colony of Victoria.

LIMITATIONS

Bate, in his impressive and colourful history of a major city in the Victorian colony of the period, wrote both generally and intimately, revealing much of the everyday lives of Ballarat's community in a period of societal upheaval.⁴ In these general histories, detailed discussion and analysis of large amounts of data were limited prior to the existence of the personal computer and database software. Extensive and authoritative though these major works are, their very breadth of study does not allow for a detailed emphasis on the family or the individual gold mining workers, yet it was they who made up the all-important communities. An important early contribution to goldfields historiography was the 1870 history of Ballarat by journalist and historian William Bramwell Withers.⁵ It belongs in the category of broad or general history but was also highly localised through its emphasis on the events of the Eureka Stockade and its

¹ Smyth, *Gold Fields*.

² Geoffrey Serle, *The Golden Age: A History of the Colony of Victoria 1851-1861* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1977).

³ Geoffrey Blainey, *The Rush That Never Ended: a history of Australian mining*. 3rd edition (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press).

⁴ Weston Bate, *Lucky City: The First Generation at Ballarat 1851-1901* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1978).

⁵ W.B. Withers, *The History of Ballarat*. Revised edition (Ballarat: F.W. Niven & Co., 1887).

cataloguing of the growth of the great city of Ballarat. In effect, it was all encompassing as a history of Ballarat and highlighted the contributions made by many residents and leaders to the institutions and organisations that made their social and economic mark upon Ballarat. However, as was the case with most if not all local histories written in the 19th century, it failed to analyse the events and developments, and tended to be a chronicle, without explanation or exploration of issues. The works of historians who wrote about the goldfields, the cities that grew from them, and the regional and national political structures that developed, mainly derive from the decades before the 1980s.⁶ These skilled, often poetic, historians dealt with informative generalisations about demographics, settlement and industrial development as they related to the impact of the gold mining industry. Historians such as Robert Brough Smyth, Weston Bate, Geoffrey Serle, Geoffrey Blainey and James Flett made enormous contributions to Victorian goldfields historiography and were groundbreakers in synthesising and analysing the extant records from the 19th century, but there were limits to the detail they could provide.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Since those earlier histories, there has emerged a tendency towards publications containing collections of articles that highlight and explore in greater detail than ever before the lives of ordinary working families on the 19th-century goldfields. These more recent books and papers reveal issues such as gender, race and class relations, and environmental change, bringing to bear many previously unassociated disciplines to support historical research, including archaeology, demography, landscape studies and anthropology. Reeves and Nichols in their emphasis on place, people and perspectives encouraged a “better understanding of the rich history and enduring heritage of the Victorian gold rushes”.⁷ Their compilation explored “the broader social and cultural significance of Victorian goldfields culture for Australian society”.⁸ The book, however, loses its cohesion somewhat by the range of disparate topics, lacking a clear overarching

⁶ Examples of such historians are Serle, Blainey and Bate, referred to above, as well as Raymond Bradfield, who wrote *Castlemaine: A Golden Harvest*, Betty Osborn and Trenear DuBourg, authors of *Maryborough: A Social History, 1854–1904*, and George Mackay, who wrote *History of Bendigo*.

⁷ Keir Reeves and David Nichols, *Deeper Leads: New Approaches to Victorian Goldfields History* (Ballarat: Ballarat Heritage Services, 2007), xviii.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 1.

theme. Its presentation inadvertently highlights the need for a thorough study of a gold mining community (or close network of communities) that reveals the experiences of mining families and single people living in an environment in which their entire purpose was the pursuit of gold. Similarly, in the fine collection of papers published by McCalman, Cook and Reeves, there is but a glimpse of what the daily life and domestic culture was like for goldfields populations in just three papers that highlight gender, archaeology and garden history as they relate to the 19th century.⁹

In recent years, historians have tended to tease out the specifics of topics that collectively reveal much about Australian society since the 1850s. One such work is Goodman's comparison of the Victorian and Californian goldfields.¹⁰ He and other historians have focused on the early period when the gold rushes were at their peak. They highlighted revelatory issues about this time when population figures grew in a uniquely exponential manner and the population itself behaved peripatetically.¹¹ Fascinating for its content, Goodman firmly fixed his book within the period of the gold rushes of the early 1850s, siting it outside the time frame of this study. Goodman's excited crowds of the early years of gold seeking were in essence a different form of community from those who settled the townships and built the cottages and hotels, poppet heads and chimneys of the later period. Just as the big history approach was essential to a general understanding of the unique role the goldfields played in influencing contemporary Australian society, so the topical approach, such as cultural, ethnic, gender, landscape and population studies,¹² reveals important aspects of Australian society that might otherwise be overlooked, neglected, deliberately hidden or obfuscated, or forgotten.

The result of the more recent works, almost exclusively presented as collections or compilations of specialised topics, is a somewhat sketchy history of aspects of the goldfields, not a broad and in-depth revelation of what the goldfields communities of the 1860s and 1870s consisted of or experienced. Lawrence's archaeological study of Dolly's Creek is the one fully integrated and detailed investigation of outstanding influence into a

⁹ McCalman, Cook, and Reeves, *Gold*. Note Part IV: Daily Life and Domestic Culture, Chapters 14, 15 and 16 contain the three papers by Anderson, Lawrence and Hunt respectively.

¹⁰ David Goodman, *Gold Seeking: Victoria and California in the 1850s* (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin), 1994.

¹¹ James Flett, *The History of Gold Discovery in Victoria* (Melbourne: Poppet Head, 1979), 326.

¹² For example, Lawrence's study, *Dolly's Creek*.

Victorian goldfields community.¹³ Although Dolly's Creek was relatively insignificant as a gold-producing diggings, the Dolly's Creek project has provided understandings of the daily lives of miners and their families using the physical evidence of archaeological artefacts supported by documentary interpretations.

COMMUNITY

Detailed studies of goldfields communities provide evidence for understanding how mining communities functioned in colonial society. McGowan stressed the significance of middling to small mining and industrial communities "in terms of population, production and regional impact, for they dotted the Australian landscape, often in clusters, from one end of the continent to the other".¹⁴ The theoretical contention that the communities of the Springdallah goldfields at their peak can be reconstructed for purposes of detailed study is supported by contemporary social and cultural history theory, with its emphasis on social structure, embracing cultural, spatial, linguistic, topographical, archaeological, demographic and other wide-ranging fields and disciplines.¹⁵

Much has been written on the concept of community, particularly in relation to society, based initially on the work of the German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies at the end of the 19th century.¹⁶ He described the sociological construct of community as comprising three elements: bonds of kinship, a shared geographical boundary and a sense of belonging to a group, each of which can be identified on the Springdallah goldfields. Yet, debate about a specific definition that truly describes community continues to engage social scientists of all schools of thought in books, articles and papers published across the globe, a debate pointed out by Macfarlane in 1977.¹⁷ It is clear that all definitions deal

¹³ Susan Lawrence, *Dolly's Creek: An Archaeology of a Victorian Goldfields Community* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 2000).

¹⁴ Barry McGowan, "Hegemony, Localism and Ethnicity: The 'Welsh' mining communities of Currawang and Frogmore in southern New South Wales," *Journal of Australasian Mining History*, 5 (2007), 39.

¹⁵ Jo Guldi, "Landscape and Place," in *Research Methods for History*, ed. Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012). 69.

¹⁶ Tönnies, *Community and Society*, 223-31.

¹⁷ Alan Macfarlane, "History, Anthropology and the Study of Communities," *Social History* 5 (1977): 1.

with people, but the other components are debatable on various fronts when closely investigated. Davison examined the concept of community in relation to writing local history and compared the view of Patrick O'Farrell, who "emphasized ideals of mutual dependence and intercommunication",¹⁸ with the view of labour historian, Lucy Taksa, who questioned whether community consistently exists or is created only at certain times in relation to societal needs. Reading between the lines, there is a sense that Davison was warning against an idealism or romanticism that mitigates against the reality of what past communities were actually like. In stating that "Community...is as much a product of history-making...as it is an object of impartial historical enquiry",¹⁹ Davison underlined the significance of the concept of community in human culture.

It falls to the historian, then, to be consistent in regard to the chosen definition for a community study. Murdock, almost as though he recognised the Springdallah goldfields, defined community as "a group of people who live in the same place and interact daily with one another".²⁰ Lawrence chose to base her archaeological study of a small Victorian goldfields community on that definition and claimed that "face-to-face interaction...can be used to measure the strength of the bonds in a community. The more frequently and more detailed the meetings between people, the stronger the community".²¹ The role of institutions and their buildings, according to Lawrence, is linked to community identity.²² Those buildings, in which so many community activities take place, such as shopping, entertainment, worship, education and legal processes can reinforce evolving perceptions of the community. Evidence of these activities survives for the communities on the Springdallah goldfields and provides support for her definition and view of community. Lawrence went on to note the interaction and opportunity for confirmation of community membership when people share activities. As an example, within Springdallah, newspapers abound with items reporting sporting events, especially turf club race meetings, athletic sports and picnic days, meetings of friendly societies and lodges, and concerts, which were all part of the goldfields' entertainment agenda for the

¹⁸ Graeme Davison, *The Use and Abuse of Australian History* (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2000), 216.

¹⁹ Ibid., "Fifty Years of Victorian Local History," *Victorian Historical Journal*, 84:1 (2013): 130.

²⁰ G.P. Murdock, *Social Structure* (New York: Macmillan, 1949), 29.

²¹ Lawrence, *Dolly's Creek*, 13.

²² Ibid., 14.

year. So, the cementing of a sense of community, whether or not it was necessarily harmonious, can be seen to occur both formally and informally.

SPRINGDALLAH

In 1926 a small history about two Springdallah communities was compiled by William Robertson, who had been a local resident but was by that year living in Ballarat.²³ Robertson's Scottish father and Irish mother had moved some time after 1872 from Cambrian Hill to Brownsvale near Golden Lake, with two young children, William and Mary Ann. The births and vaccinations of three later children were registered at Springdallah after January 1875. Robertson's personal knowledge of Springdallah at its peak, therefore, could only have been learned at second-hand as he grew to understand the reminiscences of friends and neighbours. Despite its great value in providing details otherwise lost to posterity, his book suffers from a parochialism that assumes its readers are as intimate with the subject as are those who people the book, such as when a site is identified as "just west of the old fig tree", "at the rear of Pattinson's drapery shop" and "above where Mr C. Leask now lives"²⁴. Robertson's descriptions of Piggoreet and Golden Lake are peopled by friends, neighbours and relatives across two or three generations, bound by common experiences in a benevolent democracy confined by the boundaries of those two settlements. Dissension is absent and unity prevails; the focus is on the cohesive community.

Robertson's history illustrates Davison's view that a myth of community is sustained by some local history writing and publishing, which he warned could support or create myths.²⁵ Kusmer has written similarly of a "nostalgia for traditional views of community based on families, now perceived to have declined".²⁶ Hoffer long ago observed that "the forces in a given area that create human groups and the interests they have are numerous and varied. Some circumstances of life lead people apart as well as unite them".²⁷ These views can be seen in the aspirations of the people of Springdallah

²³ Robertson, *History of Piggoreet*.

²⁴ None of these sites now exists or is capable of identification.

²⁵ Davison, *Use and Abuse*, 256.

²⁶ Kenneth L. Kusmer, "The Concept of 'Community' in American History," *Reviews in American History* 7, 3 (1979): 380, accessed December 2, 2012, URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2701173>.

²⁷ C.R. Hoffer, "Understanding the Community," *American Journal of Sociology* 36 (1931): 617, accessed 16/6/2013, URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2767166>.

and the motivation for their social, community-based actions. Elements of both homogeneity and heterogeneity existed at Springdallah, especially given that the communities, which came into being only because of the deep-lead gold mining industry, consisted for the most part of individuals and families recently arrived from a range of countries with differing religious and other cultural, class and work-experience backgrounds. Non-English language differences, for example, existed among European and Asian immigrants, and even among Gaelic-speaking Irish and Scots from Britain.

WORKPLACE

From the early 1860s, Springdallah, like most goldfields in central Victoria that were becoming permanent settlements, created communities where its members may or may not have belonged to particular religious communities, did or did not share a common workplace, were related to a number of other residents or had no kinship links in this country. By this period, concerns about the “community critically out of balance”,²⁸ so apparent during the gold rush period, when gold-digging was primarily the work of men working and living alone or in small groups, were largely resolved due to the deep-lead gold mining companies. They facilitated the formation of settlements, villages and townships peopled mainly by families. As Philipp pointed out, each goldfields community, and its life, was distinctive, not uniquely local, and not necessarily typical of the wider colonial world.²⁹ She advised that “community must not be thought of as a system of human relationships that is always the same for all communities [because] it embraces conditions and kinds of relationships that, in some respects at least, can be variable”.³⁰ She also made the point that the maintenance of community depends on a fairly high degree of stability, which was the case at Springdallah across at least three decades.³¹

The concept of community is important in understanding how modern Australian society has developed over time. For this reason, the study of the network of small communities on the Springdallah goldfield will strengthen the current historiography of

²⁸ Goodman, *Gold Seeking*, 165.

²⁹ June Philipp, *A Poor Man's Diggings: Mining and Community at Bethanga, Victoria 1875-1912* (Melbourne: Hyland House, 1987), xiii.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, *Mining Community*, 46.

³¹ A period of three decades is generally acknowledged to be the measurement of a full generation, as it is the average interval between the birth of an individual and the birth of his or her offspring.

goldfields culture. Community as a concept need not be homogeneous or unified in any or all social aspects for the population still to be a community. Indeed, a community spirit need not exist within a community as identified in this thesis, which chooses to identify it as a geographical entity in which the residents interact frequently. By its nature, a community is a cultural organism, with factions, struggles and conflicts based on differences in ethnicity, gender, religion, financial stability, educational status, and so on.

Based on the foregoing readings, for the purposes of this thesis, community has been defined as a relatively self-contained geographical area (town, village or small settlement) in which occur all the daily occupational, social and cultural activities of its residents within the period of this study. And within those recurring domesticities elements have been included, such as class, race, gender, leadership, personality and economic differences, and dissonances and imbalances of human interactions that were common to goldfields communities, as they are to any community. McGowan argued that the “specific nature of a mining community has important implications for the expression of localism”.³² He made the point that smaller-sized communities of miners allowed for consensus to be achieved through personal interaction, as there were no industrial, administrative or institutional bodies such as workers’ organisations.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

An important element in the study of the Springdallah goldfields is cultural landscape, which is a useful substitute for the local historian untrained in archaeology. Hoskins’ pioneering work about English landscape history alerted local historians worldwide to engage in fieldwork to expose historical evidence of human influence in the natural landscape.³³ Forty years later, a similar stream of consciousness inspired the eccentric, imaginative and provocative historian Schama to create his extraordinary tribute to wood, water and rock through a synthesis with human activity and natural history.³⁴

³² Barry McGowan, “Class, Hegemony and Localism: The Southern Mining Region of New South Wales, 1850-1900,” *Labour History* 86 (2004): 93, accessed June 16, 2013, Stable URL: <http://www.Jstor.org/stable/27515969>.

³³ Hoskins, *English Landscape*, 298.

³⁴ Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (London: Fontana Press, 1996).

Lennon has studied the cultural landscape of the goldfields of central Victoria and described a relict (or fossil) landscape as “one in which an evolutionary process came to an end at some time in the past, either abruptly or over a period. Its significant distinguishing features are, however, still visible in material form”.³⁵ Lennon’s paper is supported by the work of Guldi, who, in looking at landscape as a possible alternative when there is a lack of other sources, stressed the link from “the undocumented history of experience to the everyday environment of popular life”.³⁶ In addition, Garden, an environmental historian, reminded his readers of the natural beauty that was destroyed by the ravages of gold mining.³⁷ He pointed out the scrub-lined creeks of clear water and gullies “alive with birds”³⁸ that were cleared, burnt, diverted and turned into pits and heaps of mud, gravel and clay. His discussion is joined by the reflections of McGrath, writing in 1912 about the pastoral country that became Brownsvale, that the “open forest” was “a scene of sylvan beauty, soon to be sadly disfigured by the sludge and mullock heaps of the mines”.³⁹

McGowan has discussed physical remnants of mining as distinguishing features to be found on the New South Wales goldfields.⁴⁰ Underground deep lead mining and the technological improvements that were achieved in Victoria have been studied by mining archaeology authorities, detailing the systems of extraction of gold from buried riverbeds and the particular problems that form of mining brought to miners.⁴¹ The history of alluvial and deep lead mining, and conservation of the resultant cultural landscapes, has become a specialist area for McGowan. By undertaking archival and field work, notably in the deserted gold mining areas of New South Wales national parks and state reserves, he has raised matters of importance for further study, highlighting that “both academic historians and archaeologists have neglected the evidence for [people’s] experiences in

³⁵ Lennon, *Central Victorian Goldfields*, 9.

³⁶ Guldi, “Landscape and Place,” 70.

³⁷ Garden, “Catalyst or Cataclysm?,” 33.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ McGrath and others, *Browns and Scarsdale*, 16.

⁴⁰ Barry McGowan, *Bungonia to Braidwood, an historical and archaeological account of the Shoalhaven and Mongarlowe goldfields* (Canberra: B. McGowan, 1996), 3.

⁴¹ Christopher J. Davey and Peter L. McCarthy, “The Development of Victorian Gold Mining Technology,” *Victorian Historical Journal* 73(1) (2002): 64.

the bush and country towns”.⁴² In relation to Victoria, and specifically the Springdallah area, the mullock heaps, altered watercourses, springtime bulbs blooming and buried bluestone guttering of Springdallah townships such as Piggoreet can provide ample cultural landscape evidence, which is awaiting interpretation.⁴³ To assist such study, the reports on mining sites at Springdallah, researched and compiled by Supple are meticulously detailed, comprehensively researched and highly informative, although there is no analysis or interpretation of the information extracted from the sources.⁴⁴

DEMOGRAPHICS

The enormous increase in population, from Asia and America as well as all European countries, had a great economic and demographic influence on Australian society in general and Victoria in particular.⁴⁵ From the Great Dividing Range to the south coast, on the land that became the Springdallah goldfields, the Indigenous people had lived for eons, occupying the plains and waterways and highlands that they knew was their own country.⁴⁶ Prior to gold discovery, and despite being aware that Aboriginal people occupied that region, Europeans from Van Diemen’s Land and Sydney assumed there was no impediment to their occupying those grasslands in order to graze their sheep and cattle. The representatives of the British government had, in 1835 and under Governor Bourke, proclaimed the whole country “terra nullius”.⁴⁷ The Aboriginal occupiers of the land were usurped by European (mainly Scottish) land-hungry settlers, who invaded and occupied their tribal lands.⁴⁸ In their turn, the squatters found the lands

⁴² McGowan, *Bungonia to Braidwood*, 285.

⁴³ Hoskins, *English Landscape*, 302.

⁴⁴ Ray Supple, “Historic Gold Mining Sites in the Southern Mining Divisions of the Ballarat Mining District.” *Report on Cultural Heritage*, Melbourne (1998). Accessed January 23, 2013. URL: www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/heritage/archaeology/gold-mining-history-and-mining-plots-in-victoria/historic-gold-mining-sites.

⁴⁵ McCalman, Cook and Reeves, *Gold*, 1.

⁴⁶ Michael Cannon and Ian McFarlane, *The Aborigines of Port Phillip, 1835-1839* (Melbourne: Public Record Office Victoria, 1982).

⁴⁷ James Boyce, *1835 The Founding of Melbourne and the Conquest of Australia* (Melbourne: Black Inc., 2011).

⁴⁸ Margaret Kiddle, *Men of Yesterday: A Social History of the Western District of Victoria 1834-1890* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1967).

they occupied overrun in the early 1850s by newly arrived gold seekers, who held different aspirations, values and interests.⁴⁹

The impact of the gold discoveries in Victoria was overwhelming to the administrators of the new Colony of Victoria, and no less to the Indigenous people.⁵⁰ Relations between, and attitudes towards, each other can be observed through the recorded encounters, confrontations, and lifestyles of Aboriginal and invading populations throughout the gold mining period.⁵¹ The *Wathawurrung* of the Springdallah district, after major neglect by observers and writers, are increasingly recognised and recorded in mainstream historical works of modern times, notably through the work of Cahir and Clark.⁵² The relationships between the Aboriginal occupiers and the newcomers are a thread interwoven in this study of Springdallah.

Experiences of people from various backgrounds, countries and cultures being thrown together in the central Victorian goldfields were revealed in the 10 chapters compiled, and contributed to, by Fahey and Mayne in their collection of papers about family and community in the goldfields townships of central Victoria.⁵³ Contributors to this work have incorporated a range of methods of, and approaches to, gathering data, such as oral history and use of contemporaneous diaries, and have explored different ethnic and demographic issues relating to, for instance, the Chinese and Welsh on the goldfields. It is rare to find a work on a Victorian goldfields community that covers the experiences of settling into a township and all that it entails.⁵⁴ Indeed, no academic historian has touched upon the history of the Springdallah communities, which made up the southern portion of the twenty-kilometre span known as the Woody Yaloak

⁴⁹ Richard Broome, *Arriving. The Victorians* (McMahons Point, N.S.W.: Fairfax, Syme & Weldon Associates, 1984), 21.

⁵⁰ Boyce, 1835.

⁵¹ Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians: a history since 1800* (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2005).

⁵² David Cahir, *Black Gold: Aboriginal people on the goldfields of Victoria, 1850-1870* (Canberra: ANU E Press and Aboriginal History Incorporated, 2012); Ian Clark, *Aboriginal Languages and clans: an historical atlas of western and central Victoria, 1800-1900* (Melbourne: Monash University, Melbourne, 1990).

⁵³ Fahey and Mayne, *Gold Tailings*.

⁵⁴ Wendy Ellen Morris, "Dunolly Families, Methodism and Mining: a study of Wesleyan families living in the small Victorian gold mining town of Dunolly during a period of approximately sixty years from 1860 to 1920s" (MA diss., Monash University, 1987).

goldfields. In particular, no study has been made of the combined populations of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Victorians and new arrivals from New Zealand, America, Europe, Great Britain, China and other colonies of Australia (ex-convicts and free settlers, and children born to ex-convicts and free settlers).

FAMILY RECONSTITUTION

Stone defined his “investigation of the common background characteristics of a group of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives” as prosopography.⁵⁵ More recent historians specialising in the approach recognise that it is a powerful tool in historical analysis, which has been aided by the technological revolution of recent decades, resulting in the widespread use of computers and databases.⁵⁶ Pelteret clarified that it “can be interpreted as the study of identifiable persons and their connections with others for the purpose of enabling the modern student to discern patterns of relationships”.⁵⁷ As a research approach, its aim is to bring together systematically in a database all relevant biographical data of a designated group of people to reveal connections and patterns influencing historical processes.⁵⁸ Prosopography has been employed mainly in historical settings where there is a dearth of biographical information available about the subjects under study, often in Britain and Europe as far back as the classical era.⁵⁹

Increasingly, however, the method is being applied to more recent historical settings and within the Australian context. Janet McCalman, for instance, has been involved with collaborators in three major prosopographical projects: the Lying-In Hospital Birth Cohort, 1857–1900, which is a cradle-to-grave dataset of babies born in

⁵⁵ Lawrence Stone, “Prosopography,” 47.

⁵⁶ Katharine S.B. Keats-Rohan, “Progress or Perversion? Current issues in Prosopography: An Introduction” *Oxford: Unit for Prosopographical Research*, (2003):1, accessed August 6, 2013. URL: users.ox.ac.uk/~prosop/progress-or-perversion.pdf.” 1.

⁵⁷ David Pelteret, “Unity in diversity: Prosopographies and their relationship with other databases,” *History and Computing* 12 (2000), 13.

⁵⁸ Koenraad Verboven, Myriam Carlier and Jan Dumolyn, “A Short Manual to the Art of Prosopography, Prosopography Approaches and Applications. A Handbook,” *Unit for Prosopographical Research, Linacre College* (2007): 37, accessed April 11, 2013. doi: <http://hdl.handle.net/1854/LU-376535>.

⁵⁹ James K. McConica, “The Prosopography of the Tudor University,” *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 3, 3 (1973): 544. Accessed May 6 2013. URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/202553>.

hospitals in the 19th century (with Dr Ruth Morley and Professor Gita Mishra); the Koori History Research Database, which is a reconstitution of the Aboriginal population of Victoria from 1840 to 2000 (with Ian Anderson and Len Smith); and Founders and Survivors, which is reconstituting the lives before and after sentence of the convicts transported to Van Diemen's Land and the lives of their descendants, concluding with members of the First AIF. While touching on both biography and genealogy, family reconstitution provides for population study in a specific region by detailing all documented facts about individuals and linking them where such links apply.

As Keats-Rohan, a major proponent in the modern, computer-based uses of prosopography, pointed out, "it merely collects and exploits structured biographical data".⁶⁰ Yet, prosopography "targets the common aspects of people's lives, not their individual histories".⁶¹ The website guide provided by the University of Oxford includes a tutorial and several background readings to assist with the understandings and planning required to establish a prosopographical database, that was essential to the analysis required by this thesis.⁶² Families were reconstituted in the genealogical database to supplement and complement the prosopographical approach, bringing together historical data to identify, link and extend families. This record-linkage approach is supported by King, who suggested that the "technical difficulty of the multiple source record linkage which underlies life-cycle reconstruction has been somewhat overstated".⁶³ Kennedy, for instance, highlighted the "significant investment of time to compile and link the sources" as a task requiring too great a commitment.⁶⁴ However, to a competent and dedicated typist used to reading old-style handwriting, the inputting of data from hand written documents into a spreadsheet is not very time consuming when using modern computers

⁶⁰ Katharine S.B. Keats-Rohan, "Biography, Identity and Names: Understanding the Pursuit of the Individual in Prosopography," *Modern History Research Unit, University of Oxford* 140, accessed April 10, 2013, URL: http://prosopography.modhist.ox.ac.uk/course_syllabuses.htm.

⁶¹ Verboven, Carlier, and Dumolyn, "Art of Prosopography," 41.

⁶² Keats-Rohan, Borymchuk and Fernholz, "Prosopography Research."

⁶³ Steve King, "Historical Demography, Life-cycle Reconstruction and Family Reconstitution: New Perspectives," *History and Computing* 8 (1996): 2:65, accessed April 24, 2013, doi: 10.3366/hac.1996.8.2.62.

⁶⁴ Gregory M. Kennedy, "Pushing Family Reconstitution Further: Life Course, Socioeconomic Hierarchy, and Migration in the Loudunais, 1705-1765," *Journal of Family History* 37(3) (2012): 315. DOI: 10.1177/0363199012439153, <http://jfh.sagepub.com>.

and software. Other limitations raised by Kennedy are related to the nature and period of his study (geographic boundary, migration across parishes and lack of data about ages), which do not apply in the case of Springdallah's prolific documentation from a more recent period, including a complete set of birth and death certificates for the period under study. Similarly, the possible high error problems of record linkage (in which the database may link unrelated but similar names) do not exist in the Springdallah period when not only are names fixed, but also frequently appear written in the subject's own hand.⁶⁵

While Carpenter raised conceptual and methodological problems, for example, in identification and classification, she stated that "those limitations tend to be eliminated by the adjunct of other interpretive methods to that of prosopography".⁶⁶ Another issue is that of the database possibly becoming further removed from the original source material, but there is no other manageable means by which the data can be manipulated for analysis. Coding of occupations is one example of removal from the original format, but for the Springdallah project the occupations are almost exclusively related to the mining industry and the variety of descriptors is therefore not as wide as would be needed for an urban suburb, for instance, so a coding system is unnecessary. King acknowledged the need to link lives across sources,⁶⁷ and it is obvious that the mixed methods as described above provide the enriched means to do just that. Indeed, these mixed approaches (prosopography, family reconstitution and multiple source record linkage) are the only means by which the proposed Springdallah project can be undertaken. The strengths and limitations of prosopography are responded to by use of the range of methods discussed above, which provide the unique approach of quantitative analysis applied to historical scholarship.

CONCLUSION

The accumulated wealth of historical material related to the goldfields of Australia, published as books, academic papers, magazine articles, documentaries,

⁶⁵ Verboven, Carlier, and Dumolyn, "Art of Prosopography," 58.

⁶⁶ Charlotte Carpenter, "The Formation of Urban Elites: Civic Officials in Late-Medieval York 1476-1525" (PhD diss., University of York, 2000), 40. URL: <http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/2514/1/DX215732.pdf>.

⁶⁷ King, "Historical Demography," 64.

commentaries, films, and similar, expands with every passing year. The time frame it covers, almost 165 years, would, in other fields, discount some of the work as having become out of fashion. Yet the writings of historians such as Robert Brough Smyth and George Mackay continue to contribute invaluable insights and information many years after their lifetimes. The limitations that do exist in earlier works are relatively insignificant when judged alongside the contributions that dedicated and committed historians have made in their own time and up to the present. Changing attitudes have influenced social history, introducing a stronger emphasis on history from below. This new social history has led to more local, thematic, personalised perspectives being explored across a range of disciplines now seen as providing important insights into historical themes. This more topical approach, aided by archaeology, demography, anthropology and other related disciplines, is seen to provide a better understanding of particular aspects of life of ordinary people on the goldfields. Currently, this is revealed in published chapters on such diverse topics as pleasure gardens, environmental influences, ethnicity, gold rush brooches and industrial relations. However, this overview of Victorian goldfields historiography has revealed a lack of comprehensive studies into how communities were created and functioned during the two decades when alluvial deep-lead gold mining industry was at its zenith. It has thereby identified a gap in knowledge that this thesis could fill, grounded on a firm theoretical and methodological base, about how the community networks of the Springdallah goldfields functioned.

Chapter 3: BEFORE GOLD

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter argues that this thesis provides new understandings of goldfields communities by studying the miners and their families, who were living and employed in a network of settlements at Springdallah. This chapter explores three pre-gold themes to help establish an understanding of how gold came to exist at Springdallah and the occupation of the district by humans prior to the discovery of gold. The three themes are the physical geology of the Springdallah area, the evidence of Aboriginal occupation and the 19th-century settlement by pastoralists from Britain. Some basic information about the geological formation of the Springdallah area provides an understanding of how gold came to be present not only in the gullies and valleys, but also deep below the surface. Geologists such as Robert Brough Smyth, in consultation with engineers and experienced miners, shared their knowledge and experience of geology and mining techniques from which all mid-19th-century Victorian gold miners could benefit.¹

While most of Victoria's mining population arrived after the discovery of the goldfields, the study of the Western District by Kiddle graphically recounted how others, such as British (mainly Scottish) pastoralists, had been settled in the region for more than a decade prior to the gold era.² The boundaries of three grazing runs met within the area that later became the Springdallah goldfield. The holders of those pastoral licences, with their families, managed large flocks of sheep and herds of cattle at the time that gold seekers started arriving in about 1852. The area had been the home of Aboriginal people, the *Wathawurrung*, who had occupied the land for tens of thousands of years, as Broome so eloquently described.³ Evidence of Aboriginal occupation at Springdallah exists in the naming of natural features such as creeks and hills, as well as in documentary and oral history reminiscences of early European settlers. These three pre-gold themes help to set the scene for the following period, when gold was initially discovered in the district and towns started to develop.

¹ Smyth, *Gold Fields*. Smyth was appointed secretary to the Board of Science when it was established in 1858.

² Kiddle, *Men of Yesterday*, 31–76, 183.

³ Broome, *Victorians*, 23–35.

THE LAND

As previously discussed, the several communities of the Springdallah goldfield resulted from the discovery and retrieval of gold buried deep underground. Deep lead mining companies required a workforce to access the rich auriferous alluvium by means of shafts and tunnels, and to extract and process it. How the gold came to be there and the understandings that facilitated its finding and extraction in the 19th century can only be known by studying the region's geological formation.

The gold mining industry, in its infancy, learnt by observation and experience, pooling information and sharing scientific and technological developments. Mining engineers, surveyors, mine managers and others gradually developed expertise and knowledge about how payable gold might most efficiently be found and exploited. A mineral surveyor for Victoria was appointed in 1852, and a palaeontologist commenced working for the Geological Survey in 1856. Publication by the Geological Survey, over many years, of geological maps, goldfields reports and statistics was vitally important to the early gold miners, as shown by the comprehensive Special Publication 5 edited by Douglas and Ferguson for the Victorian Branch of the Geological Society of Australia.⁴ It was the hunger for knowledge and understanding that led to Smyth's thoroughly researched work on the mining districts of Victoria in 1869; to the establishment of the Ballarat School of Mines in 1870; and to the numerous lectures on mining, metallurgy, geology and associated subjects in Mechanics' Institutes across the state.⁵ Geology also helps explain landscape features, both natural and man-made, referred to by British historian Hoskins as the "visible signs upon the face of the country",⁶ that reveal clues to the industrial history of Springdallah.

Many parts of Victoria owe their gold mineralisation to processes that occurred more than 400 million years ago.⁷ During the late Cambrian period of the Palaeozoic era, in the area that later became known as the Woody Yaloak goldfields in the region of Ballarat, igneous rocks formed the bed of a deep sea. According to the geologist

⁴ J.G. Douglas, Ferguson, J.A. and Geological Society of Victoria, *Geology of Victoria* ([1st ed.]) (Melbourne: Geological Society of Australia), 1976.

⁵ Smyth, *Gold Fields*; Warren Perry, *The School of Mines and Industries Ballarat: a history of its first one hundred and twelve years, 1870-1982* (Ballarat: School of Mines and Industries Ballarat, 1984).

⁶ Hoskins, *English Landscape*, 193.

⁷ G. Neil Phillips and Martin J. Hughes, "Victorian gold deposits," *Australian Geological Survey Organisation Journal of Australian Geology & Geophysics*, 17:4 (1998), 213.

d’Auvergne, the land as we know it was “under the sea off the east coast of ancient Australia”.⁸ Carey, in his discussion about volcanism, explained how lava flowed from underwater volcanic fissures, eventually forming oceanic crust.⁹ Succeeding layers of sedimentary sand and mud gradually created a thick sedimentary pile covering the rocky ocean floor.

Over millions of years of burial and compression, the ancient basaltic rocks were altered, taking on a dark green hue, and are sometimes called greenstone. Some examples have been brought to the surface along a major geological structure, the Avoca Fault Zone, which passes through Piggoreet and Pitfield Plains, according to the Geological Survey of Victoria.¹⁰ They also described how the thick sediment was buried and underwent conversion to sandstone and shale (which includes mudstone and siltstone). Over an extended period between 450 and 350 million years ago, the succession of greenstone, sandstone and shale was strongly deformed, mostly by compression that caused folding, faulting and fracturing. This was a mountain-forming phase that established a landmass where previously it had been deep-marine. It was also in this interval that gold, probably derived from the greenstone, was transported in aqueous solution into the sedimentary succession above and precipitated in fractures with quartz to form auriferous quartz veins. These quartz veins required crushing to remove the gold from the quartz extracted by miners many millions of years later.¹¹

According to recent study of the region that includes Springdallah by geologist Stephen Carey, Australia began to separate from the supercontinent of Gondwanaland about 90 million years ago.¹² Deep weathering and erosion, which had begun in the late Palaeozoic and continued through the Mesozoic into the Cenozoic, led to decomposition

⁸ Peter d’Auvergne, *The Deep Lead Mines of Ballarat*. Sovereign Hill, Ballarat and Lihir Gold Ballarat (2009): 4, accessed November 10, 2014. <http://education.sovereignhill.com.au/media/upload/audio/LeadsandDeepLeads.pdf>. Peter D’Auvergne was Senior Project Geologist for Ballarat Goldfields Limited.

⁹ Stephen Carey, “Rocks and landscapes: the context for gardens of the Ballarat region” (paper presented at the 33rd Annual National Conference of the Australian Garden History Conference for the Australian Garden History Society, titled ‘Gardens of a Golden Era’, held 9-11 November 2012 in Ballarat).

¹⁰ Finlay, I. S. and Douglas, P. M., “Ballarat Mines and Deep Leads”, *Geological Survey Report No. 94 and Ballarat 1:100,000 mines and deep leads map* (East Melbourne: Geological Survey of Victoria, 1992), 7.

¹¹ Douglas M. Stone, *Gold Prospecting* (Lilydale, Victoria: Outdoor Press, 1977), 15.

¹² Carey, “Rocks and Landscapes,” 6.

and disintegration of the rocks, and removal of gold from the quartz veins. As Smyth succinctly stated, “Gold is found in quartz veins, and in the rocks which these veins intersect, and in the detritus and debris which ancient or modern streams have deposited in the gullies and creeks”.¹³ In particular, such secondary gold was concentrated in the curves and bends of rivers, creeks and gullies. Blainey, reflecting on the gold deposits waiting to be discovered across Australia’s goldfields, referred to “those alluvial layers that had been eroded over the centuries from the hard rock and had been buried in the gravels a few feet beneath the earth’s surface”.¹⁴

The buried alluvial deposits are known by the mining term “deep lead”. Erosion of the land, particularly by heavy rain and raging torrents, created the undulating countryside, where the lava flows were carved into by the course of the rivers and creeks. The mullock heaps left by years of deep lead mining, which dot the countryside throughout Springdallah, are made up of alluvial sediment and provide a window into what lies beneath the basaltic plain. The presence of the basalt required that mining companies blast to reach the gold beneath.¹⁵ Typically, the deep leads are much deeper than the shallow alluvial deposits that were exploited in the early rush period and are considerably older than the shallow alluvials. Flett claimed that they were of immense influence in providing permanence and prosperity to the goldfields of the Ballarat region.¹⁶

Work by University of Melbourne geologists, such as Guy Holdgate, Malcolm Wallace and Stephen Gallagher, has confirmed that a period of volcanism began around seven million years ago when lava flowed onto the plains.¹⁷ Successive lava flows buried gold-bearing streams and rivers, creating narrow basalt plains confined to valleys in the

¹³ Smyth, *Gold Fields*, 73. Robert Brough Smyth was born near Wallsend, Newcastle upon Tyne, Northumberland in 1830; his father and brother were “colliery viewers”, i.e., managers in charge of all underground, and generally of all surface arrangements. (Ancestry.com. *1851 England Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2005. Original data: *Census Returns of England and Wales, 1851*. Kew, Surrey, England: The National Archives of the UK (TNA): Public Record Office (PRO), 1851. HO107/2389, 458:11, Crookhall pit near Consett, Northumberland, 30 Mar 1851).

¹⁴ Blainey, *Rush That Never Ended*, 10.

¹⁵ Ralph W. Birrell, “The Development of Mining Technology in Australia: 1801-1945” (PhD diss., University of Melbourne, 2005), 286. URL: <http://hdl.handle.net/11343/36521>.

¹⁶ Flett, *History of Gold Discovery*, 368.

¹⁷ G.R. Holdgate et al., “Cenozoic fault control on ‘deep lead’ palaeoriver systems, Central Highlands, Victoria” *Australian Journal of Earth Sciences*, 53 (2006): 466.

highlands. Lava flows at Springdallah are evident in the cliffs, crevices, gorges and ranges, as shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Lava flows in eastern side cliffs at the Devil's Kitchen

(Photograph courtesy of Gary Hunt)

The growing understanding of geology helped inform mining managers' necessary decision-making in the mid 19th century. It was reported at the end of December 1860, for instance, that the Grand Trunk Lead Gold Mining Company selected the site for its shaft after examination of the local geology formation along the Woody Yaloak creek.¹⁸ As another example, the mining surveyor for the Smythesdale No. 6 Division of the Ballarat Mining District, John Lynch, drew a section in Smyth's publication to illustrate the strata to a depth of 120 ft at the Tam O'Shanter Company's shaft on Slaughterhouse Hill at Lucky Womans (later called Happy Valley).¹⁹ As shown in Figure 4, the material was a thin layer of red clay overlaying 90 ft of basalt, beneath which was a layer of boulders to a depth of 10 ft covering the auriferous drift in the gutter (the common term for the buried river bed) resting on the green slate bottom.

¹⁸ Supple, "Historic Gold Mining Sites." The Grand Trunk Lead Gold Mining Company is listed as mine no. 84, HI H7622-0390.

¹⁹ Smyth, *Gold Fields*, 191.

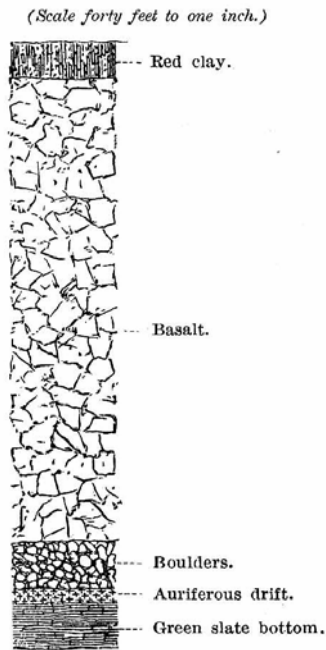


Figure 4. Section of Tam O'Shanter Company's shaft, Slaughterhouse Hill, Lucky Womans

(Reprinted from Smyth, *Goldfields*, 191)

Highly deformed sedimentary rock that is not horizontal is clearly apparent in the cliffs of the amphitheatre known as the Devil's Kitchen, as shown in Figure 5, and the ranges of Mt Erip. These are evidence of the lava flows previously referred to. A



Figure 5. Deformed, non-horizontal flows in south-west cliffs at the Devil's Kitchen

(Photograph courtesy of Gary Hunt)

distinctive feature of the cliffs at the Devil's Kitchen at Piggoreet is columnar basalt, formed during the cooling of a thick lava flow when significant contraction or shrinkage created many vertical fractures, as shown in Figure 6.²⁰

²⁰ E. Sherbon Hills, *Physiography of Victoria* (Melbourne: Whitcombe & Tombs Pty. Ltd, 1959): 192.



Figure 6. Vertical columns of basalt in the Devil's Kitchen

(Photograph courtesy of Gary Hunt)

Highly deformed, near-vertically oriented Palaeozoic sedimentary rock is exposed beneath the basalt. Deformation is extreme within the Avoca Fault Zone, which has experienced repeated movement over time, and is well displayed in road cuttings at Piggoreet.²¹ Geological study by Taylor and others has revealed that the high, crescentic cliffs and gorges of the Devil's Kitchen were carved out by the Woody Yaloak Creek over a period of millions of years.²²

The Woody Yaloak Creek, which rises in a swamp north of present-day Haddon, flows south, eventually flowing into Lake Corangamite, generally following the same route as the ancient sub-basaltic alluvium.²³ The Woody Yaloak and its tributaries, including the Spring and Springdallah creeks, were rich sources of gold during the gold rushes of the mid 1850s, as discussed in Chapter 6. Within the Springdallah goldfield, there was limited reef or quartz mining because most of the gold there derived from sub-basaltic alluvium.

Working the deep leads to extract the matrix for crushing and processing required the sinking of shafts not only through gravel, sand and clay, but also often through basalt laid down by one, two or more lava flows, making mining a costly enterprise. Mining companies were formed and invested heavily to fund shaft sinking and underground tunnelling, infrastructure of poppet heads, machinery, steam engine houses, horse

²¹ Finlay and Douglas, *Ballarat Mines*, 9.

²² D. H. Taylor et al., *Ballarat 1:100 000 map geological report* (Fitzroy, Victoria: Department of Agriculture, Energy & Minerals, 1996), 106.

²³ Smyth, *Gold Fields*, 184.

powered puddling machines, water pumps and sluice apparatus, and the employment of miners and support workers.²⁴ The ubiquitous water pumps were necessary because as the shafts were sunk the mines entered the ancient river systems. Deep lead mining was commonly known as wet mining for this reason, but it was here that, according to d’Auvergne, the highly concentrated gold was to be found.²⁵

By the time the last of the lava flows had hardened into basalt and were being carved into by water torrents, during a period when the ocean levels were considerably higher than at present, the Aboriginal Australians had long since made the southern coastal region their home.²⁶ The much later communities of miners and their families undertaking long-term employment at Springdallah were part of an industry for whose existence the geological formation of the land was the catalyst.

THE ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIANS

Broome, while advising that “the archaeological record in Victoria is still very fragmentary”, asserted that “Artefacts found at Keilor reveal that the Aborigines reached the southern coast of Australia at least forty thousand years ago”.²⁷ Prior to the arrival of non-Indigenous people, the entire Ballarat region and southward to the coast, including the Springdallah goldfields district, lay within the traditional lands of the people of the *Wathawurrung* language group. The name was derived from their distinctive word for *no*, and Clark has listed over 130 variants of its spelling.²⁸

Wathawurrung territory stretched from the Bellarine Peninsula in the south to the Great Dividing Range in the north, and from the Werribee River in the east to Mt Emu Creek in the west, as shown in Figure 7.²⁹ The *Wathawurrung* people had language

²⁴ Supple, “Historic Gold Mining Sites.”

²⁵ d’Auvergne, *Deep Lead Mines*, 14.

²⁶ Broome, *Victorians*, 4.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Ian D. Clark and Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages, *Aboriginal Language Areas in Victoria : A report to the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages* (Melbourne, Vic.: Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages, 1996): 17. The representation of this name appears to be in flux. Among the several versions of this word, including *Wathaurung* and *Wadawurrung*, I have decided to use *Wathawurrung*, it being the spelling consistently used by Clark.

²⁹ Gary Presland, *The Land of the Kulin. Discovering the lost landscape and first people of Port Phillip* (Melbourne: McPhee Gribble, 1985): 25.

affinities with the *Djadja wurrung*, *Ngurai-willam-wurrung*, *Daung wurrung*, *Woi wurrung* and *Bun wurrung*.

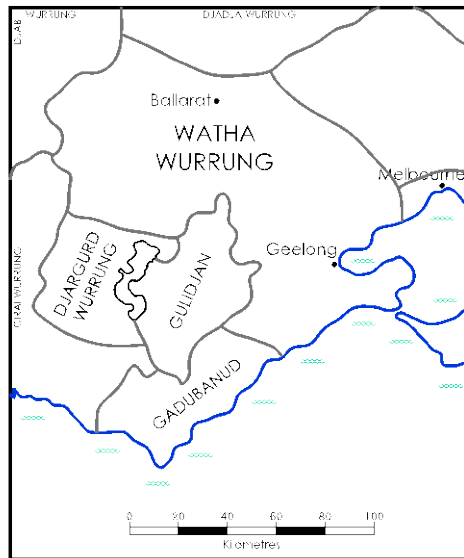


Figure 7. Aboriginal language areas in central Victoria: A reconstruction

(Map courtesy of Stephen Hunt, adapted from Ian Clark 1996)

A patrilineal form of moiety system was shared across these language groups, in which marriage rules existed.³⁰ According to Barwick, the *waa* (crow) person was able to marry only a *bunjil* (eaglehawk) person. Studies by Clark revealed that at the time of contact with the first non-Indigenous visitors, such as sealers and whalers, there were 26 clans that made up the *Wathawurrung* language group.³¹ They included the *Wongerer balug*,³² whose country of affinity was around the head of the Woody Yaloak Creek near Haddon, Nintingbool and Smythesdale. Other clans were the *Carringum balug*, who occupied the country around Carngham and Snake Valley; the *Beerekwart balug* near Mount Emu and Skipton; and the *Carininje balug*, who inhabited the land around Emu Hill on the south-western edge of Springdallah.

During the long period of time in which successive generations adapted to the land and climate, understanding intimately the plant and animal life, and gaining knowledge of the suitability of materials for hunting, cooking, and repairing and making tools, implements and weapons, the Aboriginal people gradually developed and

³⁰ Diane E. Barwick, "Mapping the Past: An Atlas of Victorian Clans 1835-1904," *Aboriginal History* 8:1 (1984):105.

³¹ Clark, *Aboriginal Languages and Clans*.

³² The word *balug* means "people".

maintained their social, cultural and family life.³³ There is little existing documentation of Aboriginal Australians at Springdallah, although evidence survives of their having lived, worked and socialised there, particularly along the Woody Yaloak creek. The euphonious names marking natural and man-made landscape at Springdallah provide a link to its early history. Piggoreet is apparently a corruption of a word that sounded like “Pee-ja-ret”, meaning “constant waters”.³⁴ On the north-west side of the Springdallah Creek next to the Devil’s Kitchen is the sloping, ironbark-covered range named Mount Erip, from the *Wathawurrung* word *yurru* meaning “ironbark”.³⁵ Cahir discussed the frequency of squatters using *Wathawurrung* names for their pastoral stations, and this is true for both Piggoreet and Moppianimum runs, on which the Springdallah gold mining communities developed.³⁶

In 1841 George Robinson, the Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate, which existed between 1839 and 1849, visited the Mount Emu pastoral station and met some members of the *Beerekwart balug*.³⁷ Robinson observed that by this time the two women and four male youths surviving were sheltering at Mount Emu and Emu Hill pastoral runs, and the members of this clan were now called, by Europeans, the “Mount Emu tribe”. Clark explained that by the 1850s non-Aboriginal people of the region rarely used the traditional language of their clans, and this is apparent in regard to personal names as well.³⁸ Francis Ormond in 1859 reported to a parliamentary select committee that the Mount Emu tribe comprised 17 people, including only two children, a 13-year-old girl and an 11-year-old male whom he referred to as

³³ Broome, *Victorians*, 6.

³⁴ Robertson, *History of Piggoreet*, 1.

³⁵ Ian D. Clark, “Multiple Aboriginal Place Names in Western Victoria, Australia” (paper presented at the 23rd International Congress of Onomastic Sciences, Toronto, Canada, August 17-22, 2009):202.

³⁶ David Cahir, “Why did squatters in colonial Victoria use Indigenous placenames for their sheep stations?” in *Indigenous and minority placenames: Australian and international perspectives*, ed. Ian D. Clark, et al. (Canberra: Australian National University, 2014), 225.

³⁷ Ian D. Clark, ed. *The Journals of George Augustus Robinson, Chief Protector, Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate*, Vol. Two: 1 October 1840-31 August 1841, 2nd edit. (Melbourne: Heritage Matters, 2000), 41.

³⁸ Ian D. Clark, “The northern Wathawurrung and Andrew Porteous, 1860-1877,” *Aboriginal History* 32 (2008): 100.

“half-caste”.³⁹ He further stated that between 1853 and 1855, a period prior to the incursion of large numbers of gold seekers to the district, “a good many deaths had occurred from venereal disease and accidental deaths by fire whilst in a state of intoxication”.⁴⁰ Ormond gave evidence to the select committee that at that time the Mount Emu tribe were employed in sheep-washing, and harvesting, and cutting wood, and were paid in money for these services, presumably mainly by the pastoralists who now occupied the land, which had previously been the traditional home country of *Wathawurrung* people.

Several sites at Springdallah have been memorialised as being associated with Aboriginal occupation. One site is the large waterhole on the Woody Yaloak Creek just south of the small bridge east of Golden Lake, and another is the flat hill later called the Tableland, overlooking the Devil’s Kitchen, both of which were described as popular camping grounds.⁴¹ On 20 January 1993 a memorial plaque at the burial site on Piggoreet West station of a *Wathawurrung* man known as Old Joe was unveiled by members of the Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operative. Also present were Gordon Clarke, whose great-grandfather was the pastoralist who employed Old Joe, and members of the Woody Yaloak Historical Society.⁴² The Clarke family believed that Old Joe was the last *Wathawurrung* man to have been employed by the family, possibly an indication that other Aboriginal people may have been employed there at an earlier time.

A number of *Wathawurrung* people born prior to the arrival of Europeans were living on their traditional lands along the Woody Yaloak creek and around Springdallah and were witness to the impact of massive cultural change. In many records, they are given only the name attributed to them by Europeans. One example is James Miller, who was described as a member of the Mount Emu tribe when giving evidence about the death

³⁹ Victoria. Parliament. Legislative Council. Select Committee on the Aborigines. *Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council on the Aborigines : together with the proceedings of Committee, minutes of evidence, and appendices*, 1858-9:27, accessed January 14, 2015.

http://aiatsis.gov.au/archive_digitised_collections/_files/archive/removeprotect/92768.pdf.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁴¹ Robertson, *History of Piggoreet*, 4.

⁴² Gordon John Clarke (1906–1996) recalled (to this writer) his grandfather John, who died in 1919, showing him the site of the burial that was at one time surrounded by a picket fence, since burnt in a bushfire. The WYHS members included this writer, Margaret Getsom, Ray Willis, and Gwen Jones.

of an Aboriginal man known as Old Donald at Carngham on 25 October 1863.⁴³ On another occasion, Miller was described as being of the Burn Bank tribe, but this may be an alternate non-Indigenous description for the same traditional clan. An inquest was held after a young man known as Burn Bank Jackie was thrown from a horse at Carngham in September 1863, so some connection between the Burn Bank and Mount Emu tribes may be assumed,⁴⁴ judging by the use of both descriptions for Miller. Old Donald was described as being about 60 or 70 years old, so was apparently born around the end of the 18th century, and had been known to farmer Andrew Porteous since about 1841.⁴⁵ Porteous was a participant in the Honorary Correspondent Scheme, which functioned in Victoria from 1860 to 1868, and fitted the description given by Clark that honorary correspondents had been “in continuous occupation of their stations since the early 1840s and had forged positive relationships with local Aboriginal clans”.⁴⁶ Old Donald’s wife had died many years before, but his son lived at their camp, as did William, who the Europeans called “the king of the Mount Emu tribe” and was apparently an Aboriginal elder. Europeans often ascribed the title of king to a clan or tribal elder.⁴⁷

James Miller, referred to above, spoke English well and said he was stock riding for Mr Clapperton at “the Amphitheatre”⁴⁸ about mid 1863, at which time he returned to live with his tribe, “camping in different places in the district”.⁴⁹ Miller was never baptised nor did he become a Christian, and he signed his mark with a cross. His sister was married to a son of King William, known as George, who died on 22 May 1864 from heart disease when it was thought he was about 26 years of age. They had no children. George died after travelling to the Devil’s Kitchen at Springdallah for a gathering and

⁴³ PROV, VA 2889 Registrar-General’s Department, VPRS 24/P0, Inquest Deposition Files, Unit 131, File 1863, no. 928, Old Donald of the Mt Emu tribe at Carngham.

⁴⁴ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 131, File 1863, no. 929, Burn Bank Jackie, at Carngham, aged 23 years, found to have died from water on the heart.

⁴⁵ Andrew Porteous, a farmer living at Carngham, was correspondent for the Central Board for the Protection of Aborigines. He died aged 63 on 1 March 1877 and is buried in Carngham cemetery

⁴⁶ Clark, “Northern Wathawurrung,” 98.

⁴⁷ Janice Newton, “Remembering King Billy,” *Journal of Australian Colonial History* 3:2 (2001): 65.

⁴⁸ This is the way that Amphitheatre, a small town near Avoca, was described at that time.

⁴⁹ *Argus* (Melbourne), July 28, 1862, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5719010>. Thomas Clapperton’s wife gave birth to a son at Amphitheatre Station, and to a daughter in February 1865, thus providing evidence that Amphitheatre township was likely to have been named after the squatting station.

corroboree attended by Aboriginal people of the district, including his father who was coming there from Skipton.⁵⁰ The dates and other details indicate that most, if not all of these Aboriginal adults were born many years before the arrival of gold seekers in the 1850s, and the older ones such as Old Donald and King William would have had memories of life prior to the arrival of any Europeans. The impact of gold discoveries compounded the damage already done by squatters and their sheep to the lives of Aboriginal families.⁵¹ By 1865 Andrew Porteous reported that the people the “tribe” was composed of were “the remnants of four tribes, viz. Mount Emu, Mount Cole, Ballarat, and Wardyallock tribes”.⁵²

PASTORALISTS

The earliest Europeans living in the area that became Springdallah were either Scottish or English, who started arriving to take up tens of thousands of acres of pastoral land from the early 1840s.⁵³ Prior to the settlement of Scots miners in the early 1860s, there were families from Scotland who had settled along the creeks, valleys and cliff tops of the Springdallah district 20 years earlier, grazing sheep and cattle on tens of thousands of acres for a mere £10 licence per annum. Dingle introduced his discussion about the situation throughout the colony with these words: “Land was cheap – after squatting was legalised the annual licence fee for a run was £10 and even this was easily evaded for several years”.⁵⁴

These pastoralists, popularly called squatters, with their wives and children, were disproportionately represented by the Scots.⁵⁵ The extensive study by Prentis noted that the Scottish diaspora, in a similar pattern to that of other British countries, included Australia among its several places of settlement throughout the world, particularly during

⁵⁰ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 141,1864/392, George of the Mt Emu tribe at Carngham. He was known to Andrew Porteous since about 1844.

⁵¹ Cahir, *Black Gold*, 39.

⁵² Clark, “Northern Wathawurrung,” 101.

⁵³ Ralph V. Billis and Arthur S. Kenyon, *Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip* (Melbourne, Victoria: Stockland Press, 1974. Second edition; first edition 1932).

⁵⁴ Tony Dingle, *Settling. The Victorians* (McMahons Point, N.S.W.: Fairfax, Syme & Weldon Associates, 1984), 25.

⁵⁵ Malcolm D. Prentis, *The Scots in Australia: A study of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, 1788-1900* (Sydney, N.S.W.: Sydney University Press, 1983), 62.

the early to mid 19th century.⁵⁶ On the one hand, there were push factors due to events such as disease of the potato crops and the Highland and Lowland clearances, which led to land tenants' dispossession and eviction to clear land for sheep grazing.⁵⁷ The pull factor was created by the discovery of gold in the Colony of Victoria. Both had an influence on Scottish immigration to Australia.⁵⁸ The Scots were already well represented in the Australian colonies in the decades before the discovery of gold, seeking land for pastoral development. Those breeders of sheep and cattle pursued all the opportunities the British government offered in the form of land grants and licences to occupy, in order to avail themselves of tens of thousands of acres of land on which to fatten up their flocks and herds for market.⁵⁹ Kiddle made the point that most of the Scottish pastoralists of the Western District, who arrived in the colonies in the early 1800s, were Lowland farmers. Griffiths supported the view of Kiddle that most were young bachelors, like the Learmonth and Yuilles, who were still in their late teens when they arrived in the Buninyong-Ballarat district.⁶⁰

However, the settlers who squatted on the three pastoral stations on which the Springdallah goldfield developed were atypical, as each was over thirty years of age when they took up their runs, two were married with children and only one was from the Lowlands. None of them was a retired army officer, which was also atypical of the lease-holding pastoralists of that period.⁶¹ Two of the three squatting families living on the properties at the time that the gold miners began swarming on their runs were not the original licence holders, but had become long-term occupants by the mid to late 1850s.

⁵⁶ Leigh S.L. Beaton, "Westralian Scots: Scottish Settlement and Identity in Western Australia, arrivals 1829-1850." (PhD diss., Murdoch University, 2004).

⁵⁷ Prentis, *Scots in Australia*, 16.

⁵⁸ Serle, *Golden Age*, 55.

⁵⁹ Kiddle, *Men of Yesterday*, 47, 14.

⁶⁰ Peter M. Griffiths, *Three Times Blest: A History of Buninyong and District 1837-1901* (Buninyong, Victoria: Buninyong and District Historical Society, 1988), 4-5.

⁶¹ Billis and Kenyon, *Port Phillip Pioneers*.

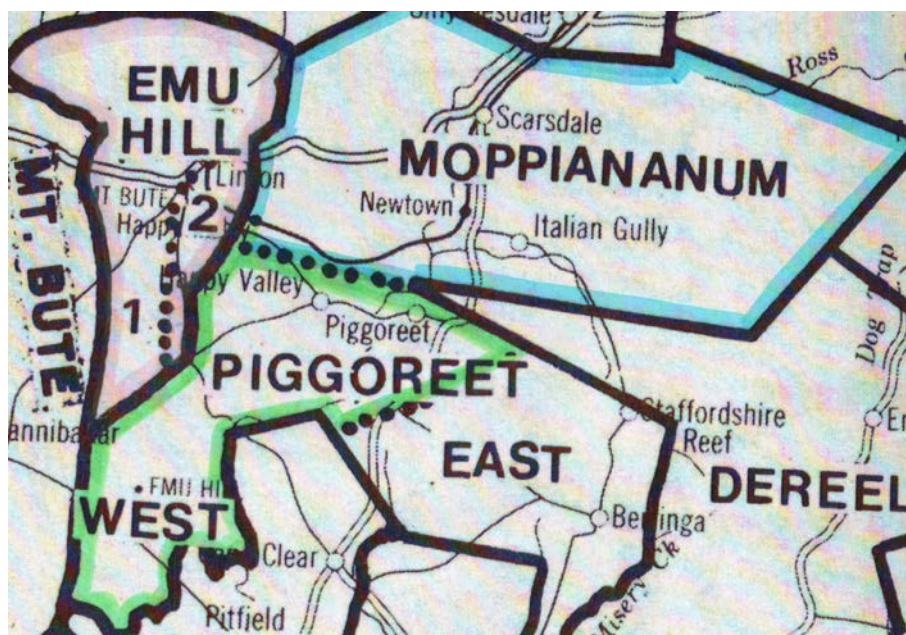


Figure 8. Boundaries of Emu Hill, Moppianimum and Piggoreet West

(Adapted from Robert Spreadborough and Hugh Anderson, *Victorian Squatters*)

The Springdallah creek and its tributaries, eventually flowing into the Woady Yaloak creek, meandered across the three pastoral runs known as Emu Hill, Piggoreet West and Moppianimum, which are shown in Figure 8. These properties were occupied under the Crown land annual lease system,⁶² and by the advent of gold discovery had made considerable financial commitments by way of buildings, fencing and stock.

Emu Hill

The first pastoral run in the area later to become part of the Springdallah goldfield was that known as Emu Hill, taken up by the Scottish Linton family. Joseph Linton was born at Paisley on the Isle of Bute in 1794, and his wife Mary Dunlop was born in the West Indies in 1809, of Scottish parentage.⁶³ They married in Ayr in June 1827 and departed from Greenock for Hobart on the barque *Potentate* with their first three children on 3 October 1838.⁶⁴ After a brief stay in Van Diemen's Land, they arrived in Geelong in February 1839 on a coastal steamer. They were at Emu Hill from early in 1839 until October 1846, after which they moved to Linton Park.⁶⁵ Both homestead sites were

⁶² Robert Spreadborough and Hugh Anderson, *Victorian Squatters* (Ascot Vale, Vic.: Red Rooster, 1983).

⁶³ Jillian Wheeler, "Who Owns Linton's Past? Multiple Histories in a Victorian Goldfields Town" (PhD diss., University of Melbourne, 2009), 31.

⁶⁴ Billis and Kenyon, *Pastoral Pioneers*, 204, 245, 264.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 97.

within the original licensed pastoral run of 15,000 acres. The gold mining settlements of Dreamers Hill, Old Lucky Womans and Happy Valley were established on the Emu Hill land the Linton family held under licence. One of the Linton daughters married John Browne of the adjoining run (Moppianimum), and another daughter, Jane Allan Linton, married Ashton Gartside, a storekeeper at Piggoreet. Yet another daughter, Mary Dunlop Linton, married Stewart Matthews, who took up the Piggoreet East run for some years, and Williamina Dunlop Linton, known as Mina, married an American Benjamin Hichborne Fernald, the hotelkeeper of the Emu Inn at Pitfield in the 1850s. Of the other daughters, Caroline married a bank manager, and Josephine became the wife of Dryden Phillipson, a mine manager at Linton.

The Rev. John Gow, a Presbyterian minister, had travelled out from Scotland with the Linton family and continued a partnership in the pastoral business while establishing churches throughout his extensive parish, known as The Colac.⁶⁶ His close relationship with the family can be seen by the Lintons' naming their son, who was born in 1848, John Gow Linton. Born in 1803, Rev. John Gow was a confirmed bachelor and committed his time to parish work, dying unexpectedly while at Miners Rest making arrangements about a pulpit.⁶⁷ He was living at Smythesdale at the time of his death and was buried locally on 22 June 1866 in the Smythesdale cemetery, where a fine monument marks his grave. Gow, a Scot identifiable with the Springdallah area both before and after gold discovery, made a notable contribution to the area, including a generous bequest to the Ballarat Hospital.⁶⁸

Moppianimum

Captain Charles Henry Ross, who in 1841 took up the run that was later called Moppianimum, left no record of his years on his leased station, nor of any interactions with Indigenous people before returning to the United Kingdom with his wife and children in 1844.⁶⁹ His leasehold station comprised 30,000 acres from Golden Lake to

⁶⁶ Robert Hamilton, *A jubilee history of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria; or, the rise and progress of Presbyterianism from the foundation of the colony to 1888* (London, England: Hodder and Stoughton, 1885), 35.

⁶⁷ *Ballarat Star*, June 19, 1866, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112862997>.

⁶⁸ VA 2620, Registrar of Probates, Supreme Court, VPRS 7591/P1, Wills, Unit 25, 5/849: John Gow, died 18 June 1866.

⁶⁹ *Geelong Advertiser*, April 8, 1844, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page8432813>. The newspaper reported, "Cleared out, April 4, *Platina*, barque, for London – Passengers, Lieutenant Ross and six children,

Napoleons, south of Sebastopol. After Ross left in 1844, it passed into the hands of George Forbes.⁷⁰ In early 1850 Forbes transferred the station to John Browne and Thomas Sproat, who immediately transferred his licence to Browne.⁷¹ It was then estimated to be capable of grazing 1,200 head of cattle and 9,000 sheep.⁷²

John Browne was born on 24 May 1818 at Carleton, Borgue, in the Scottish Lowlands near Dumfries and arrived at Port Phillip about 1838.⁷³ He was the son of a farming family, his father reporting at the 1851 census of Scotland that he employed five labourers to work his 328 acres.⁷⁴ Browne purchased 960 acres as his pre-emptive right on both the Moppianimum and Piggoreet West runs.⁷⁵ John Browne and Eliza Tennant Linton, who was born in 1829 at Greenock in Renfrewshire and was the daughter of the holders of the adjoining Emu Hill run, were married at Emu Hill on 17 July 1852, and it was they who built the homestead, which stood for many years and is today a ruin. The first three of their seven children were born at Moppianimum, the rest at Narada West, Anakie. After gold was found on his leased and freehold land in 1854, Browne suffered stock losses due to the depredations of diggers' dogs, which forced him to sell and remove to Anakie near Geelong, where his descendants live to this day.⁷⁶ Browne is remembered in the Scarsdale area names of Browns and Scarsdale Borough, Brown's Diggings, Brownsvale and Browns Road. In October 1859 William Cook became the final licence holder of Moppianimum, before the licence was cancelled in January 1867.

etc.”; Joan E. Hunt, *Forest and Field: A History of Ross Creek 1840-1990* (Ballarat, Vic.: Jim Crow, 1990), 10.

⁷⁰ *Geelong Advertiser*, April 29, 1848, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91458807>. George Forbes still held Moppianimum at this date.

⁷¹ *Geelong Advertiser*, January 22, 1850, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4771192>.

⁷² Billis and Kenyon, *Pastoral Pioneers*, 245.

⁷³ BMD, *Death certificate*, Reg. 13408, John Browne, died 27 November 1895 at Kinloss, Aphrasia St, Newtown. The informant stated that Browne had lived 57 years in Victoria, giving an approximate date of arrival of 1838.

⁷⁴ Ancestry.com. Scotland. *1851 Scotland Census*. Reels 1-217. General Register Office for Scotland, Edinburgh, Scotland. Ancestry.com. *1851 Scotland Census*. CSSCT1851_211, ED4:1. Carleton, Borgue Kirkudbright, Kirkudbrightshire, Scotland, 30 March 1851.

⁷⁵ Hunt, *Forest and Field*, 7–10.

⁷⁶ Victoria. Parliamentary Papers. Select Committee Petition. *Petition to the Government by John Browne of Moppianimum Run* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1860).

Piggoreet West

This pastoral station was at first known as Piggereet (later spelt Piggoreet), when it was taken up by Smythe and Henry Gibb in 1838. Smythe was very likely the retired Naval officer, Captain John James Barlow Smythe, who later held a licensed run further north on the Woody Yaloak Creek. The run was subdivided into Piggoreet East and Piggoreet West in March 1848.⁷⁷ Henry Gibb leased the western portion from that date, an area of 18,938 acres, capable of grazing 400 cattle and 7,000 sheep. He stated that he had been in occupation of the land for twelve months prior to March 1848.⁷⁸ In early 1850 he transferred his right, title and interest to Francis Ormond.⁷⁹ On 2 December 1851 Ormond applied for approval for the transfer of Piggoreet West to John Browne.⁸⁰ Ormond and his family had emigrated from Aberdeen to the Port Phillip District in 1842, where his father had owned the Settler's Arms Inn at Shelford before taking up Borriyallock station.⁸¹ Browne transferred Piggoreet West to Matthew Hamilton Baird, so that by September 1853 Baird held the licence and was in a position to purchase by pre-emptive right the one square mile (640 acres) of his choice.⁸² The purchase was agreed to by the end of that year at a valuation of 20 shillings per acre.⁸³ The Commissioner for Crown Lands in the Portland Bay District, Henry Hamilton Smythe, reported in October 1853 that the existing buildings consisted of a cottage and woolshed, and that there was

⁷⁷ Billis and Kenyon, *Pastoral Pioneers*, 264.

⁷⁸ PROV, VA 538 Department of Crown Lands and Survey, VPRS 5920/P0 Pastoral Run Files [Microfiche Copy of VPRS 5359]. Microfiche 48/843, 24 March 1848. Gibb was a Scots pastoralist. BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 1994, Henry Gibb, died 1853 at Lake Colac, 41 years.

⁷⁹ PROV, VPRS 5920/P0. Microfiche 50/401, 27 February 1850. Francis Ormond junior was a Scots pastoralist, who died aged 61 years in Pau, France, where he was visiting from his Toorak home. He left £175,000 in his will (PROV, VPRS 7591/P2, Unit 154, File 40/865).

⁸⁰ PROV, VPRS 5920/P0. Microfiche 51/832, 2 December 1851.

⁸¹ Don Chambers, "Ormond, Francis (1829–1889)" *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Canberra: National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 1974), accessed July 1, 2015, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/ormond-francis-4340/text7045>, published first in hardcopy 1974, accessed July 1, 2015. Francis Ormond junior later became a Member of the Legislative Council. He is remembered as a philanthropist who founded the institution that has become the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University and was a major benefactor towards the establishment of Ormond College at the University of Melbourne as well as to both the Anglican and Presbyterian churches.

⁸² Billis and Kenyon, *Pastoral Pioneers*, 20.

⁸³ PROV, VPRS 5920/P0, 55/209, 19 January 1855.

no indication of auriferous deposit.⁸⁴ Baird had arrived as a 22-year-old in October 1841 on the *Catherine Jamieson*.⁸⁵ Once the gold mining industry had become established, he bought shares in the Springdallah district mining companies.⁸⁶ He did very well financially throughout his life, shown by his private estate being valued at £29,170 when he died on 3 September 1899.⁸⁷

David Clarke, who arrived in Port Phillip from Aberdeen with his wife and young family,⁸⁸ managed the Langi Kal Kal station near Beaufort before forming a partnership in Buangor station with Alexander Campbell. By 1855 he was in occupation of Piggoreet West station, arriving at approximately the same time that the shallow alluvial gold was giving out and men with capital were considering moving in to explore the deep leads. Experience at Ballarat had shown the riches that could be won from deep underground. Clarke was from Aberdeenshire in the Scottish Highlands and had arrived with his wife Jean and their daughter Helen and son John in 1840.⁸⁹ David Clarke is remembered in various ways: his name is incorporated in the parish of Clarkesdale; he was the land holder of the Piggoreet station;⁹⁰ he employed many part-time gold miners who laboured on his property;⁹¹ he allowed his land to be used for picnics for all denominations to

⁸⁴ PROV, VPRS 5920/P0. 53/9432, 19 December 1853.

⁸⁵ PROV, VA 473 Superintendent, Port Phillip District 1839-1851, VPRS 7310, Register of Assisted Immigrants from U.K. (Microfiche copy of VPRS 14) [1839-1871] [Books 1-14A], *Catherine Jamieson*, Book 1:140.

⁸⁶ Marion McAdie, *Mining shareholders index (electronic resource): an index of shareholders in mining companies 1857 to 1886*, Ararat, Victoria, (2006).

⁸⁷ PROV, VPRS 7591/P2, Unit 297, 73/282: Matthew Hamilton Baird, died 3 September 1899.

⁸⁸ *Grenville Standard* (Linton), December 21, 1918, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article119666357>. When John Clarke turned 82 this newspaper interviewed him about his early life.

⁸⁹ PROV, VPRS 7310, *John Bull*, Book 2:61, arrived January 1840.

⁹⁰ *Star* (Ballarat), October 1, 1866, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112858341>. Grenville Shire Council to build a road across Clark's land.

⁹¹ *Ballarat Star*, October 13, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112879613>. Inquest into death at Happy Valley of child of Thomas McDonald, a shepherd employed by David Clarke.

fundraise for their churches;⁹² and he took a leading role as a committeeman for the Presbyterian church and Piggoreet school.⁹³

The three adjoining pastoral runs of Emu Hill, Piggoreet West, and Moppianimum were linked through the marriages of family members. Eliza Tennant Linton (1829-1910), daughter of the Emu Hill pastoral run holders Mary and Joseph Linton, married John Browne of Moppianimum in July 1852 at Emu Hill, and had a family of seven children; Helen Clarke (1835-1923), daughter of the Piggoreet West pastoral run holders David and Jean Clarke, married William Christie of Golden Lake in November 1858 at Geelong, and had a family of 13 children, mostly born at Brownsvale; and Mary Jane Newcomen, daughter of the manager of Brownsvale Estate, married John Clarke of Piggoreet West in December 1866 at Malvern, and had a family of eight children born at Emu Hill.

CONCLUSION

When investigating the nature of goldfields communities such as those established at Springdallah, an understanding of the geological explanation for the existence of gold is important. As discussed in this chapter, geology explains how the deep lead alluvial gold mining industry came to exist, particularly at Springdallah, where a population of mining families later worked for mining companies. The pre-gold period in the history of Springdallah encompasses the occupation of the land by the *Wathawurrung* people, who were dispossessed by the European pastoralists. Little is known of the Aboriginal people and their culture, as only limited physical evidence survives of their having lived for many generations among the waterways, valleys, cliffs and tablelands of the district before the arrival of pastoralists and later gold miners. The documentary records that survive depend mainly upon reminiscences and official reports, supplemented by oral history of early settlers. Those squatters living on the three large pastoral leaseholds of Emu Hill, Piggoreet West and Moppianimum were Scots with families, who worked with, and later became part of, the miners' network of communities. This chapter has revealed

⁹² *Ballarat Star*, April 15, 1868, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113602568>. A picnic and sports day in aid of the fund to establish a Mechanics' Institute at Piggoreet was held in the grounds of Mr David Clarke.

⁹³ *Ballarat Star*, February 13, 1866, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112867293>. David Clarke was one of six committee members appointed to the School Committee of Piggoreet No. 726.

the pre-history and pastoral history of Springdallah to set the scene for the arrival of the gold seekers who discovered the riches to be found in the valleys, gullies and creeks, and later deep under the ground.

Chapter 4: DISCOVERY

INTRODUCTION

The network of Springdallah goldfield communities was at its peak during the two decades from about 1860, when it was a thriving deep lead alluvial mining centre. A better appreciation of that productive, settled period can be gained by considering the circumstances of the discovery of gold at Springdallah several years before the arrival of the first gold mining company. Most Australian goldfields townships in that period resulted from serendipitous discoveries, usually as a result of fossicking and speculative prospecting by individuals.¹ However, this chapter proposes that the rich goldfield that developed along the Springdallah and Woody Yaloak creeks,² near the later gold mining township of Linton, resulted from a systematic, carefully planned strategy by a consortium of Geelong businessmen in mid 1852.

The man accepted as captain of the party of five appointed by the Gold Exploration Committee was an extraordinary choice.³ Swindells was an exile, which was a specific and unusual category of convict, as explained later in this chapter. One of the first diggers on the Ballarat field, he chaired a protest meeting against the imposition of the licence, led a deputation to Captain Dana on the issue, and was subsequently refused a licence. The appropriately named convicted fraudster, Herbert Swindells, opened up the first of the diggings at what was to become the Woody Yaloak goldfields, stretching from Haddon in the north to Pitfield 20 miles to the south, between Ballarat and Corio Bay. Publicity about the success of that gold exploration party led to a period of shallow alluvial fossicking success in the creeks and gullies, which kept sporadic waves of diggers working the area throughout the mid 1850s. Gradually, the diggings became deeper, until the costs involved in mining at greater depths led to the establishment of mining companies with their associated settlements and townships. The historiography of that period of discovery and gradual development of the shallow alluvial goldfield at Springdallah was shared by most early goldfields across Victoria.

¹ Flett, *History of Gold Discovery*, 324.

² The Woody Yaloak had a variety of spellings and was also known as Smythes Creek.

³ *Argus* (Melbourne), June 11, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4785689>.

THE SEARCH FOR GOLD

Blainey made it clear that when gold was officially declared to have been discovered in Australia at Bathurst in May 1851, a “universal rush to the diggings” took place.⁴ Diggers were attracted not only from Sydney and its settled districts, but also from the Port Phillip District and other colonies, well before word had reached distant shores in Europe and Asia.⁵ In the months leading up to the creation of Victoria as a colony separate from New South Wales on 1 July 1851, the Port Phillip District was losing its population to Bathurst, and the economy was starting to stagnate. According to Serle, one worry was that immigrant ships would decide to go to Sydney rather than to Melbourne, which would exacerbate the looming financial crisis.⁶ A plan was needed.

Rewards

Consequently, a Victorian Gold Discovery Committee was established at a meeting held at the Melbourne Mechanics’ Institute on 9 June 1851 attended by Mayor William Nicholson, several councillors, John Pascoe Fawkner and many other private businessmen.⁷ The committee offered a reward of £200 to anyone who discovered a payable goldfield within 200 miles of Melbourne. Rewards of this kind were soon offered in various other places, and Flett reported that even when they later came under select committees appointed by the Victorian Parliament they continued to reward entrepreneurs who had sought gold discoveries on their own undertaking.⁸ Eventually, rewards were paid for the discovery of about 75 different goldfields, whose discoverers generally gave evidence before the select committees.⁹

Concurrent with the establishment of the Colony of Victoria on 1 July 1851 was the official recognition of the discovery of gold in Victoria, at Clunes near Creswick by James William Esmond.¹⁰ He was duly rewarded in 1854, not by the original Melbourne committee, which had repudiated its £200 offer, but by the Legislative Council select

⁴ Blainey, *Rush That Never Ended*, 19; *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 20, 1851, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article12927228>.

⁵ Blainey, *Rush That Never Ended*, 21.

⁶ Serle, *Golden Age*, 9.

⁷ *Argus* (Melbourne), June 11, 1851, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4778440>.

⁸ Flett, *History of Gold Discovery*, 7.

⁹ Victoria. Parliamentary Papers. Select Committee Report. *Claims for the Discovery of Gold in Victoria*. Melbourne: Government Printer, 1854.

¹⁰ Withers, *History of Ballarat*, 20.

committee on claims for the discovery of gold in Victoria, which awarded him £1,000.¹¹ Six weeks later, the Geelong press announced that gold had been found at Buninyong. The “exciting intelligence about the discovery of gold within fifty miles of Geelong” caused hundreds to head for Buninyong in the second week of August: “...men, women, and children were there, all more or less intent on gold finding”.¹² At the end of the month that report was quickly overshadowed by more exciting news about the prolific new Ballarat goldfield.¹³ These events brought on what was popularly called gold fever and triggered the great Victorian gold rushes, as described by Bate.¹⁴ Within months, an influx of ships under sail began arriving at Port Phillip, causing the *Argus* to report on discussion in parliament about “the multitudes of immigrants now pouring into this colony”.¹⁵ Broome discussed how tens of thousands of immigrants eventually came to the new goldfields from other Australian colonies, California, China, Britain and other parts of Europe.¹⁶

Geelong

By early 1852, Geelong was casting its eyes to Melbourne and observing the traffic of shiploads of immigrants.¹⁷ Melbourne, by mid 1852, was bursting with incoming gold seekers, at the rate of a thousand per week.¹⁸ Immigrants were buying equipment and belongings to take to the goldfields, and paying for accommodation and food, all to the advantage of Melbourne’s economy. At the same time, successful diggers, using the coaches that ran daily between the goldfields and Melbourne, supported growth by extravagantly spending their easily won riches.¹⁹ Press reports such as “We have had

¹¹ Louis R. Cranfield, Louis R, “Esmond, James William (1822–1890),” *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, accessed March 24, 2013, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/esmond-james-william-3485>; Flett, *History of Gold Discovery*, 7.

¹² *Geelong Advertiser*, August 15, 1851, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91917185>.

¹³ *Argus* (Melbourne), September 8, 1851, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4780295>.

¹⁴ Bate, *Lucky City*, 9–10; *Geelong Advertiser*, November 28, 1851, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article86263939>.

¹⁵ *Argus* (Melbourne), August 5, 1852, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4786601>.

¹⁶ Broome, *Arriving*, 72; Serle, *Golden Age*, 65.

¹⁷ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, January 23, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91928940>; *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, February 11, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91928068>.

¹⁸ *Argus* (Melbourne), April 21, 1852, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4784497>.

¹⁹ Bate, *Lucky City*, 42.

an addition to our population of upwards of 2000 this week, from the neighbouring colonies of Sydney, Van Diemen's Land, and South Australia"²⁰ were common. The Geelong business community realised the economic benefits to be gained by attracting ships to Corio Bay and wondered what could be done to encourage some of that eager population to its commercial centre. In the first months of 1852, the Geelong press was busy with letters, reports and proposals about gold finds to the north-west, between Geelong and Ballarat.²¹ As early as 12 January 1852, George Wright, a Geelong auctioneer, had published a letter to the editor in which he recounted his successful gold-digging at the Spindella Creek the previous week.²² The following month, this same prominent Geelong citizen raised in the press the idea of offering a reward for the discovery of a paying goldfield as encouragement for their town's economic wellbeing.²³

Entrepreneurs

Similar reports of individuals finding gold in the locality of the Woody Yaloak Creek had been appearing in the press since mid 1849, but there was always doubt as to whether they were hoaxes, the diggers were just finding enough to clear expenses, or the ground was actually capable of being worked to advantage.²⁴ The reports needed to be tested. Local businessmen appealed to "everyone interested in the advancement of Geelong" to subscribe to a fund to fit out parties to explore localities including the Wardy Yallock ranges to the north-west.²⁵ By the end of May, they had raised £300.²⁶ When the

²⁰ *Argus* (Melbourne), January 26, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4782854>.

²¹ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, January 27, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91927385>; *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, March 1, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91927894>; *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, May 25, 1852, 1, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91929300>; *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, May 27, 1852, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91930585>; *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, June 4, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91931138>.

²² *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, January 13, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91929442>. Spindella was the original name of the creek later called Springdallah.

²³ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, February 11, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91928068>.

²⁴ *Argus* (Melbourne), July 14, 1849, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4770017>.

²⁵ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, June 4, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91931138>.

²⁶ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, May 31, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91928834>.

subscribers met at the Royal Hotel in Malop Street on 4 June 1852 to make plans, they had raised £450 with more than 70 names on the published list.²⁷ Those present included many of the same merchants, traders and businessmen who, a year later, formed the Chamber of Commerce: Alderman James Cowie, MLC; William Henry Dalton of Carver and Dalton, the auctioneers; Frederick Bauer, who opened a “magnificent ironmongery establishment in Ryrie Street” in November 1851; and William Paterson, a prominent jeweller and gold buyer of Market Square.²⁸ James Noble, a wine and spirit merchant and storekeeper who left an estate of over £18,000 when he died in 1897, was appointed treasurer.²⁹ There were storekeepers, merchants, auctioneers, hoteliers, manufacturers, gold dealers, aldermen, bankers and other subscribers to the enterprise. The discovery and development of a nearby goldfield was obviously of commercial interest to men of business.



Figure 9. The former Shearers' Arms Hotel, 202 Aberdeen Street, Geelong West

(Photograph courtesy of Gary Hunt)

Also among the many present was Herbert Swindells, recently married. His wedding took place on 17 May 1852 at Christ Church, Geelong, to Ann, the daughter of William and Elizabeth Harrison. The Harrison family owned the Shearers' Arms Hotel,

²⁷ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, June 5, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91927625>.

²⁸ Paterson was a columnist for the *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, who wrote the Geelong Gold Circular column; he was the brother-in-law of John Pounder Roberts, who later was prominent as mining manager and speculator in the gold mining community throughout the Woody Yaloak district, including Springdallah.

²⁹ PROV, VPRS 7591/P2, Unit 264, 64/970, James Noble, died 9 May 1897.

built in 1843, on the Great Western Road, now Aberdeen Street, where the small brick building still stands, as shown in Figure 9.³⁰ After William Harrison's death, the hotel was run by his widow Elizabeth (who remarried, to George Leaford), and later Herbert Swindells himself, until Swindells' death in November 1871.

GOLD EXPLORATION COMMITTEE

On 5 June 1852, less than three weeks after his wedding, Swindells attended a Saturday meeting at the Royal Hotel in Malop Street, Geelong. Here, Alfred Clarke, the *Geelong Advertiser* reporter who had informed the world of the Ballarat gold discoveries the previous year, was called upon to address the meeting. He explained that "the present object was to explore all that tract of country that laid [*sic*] between Ballarat and Geelong, with a particular intention of examining that part known as the Anakie, the Wardyyallock, and other places known to possess gold...to within 6 miles of Geelong".³¹ Clarke had assisted Paterson, the jeweller soon to become gold assayer, to raise the sum of £450 by subscription to fund the survey. At this meeting, the committee of the Geelong Gold Exploration Society was formed to include the Mayor of Geelong and ten of the town's leading businessmen, and plans were made to progress their proposal.

The committee met four days later, on 9 June, when it was agreed that a party of four volunteers under the superintendence of Mr Herbert Swindells be sent to try to discover a paying goldfield on the lower reaches of the Woody Yaloak Creek.³² That decision had very likely been influenced by a letter published four months earlier reporting on about 200 persons who were obtaining gold at a diggings about eight miles from the Wardy Yallock public house and where pure water was abundant.³³ The informant claimed he had met on his return to Geelong no less than 16 loaded drays bound for the Wardy Yallock.³⁴

Swindells had volunteered himself to the Gold Exploration Committee free of any remuneration, but the members of the party were to be paid £1 per week, with rations, and

³⁰ W.J. Morrow and I. Wynd, comp., *Geelong Hotels and Their Licensees* (Geelong: Geelong Historical Society, 1996), 55.

³¹ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, June 5, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91927625>.

³² *Argus* (Melbourne), June 11, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page507046>.

³³ The public house was then known as the Emu Inn; later as the Pitfield or Wardy Yallock Hotel.

³⁴ *Argus* (Melbourne), January 28, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4782905>.

would be entitled to all gold found by them and, if successful, a bonus of £50 would be divided equally among them. They would be engaged for the term of three months from the date of starting, unless the superintendent (Swindells) should in the meantime inform the committee that the goldfield had been discovered. At the following meeting, held again at the Royal Hotel on Monday 14 June, four men, John Williams, Edmund Jones, John Long and James Hyatt, were chosen by ballot from the 19 applicants, to make up the exploration party.³⁵ Swindells was empowered to purchase a team of no more than eight bullocks and to draw on the treasurer of the Gold Exploration Committee for “the amount requisite to fit out the party”.³⁶ The prominent businessmen who financially backed the exploration enterprise may have been much more cautious about accepting Swindells’ leadership offer had they been fully aware of his convict background, connected as it was with fraud, and his enduring problems with alcohol.³⁷

Herbert Swindells

Herbert Swindells was born at Sandbach in Cheshire on 9 July 1819 and baptised a fortnight later as a member of the Independent or Protestant Dissenters.³⁸ He was the son of Abraham Swindells, whose family had lived around Congleton in Cheshire for generations, and his wife, Anna Downing. Herbert was the sixth of their seven children and was the namesake of an earlier brother who had died in infancy. His father died when Herbert was only 14 years old.³⁹ Prior to 1841, his widowed mother settled the family in Burslem, just over the county border in Staffordshire. After completing his education, Herbert worked for the Burslem firm of Messrs William and John Ward, solicitors, as a

³⁵ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, June 15, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91927299>.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Geelong Advertiser*, March 26, 1863, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article148907019>. On several occasions Swindells was before the courts for violent and threatening behaviour towards his wife and her mother. On 26 March, 1863, his wife claimed “the defendant was only dangerous to her when in drink, and that this was a too frequent occurrence”.

³⁸ FamilySearch, *England, Cheshire Bishop’s Transcripts, 1598-1900*. <https://familysearch.org/>, Herbert Swindells, 23 July 1819, Baptism, Sandbach, Cheshire, RG4:9.

³⁹ FamilySearch, *England and Wales Non-Conformist Record Indexes (RG4-8), 1588-1977*. <https://familysearch.org/>. Abraham Swindells, 27 December 1833:1:32, Burial, FHL microfilm 1751912.

confidential clerk and accountant.⁴⁰ Despite his good home and superior education, Swindells fell into bad company and was twice before the courts in his early twenties.⁴¹ He was sentenced to one month's imprisonment at the Staffordshire Sessions on 19 July 1842, aged 22 years, for riot in company with four other men at Wolstanton.⁴² This was at the time of the 1842 general strike and unrest that was an element of the Chartist movement struggle, but Swindells' lawlessness predated the Burslem riots by nearly a month. He would still have been languishing in gaol when the violence broke out at Burslem in mid August. As a result of the riots, 54 men were transported to the colonies, and 146 were imprisoned, but Swindells was not involved.⁴³

Conviction

On 22 August 1845 Swindells appeared at the Staffordshire Lent Assizes, charged with forging a promissory note for £25 by signing the name of William Ward in order to defraud John Taylor.⁴⁴ Evidence given showed that Swindells had become addicted to drinking and gambling, and the reason for his crime was his need to liquidate the debts he owed his associates. According to his court statement, once Swindells realised he was

⁴⁰ Ancestry.com. *1841 England Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc, 2010. Original data: *Census Returns of England and Wales, 1841*. Kew, Surrey, England: The National Archives of the UK (TNA): Public Record Office (PRO), 1841. Data imaged from the National Archives, London, England. HO107/987, 9:38, 25 Brick House, Queen St., Burslem, Staffordshire, 6 June 1841.

⁴¹ Ancestry.com, *England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2009. Original data: Criminal Registers, Middlesex and Home Office: Criminal Registers, England and Wales; Series HO 26 and HO 27; The National Archives of the UK (TNA), Kew, Surrey, England. *Criminal Registers*. HO27/80, 106: Stafford County Assizes, Herbert Swindells, 17 March 1846. This document recorded the educational status of Herbert Swindells as "superior".

⁴² Ancestry.com, *England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2009. Original data: Criminal Registers, Middlesex and Home Office: Criminal Registers, England and Wales; Series HO 26 and HO 27; The National Archives of the UK (TNA), Kew, Surrey, England. *Criminal Registers*. HO27/68/160, Stafford County Assizes, Herbert Swindells, 19 July 1842.

⁴³ "Riot at Burslem", *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser*, August 13, 1842, 22, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/search/results?basicsearch=chartist%20burslem%20riots>.

⁴⁴ "Forgery by a Clerk at Burslem – a Remarkable Life," *Stirling Observer*, April 9, 1846, 2, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/search/results/1840-01-01/1849-12-31?basicsearch=forgery%20by%20a%20clerk%20at%20burslem&exactsearch=false>.

under threat of being arrested he ran away to sea, and after various adventures, including a shipwreck, returned to England with the idea of joining the Royal Navy.⁴⁵ After arriving at Liverpool, from where he tried to contact one of his sisters secretly by letter, he travelled to Sheerness in Kent, where at the naval yards he boarded the *Trafalgar*. Evidence was given that the chief constable of Newcastle tracked him down and took him into custody. On the journey by train back to Staffordshire, he jumped out of the railway carriage near Coventry in the midlands, escaped across the fields and found a blacksmith to whom he appealed to have his handcuffs knocked off. The law-abiding blacksmith instead reported him to the authorities and he was once again apprehended.

Consequent on these many adventures, it was not until seven months after his initial arrest that he found himself facing the judge at the Stafford Assizes.⁴⁶ There, on 17 March 1846, he was convicted on a charge of forging a promissory note for payment of money and sentenced to seven years transportation.⁴⁷ Swindells was received on 7 July 1846 at Millbank prison on the south bank of the Thames, the holding prison for criminals prior to their transportation to the Australian colonies.⁴⁸ It was conducted on the principles of silence and isolation to encourage prisoners to meditate upon their crimes and to repent. It was here, and later at Pentonville prison, that Swindells spent two years of his term.

Transportation

During his time in Pentonville prison, Swindells accepted the opportunity to become an exile.⁴⁹ This was a boon offered only to those prisoners selected from Millbank, Parkhurst and Pentonville gaols who were judged to be of good behaviour and

⁴⁵ "A Prophecy from the Potato," *London Daily News*, February 26, 1846, 6, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/search/results/1840-01-01/1849-12-31?basicsearch=swindells&exactsearch=false&someesearch=swindells&newspapertitle=london%2bdaily%2bnews>.

⁴⁶ Ancestry.com, *England and Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892*. <http://search.ancestry.com.au/search/db.aspx?dbid=1590>. *Stafford County Assizes*, HO27/80/106.

⁴⁷ Ancestry.com. *Australian Convict Transportation Registers – Other Fleets & Ships, 1791-1868* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2007. Original data: Home Office: Convict Transportation Registers; (The National Archives Microfilm Publication HO11); The National Archives of the UK (TNA), Kew, Surrey, England. *Convicts transported*, Class: HO11/15, folio 138, 273.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ PROV, VA 473 Superintendent, Port Phillip District 1839-1851, VPRS 19/P0, Inward Registered Correspondence, Unit 37, file 1393, 22 June 1848. This file documents the arrival of 155 exiles from Pentonville prison, and 8 boys from Millbank prison on board the *Anna Maria*.

repentant and remorseful demeanour, of firm religious conviction, showing genuine potential for reform, and serving a short term, usually of seven years.⁵⁰ They were generally first offenders, and Lord Stanley, Secretary of State for the Colonies referred to them in a letter to the Governor of New South Wales, Sir George Gipps, as a “better class of prisoner”.⁵¹ Each man was to have completed a period of exclusion, meaning total deprivation of contact with other people and influences, of between six and twelve months. Another requirement, of having undertaken training in a trade considered suitable and necessary for the colonies, was hardly met by Swindells, who worked as a rug maker during his two years of incarceration, but perhaps his previous training and experience in clerical work helped meet this criterion. Those who accepted exile status were to be given a Royal Pardon, signed by Queen Victoria and effective upon disembarkation in the colonies, with just one condition, that the pardon holder not return to the United Kingdom for the period of their original sentence.⁵² The commitment of the colonial government was to provide hostel accommodation and food until each exile was suitably employed, and to assist with locating their employment. The exiles could exit the ship on their own account but thereby relinquished all right to expect the government to provide support. Between November 1842 and February 1849, nine ships arrived in Van Diemen’s Land and the Port Phillip District of New South Wales carrying a total of 1,727 exiles.⁵³

A New Life

Swindells and 189 other exiles sailed from Plymouth on the *Anna Maria* on 9 March 1848. Her Majesty’s Pardon was read to the exiles by Edward Brown Addis, Esquire, JP, on 27 June 1848, prior to their disembarkation at Geelong.⁵⁴ Documentary reports compiled by Addis show that Swindells had taken on board with him a bag of clothing and seven shillings in cash.⁵⁵ On discharge from the ship at Geelong on 23 June

⁵⁰ PROV, VPRS 19/P0, Unit 37, file 2057/48; Ian Wynd, “The Pentonvillains,” *Victorian Historical Journal* 60:2 (1989), 40.

⁵¹ Ian Wynd, *The Pentonvillains* (Geelong: Geelong Historical Society, 2011), 3. Wynd quoted from the *Historical Records of Australia*, I:XXXIII, Stanley to Gipps, July 27, 1844: 699.

⁵² Wynd, *Pentonvillains*, 3.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁵⁴ PROV, VPRS 19/P0, Unit 108, file 1421/48, 28 June 1848, letter from Erskine reporting on proceedings of the Board that mustered the Exiles on board *Anna Maria*. At the muster, Addis read Her Majesty’s Conditional Pardon.

⁵⁵ PROV, VPRS 3502/P0, 4:59.

1848, he had the clothes in his bag, two shillings and eight pence, and goods he had purchased on board worth four shillings and four pence. His name heads a list of 34 men who had “distinguished themselves by exemplary conduct during the voyage”.⁵⁶ Swindells was so well regarded by the authorities that he was placed in charge of 37 exiles not yet hired in Geelong by 1 July 1848, overseeing their employment arrangements and attending to the paperwork.⁵⁷

As a convicted exile from Britain coming ashore to take up his second chance in life, he little knew of the exciting role he was to play in the creation of a rich goldfield in his new home. Within seven weeks, he had established himself as an engrossing clerk and accountant in Little Malop Street adjoining the Sir William Wallace Hotel.⁵⁸ From these premises, he offered moderate terms to have “deeds neatly and expeditiously written”, tradesmen’s books posted, and declared his office a registry for servants.⁵⁹ By September 1848, Herbert Swindells was teaching in the new Ashby school of the Free Presbyterians, where he was praised for his “abilities, energy and perseverance”.⁶⁰ After 14 months, he had a new post at the Corio Free (Presbyterian) Church School in central Geelong, having been made a presentation of books and money by the parents of his former pupils “as a testimonial of esteem and regard”.⁶¹ He resumed management of the Ashby school on 1 May 1850.⁶²

The Goldfields

Swindells had been among the first to leave Geelong when the announcement of gold being found at Buninyong on 12 August 1851 caused hundreds to head north. He was there by at least 25 August 1851. On that date, the Buninyong diggers heard of the proclamation of the government-imposed gold mining licence fee of 30 shillings per

⁵⁶ PROV, VPRS 19, Unit 107, File 1394/48, 5 July 1848.

⁵⁷ Wynd, *Pentonvillains*, 36.

⁵⁸ An engrossing clerk copied legal documents in clear, attractive handwriting.

⁵⁹ *Geelong Advertiser*, August 12, 1848, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91459021>.

⁶⁰ Gladys Seaton, *The Ashby Story, a History of Geelong West* (Geelong: Geelong West City Council, 1978), 30.

⁶¹ *Geelong Advertiser*, November 30, 1849, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article93136662>.

⁶² *Geelong Advertiser*, May 4, 1850, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article93135290>.

month, to commence from 1 September.⁶³ Swindells demonstrated his leadership qualities by chairing and addressing a mass meeting of diggers on the new goldfield at Hiscocks Gully near Buninyong that same evening.⁶⁴ He and his colleague James Oddie led a deputation to Gold Commissioner Francis Crossman Doveton to express opposition to the licence system.⁶⁵ When Commissioner Doveton announced on 21 September that he was ready to issue the licences, he refused to allow Swindells and Oddie to have one.⁶⁶ That decision appears to have been based on the two men's leadership, which would have been viewed by the government as trouble-making. No evidence has been uncovered in this study that Swindells' past history as an exile was known about in the community, nor that he was actually banned from staying on the goldfields.

Not only was Swindells one of the first at Buninyong, but an eyewitness named him as one of the earliest diggers at Golden Point. When William Lindsay wrote to the editor of a Geelong newspaper in January 1854, recollecting the early arrival of his party at Ballarat in 1851, he remembered that "the first human being we saw was Mr Yuill's [*sic*] shepherd, with a huge flock of sheep. The next was Mr Swindles [*sic*] of Geelong, who came from Buninyong with his horse and tin dish".⁶⁷

These reported experiences indicate that Swindells would have gained an understanding of basic surface and shallow alluvial gold mining techniques and technology during his several weeks at Buninyong and Ballarat. Those skills and knowledge were important to his later role in the Springdallah goldfield discovery.

Exploration

The Woody Yaloak exploration party of five men with their bullocks and drayload of canvas, tools, equipment and stores sufficient for three months set off from Geelong on

⁶³ *Geelong Advertiser*, August 22, 1851, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91914494>. This was the newspaper publication of the Government Notice, dated 18 August 1851 entitled "Licenses to Dig and Search for Gold". It apparently took about three days to be made known to the Buninyong diggers.

⁶⁴ *Argus* (Melbourne), September 1, 1851, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4780166>; Stacpoole, *Gold at Ballarat*, 49.

⁶⁵ *Geelong Advertiser*, September 24, 1851, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91917067>.

⁶⁶ H.J. Stacpoole, *Gold at Ballarat: The Ballarat East goldfield, its discovery and development* (Kilmore, Victoria: Lowden Publishing Co., 1971), 50.

⁶⁷ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, January 20, 1854, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article86415007>. Yuille's Swamp, later Lake Wendouree, was named after the first squatter, William Cross Yuille.

Tuesday 22 June 1852.⁶⁸ It is likely that the Shearers' Arms Hotel on the Great Western Road, the home of Swindells' parents-in-law, was the starting point of the expedition. At that time, surrounded by paddocks, it would have been capable of grazing the bullocks and horses, and storing the equipment and supplies that Swindells had been empowered by the Gold Exploration Committee treasurer to purchase.⁶⁹ Here would have gathered John Williams, Edmund Jones, Jim Hyatt and John Long, the four men selected by ballot, with Herbert Swindells, and probably a large gathering of relatives, friends and wellwishers, and many of the subscribers to the enterprise, excitedly farewelling the expedition. The outfit supporting Swindells and his party comprised six bullocks and a dray, with bows, yokes and chains. There was an 18 ft by 10 ft tent, a tarpaulin and all the necessary tools and implements, including at least one cradle, tin dishes for panning, and shovels and picks for digging. There were the required cooking utensils and three months provisions.⁷⁰ Although horses are not mentioned, it is likely that at least a couple of the men would have been riding, given the distances and flexibility of travel by the men as described in Swindells' later reports. At one stage, he sent two of the men to explore as far as a flat he referred to as Russell and Simson's, beyond Carngham.⁷¹

The party travelled up to the small village of Pitfield on the Woody Yaloak River, as indicated in Figure 10. Matthew Hamilton Baird,⁷² licensee of the Emu Inn, welcomed them with a hot meal and reasonable bedding for the first and last time in about two months. From here, the exploration party started their investigations along the river, heading in a northerly direction until they arrived at its junction with the Springdallah

⁶⁸ *Argus* (Melbourne), June 22, 1852, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page507107>.

⁶⁹ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, June 15, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91927299>; *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, June 24, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91929886>;

⁷⁰ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, September 10, 1852, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91927999>.

⁷¹ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, July 28, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91930248>. Philip Russell (1822–1892) and Robert Simson (1819–1896), cousins, were at Carngham until April 1853 when their partnership was dissolved, and Simson took up Langi Kal Kal pastoral run near Beaufort (Brown, "Russell, Philip [1822–1892]").

⁷² *Freeman's Journal* (Sydney), October 9, 1851, 11, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article115765605>. Matthew Hamilton Baird was at the Emu Inn, also known as the Pitfield Hotel at Wardy Yallock, until at least 1856 when he offered it for sale (*Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, March 24, 1856, 1, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91865816>).

Creek. Swindells reported back to the Exploration Committee and the Geelong community in letters published by the *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*. One of the party would have ridden south to the Emu Inn to leave the letters for collection by the mail, which at that time was running between Portland Bay and Geelong.⁷³

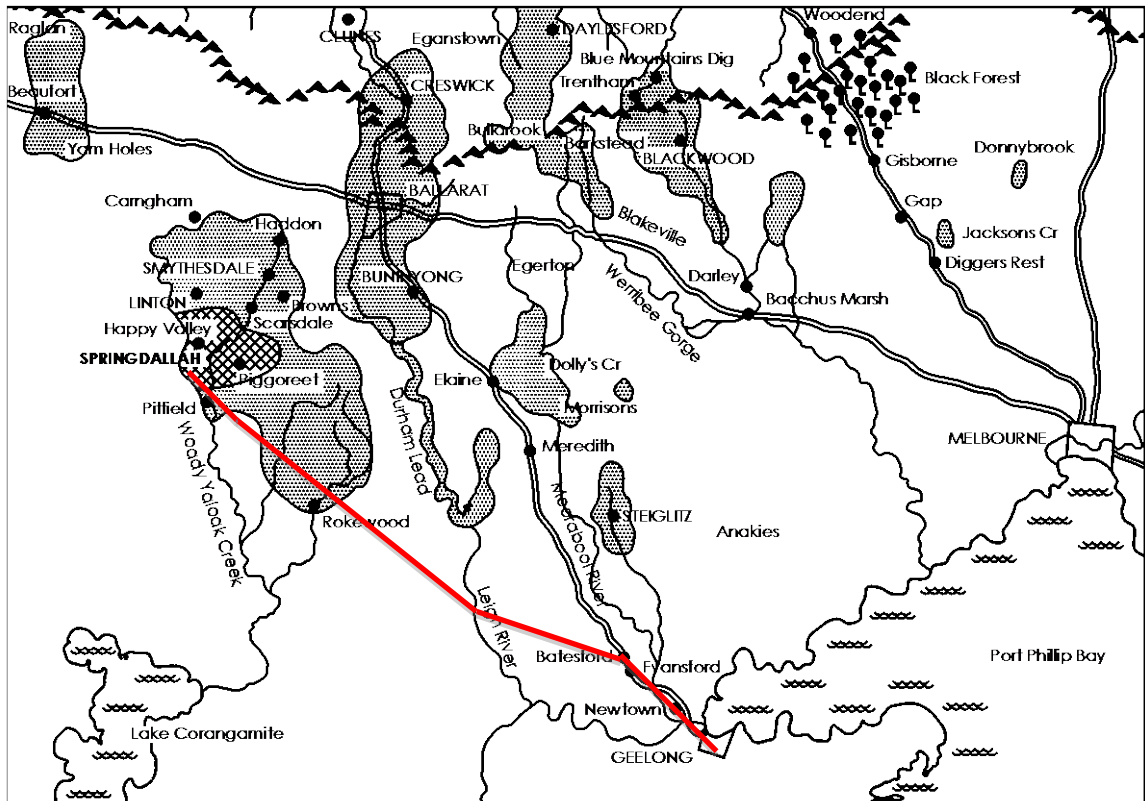


Figure 10. Exploration party's route from Geelong via Shesha to Pitfield

(Map courtesy of Stephen Hunt, adapted from Flett, *History of Gold Discovery*)

The letters included engaging descriptions of the landscape, including that of the natural amphitheatre that became known as the Devils Kitchen at Piggoreet, east of Mt Erip. Swindells' first letter, dated 17 July 1852, from Mt Yeerup, as he called it, reported finding some gold, but not much, and he complained of their holes completely filling with water during the night.⁷⁴ The poor results the party had obtained to date influenced their stated intention to move towards Mt Misery, in the direction of Buninyong, in the hope of

⁷³ Rev. John Dunmore Lang made use of the mailman's cart to travel the route in 1846, gathering material for *Phillipsland*, his travelogue of "Australia Felix": John Dunmore Lang, *Phillipsland; or the Country Hitherto Designated Port Phillip: its Present Condition and Prospects, as a Highly Eligible Field for Emigration* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1847). Accessed June 24, 2015. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/18531102>.

⁷⁴ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, July 23, 1852, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91927103>.

discovering a goldfield in that area.⁷⁵ However, by the next report about 10 days later, the banks and bed of the Spindella Creek had kept them at Mt Yeerup, where they were using the cradle to advantage. Swindells recorded his surprise that the gold was found in the mud or earth deposit in the creek and its banks, instead of between slate crevices, as was the case at Mount Alexander diggings. He referred to how quickly holes were filled with water from seepage, and stated, “In the summer months, I have no doubt but parties may work the bed of the Spindella profitably, but to attempt it now, would be, to say the least, a very ill-advised step”.⁷⁶ By 7 August 1852, Swindells wrote from Patersons Crescent with a favourable report, having bottomed two holes less than 22 ft deep, although they were still presenting with water seepage and mud each morning.

Swindells justified the naming of the natural amphitheatre by writing, “The range forms a semicircle with a sweep of about a mile, and I have taken the liberty of calling it ‘Paterson’s Crescent’ after our respected townsman and friend, Mr Paterson”.⁷⁷ In his report of 14 August, Swindells told the secretary of the Committee that he had obtained “twenty-nine nice bits of gold” in one tin dish, and that as they dug deeper “the gold gets heavier, which is a promising sign”.⁷⁸ He stated further that wherever surface earth in Patersons Crescent, shown in Figure 11, has been tried, they have invariably obtained gold. The men decided to sink holes on the flat ground that appeared to have been at some time or other the original bed of the Spindella Creek. But the heavens opened and the downpour was ceaseless, preventing them from working. Swindells wrote as follows:

It has been rain, rain, rain from morning to night. We have been confined to the tent the whole of the time. Yesterday it blew a perfect hurricane for several hours, and I had

⁷⁵ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, July 28, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91930248>.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* A few years later the name of the creek changed inexplicably from Spindella to Springdallah.

⁷⁷ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, August 11, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91930841>. Patersons Crescent was named by Swindells after William Paterson, the jeweller and gold buyer of Geelong, who was on the Gold Exploration Committee, and whose name appears often in the gold discoveries between Geelong and Ballarat. Paterson was a brother-in-law of John Pounder Roberts, who later managed gold mines at and near Springdallah. By 1860 the early name of Patersons Crescent had ceased being used and, again inexplicably, changed to the Devils Kitchen.

⁷⁸ *Argus* (Melbourne), August 19, 1852, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4786812>.

strong fears that our tent and us would have parted company; as it was, several of the fastenings gave way, and the ridge pole bent almost double.⁷⁹



Figure 11. Patersons Crescent, later known as the Devils Kitchen, in 1861

(Courtesy of State Library Victoria [H1689])

Despite the rain impeding further work, he optimistically claimed that “success will smile upon us”. On 21 August 1852 Swindells sent his final report (from Spindella Creek), as follows:

Our expectations of this place have been partially verified on sinking to the bottom of one of the holes in the flat below the Crescent alluded to in a previous communication; we obtained about an ounce and a half of gold, a sample of which I herewith transmit to you, the other holes we found it impossible to bottom, the water came in so rapidly upon us. My opinion of the locality remains unchanged, and I have every confidence in asserting that a gold field, attractive and valuable, will be, in the ensuing summer, developed in and around Paterson’s Crescent.⁸⁰

The site that Swindells referred to as a valuable goldfield became the Springdallah mining townships of Piggoreet, Happy Valley, Grand Trunk and Golden Lake, with the smaller settlements of Derwent Jacks, Brownsvale, Exchequer, Lucky Womans and Dreamers Hill. The Gold Exploration Committee agreed with Swindells’ evaluation of Springdallah, and on Monday 30 August 1852 declared themselves satisfied that the reports demonstrated the existence of an available goldfield in that locality, which only required

⁷⁹ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, August 19, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91928907>.

⁸⁰ *Argus* (Melbourne), August 27, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4786934>.

greater numbers of diggers to test its richness. They resolved to pay the bonus to the party, judging that the aim of the expedition had been achieved. The party was recalled and returned to Geelong, almost as conquering heroes. The promised bonus was paid, along with any gold they had found, and £1 per week wages.⁸¹

At a soiree held on 23 November 1853 at the British Hotel in Geelong, a handsome embossed silver cup was presented to Herbert Swindells as a token of the high esteem in which he was held in that town for his patriotic services rendered to the Western District.⁸²



Figure 12. Silver cup presented to Herbert Swindells

(Photograph courtesy of Gary Hunt)

An inscription on the cup, shown in Figure 12, reads “Presented to Mr Herbert Swindells, on the 23 November 1853, by the Geelong Gold Exploration Committee, for his able and successful efforts in developing the Wardy Yallock Gold Fields”.⁸³ At that testimonial dinner in Geelong, tributes were paid to Herbert Swindells, recognising his contribution to the establishment of Springdallah goldfield. On 1 September 1854 Herbert and Ann Swindells took over the running of the Swan Hotel at Fyans Ford, but by February 1855 found themselves in financial difficulties, and Swindells became bankrupt.⁸⁴ Ann took over the Shearers’ Arms Hotel, held in her name presumably because Herbert was a

⁸¹ Flett, *History of Gold Discovery*, 324.

⁸² The cup is now in the Mitchell Library Special Collection, Sydney. It was bequeathed by Sir William Dixson in 1952 (Ref. ACMS Record ID 891655, D172, Spencer list no. 45c.)

⁸³ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, November 24, 1853, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article86412309>.

⁸⁴ PROV, VA 2775 Geelong Courts, VPRS 815/P0, Court of Insolvency Schedules (1853-1928), Unit 1, file 10, 30 April 1855.

declared insolvent, and they ran the hotel together until Herbert's death there on 1 December 1871.⁸⁵ Swindells' parents-in-law had run the Shearers' Arms for nearly 20 years, in the latter years with him. His wife Ann died there three years later on 13 July 1874, and they are buried together at the Eastern Cemetery, Geelong.⁸⁶

A POTENTIAL GOLDFIELD

Throughout the rest of the 1850s, regular reports of shallow alluvial workings persisted, with deep lead and quartz companies setting up towards the end of the decade. At the end of 1853, 90 oz of gold were washed at Patersons Crescent, showing that the shallow alluvial diggings there were proving lucrative, and sporadic reports gave evidence of continuing interest.⁸⁷ Long-term settlement did not occur for some years, during which time the gold mining there was of the shallow alluvial type, with parties arriving and working on their own claims for relatively brief periods before moving on. By mid 1856, it was claimed that "Springdallah...is looking brisk and will certainly become a standing diggings; it is a beautiful spot to reside upon".⁸⁸ The era of shallow alluvial workings by one or several men was passing as the easy gold was worked out, and the scene was set for exploitation of the deep alluvial leads by capital-rich mining companies. Within five or six years, the Springdallah goldfield comprised nine settled communities and had the infrastructure necessary to support commercial and domestic life. Miners were employed as waged men in the deep lead mining companies at Springdallah from 1859 onwards, although shallow gold working by small parties continued for years.

In 1864 Swindells was granted £100 by the Victorian Government as the official discoverer of the Wardy Yaloak goldfields at Springdallah, which in the second half of the 1850s stretched for many miles, as far as Haddon and Bunkers Hill in the direction of the Ballarat diggings. The total award was £600, which was divided among several claimants. Herbert Swindells received £100 for his discovery of Springdallah in June 1852, and the remaining £500 was equally divided (making £166/13/4d each) between the

⁸⁵ Morrow and Wynd, *Geelong Hotels*, 55.

⁸⁶ Geelong Cemeteries Trust, Eastern Cemetery, Church of England Old Section, A-807-524. Herbert Swindells was buried 3 December 1871, and Ann Swindells was buried 15 July 1874. A son and daughter survived to adulthood and had families, and two other children died in infancy.

⁸⁷ *Argus* (Melbourne), November 1, 1853, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4798899>.

⁸⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), August 7, 1856, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66039178>.

Frenchman Julien Hardy (who discovered Happy Valley in late 1854), and Henry Vincent Smith and Thomas Kemp (who discovered Bloomers Gully at Linton in May 1855).⁸⁹

Immediately upon the return of the Geelong Gold Exploration party to Corio Bay with descriptions of a payable goldfield in an attractive, well-watered area easily reached from the town, parties of diggers regularly worked along the Springdallah and Woody Yaloak creeks and their tributary creeks and gullies. The permanency of gold-digging as an industry was becoming obvious to both government and the general population across Victoria. Mining historian Ralph Birrell pointed out that diggers, while nevertheless benefitting from them, were increasingly obliged to comply with government regulation of the goldfields.⁹⁰

The outcome of the impassioned protests by miners that led to the Eureka Stockade rebellion at Ballarat on 3 December 1854 was the Gold Fields Royal Commission, an enquiry into conditions on the goldfields. Resulting legislation enacted in 1855 provided for a “Miner’s Right” in Victoria, later adopted throughout Australia. Its importance, as explained by Fahey et al., was in the associated political right by which miners themselves could elect local mining courts to “frame mining regulations and arbitrate disputes”.⁹¹ Even more far-reaching was the influence on manhood suffrage, granted in 1857, which had its own impact on the opening up of the land to selection, particularly after the 1865 Land Act. This legislation, and the many by-laws that were enacted by the local courts, applied also to the increasing numbers of gold seekers attracted to the ranges and gullies along the Woody Yaloak and Springdallah creeks.

The technology and techniques used to gain gold in the surface and shallow alluvial diggings were gradually being improved and affected how the diggers accessed and processed the paydirt.⁹² Blainey showed how the peripatetic nature of the diggers’ lives was becoming more settled as the cooperative nature of mining became a necessity.⁹³ Furthermore, Fahey et al. argued that all successful and therefore long-term

⁸⁹ Flett, *History of Gold Discovery*, 8.

⁹⁰ Ralph W. Birrell, *Staking a Claim: Gold and the Development of Victorian Mining Law*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1998, 61.

⁹¹ Charles Fahey et al., “A miner’s right: making homes and communities on the Victorian goldfields,” in *Eureka: Reappraising an Australian Legend*, ed. Alan Mayne. (Perth, WA: Network Books, 2006), 203.

⁹² Smyth, *Gold Fields*.

⁹³ Blainey, *Rush That Never Ended*, 47.

goldfields of the period, such as Springdallah, experienced the social transformation that followed in the wake of the early gold rushes.⁹⁴ Experience from other goldfields, such as Ballarat, taught the Springdallah miners that there were even deeper layers of buried streams, as Bate revealed was the case at Ballarat.⁹⁵ Decisions had to be made that would alter the goldfields working and social structure completely. For Springdallah, the transition took place during the five or so years before the mining companies introduced the capital, shareholdings and costly financing of equipment, buildings and employment to tap the auriferous deep leads.

The extraordinary yet inevitable frenzy created by gold discoveries in the new world started just after the new year of 1849. The impetus was the Californian goldfields, which attracted hundreds from Australia to become “forty-niners”.⁹⁶ The following three years started the phenomenon known as rushing, comprehensively described by Goodman,⁹⁷ first to the country west of San Francisco, then to Bathurst in New South Wales, and then to and fro mainly across the central highlands of Victoria. This first wave of diggers became an informal school of gold mining techniques, as they learnt to recognise gold-bearing ground and read the messages that geological formations carried. The first discoveries of gold at Andersons Creek, Clunes, Buninyong and Ballarat, all before the end of August 1851, were of easily found surface and shallow alluvial gold.⁹⁸ On 7 July 1851 the *Geelong Advertiser* announced James Esmond’s discovery in the midlands of Victoria at Clunes.⁹⁹ Over the following twelve months, thousands entered Victoria from other colonies and began the great gold rushes of the early 1850s. It took some time before the news found its way to Britain, and even longer before its importance, its richness and its easy availability, made an impact that started the crowded ships arriving at Port Phillip and Corio Bay.

⁹⁴ Fahey et al., “Miner’s Right,” 201.

⁹⁵ Bate, *Lucky City*, 80.

⁹⁶ Peter McCarthy, “150 Years of Gold” (paper presented at the Sir John Quick Bendigo Lecture Series, 150th anniversary of the official discovery of gold in Victoria, La Trobe University, Bendigo, September 26, 2001), 2.

⁹⁷ Goodman, *Gold Seeking*, 24.

⁹⁸ Stacpoole, *Gold at Ballarat*, 12.

⁹⁹ *Geelong Advertiser*, July 7, 1851, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91920276>.

CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT

An eyewitness to the early Victorian gold rushes, from mid 1853 until 1858, was an Englishman who published his journal of observations. Henry Brown knew that some people believed that “the gold never would become exhausted”. However, his own view was that “as gold does not grow, it was evident that it was only a matter of time, and the whole of the gold would be extracted from the earth”.¹⁰⁰ He, like many others, could not know that the ultimate extent of the goldfields would be vast, and that an enormous industry would provide employment for permanent communities for many years.

During the period of the rushes of the early 1850s, the living and working conditions, goldfields regulations, and the technology of gold finding and processing changed mightily, so that the countryside and the people’s lifestyles of the pre-gold era were hardly recognisable. Once tents, shanties, huts and later cottages started appearing along the flats of Springdallah’s gold communities, joined by the canvas and bark slab stores, beer houses, and butchers’ slaughterhouses, the previously unblemished, natural countryside became ravaged. When Patrick McGrath reminisced as an old man in 1912, he recalled the open forest around the Woody Yaloak Creek, “timbered with white gum, messmate, stringy bark and peppermint, with occasional specimens of blackwood, cherry tree and she-oak. The Wardy-Yallock in those days was a picturesque stream, in which blackfish and eels abounded”.¹⁰¹

A happy valley indeed it may have been, but before long the crystal waters of the Spring Creek flowing into the Springdallah would have become well muddied with puddling and washing, piles of soil and gravel covering the once-verdant grassy banks. The slopes towards Mt Erip became pocked with holes and denuded of trees, which were needed to support canvas and bark tents, and to feed fires on which food was cooked and water heated. Bate, referring to the “rape of Golden Point” in Ballarat, described the “enormous amount of earth...carted to the creek...polluting the clear stream unmercifully in the process and reducing its banks to long shoals of tailings”.¹⁰² That scene must have been re-enacted countless times at other shallow diggings and certainly in the waterways

¹⁰⁰ Henry Brown, *Victoria, as I found It, During Five Years of Adventure, in Melbourne, on the Roads, and the Gold Fields, With an Account of Quartz Mining, and the Great Rush to Mount Ararat and Pleasant Creek* (London: Newby, 1862), 163.

¹⁰¹ Patrick McGrath and others, *Browns and Scarsdale*, 16.

¹⁰² Bate, *Lucky City*, 16.

and gullies of Springdallah diggings. The map in Figure 13 shows the expanse of auriferous ground traversed by the deep lead (red) throughout Springdallah in the Parish of Clarksdale.

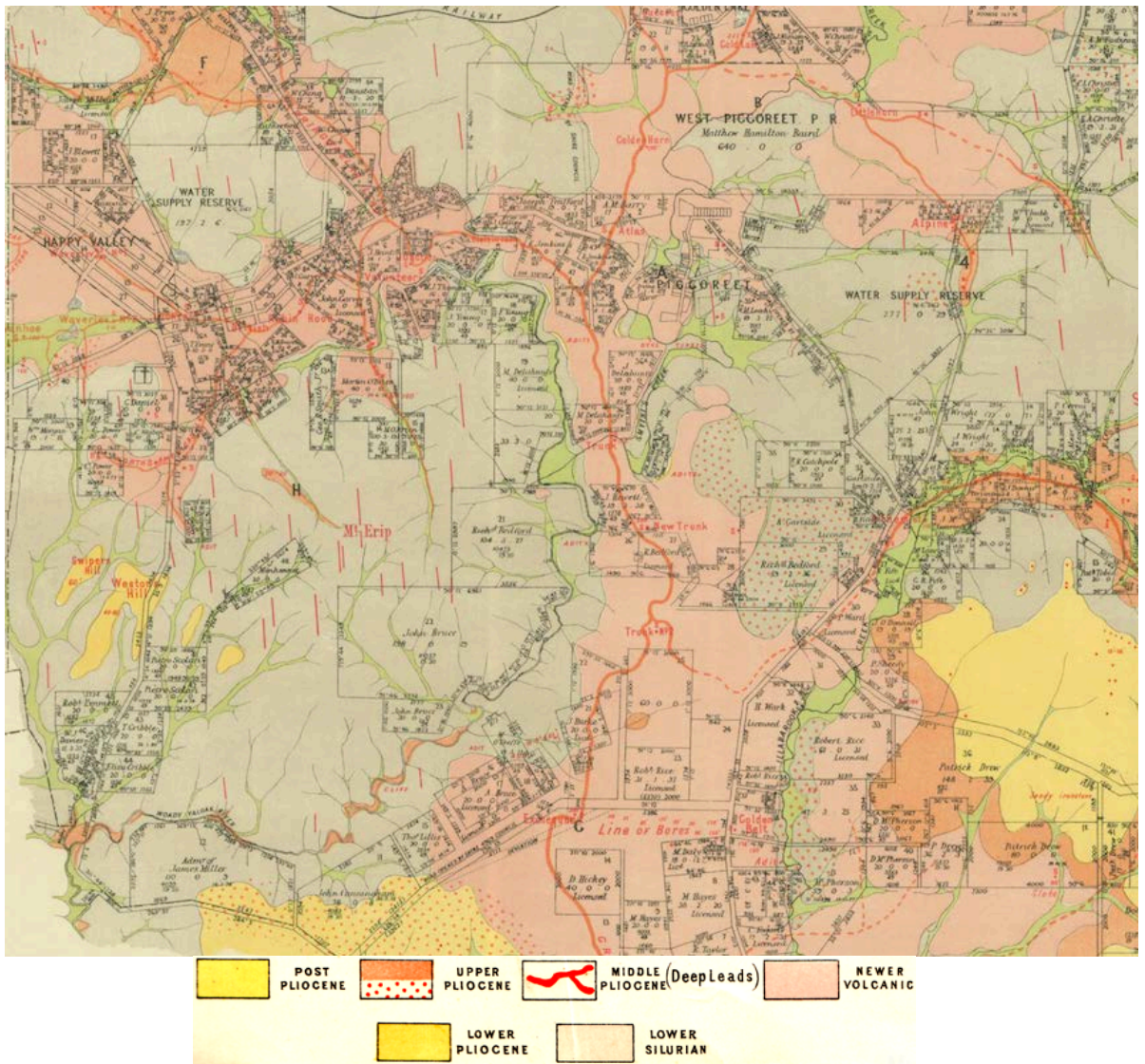


Figure 13. Geological and parish plan of Springdallah in Clarksdale Parish

(Adapted from Department of Crown Lands and Survey, Melbourne)

A fine sample of 22 dwt of gold was reportedly found in the Springdallah locality in April 1853.¹⁰³ The most favourable areas reported on at the Wardy Yallock diggings were near Mt Erip, where Swindells had found payable gold at Patersons Crescent (the Devils Kitchen).¹⁰⁴ In May 1855 Happy Valley, which ran west on the north side of the

¹⁰³ *Argus* (Melbourne), April 25, 1853, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4791977>.

¹⁰⁴ *Argus* (Melbourne), April 20, 1855, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4806996>.

Mt Erip ranges, was opened up.¹⁰⁵ Various reports indicate rich finds by mid 1855, one correspondent claiming that “as much as 8 lbs has been washed from one tub of stuff, and on this day a party washed all day and averaged 1 lb to the tub”.¹⁰⁶ The following week it was reported that the “population is about 4500, water abundant, gold plentiful, and the sinking averaging from five to twenty-five ft...sly grog is abundant”.¹⁰⁷ Large numbers left nearby diggings such as Smythes Creek, and by mid May a reported population of 4,500 diggers at Happy Valley were sinking from 5 to 25 ft where the gold was said to be plentiful.

One of the many who were at Happy Valley by June of 1855 was the American Charles Derius Ferguson, who had fought at Eureka and who later published his reminiscences.¹⁰⁸ He set up a store, selling “brandy, dark and pale, port-wine, gin, ale and porter in ample casks”,¹⁰⁹ as well as both flour and bread and other goods, and even bought gold from successful diggers as there was no bank. He claimed to have employed young Aboriginal men to help build his store from bark and gum-tree poles, and was told by one Aboriginal youth at Linton that he knew where to find gold at Ararat. Ferguson recorded that he eventually left Happy Valley and Linton for Ballarat, carrying 80 lbs of gold, which he was obliged to defend from a group who tried to rob him.

Regulation

As Birrell made clear, the problems created by the gold rush in Victoria were unique. The massive influx of gold seekers overwhelmed the administration of a colonial government in its infancy. He stressed the importance of the 12 June 1855 Act for the Better Management of the Gold Fields (Act 18 Vict. 37), which “created the miner’s right at £1 per year and reduced business licence fees to £2.10s for three months, £5 for six months and £10 for twelve months”. The Act also set up “districts for the purpose of forming Local Courts” to include a chairman (warden), and “at least five of the nine other members were to be elected by the holders of a miner’s right or a lease in the district”. Birrell pointed out that “the gold fields were outside the settled districts, and as such had

¹⁰⁵ *Argus* (Melbourne), May 9, 1855, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4807880>.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Argus* (Melbourne), May 18, 1855, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4808260>.

¹⁰⁸ Charles D. Ferguson, *Experiences of a Forty-nine in Australia and New Zealand* (Melbourne: Gaston Renard, 1979). In Chapter 8 (74-86) Ferguson writes about his experiences in Happy Valley.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 76.

not yet developed any systems of administration, had no infrastructure such as sealed roads or public buildings and amenities”.¹¹⁰ Serle argued that the political fallout after Eureka was considerable, influencing both mining law, through the new government regulations of June 1855, and the development of mining technology.¹¹¹ Fahey et al. expanded on the advantages of the new regulations: for the price of £1 per year, the miner’s right entitled each miner to “a mining claim twelve feet square, to occupy crown land for residential purposes, and to elect local mining courts that would frame mining regulations and arbitrate disputes”.¹¹²

Because of the vested interests involved, such as the squatters, capitalists, mining companies and even miners, it took years for the government to evolve a consistent policy to regulate claims and leases on the goldfields. Not until the Mining Statute of 1865 did such regulation become relatively stable.¹¹³ Under the Goldfields Amending Act of 1858,¹¹⁴ mining districts were established, each subdivided into a number of mining divisions. Within the districts, there were mining boards (which existed from 1855), wardens (who operated from 1855), registrars (who were appointed from 1860) and surveyors (who often carried out the role of registrar at the same time).¹¹⁵

John Lynch — Mining Surveyor

The mining surveyor of No. 6 Smythesdale Division, Ballarat Mining District, was John Lynch, an Irish civil engineer, who held the position for many years. Born in 1826 in Ennis, County Clare, he emigrated as a young man and was among the earliest of the gold diggers, at first at Bendigo and then at Ballarat.¹¹⁶ He joined the Ballarat Reform League in October 1854 and took a leading part in the agitation to achieve reform that resulted in the Stockade rebellion. Lynch was one of Peter Lalor’s captains and was arrested and gaoled after the battle, but subsequently released. He later published his recollections, including of the conditions in gaol: “All night we were handcuffed in

¹¹⁰ Birrell, *Staking a Claim*, 6.

¹¹¹ Serle, *Golden Age*, 180–87.

¹¹² Fahey et al., “Miner’s Right,” 203.

¹¹³ Birrell, *Staking a Claim*, 60.

¹¹⁴ Six mining districts were established by the Governor-in-Council on 4 January 1858 under the provisions of An Act for Amending the Laws Relating to the Goldfields (21 Vic., No.32).

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 73.

¹¹⁶ McGrath and others, *Browns and Scarsdale*, 74.

couples, and had to lie on the floor in rows...we had neither straw for bedding nor the usual luxury of boots for pillows".¹¹⁷

In 1856, Lynch married Isabella McGregor,¹¹⁸ the daughter of Peter and Janet McGregor, who lived in Ballarat East. After their marriage, John and Isabella lived for more than 50 years at Frasers Hill, Smythesdale, where 14 children were born to them, eight of whom died in childhood and five during the diphtheria epidemic of 1872.¹¹⁹ Lynch was elected one of seven members of the first Smythesdale Municipal Council, but his sympathies with the miners caused friction with the commercial interests.¹²⁰ Four members of the council, including Lynch, tendered their resignations at the usual weekly meeting on Friday 9 August 1861.¹²¹ The meeting for election of the council took place in early May, so Lynch held his position for only three months, always taking a position favourable to the mining interest. It was claimed that "Mr Lynch had been chiseled out of his seat in the municipal council at the last election", and Lynch declared himself an "open opponent of chicanery, selfishness, and duplicity...but bigotry and narrow-mindedness were rife in the soil".¹²² He then stood for council in the Municipality of Browns and Scarsdale in 1862, was elected its first chairman, and was subsequently appointed a justice of the peace.¹²³

John Lynch was one of the first examiners in mathematics at the Ballarat School of Mines.¹²⁴ His importance to the miners of Springdallah can be seen in almost every file containing his many surveys of land allotments, mining leases and Crown Land reserves, as well as his own regular quarterly reports to the Mining Board, for which he was

¹¹⁷ John Lynch, *The Story of Eureka Stockade: Epic Days of the Early Fifties at Ballarat* (Melbourne: The Australian Catholic Truth Society, 1893), 32.

¹¹⁸ BDM, *Marriage certificate*, Reg. 1394, John Lynch married Isabella McGregor on 12 April 1856 at St Alipius Church, Ballarat.

¹¹⁹ Joan E. Hunt, *Smythesdale General Cemetery: 150 Years (1859-2009)* (Ballarat, Vic.: Smythesdale Cemetery Trust, 2009), 15. With CD-ROM of burial transcriptions.

¹²⁰ *Star* (Ballarat), May 24, 1861, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66339455>.

¹²¹ *Star* (Ballarat), August 13, 1861, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66341289>. The other three resignations were from Louis Saenger, John Moseley, and Henry Crossen.

¹²² *Star* (Ballarat), August 8, 1862, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66326186>.

¹²³ McGrath and others, *Browns and Scarsdale*, 75.

¹²⁴ Joan E. Hunt, *John Lynch, Mining Surveyor (1826-1906)* (Ballarat: The Woody Yaloak Historical Society, 1992), 8. Lynch was voted to the position of mining surveyor as a result of the regulations that grew out of the Eureka rebellion, in which he played an active role.

publicly thanked in August, 1862.¹²⁵ An invitation-only dinner and presentation was given at Dent's Royal Hotel, Smythesdale, where "a very handsome silver tea service, and three volumes of legal lore", were "presented to Mr John Lynch, C.E., as a mark of esteem and acknowledgment of his public and private worth from his fellow citizens of Smythesdale". The following year, the gesture of gratitude was repeated when a complimentary dinner was given at the Crow Club Hotel at Browns Diggings, and it was claimed that "there was no movement where the interest of the public was concerned in which Mr Lynch had not devoted his time and expended his money".¹²⁶ His endeavours on behalf of the mining community of the district was clearly acknowledged.

Lynch was a witness to all the developments that occurred from the mid 1850s, and many are the examples of his involvement with, and support of, the mining interest. His surveys often contain sketch symbols of huts, fencing, shallow diggings and waterholes of that early period.¹²⁷ Alongside men like Lynch were others who strengthened their own financial situations while assisting in providing services and facilities within the growing communities. Entrepreneurs wasted no time in setting up gold-finding businesses. As early as mid 1856, the proprietor of a puddling machine advertised it as newly erected and for sale at Happy Valley.¹²⁸ Each of the settlements of the Springdallah, as it grew into a township, would have been busy with the sounds of axes felling trees, hammering and pitching of tents, shouts of miners passing orders and requesting answers, bleating of goats and barking of dogs, creaking of leather as horses strained to pull equipment, trundling of wheelbarrows, and turning of windlasses, not to mention the nightly firing of weapons.¹²⁹ The piles of gravel and drains of sludge and mud from puddling cradles, tubs and horse-operated machines made movement over distances precarious.¹³⁰

¹²⁵ *Star* (Ballarat), August 8, 1862, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66326186>.

¹²⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), September 5, 1863, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72516983>.

¹²⁷ PROV, VPRS 627/P0, Unit 304, file 21694/31. Land Selection files for the Parish of Clarkesdale contain survey drawings such as that in Figure 7, invaluable for the evidence they provide of early shallow alluvial diggings.

¹²⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), July 24, 1856, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66039031>.

¹²⁹ Robyn Annear, *Nothing but Gold: the diggers of 1852* (Melbourne: Text Publishing, 1999), 140. Robyn Annear cites more than five sources for reports of the discharging of guns night and morning as a usual event on the early goldfields.

¹³⁰ A.W. Strange, *Ballarat: The Formative years* (Ballarat: B & B Strange, 1982), 21.

In the Mining Surveyor's report for August 1859 on the Linton's diggings area (including Happy Valley, Lucky Womans and various other gullies),¹³¹ Lynch gave the number of alluvial miners as 950, with 150 surfacing, that is, sluicing away the topsoil to process for gold. Altogether, there were 2,700 Europeans and 240 Chinese in that area. He commented that Lucky Womans "has acquired within the last six or eight months a prosperous pre-eminence, exceedingly rich patches being frequently found"¹³² in shallow and dry ground. For the whole of the No. 6 Smythesdale Mining Division, which included the goldfields of Haddon, Smythesdale, Scarsdale, Springdallah, Linton and Carngham, he gave a total European population of 17,050. In November he gave similar figures,¹³³ with the addition of 950 Chinese.

Gold, Water and Tools

Prior to the discovery of deep leads or quartz lodes, gold diggers at first accessed the shallow alluvial gold, generally by panning for gold in the creeks and gullies or digging for washdirt on adjacent rangey slopes, valleys and flats, as McGowan pointed out.¹³⁴ Creeks and rivers were essential to gold mining, to provide the water for separating the gold from the washdirt by use of tin dishes, cradles and puddling tubs.¹³⁵ Processing the washdirt in its simplest form was by use of a dish or pan. The large shallow tin dish was about 40 cm diameter and 15 cm deep, with a recess just below the lip, allowing water to be swilled with the washdirt. Birrell described the process by which the water, clay and gravel are gradually washed and tipped out, leaving the heavier gold in the bottom.¹³⁶

The work was wearying and wet. Herbert Swindells recalled the difficulties they "had to encounter in sinking, and the complete drudgery of the labour, up to the knees in wet and mud all day".¹³⁷ Throughout the era of the gold mining industry, other hand tools were used consistently, including picks, shovels and buckets, and were altered, modified and improved in innovative ways to suit the particular circumstances in which miners

¹³¹ *Age* (Melbourne), September 27 1859, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article154827977>.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *Age* (Melbourne), December 24, 1859, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article154881463>.

¹³⁴ McGowan, *Dust and Dreams*, 311.

¹³⁵ Smyth, *Gold Fields*, 79. Clean water for survival purposes, to drink and use for washing and cooking, was at a premium, as mining activity muddied and polluted the creeks.

¹³⁶ Birrell, "Development of Mining Technology," 602.

¹³⁷ *Argus* (Melbourne), August 27, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4786934>.

worked. As time passed and experience developed, many mechanical inventions were applied to the daily mining work. Panning in creeks, digging for washdirt in surrounding creek banks,¹³⁸ and fossicking in grass roots and tree roots with a penknife had a limited life. Puddling was the most basic treatment of the washdirt in which gold particles were embedded. Small-scale puddling, often by one person or a partnership or small group, was undertaken in half a wooden barrel, or a rockable cradle, an example of which is shown in the painting by S.T. Gill, Figure 14,¹³⁹ the job being finished in a tin pan or dish.



Figure 14. Zealous gold diggers, Castlemaine

(Painted by S.T. Gill 1852. Courtesy of Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria [H141536])

Large amounts of washdirt were processed by the same method, using a wooden or iron puddling machine, in which the alluvium was dumped with water, then rotated and puddled by the raked tool, which was drawn by a horse as it walked around the edge of the machine. Smyth explained that later, horses were replaced by steam engines to achieve the same ends. Horses were yoked to horizontal beams attached to a revolving centre pin so that they walked around the outside of a circular trough in which harrows churned the deposits of clay and washdirt to separate the gold.¹⁴⁰ There were inlets to

¹³⁸ Soils, sand, clay, gravels and quartz-drifts, deposited by water action are known as alluvium. If gold-bearing (auriferous), the material is called washdirt. The term 'rangey' appears frequently in documents describing the Springdallah country, indicating rough, rock-strewn hillsides and gullies, impossible to cultivate.

¹³⁹ S.T. Gill, *Zealous gold diggers, Castlemaine*, 1852, <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/303474>.

¹⁴⁰ Smyth, *Gold Fields*, 618.

admit a flow of water and outlets to release it. Large stones were removed regularly, and the washdirt deposit was removed and worked by a cradle or Long Tom.¹⁴¹

Shaft Digging

When gold was first found, usually two or more miners would dig a pit or hole until they gained the bottom where the gold-bearing dirt was found, and then extract that paydirt until they reached the boundaries of their claim, which was 12 ft square per miner's right.¹⁴² The ground became honeycombed. Before long, the small cooperative groups of miners had to dig deeper to find the buried watercourses in which the heavy gold had been caught among the pebbles and sand of meandering rivers and streams.

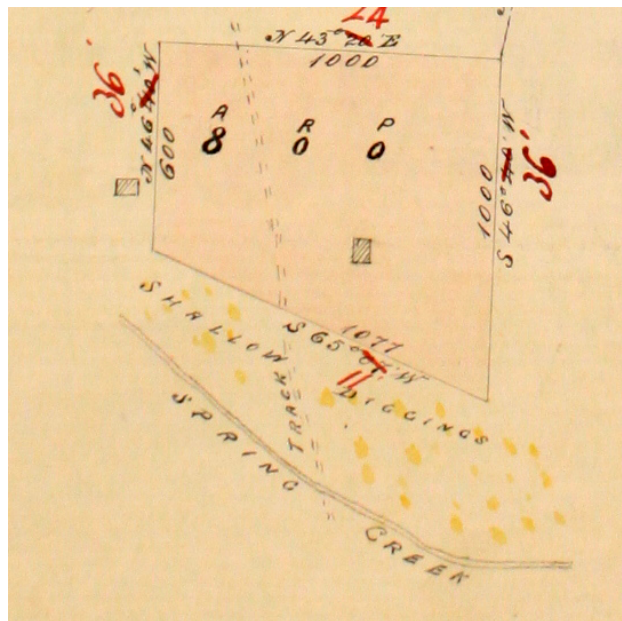


Figure 15. Shallow diggings on Spring Creek below Coxon's licensed land

(Courtesy of Public Record Office Victoria [PROV, VPRS 627/P0, Unit 304, file 21694/31])

Figure 15 shows the shallow diggings on the north bank of the Spring Creek, a short distance from what became the main street of Happy Valley. Both George Coxon, who arrived in December 1857 with his wife, Mary, and seven children, and William McLennan were early diggers. Huts such as theirs, with the track that ran between the creek and the row of stores that became the main street, are discernible in land licensing surveys. The shallow diggings on the creek, marked on the survey of 8 acres that Coxon applied to take up under licence, indicate the earliest phase of the mining industry at

¹⁴¹ McGowan, *Dust and Dreams*, 315. Long Tom was the name given to a sluice box that was much longer than the normally 3–4 ft cradle.

¹⁴² Fahey et al., "Miner's Right," 203.

Happy Valley.¹⁴³ The holes and pits became shafts, often “between ten and forty feet deep”¹⁴⁴

In April 1855 when the Lucky Womans goldfield was identified as “near Mrs Linton’s station”,¹⁴⁵ the sinking was given as about 25 ft, with a yield of 3 to 6 oz to the tub. These depths were shallow enough that miners “often used footholes cut in the sides of shafts to enable them to ascend or descend”.¹⁴⁶ As the shafts had to descend even more deeply, footholes and ladders became inadequate to the task. Birrell described the simple mining technology that introduced windlasses to lower buckets, with two or three men working below ground, and a similar number above.¹⁴⁷ Another would guard their tent and belongings while attending to the necessary domestic duties. In this way, the shallow alluvial miners were able to work at 20 or 30 ft depths, and even as deep as 80 or 90 ft.

Winning and Losing

A feature of the initial goldfields across Victoria is the degree to which their fortunes fluctuated, with large populations moving back and forth between nearby diggings, chasing richer deposits. The analysis by Robyn Annear of the Mount Alexander goldfields revealed many cases of population surges in the first year or so of the rush period.¹⁴⁸ The nature of shallow alluvial diggings is further demonstrated by newspaper reports, at one time lamenting poor results, and at another indicating large numbers “doing first-rate”.¹⁴⁹ In mid 1855 the press viewed the Happy Valley diggings as having a potentially short life: “Being shallow, they are soon and easily worked out”, and “likely to be deserted”.¹⁵⁰ In August 1855 the Geelong Gold Circular, a regular column in the

¹⁴³ PROV, VPRS 7666, 137:5, *John Barbour*, December 1857. Coxon’s wife, Mary, gave birth to their eighth child at Happy Valley (BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 13921, James Edward “Bert” Coxon, born 1860 at Happy Valley).

¹⁴⁴ Serle, *Golden Age*, 12.

¹⁴⁵ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, April 14, 1855, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91862807>.

¹⁴⁶ Smyth, *Gold Fields*, 611.

¹⁴⁷ Birrell, “Development of Mining Technology,” 71. A horizontal cylinder, such as a log, was rotated by a handle inserted at one end, around which a rope attached to a bucket was wound, enabling the bucket to be raised and lowered.

¹⁴⁸ Annear, *Nothing but Gold*, 175–87.

¹⁴⁹ *Star* (Ballarat), October 9, 1856, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page6458181>.

¹⁵⁰ *Argus* (Melbourne), June 7, 1855, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4809223>.

Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer, identified the Spindella Creek as the original Wardy Yallock diggings, where there was a successful rush taking place.¹⁵¹ Good fortune continued through to the following May, when the correspondent from Linton's was impressed by the diggings at Derwent Jacks and the neighbourhood that made up the Springdallah goldfield.¹⁵² He remarked on "how soon a golden discovery changes the appearance of an almost deserted diggings".

Smyth observed about Happy Valley that "in about eighteen months the shallow diggings were worked out by those who could bring but poor appliances and little skill to the work before them".¹⁵³ Things were so poor for the miners in September 1856, however, that the *Ballarat Times* commented that "Lucky Womans ought now to be called Unlucky Womans".¹⁵⁴ Yet in the same month, the view of the *Geelong Observer* (reported in the *Ballarat Times*) was that "prosperity is the order of the day at a great majority of these diggings, both in a commercial and a gold seeking nature. With the return of fine weather a corresponding activity has taken place among all classes".¹⁵⁵ New finds in nearby gullies often provided a fillip to the economy, such as occurred in July 1859 at Lucky Womans lead, which put "the miners there in a most prosperous condition".¹⁵⁶ In August 1859 Smythesdale Mining District Surveyor Lynch reported that the Springdallah diggings had been abandoned for the previous six months, stating that

they were found to be payable for a distance of 400 yards, beyond which they spread out over a wide area between two slightly elevated reefs, thus reducing the aggregate of auriferous drift to a very small thickness, by which it was found that the expense of working exceeded the value of gold derived from it.¹⁵⁷

Throughout the shallow alluvial gold mining period, those fluctuations of prosperity were dependent on matters outside the control of many diggers. Often there was either not enough water to separate gold from the matrix, or so much water that their workings were flooded out. Diggers took a punt on just where they should sink their holes and one could

¹⁵¹ *Argus* (Melbourne), August 22, 1855, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91865816>. The Geelong Gold Circular was the column written by William Paterson.

¹⁵² *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, May 8, 1856, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article93145083>.

¹⁵³ Smyth, *Gold Fields*, 188.

¹⁵⁴ *Ballarat Times*, September 22, 1856, 2.

¹⁵⁵ *Ballarat Times*, September 29, 1856, 2.

¹⁵⁶ *Argus* (Melbourne), July 7, 1859, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5684037>.

¹⁵⁷ *Argus*, (Melbourne), August 27, 1859, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5686980>.

find a “shicer” (a claim devoid of gold) abutting on a neighbouring very rich claim.¹⁵⁸ And there were some who had to deal with unscrupulous thieves and swindlers, often people in authority as well as from the general population.¹⁵⁹ By the time that the Springdallah goldfield diggings were starting to be settled by gold seekers with aspirations for more permanent homes for themselves and their families, better conditions for all miners were starting to be implemented.

CONCLUSION

Where other reward systems were prepared to make payment after the event to any person confirming a payable goldfield in a particular place, the system by which the Springdallah, and therefore the greater Woody Yaloak, goldfields were discovered involved the equipping and sending out of a selected party with an appointed leader to report on their progress, with the particular task of finding a payable goldfield. This synthesis and examination of many sources from the earliest period of the gold mining industry provides a picture of the conditions and social and industrial changes of that time. The era of surface and shallow workings by one or several men was passing as the easy gold was depleted, and the scene was set for exploitation of the deep leads by capital-rich mining companies. The total population of Victoria in December 1851, shortly after the gold discoveries, was estimated to be less than 100,000. By December 1861, it was nearly 550,000, an amazing five-fold increase in just one decade.¹⁶⁰ This population growth, mainly due to immigration of gold seekers, transformed the new Colony of Victoria beyond all expectations. As experience taught the diggers, technological improvements increased and developed on the goldfields, and more efficient means of both gold discovery and gold processing were implemented. Permanency of diggings led to the establishment of settlements with entrepreneurs setting up businesses to service the needs of mining families. Regulation of the goldfields included the introduction of surveyor-wardens to administer the divisions of each of the districts of the Victorian goldfields. John Lynch was a notable surveyor of the No. 6 Smythesdale Mining Division, a role he undertook to wide acclaim, and which had a

¹⁵⁸ Bate, *Lucky City*, 35. A shicer was an unproductive mining claim; Bate claimed that “one deep hole in four was a ‘shicer’ ” at Ballarat.

¹⁵⁹ Birrell, *Staking a Claim*, 33–34.

¹⁶⁰ Serle, *Golden Age*, 382.

lasting effect upon the development of the Springdallah area. Leaders such as Lynch emerged as significant in the creation of structure and order in the goldfields communities.

Chapter 5: ARRIVING AND SETTLING

INTRODUCTION

The discovery of the rich, shallow alluvial goldfields of Victoria, as discussed in the previous chapter, created a sensation that resonated across the world, particularly in Britain and Europe, resulting in a mass movement from the northern hemisphere to south-eastern Australia. According to Broome,¹ immigration to the Victorian goldfields by miners and mining families swelled Victoria's population to five times its size prior to the discovery of gold in just one decade. This created a truly cosmopolitan mixture of male and female, child and adult, poor and moneyed, English and non-English speakers, of all shades of world experience and social class. Those who immigrated shared the experience of a lengthy and often uncomfortable journey across the seas on a sailing ship.²

Conditions aboard ship demanded great adjustments for most passengers, many of whom had never even seen the sea before, nor experienced the particular privations and difficulties of life in a small vessel on a potentially volatile ocean. This chapter argues that the voyage itself often impacted on personal and commercial relationships that played a role in the Springdallah communities.

Before arriving on the Springdallah goldfield, many miners had experienced the shallow alluvial gold rushes of the early 1850s in central Victoria and had gained an understanding of basic alluvial gold mining techniques.³ Others who had been coal and lead miners in the north of England and Scotland brought experience, specialised knowledge and skills from their previous employment. As is argued in this chapter and in Chapter 6, the Springdallah gold mining industry owed its success as a rich and productive deep lead alluvial to the inventive, entrepreneurial and skilful application of the expertise brought to the industry by its mining community. Evidence is presented that some with less mining experience turned to farming, when possible, or support services such as carting, timber cutting, hotelkeeping and other alternative employment. A focus

¹ Broome, *Arriving*, 72. Between July 1851 and December 1861, around 584,000 people emigrated to Victoria.

² Don Charlwood, *The Long Farewell* (Warrandyte, Vic.: Burgewood Books, 2000), 30.

³ The *Pioneers Index* to Victorian births bears witness to the many infants born in Ballarat and other gold mining centres prior to the families arriving at Springdallah.

of this chapter is the countries of origin of the mining families, their backgrounds and the implications that can be drawn from analysis of data relating to places of birth and marriage, and occupational status.

Some sense of the physical development of the Springdallah communities is also presented. Many residents of Springdallah were already living in the gullies and valleys by the time the deep lead companies became established, and it was they who helped create the stable communities of the next several decades. Residents gathered for meetings to formally request support services and public institutions, schools, churches, protection by staffed police stations and courthouses, public halls and other marks of civilised society. Their representatives began petitioning local government bodies to clear stumps from roadways, to make and improve roads with gravel and drainage, and build bridges. This chapter contends that within four or five years of the first gold mining company being established, a network of thriving, financially viable commercial and domestic settlements both supported, and was supported by, the 50 or so companies on the Springdallah goldfield. Happy Valley and Piggoreet, the major centres at Springdallah, were well established by the end of 1864, with hotels, churches, stores, schools and homes that were more permanent and comfortable than the tents and huts of earlier years. Socially and economically, the countryside and its riches impacted on the new and growing population that had settled on a permanent basis in a district where no township had previously existed.

THE VOYAGE

Of those who settled at Springdallah, all who were immigrants had experienced the dangers associated with travelling by sea in sometimes appalling conditions. In Charlwood's study of journeys by immigrants to Australia, he argued that during the average three to four month voyage, conditions were generally cramped (particularly in steerage accommodation), smelly (especially during the seasickness stage), terrifying (mostly during heavy weather), and boring (notably during periods when the ship was becalmed).⁴

Even under the most favourable conditions, passengers had to bear hardships and privations. Sanitation, fresh water, adequately cooked food supplies and warm, dry clothing and bedding were extremely difficult to maintain in the circumstances. For some,

⁴ Charlwood, *Long Farewell*, 4.

the journey was a “rite of passage, its transformative qualities a preparation for settlement”, especially in the case of non-English speakers, whose familiar culture in their homelands (including cuisine, language, entertainment and manners) had usually been quite different from their experiences on the voyage.⁵

There were two systems of payment of the costs involved in the long voyage of migration: one where the passengers paid their full passage fees and the other where passengers were financially assisted.

Unassisted Immigration

In the case of immigrants paying their own passage, there was considerable variation in conditions. The *Marco Polo* clipper ship, shown in Figure 16, carried a number of the Springdallah residents to Victoria’s shores as unassisted passengers, such as the two brothers James and William Ballantine from Ayrshire in Scotland, who arrived in January 1854; the three brothers Humphrey, Evan and Edward Rowlands from Corris in Wales, who arrived in September 1857; and John Menhennet from Redruth in Cornwall, who arrived in June 1855.⁶



Figure 16. The Marco Polo clipper ship

(Painted by T. Robertson 1859. Courtesy of Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria [H306])

⁵ Bridget Rachel Carlson, “Immigrant Placemaking in Colonial Australia: The Italian-Speaking Settlers of Daylesford” (PhD diss., Victoria University of Technology, 1997), 91.

⁶ PROV, VPRS 7666, B/61:5 *Marco Polo*, January 1854; PROV, VPRS 7666, B/130:3 *Marco Polo*, September 1857; PROV, VPRS 7666, B/95:9 *Marco Polo*, June 1855.

Those who could afford to travel in costly cabin accommodation or intermediate did so, although most were between decks in steerage.⁷ Cabin accommodation was private for the occupying individual or family, while intermediate cabins were shared between a small group, often several young men or young women. Below decks in steerage, the married couples occupied the middle section of the ship, providing a convenient separation between the bachelors' quarters at one end of the vessel and the spinsters' accommodation at the other. A shared dining room was usually available to the higher paying passengers, while those in steerage dined together below on long bench tables.

Often married men arrived on the goldfields alone, leaving their wives to journey out later with the children once the miner had determined that emigration of the family was desirable. For instance, Ralph Jobling, a coal miner at the Murton Colliery in Durham, embarked on the *White Star* at Liverpool on 20 August 1856, arriving at Melbourne in November 1856,⁸ when he was 29 years old. His wife, Lillyas Jane, joined him nearly seven years later. She boarded the *Hope* at Liverpool on 17 March 1863 with their ten-year-old daughter, Catherine, sons John aged eight and William aged seven, and five-year-old Sarah Jane.⁹ Their family connections at Springdallah were of long duration, with many marriages between their children and other local families.

Assisted Immigration

As Serle explained, the Colonial Land and Emigration Commission assisted about 200,000 British immigrants by paying all or part of their passages to the colonies between 1852 and 1860 "by the sale of colonial crown lands".¹⁰ Until 1871, families and particularly females, qualified for financial assistance to cover the costs of the voyage.¹¹ The employment requirements of the colony for domestic servants influenced the high proportion of females in proportion to men. The social demand for wives also played a part in the encouragement of women to migrate.

⁷ Charlwood, *Long Farewell*, 97.

⁸ PROV, VPRS 7666, B/115:4, *White Star*, November 1856.

⁹ PROV, VPRS 7666, B/218:6, *Hope*, June 1863.

¹⁰ Serle, *Golden Age*, 44.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 54.

The Government Emigration Board in Westminster made its report in January 1864 with a summary of emigration to Victoria.¹² The ships they had chartered for the journeys to the colony carried 2,583 emigrants. Of that number, 1,262 were English, 488 were Irish and 504 were Scots. The average contract price for any migrant was £14/2/11. Of the selected emigrants,¹³ 526 were males, including 19 single men and lads who were members of families. Unmarried women and girls over 12 years numbered 1,512, the rest of the 1,628 females being married women.

The *Constance*, a government immigrant ship that departed from London via Plymouth on 15 July 1851, arrived at Hobsons Bay on 27 October 1851 with a full account of its passengers recorded in the ship's nominal and disposal indents.¹⁴ The McKay family from Sutherlandshire in Scotland was one family of passengers that later settled at Springdallah. Their third child, Alexander, was born on board on 14 October 1851, just two weeks before arrival.¹⁵

The *Constance* was not bringing gold seekers, as it departed from Britain before the official gold discovery in Victoria and months before the news of the richness of the Ballarat district goldfields had reached British cities and ports.¹⁶ The passengers were predominantly from Scotland, but also from England and Ireland. Among the employed staff on board were a matron, a schoolmaster, a hospital assistant, a cook's assistant and four constables. There were 66 married and 108 single adults and 45 children who embarked on the *Constance*, making 219 passengers on the 573-ton barque.¹⁷ Four children were born on the voyage, and the three deaths that occurred were of children under one year, all from failure to thrive.

Numbers of births and deaths during the voyage gave a final disembarking number of 220. Those numbers were calculated to equal 192.5 "Statutory Adults" on

¹² *Argus* (Melbourne), March 19, 1864, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5745947>.

¹³ The assisted immigrants were those qualified to be selected by the Government Emigration Board according to employment background and gender.

¹⁴ PROV, VPRS 7310, *Constance*, Book 5:186, 190; and Book 4A: 368.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, an unnamed infant McKay was born on board on 14 October 1851; BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 33443/9348, Alexander McKay, baptised 1852 at Williamstown.

¹⁶ *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, May 25, 1852, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91929301>. A fleet of 14 vessels bound for Geelong and Melbourne was "at once freighted for Port Phillip" from London in February 1852 after news of the Victorian gold discovery was received.

¹⁷ *Geelong Advertiser*, October 29, 1851, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91919865>.

board.¹⁸ The ship's master received a gratuity of two shillings for each "soul", making him an extra income of £22 for this voyage. The surgeon superintendent received 10 shillings per passenger, a total of £110, while the chief officer and second officer each received one shilling per soul, giving them a gratuity of £11. The contract price per Statutory Adult for this assisted immigration vessel was £10/2/-.

Upon arrival, the ship was inspected by the authorities, after which the families and single men were permitted to be interviewed by prospective employers. A set time was advertised for the interviews, which were held on board for families and single men, while the single females were interviewed in the shipping depot. All interviews were arranged by the immigration agent.¹⁹ John and Bella McKay left the ship at Melbourne "on their own account", finding employment and continuing to increase their family at Melbourne and Geelong before settling at Lucky Womans about 1855, where they established a hotel, the Sutherland Arms.²⁰ John died there at the end of 1872, and Bella continued to run the hotel for at least another decade.²¹

The voyage experience was often of great importance to the direction passengers' lives took later, especially if they befriended fellow travellers with whom they developed long-term personal or business relationships. In Chapter 7, a number of friendships of that kind are discussed, notably that of the northern Irish Watters and southern Irish Wilson families, who met on their voyage to Australia. Members of the two families not only shared in the storekeeping business at Happy Valley and Golden Lake, but also married and created long-lasting family connections.²²

COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

Those who found their way to Springdallah from the late 1850s onwards arrived from a variety of places. Some adults and children had been born in Victoria, others

¹⁸ PROV, VPRS 7310, *Constance*, Book 5: 190. Two children equaled one Statutory Adult.

¹⁹ *Argus* (Melbourne), October 29, 1851, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4781332>.

²⁰ *Star* (Ballarat), June 2, 1862, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66324513>. A valueless cheque was tendered to John McKay at Lucky Womans, where their daughter Mary Ann had been born in 1858 (BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 19284).

²¹ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 10141, John McKay, died 1872. Bella lived to just three years short of becoming a centenarian, having left Old Lucky Womans for Camperdown in the late 1870s.

²² BDM, *Marriage Certificate*, Reg. 1387, Hannah Jane Wilson married John Robert Watters in 1863 at Wesleyan Church, Yarra Street, Geelong.

landed at Port Phillip or Corio Bay from colonies around the Australian coastline, many arrived in family groups mainly from all parts of Great Britain and Ireland, and others came from America and parts of Europe, such as Germany, Switzerland, the Scandinavian countries and France. They were all obliged by circumstances to socialise and work cooperatively in often challenging situations. A number of Chinese men travelled on foot from Robe in South Australia, and some European immigrants arrived via American ports.²³

Registrations of births at Springdallah from 1863 until 1883 give a good indication of the population trends, although they cover only Piggoreet and nearby settlements. Piggoreet at that time was officially named Springdallah, but births at nearby Derwent Jacks, Brownsvale and gullies closer to Happy Valley do appear. The remaining births within the boundaries of the Springdallah goldfield would mainly have been recorded at Happy Valley, with some at Linton, Cape Clear and Scarsdale. The registrations available to this study show a predominance of fathers born in various counties of the British Isles. There were some Swiss-Italians and Germans, and native-born Australians. Far fewer were from America, Canada, and Scandinavian countries, but they are represented. Figure 17 illustrates the strong representation from Britain, 88% of fathers having been born in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

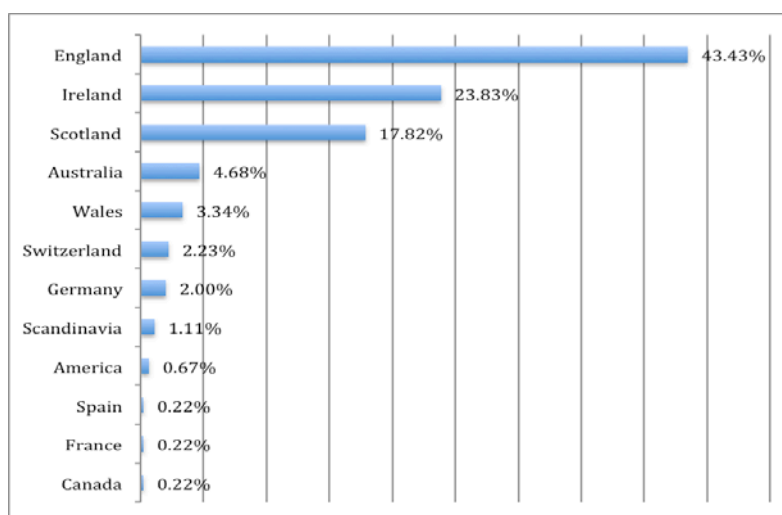


Figure 17. Frequency distribution of country of birth of fathers at Springdallah 1863–1883

²³ Ellen Mary Cawthorne, *The Long Journey: The Story of the Chinese Landings at Robe during the Gold Rush Era, 1852-1863* (Robe, South Australia: E.M. Cawthorne, 1974); PROV, VPRS 7667, F/027:2, *Wings of the Morning*, October 1854.

Northern English

The most common country of birth of fathers whose children were registered at Springdallah was England, as Figure 17 demonstrates. Many of the northern English either arrived with extended families or were followed to the colonies by family members. An example of family group migration is the Willis brothers, aged in their late twenties. William Willis arrived at Melbourne on 21 September 1860 on the *Great Britain* with his wife, Barbara, and four-year-old son, Charles.²⁴ Travelling with them was his brother Joseph, with his wife, Susannah, and four-year-old daughter, Mary. The adults in this group all came from coal-mining families and had lived and worked at various collieries in Durham and Northumberland, including the Hebburn Colliery near Newcastle upon Tyne.²⁵

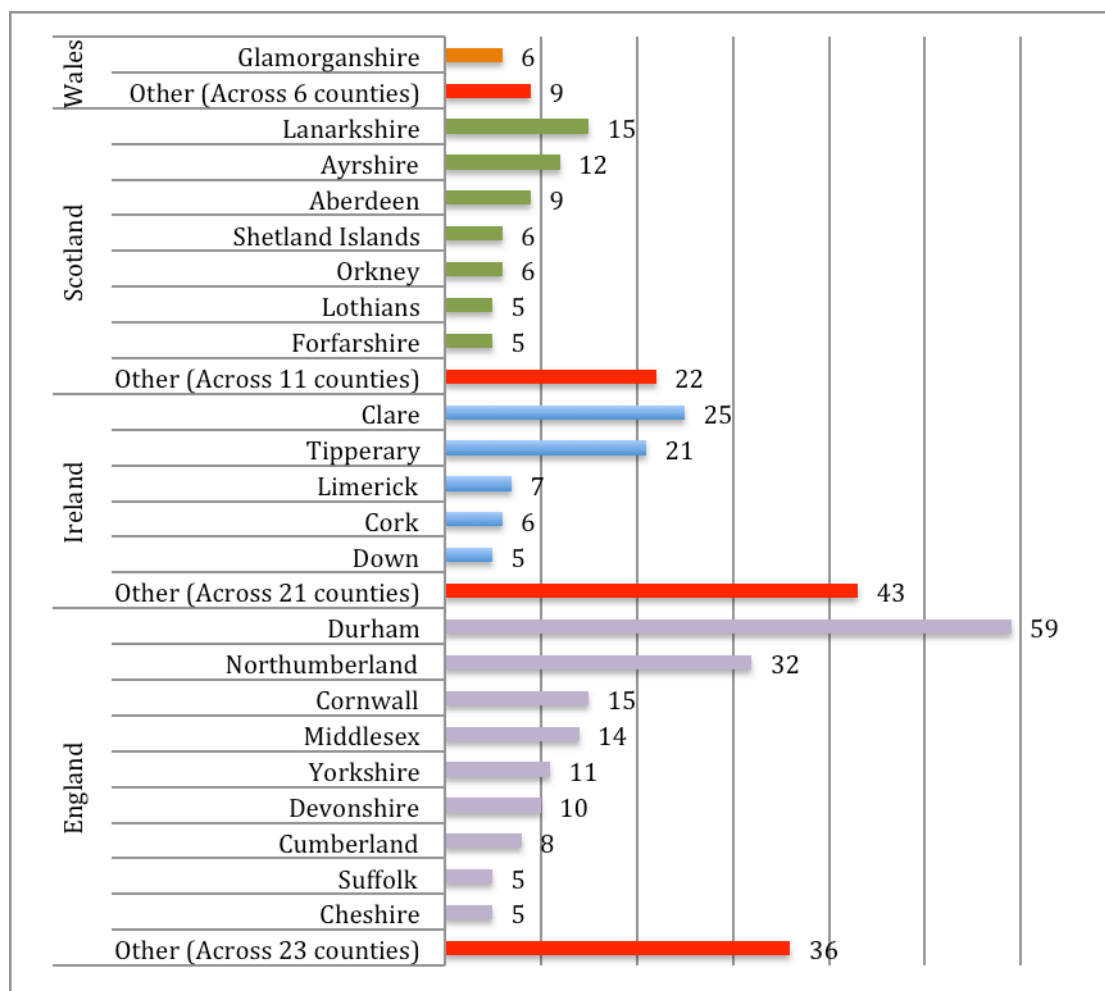


Figure 18. Numbers of fathers at Springdallah by British counties of origin 1863–1883

²⁴ PROV, VPRS 7666, *Great Britain*, B/181:3, 21 September 1860.

²⁵ Ancestry.com, *1851 England Census*, HO107/2400, folio 363:26, B pit cottages, Hebburn Colliery, Jarrow, Durham.

The familiarity of these experienced miners with working underground, using similar technology to that on the goldfields (including steam engines), and dealing with heavy flows of water would have made them valued contributors.²⁶ The combined numbers from the coal and lead mining counties of Northumberland, Durham, Yorkshire and Cumberland (Cumbria) make the northern English the predominant group at Springdallah, as can be seen in Figure 18. In Chapters 6 and 7, further analysis of the Springdallah families provides reasons for their strong representation in the deep lead mining industry and the influence they had in attracting relatives and neighbours from the north-eastern region of England. They appear to have been the most experienced miners at Springdallah and had an impact on the demography, as they frequently arrived as family networks, sometimes three generations arriving, as indicated by grandmothers, siblings and cousins acting as informants on the birth certificates or assisting at the birth.

Scots

The next most populous group of fathers was Scottish. Rapid industrialisation in Scotland towards the end of the 18th century led to the establishment of ironworks, whose fuel was provided by the associated coal-mining industry.²⁷ From about 1830, Scotland's economy increasingly relied on the coal, iron, engineering and shipbuilding industries. Both collieries and ironworks in the Lowlands of Lanarkshire and Ayrshire caused a massive increase in population in the first half of the 19th century, and many of the Scots at Springdallah emigrated from those shires, as the birth registrations reveal. Working the raw materials required a great workforce to mine and manufacture, encouraging waves of migration from Highlands, Lowlands and islands into the new and developing cities of Britain.²⁸ This movement in turn led to overcrowding and squalor, which, especially during times of downturn in the economy, must have made stories of the gold discoveries in Australia, the land of new economic opportunities, seem very attractive.

²⁶ Hair, T.H. *A Series of Views of the Collieries in the Counties of Northumberland and Durham* (London: George Kelsall, 1844), cited in Durham Mining Museum. Accessed February 14, 2015. <http://www.dmm.org.uk/books/votc-18.htm>

²⁷ David Turnock, *The Historical Geography of Scotland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 168.

²⁸ Scottish Mining Website. "History of the Coalfields: Lanarkshire." Accessed August 12, 2014. <http://www.scottishmining.co.uk/507.html>.

Emigration schemes offered finance, especially after the Emigration Act of 1851 provided even the poorest crofter with financial support to make the life-changing journey for just £1. The process between 1852 and 1857 was overseen by the Highlands and Islands Emigration Society,²⁹ which assisted many poor, mainly single, young men, especially those from the islands, to emigrate. For many, although circumstances made their migration compulsory, there was an element of choice, especially as the news of greater opportunity in countries like Canada, America, Australia and New Zealand became widespread.³⁰

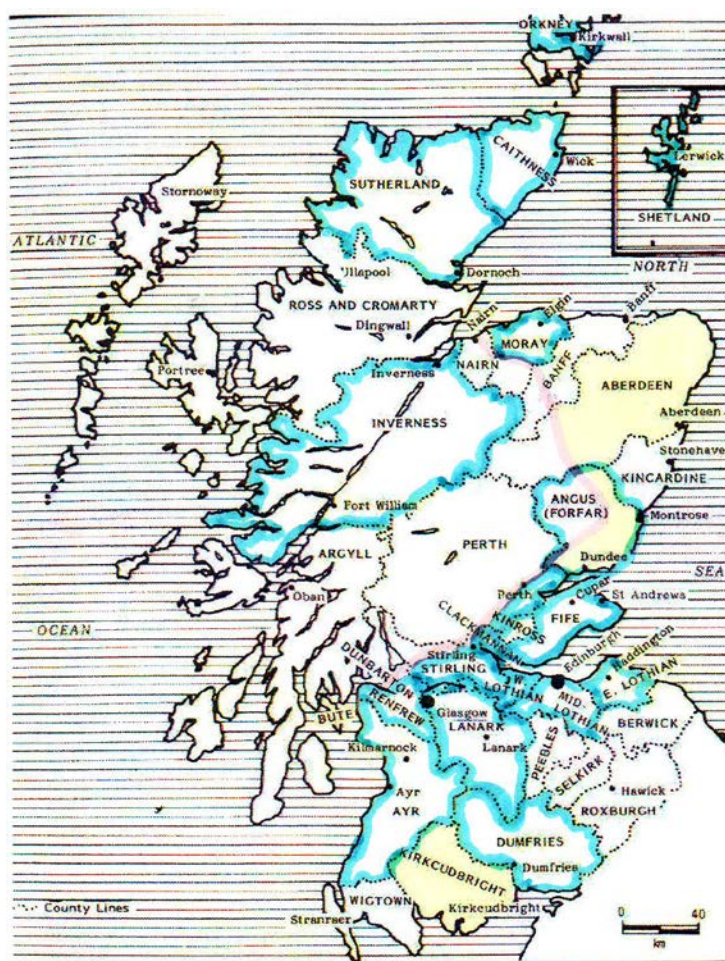


Figure 19. Springdallah pastoralists' and miners' shires of origin in Highlands

(Pastoralists: Yellow infill. Miners: Blue outline. Map outline adapted from Prentis, *Scots in Australia*)

²⁹ Marjory Harper, "Opportunity and Exile: Snapshots of Scottish Emigration to Australia," *Australian Studies* 2 (2010), accessed April 12, 2014, www.nla.gov.au/openpublish/index.php/australian-studies/issue/view/149.

³⁰ T.M. Devine, *The Great Highland Famine: Hunger, Emigration and the Scottish Highlands in the Nineteenth Century* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1988).

The counties outlined in blue in Figure 19 show the common places of origin of the Scottish fathers whose children were born at Springdallah between 1863 and 1883, and the yellowed counties are the places of origin of the pastoralists of Emu Hill, Piggoreet West and Moppianimum. The Mining District Reports of 1844–1859 provided information about the coal mining industry of Lanarkshire, the Lothians, Stirlingshire and Fifeshire,³¹ and many of the Scottish fathers of children born at Springdallah came from those counties.³² It is highly likely, therefore, that those immigrants had mining experience that influenced the mining techniques at Springdallah.

Based on evidence from the birth registrations, about 65% of the Scottish family men worked at Springdallah as miners, rising to 72% when skilled mining positions, such as mine manager, engineer, engine-driver, blacksmith and carpenter, are included. Some Scots worked in service industries necessary to the maintenance of the goldfield community, such as storekeeper, cobbler and grocer. Also represented were the occupations of pastoralist, station overseer, surgeon and farmer. Some were poor, leaving conditions in Scotland of high unemployment, illiteracy and slum housing. However, "...impoverished highland Scots, some of whom spoke only Gaelic...often judged...as jabbering heathens, slow in both body and mind" were as truly Scottish as were the well-educated, often bilingual, Presbyterians of high culture and polite society.³³

Of the 1,086 births registered at Springdallah between 1863 and 1883, there were 177 children born to 76 Scottish fathers, and the same number born to 78 Scottish mothers, although they were not necessarily married to each other. 21 marriages (28% of the Scottish fathers) were of Scots who had married in Scotland, arriving with children, and continuing to grow their families at Springdallah. 55 marriages of Scottish men who fathered children at Springdallah (72%) married in Victoria to Irish, English or Australian-born women, and one married a Welsh woman.

³¹ Scottish Mining Website, "Mining District Reports 1844-1859," accessed August 15, 2015, <http://www.scottishmining.co.uk/64.html>.

³² Janice Croggon and Joan E. Hunt, "The Scots at Springdallah," *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria* 13 (2014). Accessed February 4, 2015. <http://prov.vic.gov.au/publications/provenance/provenance2014/scots-at-springdallah>.

³³ Broome, *Arriving*, 64.

Irish

The Irish were well represented, with 304 children born to Irish fathers in the 20-year period of this study. The mothers of those children were predominantly Irish, although, as with all the Springdallah families, most couples did not meet and marry until after their arrival on the goldfields. An unusual family within this context was that of Alexander Crothers. He was a grocer and storekeeper at Piggoreet for at least 10 years, where four children were born to him and his wife, Elizabeth Scott Christie. Alexander was born in Rathfriland in County Down about 1830. By 1856 he was living in Glasgow, Scotland, where he and Elizabeth married in 1856. The census taken on 7 April 1861 showed that he was a grain merchant living at Govandale Cottage, Govan,³⁴ in Glasgow, with Elizabeth and their first two children. Alexander was representative of many Irish, however, in his occupation not being directly connected to the gold mining industry. Those Irish who were miners tended to have come from County Clare, particularly from Quin and Ennis where mining of lead and zinc took place in the 19th century,³⁵ and which may therefore have provided mining experience for some of the Irishmen at Springdallah.

Welsh

The Welsh who had worked in the slate quarrying industry would have brought some expertise in mining with them. There was a strong representation of Welsh at Happy Valley and Lucky Womans, some who mined alone in small claims. Humphrey Rowlands, one of the family from Corris in western Wales, died in July 1873 when a fall of earth smothered him while working in shallow ground at his claim at Watties Gully at Happy Valley.³⁶ McGowan's study of independent miners who worked alone, in small companies, and/or as tributers is in agreement with the findings of the Springdallah study, where miners of all backgrounds, not only Welsh, were capable of undertaking a variety

³⁴ Ancestry.com, *1861 Scotland Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA; Ancestry.com Operations Inc. 2006. Original data: Scotland. *1861 Scotland Census*. CSSCT1861_114, page 24, line 5, parish of Govan. General Register Office for Scotland, Edinburgh, Scotland. Ancestry.com.

³⁵ A. Fullarton, A. "Quin." In *The Parliamentary Gazetteer of Ireland*. Vol. 3, *N-Z, Index*. Dublin: A. Fullarton and Co., 1846. Raw text prepared by Clare Local Studies Project, accessed April 2, 2015. <http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/places/quin1845.htm>.

³⁶ *Ballarat Star*, August 11, 1873, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article199006554>.

of occupations while continuing to mine “on their own account”,³⁷ as is seen by many instances cited in this thesis.

Other Welsh miners appear to have worked in a number of the Springdallah mines, raising their families without remarkable influence on the local community, but contributing generally to the general growth and wellbeing and interacting in the workplace with miners from a range of backgrounds.

Germans

During the mid 19th century, many German families were attracted to the Victorian goldfields, including a strong representation from Nieder Weisel in Hessen, Germany. Of the 24 shareholders in the Cleft in the Rock gold mine, midway between Happy Valley and Piggoreet at Springdallah, 16 were working shareholders, of whom 9 were men from Nieder Weisel.³⁸ There were brothers, cousins, marriage connections and friendships of longstanding among the Nieder Weisel families.

Other German families included that of George Bolte who married Caroline Fehring. They raised their family at Old Lucky Womans, an area also known as Argyle, close by Dreamers Hill. Their details will be given in the section of Chapter 7 that deals with Happy Valley and Lucky Womans. George Yüing and Christine Weller were Germans, but married in New York in 1849 before travelling to the Victorian goldfields, and their story will also be told in Chapter 7 in connection with a mining accident at Derwent Jacks, where George died in the All Nations mine disaster. Asmus Detlev Japp and his German wife Catharina Prinz were prominent members of the Piggoreet community, where he was a carpenter and undertaker, whose name appeared on 172 death certificates between June 1865 and February 1883.

Swiss-Italians

The Tableland at Piggoreet, a large elevated flat overlooked by Mt Erip and abutting on the west of the Devils Kitchen, was home to many mining families occupying huts and cottages after about 1860. They included the Swiss-Italian Quanchi family and others who had emigrated mainly from the villages of the Vallemaggia region in the

³⁷ Barry McGowan, “The Working Miners of Southern New South Wales: Subsistence Men, Entrepreneurs or Proletarians?” (paper presented at the conference of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History, Canberra, 2001, accessed July 12, 2015, <http://labourhistorycanberra.org/2014/11/2001-conference-the-working-miners-of-southern-nsw/#more-749>).

³⁸ Dicker, *Mining Record*, 3:224.

Canton Ticino of Switzerland.³⁹ Of three youths surnamed Quanchi who arrived at Melbourne on the *Adele* from Antwerp in November 1855, 13-year-old Alessandro was a cousin to 16-year-old Abbondio and his 17-year-old brother, Lorenzo. These two brothers were Italian-speaking *bracciante* (labourers) from Vallemaggia, Switzerland,⁴⁰ who had endured a miserable voyage with putrid and inadequate food before joining Alessandro's father, Vincenzo Quanchi, at Jim Crow (Daylesford).⁴¹ The cousins soon left Daylesford for Springdallah, where there was a growing community of Italian-speaking Swiss gold miners at Lucky Womans and Derwent Jacks.⁴² The Perinoni brothers and cousins, who arrived in February 1855 on the *Glenmanna*, were settled at Derwent Jacks by April 1863 when their father was joined by his wife, Maria Catalina, and their young daughter, recently arrived on the *Great Britain*.⁴³ It is likely that living apart for eight years had been both emotionally and practically difficult for the family, and that their reunion was one of great celebration. The kinship and friendship groups of the Swiss-Italians provided strong community support for several decades in the Springdallah district.

It is noticeable that the Cornish, so highly visible at Ballarat and Bendigo, are less apparent in the statistics for Springdallah. It seems that Cornish miners, experienced in hard rock mining, were better suited to the processes suitable for working quartz and were therefore less interested in the wet ground of deep lead alluvial extraction of gold. This may explain their low profile at Springdallah.

DEMOGRAPHICS

When the mining surveyor and civil engineer, John Lynch, reported to the Mines Department on 18 July 1859, he provided the earliest known population figures for that

³⁹ J. Gentili, *The Settlement of Swiss Ticino Immigrants in Australia*, Perth, W.A.: University of Western Australia, 1988 (3rd ed.), 88.

⁴⁰ Carlson, "Immigrant Placemaking," 116.

⁴¹ Giorgio Cheda, *L'emigrazione Ticinese in Australia* (Locarno: Armando Dado Editore, Vols I & II, 1979, 2:178. This was in a letter from Tranquillo Pata dated April 1856; Tony Pagliaro, "'We Sought Gold and Found Stones': Swiss Italians at the Victorian Gold Rush," *Australian Studies* 5, 1991, 84.

⁴² Valentine W. Quanchi, *From Ticino, Switzerland to Australia* (Melbourne: A Family Tree Publication, 1987), 30. At Springdallah in the 1860s just some of the Swiss-Italians from Vallemaggia were Luigi Campigli, Antonio Bonetti, Maurizio Martinelli, Fedele Lafranchi, Lallo Antonio, Stefano Bolla, Abbondio Perinoni, Guisepe Jemini, Giovanni Madalena and Aquilini Perinoni, whose names appear in coroner's inquests, mining reports, and birth and death registrations.

⁴³ PROV, VPRS 7666, B/215:13, *Great Britain*, April 1863.

part of the No. 6 Smythesdale Mining Division of the Ballarat Mining District.⁴⁴ There were 3,700 Europeans and 330 Chinese, giving a total of 4,030 people resident at Linton's, Happy Valley and adjoining gullies, and Derwent Jacks and its neighbourhood. The total was 17,850 for the whole division, which also included the highly populated Browns Diggings, Snake Valley, Scarsdale and Smythesdale. In his capacity as the mining warden of the No. 6 Smythesdale Mining Division, Lynch compiled population statistics that help to compensate for the inadequate detail for Springdallah in the five Victorian census reports between 26 April 1854 and 3 April 1881.⁴⁵ The official census figures for Happy Valley and Slaughterhouse Lead for 1861 recorded a population of 1,008, made up of 698 males and 310 females, living in 307 dwellings,⁴⁶ but other parts of Springdallah are either inadequately or not at all reported in that or other census records.

In April 1862 Lynch provided a total population report within the division of 4,450 miners, comprising 3,550 Europeans and 900 Chinese, made up of 3,400 alluvial miners and 150 quartz miners.⁴⁷ The parliamentary report for the year to the end of 1864, to which Lynch contributed as Mining Surveyor and Registrar of the Smythesdale Division, gave a total mining population for the division of 3,759, comprising 3,659 alluvial miners (3,059 European and 600 Chinese) and 100 quartz miners (all Europeans).⁴⁸ Lynch reported a distribution of 1,400 miners within Springdallah as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Gold miners on the Springdallah goldfield in 1864

Goldfield name within the Springdallah area	Number of miners
Springdallah, including New Chum Lead	420
Happy Valley, including Springdallah Creek and Lucky Womans	770
Derwent Jacks	210

Source: Data from Victoria, Department of Mines, *Reports of Mining Surveyors*, No. 32, 31 December 1864.

Population statistics gleaned from the birth, vaccination, marriage, death, burial and other registrations at Springdallah reveal the youthfulness of the gold mining

⁴⁴ *Age* (Melbourne), July 19, 1859, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article154827630>. These figures were a report for the month of June 1859.

⁴⁵ Watson, *Lost and Forgotten Towns*, xvii.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 202.

⁴⁷ *Argus* (Melbourne), April 14, 1862, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5713285>.

⁴⁸ Victoria, Department of Mines, *Reports of Mining Surveyors*, 31 December 1864.

population in the 1850s and 1860s. An American living in Victoria for two years from 1853 wrote letters reflecting his views of the goldfields around Ballarat at the time, commenting that “all we have to do is...admit the poor emigrant who flies from misery and want – from his unhappy country to the land where no old men are ever seen”.⁴⁹ The youthfulness of the population at Springdallah is reflected in the high numbers of couples marrying in close proximity to the communities within Springdallah, as illustrated by Figure 20.

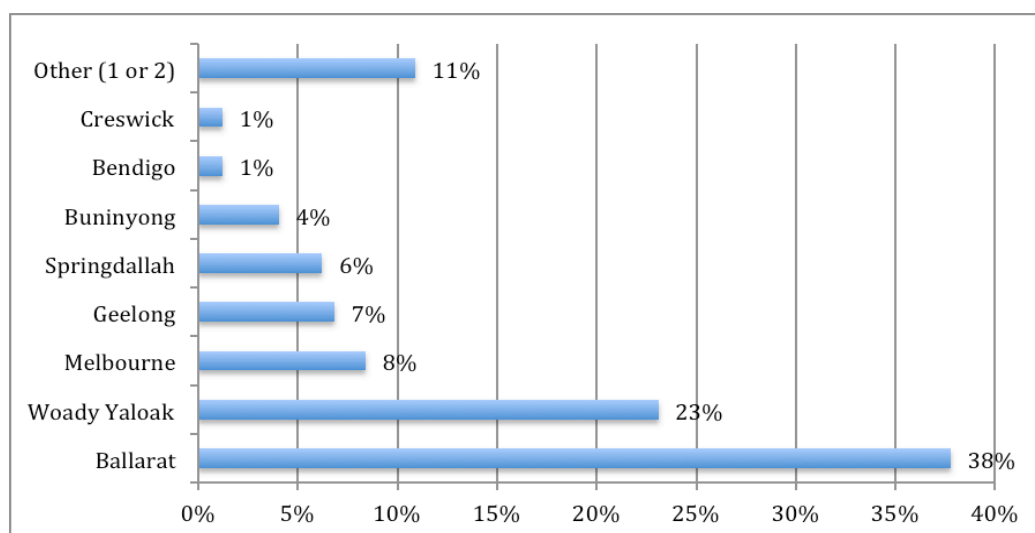


Figure 20: Frequency distribution of 320 marriages in Victoria of couples who later had at least one child at Springdallah 1863–1883

Of 320 marriages in Victoria of couples who later had at least one child at Springdallah, 121 marriages (38%) occurred at Ballarat. The next greatest number, of 74 marriages, were within the Woody Yaloak area, at Scarsdale and Smythesdale, for instance. After the major centres of Melbourne and Geelong, the next highest numbers of marriages occurred within a few miles of Springdallah, particularly at Buninyong (13), Springdallah (11) and Linton (9). Many immigrants lived initially in the ports where they disembarked, which explains the high number of marriages at Melbourne and Geelong, prior to the opening up of Springdallah by gold mining companies. An analysis of the Springdallah birth registrations shows that 60% of marriages of Springdallah parents that took place at Geelong and Melbourne were between 1852 and the end of 1863. These influences explain the marriage patterns and movements into the goldfields in and near Ballarat during the time of great social change.

⁴⁹ Daniel E. Potts and Annette Potts (eds). *A Yankee merchant in goldrush Australia: the letters of George Francis Train 1853-55* (Melbourne: Heinemann, 1970), 194.

Of those couples who married within a few miles of Springdallah communities, the average age for the grooms was 28 years, an indication that supports the claims of a relatively youthful demographic in the decade 1852 to 1862. The oldest Springdallah father at marriage was 45 years but only 6% were over 40 years, and the data could be misleading as a second marriage in widowhood was not uncommon. The youngest groom was 18 years old. That so many couples had married locally, at or within the region of Ballarat, indicates the stability that comes with long-term settlement in communities. Most of the couples settled at Springdallah to work and raise their families. In total there were 1,086 births recorded by George Woodhouse, the Deputy Registrar at Springdallah between 1863 and 1883, representing 430 civil marriages, 11 common law marriages, and 14 single mothers.⁵⁰

SETTLING AT SPRINGDALLAH

By the late 1850s, the goldfields of central and western Victoria no longer comprised a peripatetic population famed for its tendency to rush wherever the latest gold discoveries had occurred, as explored in the discussion by Blainey about Victorian gold rushes.⁵¹ That frenzied period of shallow alluvial gold discovery had diminished as the easily found gold was exhausted, and the great gold rushes became a phenomenon of history. The growing awareness that large amounts of gold lay deep below the surface led to a major development in the mining industry. Newspaper accounts of “the permanent nature of the diggings” at Springdallah, Lucky Womans and Happy Valley, and of mining companies being formed provided optimism for permanent settlement.⁵² Private and public infrastructure started being built at centres like those at Springdallah, supporting Bate’s representation of life on the Ballarat goldfields and the similarly nascent township there.⁵³

Charles Derius Ferguson, the American digger already introduced, recalled leaving Ballarat for Happy Valley six months after the Eureka riot, about May or June of 1855.⁵⁴ His eyewitness account of Happy Valley is important as so little is recorded about

⁵⁰ George Woodhouse was a chemist whose business was in Piggoreet in the 1860s.

⁵¹ Blainey, *Rush That Never Ended*, 43.

⁵² *Geelong Advertiser*, September 29, 1862, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article149830549>.

⁵³ Bate, *Lucky City*, 99.

⁵⁴ Ferguson, *Experiences of a Forty-Niner*, 74.

the very early period of mining occupation there. The nearest general store was at Smythesdale at a distance of 13 miles when he arrived, so he walked to and from Ballarat to “lay in a stock” for his store, a total of 56 miles in one day. Experience had taught Ferguson and his party that suppliers of provisions had a certainty of income that diggers did not. His friends had bottomed on paying gold at 14 ft, and like so many before and after them, the party combined mining with other paying activities. The store, built with assistance from local young Aboriginal men they employed, supplied the diggers attracted by reports that “as much as 8lbs of gold has been washed from one tubfull”.⁵⁵ Ferguson found that he made more on liquor than all other goods, such was the taste of the population on those early shallow alluvial diggings. Although two or three stores soon set up in opposition to him, there were no bakeries, so he sold flour and bread, both in heavy demand. Ever the entrepreneur, he included gold buying among his enterprises. The unsettled nature of the gold rush period of shallow alluvial diggings is exemplified by Ferguson’s movements: he moved to Linton’s shortly after establishing the Happy Valley store, as “Happy Valley did not last long”, but then “Linton’s lasted six weeks and then another gully opened up three miles away from that”.⁵⁶ When the Happy Valley field had opened up in May 1855, it was reported that “Smythe’s Creek has been totally deserted for this place”.⁵⁷

From about 1859, the gold industry at Springdallah took on a different and more permanent aspect, as miners and their families were attracted to settle and build townships in the area around the Springdallah Creek. As Dingle explained, miners gradually embraced inevitable change, despite earlier resistance by diggers to company capital and a machinery-based industry that they feared would return them to waged employment.⁵⁸ Thriving townships of bark and calico stores, weatherboard hotels and shanties, and residences of more permanent aspect than rough tents began to appear, such as the weatherboard and shingle cottage shown in Figure 21.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ *Argus* (Melbourne), May 10, 1855, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4807899>.

⁵⁶ Ferguson, *Experiences of a Forty-Niner*, 79.

⁵⁷ *Mount Alexander Mail*, May 11, 1855, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article202630944>.

⁵⁸ Dingle, *Settling*, 56; Serle, *Golden Age*, 183.

⁵⁹ This image shows Alan and Laura Bowler and their children in 1896, but the obvious age of the cottage shows it had been built many years before, most likely during the peak of Happy Valley.



Figure 21. Wooden cottage at Happy Valley with Bowler family members

(Courtesy of Terri Svensson, private collection)

Each township gradually developed infrastructure such as roads, bridges, culverts and gutters, and private commercial businesses such as hotels, stores and shops. Residences, always of timber, were increasingly constructed for the growing population.

The first school in the Springdallah area was built at old Lucky Womans before 1861.⁶⁰ It was a weatherboard building, moved to the hill overlooking Ivanhoe Flat to the west, where “the majority of the children attending school” resided. The school was next to the wooden Church of England and was registered as Lucky Womans No. 376. The head teacher was Thomas Lea in 1863, when about 90 children attended. A Roman Catholic Church Committee at Lucky Womans was set up and met at John Hart’s post office store on 15 July 1862.⁶¹ At that meeting, a motion was carried to request a church and school be built “in our rising locality”.⁶² When built as school No. 818, it was situated beside John Hart’s store, as shown in Figure 22.

⁶⁰ *Star* (Ballarat), May 10, 1861, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66339133>.

⁶¹ Ballarat Catholic Diocesan Archives, Notes of meeting, Archive Box 29/1, Item 4. In the same source, Item 14 recorded that the Lucky Womans Catholic School opened about August 1862 and closed about September 1866.

⁶² Gallagher, Laurence. “The Light of Other Days.” *Light: Ballarat Diocesan Journal*, 4:22.



POST OFFICE STORE,
SUCCESS STREET, MAIN ROAD,
HAPPY VALLEY.

Figure 22. Hart's post office store beside the Catholic school

(Reprinted from Gallagher, "Light of Other Days," 4:22)

Occupations

Fathers of children born between 1863 and 1883 at Springdallah worked at 29 different occupations in eight categories: mining industry (miner, mine manager, engine-driver, engineer, etc.); labouring work (carter, splitter, timber cutter, etc.); farming industry (settler, pastoralist, grazier, farmer, etc.); building trade (plasterer, carpenter, etc.); sale of goods (storekeeper, draper, cobbler, etc.); hotel trade (beer house keeper, publican, hotel licensee, etc.); professional (teacher, policeman, surgeon, etc.); and food production (baker, butcher, dairyman, etc.).

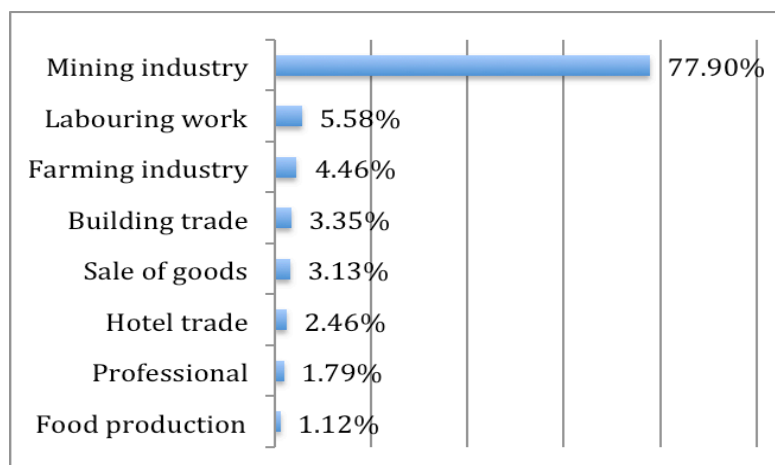


Figure 23. Frequency distribution of occupations of fathers at Springdallah 1863–1883

Figure 23 confirms that the vast majority of workers at Springdallah were employed in the mining industry, almost 78%. All other categories included some occupations that could have been within the mining industry, such as labouring (providing firewood, for

instance), or building (constructing mine site buildings, for instance), while others supported the mining population. The breakdown of specifically mining related occupations shows the high percentage who were basic miners in the industry, as shown in Figure 24.

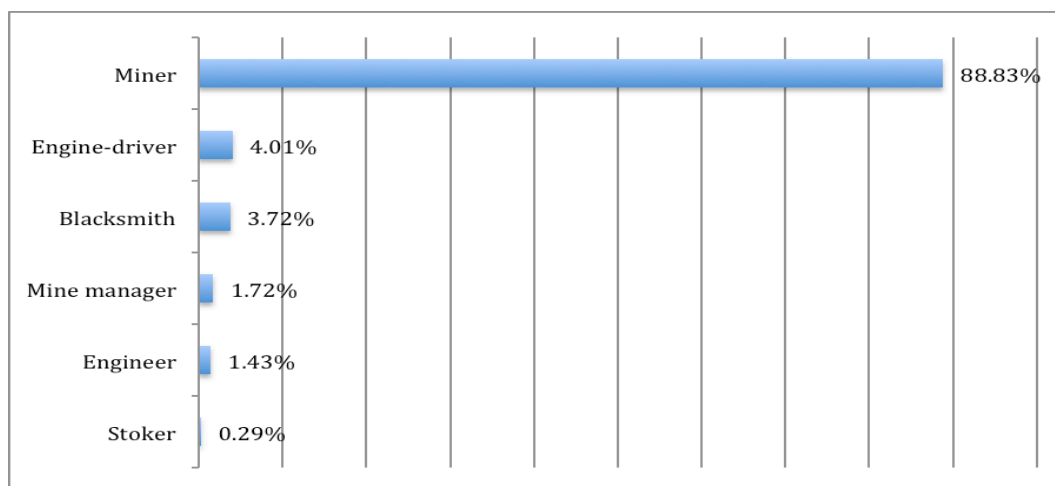


Figure 24. Frequency distribution of mining occupations of fathers at Springdallah 1863–1883

Miners and support workers such as carpenters and blacksmiths settled with their young families around the poppet heads, engine houses and growing mullock heaps of successful mines, raising their families among the din of steam engines, whistles, hammering, wood chopping and general clamour. Many brought with them appropriate experience gained in the coal and lead mines of northern England, while others had learned gold mining skills while working on the Ballarat and other goldfields in the years since their arrival in the colonies. Of those employed within the mining industry itself, nearly 89% were miners, while others had more specialised mining skills and worked in occupations such as engineers (driving the steam engines to pump water, wind ropes, rotate puddling machines and haul equipment, for instance) and mine managers.

Commerce

Newspaper advertisements of property sales often gave detailed descriptions of hotels and stores, giving an insight into the building structures and types of goods being sold in the early years of township development on the goldfields. They reveal the extent to which quality buildings were starting to be built, with a wide range of supplies necessary for local residents.

One example was the property of Stephen Onians,⁶³ who was a produce merchant and livery stable keeper at Lucky Womans. His impressive estate was sold at public auction on 18 April 1863. The assets, advertised to attract the attention of produce merchants, livery stable keepers, publicans and storekeepers were 20 first-class saddle, carriage and draught horses, an almost new first-class produce cart, a set of spring-cart harness, three saddles and bridles, two martingales, sundry table utensils, whips, spurs and bits, a new Avery weighing machine, three water barrels, potatoes and chaff, empty bags and sundries. The recently built large store and three-room dwelling had a large kitchen with a brick chimney and oven. The premises had a 54 ft frontage to the main road at Lucky Womans, opposite the Prince of Wales Hotel. A large and substantial four-stall stable, large hay shed and stone-built waterhole about 10 ft square completed the whole of the securely fenced property behind a total frontage of about 100 ft.⁶⁴

Joseph Levinson put the Prince of Wales Hotel up for sale in January 1863, describing it as a first class hotel, having superior accommodation, containing a bar 20 ft by 20 ft, a concert room 40 ft by 20 ft, three sitting rooms, eight bedrooms, a detached kitchen, a six-stall stable, fowl houses, outhouses and sheds, with a fenced-in garden growing vegetables, fruit and flowers.⁶⁵

Yet another Happy Valley hotel of this period was known as McDonald's Hotel, whose owner described it as built of the finest American pine, with two parlours, seven bedrooms, a commodious bar and a large concert room.⁶⁶ It had a five-stall stable detached from the building. This hotel was situated immediately opposite the British and North American Gold Mining Company claims, near to the Robin Hood and Waverley mines, which positions it in the commercial heart of Happy Valley.

Mrs Kinnear sold her "comfortable and well-built four-roomed weatherboard cottage with verandah, sitting-room, bedroom and kitchen" near the Mount Erip Hotel at Happy Valley in April 1866.⁶⁷ Her property included a shop with counter and fixtures, with a stock of groceries, drapery, monkey jackets, scales, kerosene lamps and similar.

⁶³ *Star* (Ballarat), April 15, 1863, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72556246>.

⁶⁴ *Star* (Ballarat), April 17, 1863, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72556328>.

⁶⁵ *Star* (Ballarat), January 2, 1863, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72553874>.

⁶⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), January 30, 1863, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72554534>.

⁶⁷ *Ballarat Star*, April 7, 1866, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112868569>. The site of Mrs Kinnear's shop and the Mount Erip Hotel was at the intersection of the road from Linton, near where the Happy Valley to Piggoreet road once crossed the Springdallah Creek over a bridge.

When Peter McKean, storekeeper of Happy Valley sold his Criterion Store in May 1865, it consisted of the store, a dwelling, a bakehouse, an extensive garden and outhouses, with stock of crockery, drapery, boots and shoes, groceries, tobacco, cigars, ironmongery and “a variety of other articles too numerous to mention”.⁶⁸ William Kelly noted the types of mining equipment that would have been on sale in general stores, the dishes and cradles, buckets and tubs, crowbars and picks.⁶⁹ These items were on sale because it would be a rare miner employed in waged work by a company who did not also, in times of recreation, pan in the babbling creeks of the Woody Yaloak, Spring or Springdallah, especially after rain.

Mr William Henry Comyns’ Gold Office at Lucky Womans, which functioned as a branch of the Bank of Australasia, was open for business from at least October 1862.⁷⁰ Also within the township at that time was Thomas Aristotle Freeman, a timber merchant, who had become the publican of the Prince of Wales Hotel by October 1864. The publicans who were granted licences in June 1863 included Thomas Bellingham of the Roebuck Hotel, Thomas Fletcher of the Cricketers’ Arms, Thomas Hughes of the Ancient Briton, J. B. Knight of the Mount Erip, Joseph Levinson of the Prince of Wales, James Robson of the Racecourse, and Edmond Page Walters of the Crown Hotel, all at Happy Valley.⁷¹

SUPPORT SERVICES

Local government existed in the form of the Woody Yaloak Roads Board, after the Woody Yaloak Road District, a portion of the County of Grenville, was proclaimed on 27 August 1861.⁷² It was resolved in October 1861 that the fourth meeting of the Woody

⁶⁸ *Ballarat Star*, May 1, 1865, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112886364>. Peter McKean, who was a member of Grenville Shire Council, married Martha Leigo at the Whim Holes on 8 October 1862, and Martha gave birth to their daughter at their Criterion Store, Happy Valley, on 11 August 1863.

⁶⁹ William Kelly, *Life in Victoria or Victoria in 1853, and Victoria in 1858, showing the march of improvement made by the Colony within those periods, in town and country, cities and diggings* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1859), 201.

⁷⁰ *Star* (Ballarat), October 1, 1862, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66327563>.

⁷¹ *Star* (Ballarat), June 29, 1863, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72515350>. The Prince of Wales Hotel existed from at least as early as 16 December 1861 when the *Star* announced shares to be sold there.

⁷² *Victoria Government Gazette*, August 27, 1861, 1630, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

Yaloak Roads Board should be held at the Lightwood Hotel, Lucky Womans.⁷³ This meant that local residents were aware of their representatives, and the issues of interest to them were constantly to the fore. Ratepayers from a wide area including Springdallah were represented on the board, which later became the Grenville Shire Council.⁷⁴

A public meeting was held at Frederick Parkinson's hotel at Black Hill north of Brownsvale in September 1861, attended by about 25 residents of the district.⁷⁵ A year later six landholders and the same number of householders living within the road district petitioned Samuel Lewers, Esq., JP, who lived at Linton, to convene a meeting to elect members for the ensuing year, to strike a rate, and to carry out the provisions of Act 16 Victoria No. 40, and that meeting was held. The election of members of the district mining board, "the all engrossing topic amongst us",⁷⁶ followed a public meeting held at the Lightwood Hotel on 15 February 1861, addressed by Montgomery and Bickett, two of the candidates.

The local miners, storekeepers and dairymen living on the Happy Valley and Lucky Womans goldfields approached their local members of parliament to present a petition for the proclamation of a common in the neighbourhood.⁷⁷ Mr O'Connor stated that the goldfields were likely to be of a very permanent character, and that gold mines made use of two or three horses each, with no ground available for paddocking them each night. The petition set forth that the accommodation sought was indispensably necessary to the petitioners, as they suffered much inconvenience from having their cattle impounded by the neighbouring squatter. Mr O'Connor stated that the mining in the district was very deep, the sinking being over 300 ft, and the extent of the claims was in proportion to the depth of the sinking, which in fact was at present becoming even deeper. Mr Duffy observed that the locality in which the common was applied for seemed to be

⁷³ *Star* (Ballarat), October 17, 1861, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66342827>.

⁷⁴ PROV, VPRS 7232/P2, Unit 1.

⁷⁵ *Star* (Ballarat), September 17, 1861, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66342105>.

⁷⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), February 20, 1861, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66337510>. John Montgomery was a mining registrar and member of Ballarat Mining Board in 1859 and 1861, became the engineer for Grenville Shire, and was MLA for Grenville in 1873–1874; Victoria. Parliament. "Montgomery, John." <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/re-member/bioregfull.cfm?mid=595>. James Milhinch Bickett was a long-standing member of the mining board after 1856.

⁷⁷ *Age* (Melbourne), January 21, 1862, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article154846082>.

between two commons already proclaimed, one of 7,000 acres, the other of 3,000 acres, about two miles apart.

PROBLEMS

Fragile mental health, associated with deteriorating physical health, took its toll when no financial, emotional or medical support was available. A Frenchman named George August hanged himself in May 1863 in his tent at Dreamers Hill. The inquest, held at John McKay's Sutherland Arms hotel and store, heard that the deceased "was in destitute circumstances and suffering from sickness".⁷⁸ He was unable to work, suffering from dropsy and hernia, and had been summonsed for debt. His passport showed that he had been a merchant, was about 60 years of age, and lived alone, since the woman with whom he had lived in Ballarat nine years previously had left him two years earlier. It seems that a man in such desperate circumstances could see no future for himself.

Edward Murphy, a storekeeper at Lucky Womans, was murdered at Smythes Creek on 29 May 1855.⁷⁹ Murphy had prosecuted Henry Helbin, his wife, Elizabeth Helbin, Benjamin Grix and David Smith for robbing his store at Lucky Womans.⁸⁰ Henry Helbin was committed for trial, while Smith and the female were acquitted, and they left the court vowing vengeance against Murphy. They were strongly suspected of having waylaid Murphy on his return home from Ballarat, where the court case had taken place.⁸¹ He was found lying dead by the roadside by John Monteith, a shepherd employed at Smythes Creek. The body was about 200–300 yards from the Smythes Creek police camp, with a gunshot wound to the head. The death was reported to the police by a Smythes Creek farmer named Thomas Black. The verdict at the inquest was "wilful murder", David Smith being named as the perpetrator, aided by Elizabeth Helbin and Benjamin Grix. The three accused came before Sir William a'Beckett at the Geelong

⁷⁸ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 126, File 1863/321, Auguste Unknown [*sic*]. This man was George August, known as the "Frenchman", the finding of his death by the jury being "suicide hanged".

⁷⁹ PROV, VPRS 30/P0, Unit 214, File 2219(a). The trial was held on 5 October 1855 at Geelong Circuit Court.

⁸⁰ *Age* (Melbourne), June 8, 1855, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article154897475>.

⁸¹ *Age* (Melbourne), June 4, 1855, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article154894505>.

Circuit Court on 26 July 1855,⁸² to answer a charge of murder. However, on 4 February 1856 the prisoners were acquitted due to insufficient evidence and were discharged.⁸³

CONCLUSION

This chapter has covered a short period from 1859 to 1863, when the discovery of gold deep underground at Springdallah attracted miners and their families to settle and build townships in that area. Its aim was to build a picture of the kinds of people who made up the network that created the Springdallah goldfield communities. It has explored the backgrounds of the miners, gaining an overview of the countries from which they came and the work experiences that may have contributed to the mining industry at Springdallah. It has also considered the enormous sacrifices and hardships that many encountered, initially in terms of the long and potentially dangerous sea voyage that most had to make, usually from Britain and Europe, sometimes via American ports, on relatively slow sailing ships.

Once they arrived at southern Australian ports and made the journey overland to the goldfields at and near Ballarat, the countryside and its riches had an effect on them both socially and economically. Conversely, they influenced the network of communities that was made up of Australians, British (of English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish origin), Europeans (mainly from Germany and the Swiss-Italian borders, but also from Scandinavian countries), and Americans, all obliged by circumstances to socialise cooperatively in often challenging situations.

Some of the Springdallah residents, notably those of Irish backgrounds, became part of the community without working exclusively for mining companies. They ran hotels, general stores and shops, and became carters and woodcutters. Collectively, the residents petitioned and appealed for improved public services, and gained them. They created a home and work environment in which economic stability and a thriving social life was possible for the mining families. Evidence for increasing permanency of

⁸² *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, January 31, 1856, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91865944>.

⁸³ Ferguson, *Experiences of a Forty-Niner*. In Chapter 8 of Ferguson's reminiscences, entitled "Happy Valley", he tells the circumstances that led to Edward Murphy's murder, but falsely claims that it was he who found and reported the body, and that those accused were found guilty and executed—when in fact the Supreme Court trial brief attributes the finding and reporting to a different man, and shows that the accused were acquitted for lack of evidence (PROV, VPRS 30/P0, Unit 214, 2219[A]).

residence, which led to a higher standard of buildings, roads, bridges, water supplies and other public services, demonstrates that a stable population had arrived and settled at Springdallah.

Chapter 6: DEEP LEAD ALLUVIAL GOLD MINING

INTRODUCTION

As discussed in the previous chapter, the nascent gold mining industry at Springdallah in the early years of the 1860s attracted men and women, often with young families, to that beautiful deep lead goldfield where many of them settled for more than a generation. Their livelihoods and the financial and social means by which they could settle and raise their families depended on the success of the mines around the Springdallah Creek and its tributaries. This chapter is an exploration and study of the gold mining industry there, demonstrating that gold mining technology and innovation improved in concert with the social and living conditions of the miners and their families.

The continuing, long-term existence of Happy Valley, Piggoreet, Golden Lake and the smaller gold mining settlements at Springdallah was totally dependent on the viability of the deep-lead gold mining industry. Exploitation of the deep leads, which was complicated and costly, required capital to fund the shaft sinking and underground tunnelling, the infrastructure of poppet heads, machinery, equipment, steam engine houses, puddling machines, water pumps and sluice apparatus, and the employment of miners and support workers.¹ Birrell made the point that mining companies often had to undertake preparatory work for lengthy periods of time before any income was derived from gold extraction.² This circumstance required shareholders to wait months, and possibly years, before they received a return on their investment.³ Serle has demonstrated the changes in the nature of mining with the increasing numbers of “larger co-operatives and private companies”.⁴

The increasing numbers of immigrants to the Victorian goldfields, joining those who had been part of the earlier great rushes seeking easily won gold in shallow diggings, were witness to, and active participants in, a period of extraordinary social change. Study of the transformation from gold rush behaviour to settled long-term employment is crucial to an understanding of the Victorian goldfields of the period. Bate has revealed the

¹ Davey and McCarthy, *Victorian Gold Mining Technology*, 67; Bate, *Lucky City*, 77.

² Birrell, “Development of Mining Technology,” 70.

³ Serle, *Golden Age*, 219.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 224.

experiences of miners in Ballarat,⁵ and it was arguably the same on every goldfield that survived beyond the superficial period of the early gold rushes. Historians such as Bate, Serle and Blainey showed that there was a gradual, transitional movement from the initial shallow alluvial mining as the necessity to dig much deeper to find gold, often below layers of basalt, grew with the passing years.⁶ In the process, diggers became miners and laissez faire became regulation, as a range of rules and by-laws were introduced for the safety of the miners and efficient administration of the goldfields. Serle demonstrated how by-laws became practice, advanced technology became the norm, and economic management of mining plant and infrastructure gave the mining scene a more professional air.⁷ Gold mining technology and theory developed markedly throughout the period, in both alluvial deep lead and quartz mines, as described in Birrell's comprehensive study of gold mining technology in the 19th century.⁸

By the mid 1860s, about 50 mining companies were at work along the auriferous belts that ran east-west along the Happy Valley to Piggoreet and north-south from Brownsvale to Grand Trunk. These belts were part of a greater gold-bearing expanse of country that stretched south from Haddon and east from Linton, joining in the vicinity of Grand Trunk near Cape Clear before continuing south to the Pitfield Plains.⁹ The depth of the Springdallah mines was between 150 ft and 300 ft, mostly sunk through great depths of hard bluestone rock, as described in Chapter 3. The countryside included in the expanse known as the Woody Yaloak goldfields is shown in the map in Figure 25.¹⁰

⁵ Bate, *Lucky City*, 77.

⁶ Blainey, *Rush That Never Ended*, 51, 78–79.

⁷ Serle, *Golden Age*, 224.

⁸ Birrell, "Development of Mining Technology," 70

⁹ J.G. Roberts, *Pitfield and Bulldog, Western Creek* (Smythesdale: Woody Yaloak Historical Society, 2003), 7.

¹⁰ Woody Yaloak Historical Society, *The Golden Stream: a Photographic History of the District Around the Woody Yaloak Creek* (Daylesford, Vic., Jim Crow Press, 1999).

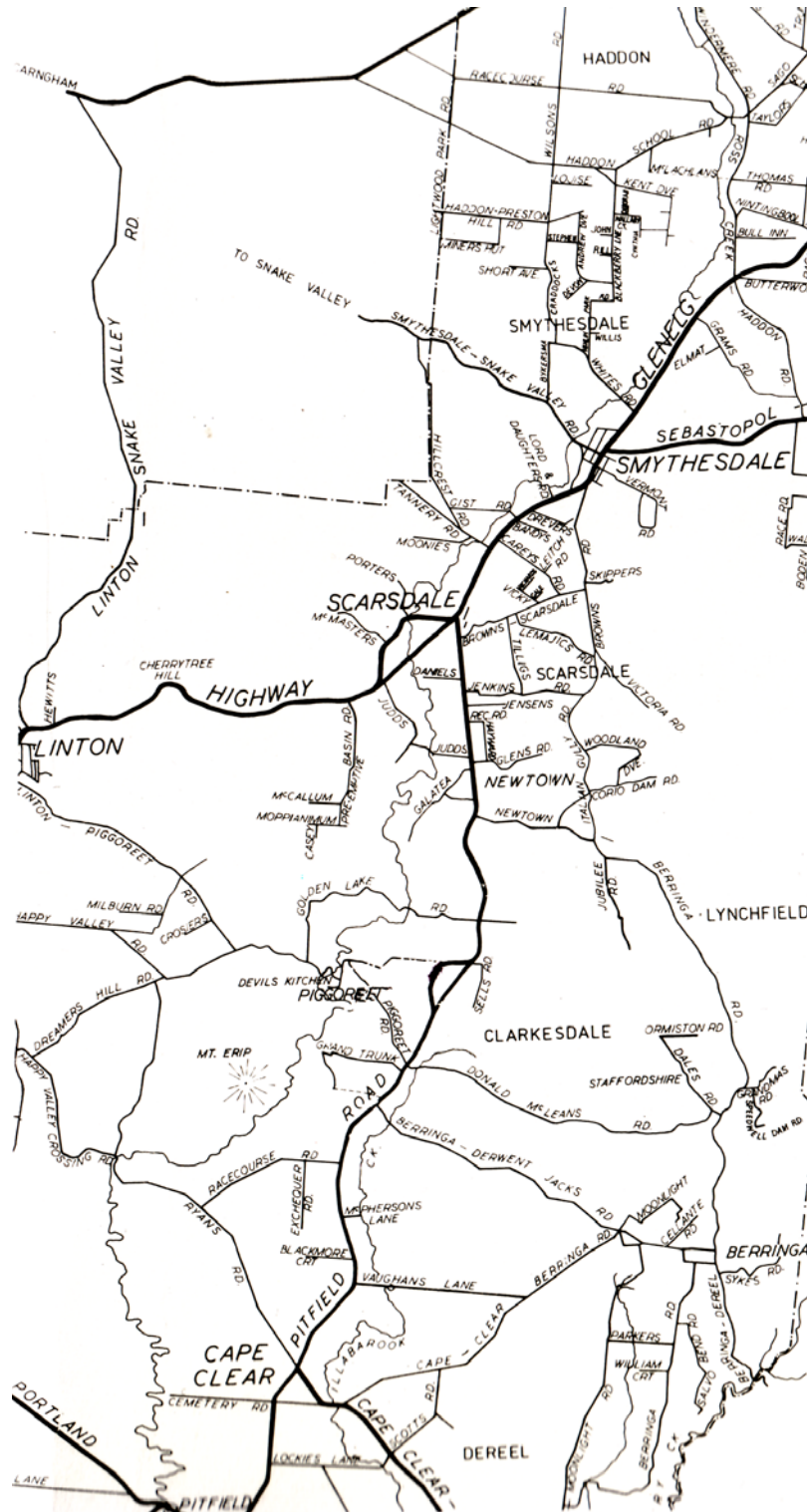


Figure 25. Mining country between Haddon, Linton and Cape Clear

(Adapted from *Golden Stream*, front endpaper)

For the many hundreds of miners employed by the deep lead companies, their work experiences were in many ways different from those of the earlier shallow diggings period. As this chapter demonstrates, they now mined cooperatively, using machinery and equipment of greater sophistication than they had employed previously, and used it with

greater understanding of the nature of the task of retrieving gold. Leaders in the mining community, local political representatives and government officials worked to tighten legislation and to improve financial and physical safeguards for the companies and their workers and shareholders.

MINING REGULATION

The Mining Statute of 1865, as discussed by Birrell, consolidated the by-laws of the local courts and the later mining boards.¹¹ From April 1853, new gold regulations allowed an increase in claim size to 12 ft square. Although independent diggers mining alone or in small groups continued to work shallow alluvial ground well into the 1860s, the necessity to combine capital to pay for a more commercial development was becoming apparent.¹² A report of September 1856 referred to the financial constraints of deep lead sinking:

On Spin Della [*sic*] there are about 400 capitalists at work, doing well; we say capitalists, as none but men of money can bottom there; the holes being upwards of 100 feet deep, in some cases through 30 feet of blue stone.¹³

Bills were introduced in parliament, often by members who had been miners themselves, that were supportive and protective of mining companies. By the time deep lead companies were forming at Springdallah around 1860, earlier anti-company antagonism had abated, especially as most companies were cooperatively formed by working miners, as argued by Serle.¹⁴

The 1853 regulations allowed five-year company leases of up to 160 acres on alluvial ground. Cooperatives were formed when small parties of miners realised that it was more economical to combine and work the areas as one mining company, as Birrell's study of the development of mining technology makes clear.¹⁵ Vincent Pyke, MP,¹⁶ introduced a bill in 1860, which, among 18 clauses, included one that limited liability: "Any shareholder in any mining company shall be liable only for any debts incurred on

¹¹ Birrell, "Development of Mining Technology," 66.

¹² Serle, *Golden Age*, 73,

¹³ *Bendigo Advertiser*, September 13, 1856, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article88052767>.

¹⁴ Serle, *Golden Age*, 221.

¹⁵ Birrell, "Development of Mining Technology," 91.

¹⁶ Quaipe, "Pyke, Vincent (1827–1894)." Pyke (1827–1894) was a politician and president of the Board of Land and Works from September 1860, who had previously been a miner.

behalf of such company to the amount of shares for which the shareholder has agreed to subscribe or of which he has become the holder by share transfer".¹⁷ Consequently, by the early 1860s, limited liability gave some financial protection to investing shareholders. The Grand Junction Gold Mining Company acted promptly after Pyke's Act, known as the Limited Liability Act, was passed and put into effect in the first week of October 1860. The new mining company, with 36 shareholders, 27 of whom (75%) lived at Lucky Womans, Happy Valley and Springdallah, was listed in November 1860. A Mining Companies Act with a no-liability clause added further protection in May 1871. It was passed "in response to the requirements of the gold mining industry",¹⁸ which is a comment that indicates that those who made up that gold mining industry were influencing legislation.

The mining by-laws entitled the holder of a miner's right to take up alluvial claims, which many Springdallah miners used for shallow sinking, tunnelling, sluicing and puddling. They had the legal right to hold a site for machinery, a water race, a dam, and a residence, all constructed on Crown land. It was this occupancy of Crown land that brought important advantages for family life throughout the Victorian goldfields, which Fahey et al. stressed when they wrote that "both men and women could take out a Miner's Right".¹⁹ Coroners' inquests and sketch plans in school and land records provide documentary evidence that slab and canvas huts and weatherboard cottages were scattered along roads and pathways throughout the Springdallah goldfield. Until the Land Acts of 1865 and 1869, only a handful of local residents lived on licensed or freehold land. Many hundreds of families and individuals were therefore living at Springdallah on land that belonged to the Crown, courtesy of their miner's right.

Most deep lead mines at Springdallah had a workforce of miners who owned shares in the companies in which they worked, which may explain why there is little evidence of industrial unrest on that goldfield. McGowan argued that smaller sized communities of miners allowed for consensus that could be achieved through personal

¹⁷ *Victoria Government Gazette*, November 30, 1860, 2315, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>. This was the Victorian Act 24 Vict. 109, Mining Partnerships Limited Liability Act 1860.

¹⁸ Phillip Lipton, "A History of Company Law in Colonial Australia: Economic Development and Legal Evolution," *Melbourne University Law Review* 31 (2007): 836, accessed March 25, 2015. http://www.law.unimelb.edu.au/files/dmfile/31_3_4.pdf.

¹⁹ Fahey et al., "Miner's Right," 203.

interaction in a situation where no workers' organisations existed.²⁰ Issues of conflict that arose appear to have been settled in the Warden's Court, as was the case with the Menai Straits Company. Seven individual miners, later extended to eight, used their miner's rights to combine their allowed 12 ft square pieces of ground cooperatively to form that company, the mine being on Slaughteryard Hill at Lucky Womans. The Criterion Company then took the Menai Straits Company to court, for encroachment of the survey onto their leased ground. Apart from providing an example of peaceful resolution to a dispute, the case makes clear the process by which each company actually took possession of a mining lease.²¹ Surveyor John Lynch gave evidence that he sent his assistant surveyors Robert Preston Bain and Joshua Green to survey the piece of ground. Pegs were used to mark certain points, although a peppermint tree marked corner F, another tree was at corner A, and a V trench delineated the ground at corner C. After each side presented their case, the court resolved the situation by judgement, and each company and its shareholder-miners were able to return to work in a situation of greater certainty, apparently to the satisfaction of both parties.

DEEP LEAD MINES

Once a company had been formed and registered, a claim surveyed and a lease registered, the uncertain journey to auriferous ground had only just started. The aim of those miners standing upon their newly surveyed claim was to find, deep below, payable gold in the deep lead at the end of their shaft and tunnels. Miners referred to those gold-rich deposits as gutters, and the sinking of a shaft to the gutter was known as "bottoming". The shafts and drives were often wet, so had to be slabbed for safety,²² an activity that at times failed during the construction stage, occasionally resulting in injury and death for the underground miners.

George Thomas was killed while working in the Menai Straits mine at Lucky Womans on 4 July 1862 when three or four tons of clay fell on him.²³ His widow, Louisa, gave evidence that he was 37 years old, from Swansea in Wales and working for wages,

²⁰ McGowan, "Class, Hegemony and Localism," 93.

²¹ *Star* (Ballarat), June 8, 1860, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66056316>.

²² Birrell, *Staking a Claim*, 100.

²³ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 113, file 1862/509, George Thomas inquest. The inquest was held on 8 July 1862 at Lucky Womans, the name by which Happy Valley was known in the early 1860s.

but was also a shareholder in the mine. She was left with six children under 11 years of age.²⁴ All those who gave evidence lived at Lucky Womans. Another miner-shareholder named Joseph Weir gave evidence that the clay roof fell on George Thomas, George Bates and Joseph's brother William, who were working at the face of the main drive about 100 ft from the shaft. Weir was sure Thomas must have been killed, but he shovelled until he found that he was in fact dead. The other two men were not as completely covered and escaped without injury. The Menai Straits miners had not been timbering the drive with props and cap pieces,²⁵ except if it was required, as it was regarded as stable ground. Props were usually put in 4 ft apart, and the men were intending to put in more timber as soon as they had levelled the hollows and undulations, and cleaned away. From the last set of props to the face of the drive was 10 ft. Evidence was given that it was the first time that any ground had fallen, and the jury found that no fault was to be laid for the accident.

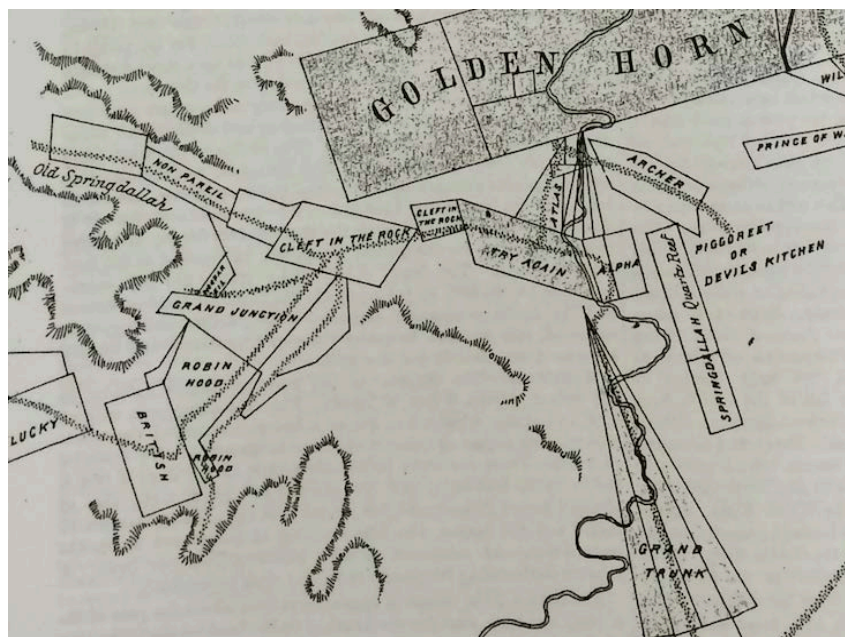


Figure 26. Map of the main lead and its tributaries in the No. 6 Smythesdale Mining Division

(Adapted from Dicker, *Mining Record*, 8:121)

²⁴ *Age* (Melbourne), July 8, 1862, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article155010495>. The shareholders in the Menai Straits Company were reported to “have very handsomely headed a subscription list for the assistance of the family”. A fortnight later £60 had been subscribed, expected to increase to £100 by the end of the week.

²⁵ Cap pieces were horizontal timbers placed on top of vertical members on either side of the drive, used to support the roof.

The Golden Horn Gold Mining Company, shown in Figure 26, was one of 10 mining companies within easy walking distance of Piggoreet township in the 1860s. It was formed in December 1862 on the private land of pastoralist David Clarke of Piggoreet West. Permission to mine on his 640 acres was obtained by agreement to pay £5,000 in cash and a royalty of 3% of the gross yield of gold.²⁶ The company was capitalised in 2,500 shares of £10 each. The first shaft of the Golden Horn mine, measuring 9 ft by 3 ft 3 in, was a quarter of a mile east of Clarke's Piggoreet West homestead.²⁷ Sam Maddison, the mine manager, reported that on 5 January 1863 a contract was let to Chapman and party to sink the shaft to a depth of 150 ft at £2/12/- per foot for rock and £1/6/- for alluvial and reef, and that work was completed by the end of February.²⁸ At a depth of 140 ft, a drive was put in to a distance of 30 ft, but a large quantity of water was struck, which stopped further work proceeding. Shaft No. 1 was abandoned, and a second shaft was sunk at £13 per foot, although in June 1864 a heavy flow of water impeded progress and the company was constantly baling. A 25-horsepower engine with housing, a puddling machine and other necessary buildings were erected, and work was able to continue.

The second shaft was then abandoned, and a third shaft was sunk on the main lead, with the water being kept down because of the pumping by the adjoining Golden Lake Company.²⁹ The water problem was reported again by Maddison at the end of 1867 when the company was baling 40,000 gallons per week from 7 July until 26 September, by which time the water had been cleared out.³⁰ The Golden Horn mine yielded over 2,000 oz per quarter in its final four years, and the company ceased working in 1871.³¹ At the half-yearly meeting held on 26 July 1871, it was reported in regard to the remaining No. 2 shaft, that "in a few days you will see the complete working out".³² The gold had been worked out, and the company wound up in April 1872, on resolution of all

²⁶ Dicker, *Mining Record*, 5:272.

²⁷ Robertson, *History of Piggoreet*, 6.

²⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), July 13, 1863, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72515696>.

²⁹ Victoria, Department of Mines, *Reports of Mining Surveyors and Registrars 1859-1882* (Melbourne: John Ferres, Government Printer), June 1865.

³⁰ Dicker, *Mining Record*, 9A:164.

³¹ *Ballarat Courier*, April 25, 1872, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article191571108>.

³² *Ballarat Star*, July 27, 1871, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197564629>.

shareholders, by which time the mine had produced a total of 1413 lbs of gold.³³ The Golden Horn Gold Mining Company had provided employment and generous dividends for nine years.³⁴

Tenders were invited for sinking the shaft of the Grand Trunk Lead Gold Mining Company at the junction of the Woody Yaloak and Springdallah Creeks at the end of November 1860.³⁵ Although plagued by problems of flooding, the Grand Trunk proved to be the richest mine on the main lead running north-south from the township of Piggoreet, the aggregate of dividends to shareholders reaching £20,000 by October 1865.³⁶ The Zuyder Zee Gold Mining Company, abutting on Clarke's run, amalgamated with the Junction Company to become the Golden Lake Gold Mining Company in February 1863, yielding 2,425 lbs of gold between 1868 and 1875, and is regarded by Heritage Victoria as "possibly the largest deep lead mine site in Victoria".³⁷

The Galatea Company, originally the Scarsdale Extended Company, bought 960 acres from the owner of Moppianimum run in October 1861, thereby bringing the second of the Piggoreet district squatting runs within the influence of the gold industry.³⁸ The Alchemist Gold Mining Company provided strong employment for local men, but was the furthest from Piggoreet, in the direction of Derwent Jacks, and a long walk to their workplace for many miners living there.

The Alpha Company was regarded as one of the principal mines in the area in March 1865 when its shares were £175 each, providing a weekly dividend of £5 per share.³⁹ In March 1865 it was described as "yielding magnificently" and regularly paid £20 per original share per fortnight. In its first five years, it produced 915 lbs of gold.⁴⁰ The Norwegian mine manager, Frederick Lund (1830-1889), was presented with a Mourey figural mantle clock as a mark of the esteem in which he was held. It was inscribed: "Presented to Fredk Alexr Lund esq by shareholders, workmen and friends of

³³ Supple, "Historic Gold Mining Sites," 187.

³⁴ *Ballarat Star*, July 27, 1871, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page21071837>.

³⁵ *Star*, November 24, 1860, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66335954>.

³⁶ Dicker, *Mining Record*, 5C:293.

³⁷ Supple, "Historic Gold Mining Sites," 189.

³⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), April 2, 1862, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66323035>.

³⁹ Robertson, *Piggoreet and Golden Lake*, 6.

⁴⁰ Supple, "Historic Gold Mining Sites," 173.

the Alpha GM Co Piggoreet, 2nd April 1866”.⁴¹ Shareholders in these mining companies include many familiar Piggoreet names, showing that it was relatively common to purchase shares in local mines. Many gave their occupation in various records simply as “miner”. That they often were shareholders in the very mines in which they worked reveals that good returns could provide a welcome supplement to wages, judging by the mining reports on yields and dividends published in Dicker’s *Mining Record* in the 1860s.

Many northern English miners at Springdallah had a work-experience background in coal and lead mining, particularly in Durham and Northumberland, and the Alston area of Cumberland.⁴² The lead miners in northern England were experienced in techniques such as shaft sinking, use of the windlass and whim (which they called a whimsey), steam-driven pumping engines to drain water from below ground, use and management of horses underground, coping with foul air, and stoping (working upwards from a tunnel or drive), all valued gold mining skills. Thomas Sopwith (1803-1879),⁴³ an English mine agent, engineer, geologist and historian, wrote about the experiences of lead miners in the mid-19th century in the north-east of England. He spent a long period at Allenheads in Northumberland in the area where many of the Springdallah gold miners originated. Hunt provided details of the miners’ life experiences beyond lead mining to include their farming practices on small allotments,⁴⁴ very similar to the situations their miner’s rights permitted on the goldfields south of Ballarat. Mixed occupations of labouring and harvesting while raising a head or two of cattle on the common to supplement their mining incomes were familiar prior to their taking up those practices at Springdallah.

Cleft in the Rock Gold Mining Company

A block claim of nearly 60 acres was leased from the Crown by the Cleft in the Rock Gold Mining Company on Lucky Womans Lead at Happy Valley in November

⁴¹ Hans Lund (professor emeritus, Lund University, Sweden), email correspondence with author, November 23, 2015.

⁴² Hubert Dixon, *An Allendale Miscellany* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Frank Graham, 1974), 56.

⁴³ T. Sopwith, *An Account of the Mining Districts of Alston Moor, Weardale, and Teesdale in Cumberland and Durham; Comprising Descriptive Sketches of the Scenery, Antiquities, Geology, and Mining Operations, in the Upper Dales of the Rivers Tyne, Wear, and Tees* (Alnwick, Northumberland, UK, 1833).

⁴⁴ C.J. Hunt, *The Lead Miners of the Northern Pennines in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1970), 149.

1859.⁴⁵ This mine was one of several, including the Lucky, British, Robin Hood, Grand Junction and Volunteers, on the rich lead that ran east-west along the Happy Valley or Lucky Womans Lead,⁴⁶ shown in Figure 27.

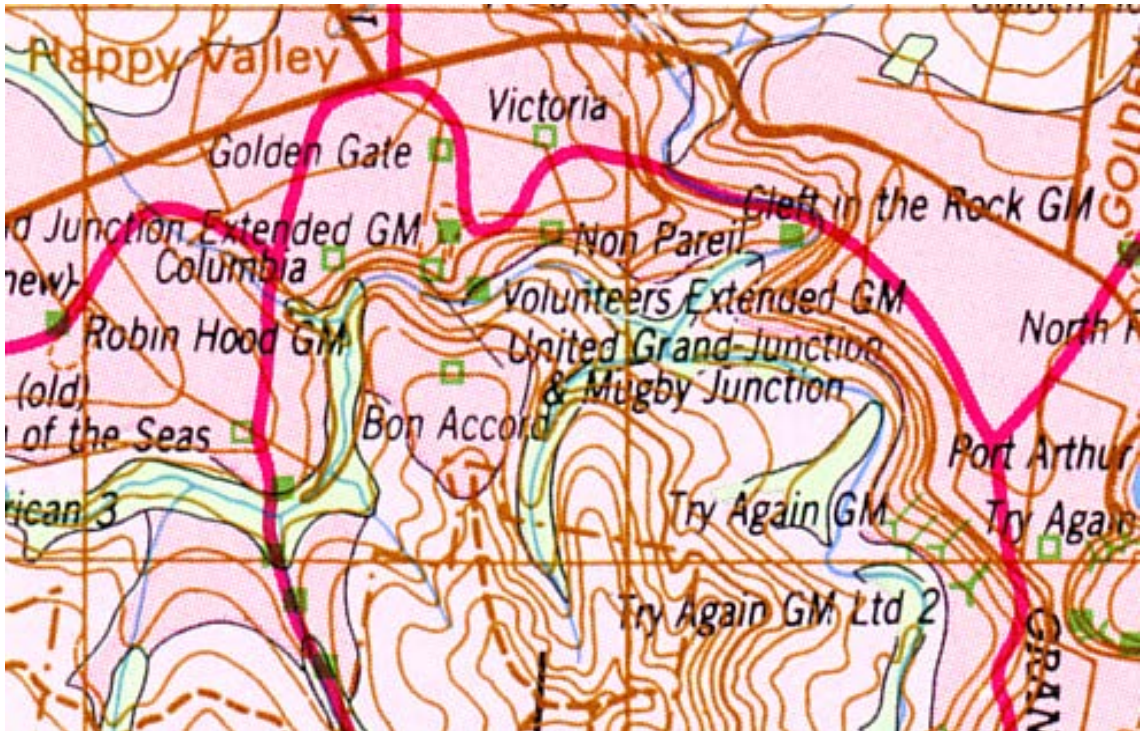


Figure 27. Position of Cleft in the Rock shaft (green square) at right of centre on east-west lead (red)

(Adapted from Finlay and Douglas, *Deep Leads Map No. 6*)

Initially, the miners dug an adit and tunnel into the cliff adjoining their claim, indicated by the brown close contour lines in Figure 27, where the Springdallah Creek passes towards its junction with the Woody Yaloak Creek. Adits are an unusual feature on a deep lead goldfield, but the high cliffs composed of rock from successive lava flows encouraged miners to drive under the basalt to access the leads. Figure 28 shows a tunnel leading from an adit in the cliffs under the Tableland, leading from the western side of the Devil's Kitchen towards the workings of the Cleft in the Rock claim.

⁴⁵ Dicker, *Mining Record*, 2:144

⁴⁶ Supple, "Historic Gold Mining Sites," 18.



Figure 28. Inside a drive leading west from the Devils Kitchen

(Courtesy of Dean Anthony, private collection)

By the end of August 1860, Cleft in the Rock tunnel was 800 ft into the hill.⁴⁷ They sank only one shaft with a rectangular opening 5 ft 6 in by 3 ft 2 in. The shaft bottomed 150 ft below the surface level, and a drive was dug to follow the lead more than 1,400 ft. They found the thickness of washdirt to be from 2 ft to as much as 7 ft in depth. For more than 300 ft, the basalt rested on the gutter washdirt, until reaching the face of washdirt believed to be the main lead. By early December 1860, they washed out the first gold, and by Christmas offered for sale the 10-horsepower steam engine “with winding gear and 100 ft of 7-inch pipes, and pumping gear complete” that they had been using.⁴⁸ The company then procured a larger, more powerful engine with a 20-inch cylinder, and a 33 ft by 6 ft 6 in boiler.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ *Star* (Ballarat), September 1, 1860, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66057991>.

⁴⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), December 25, 1860, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66336488>.

⁴⁹ Dicker, *Mining Record*, 2:144.

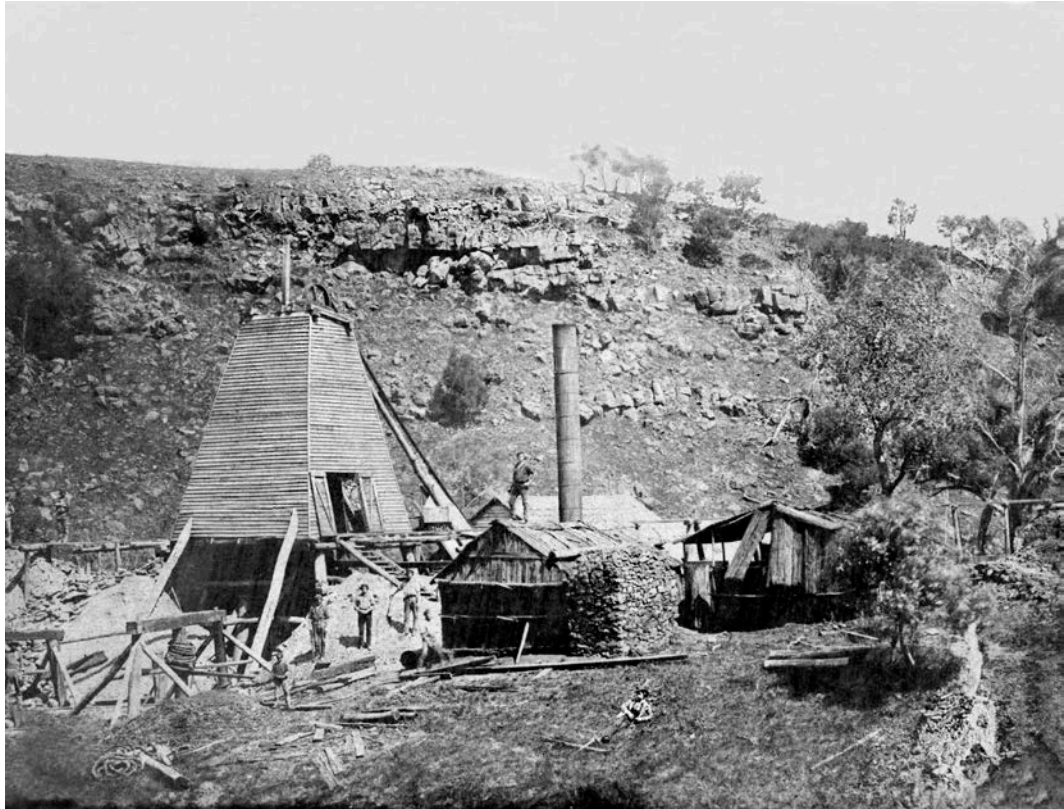


Figure 29. Cleft in the Rock mine, 1861

(Courtesy of Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria [H2019])

The description of the mine site, in accord with Figure 29, stated that it had its machinery and works placed in a little nook of the promontory that stretched out into the fork formed by the two creeks mentioned above. The immediate neighbourhood bore a very wild appearance, the high tableland on the opposite side of one creek rising almost perpendicularly to a great height and, on the opposite side of the other creek, the ground rising very steeply to above the elevation of the plain.⁵⁰

Pumping started with the new engine in March 1861, water continuing to be an obstacle to progress in mining. According to a report of March 1863, the Cleft in the Rock Company's ground was considered the best in the locality, and shares could not be obtained.⁵¹ At that time, the company consisted of 20 working shareholders holding 40 shares between them in a cooperative arrangement. A year later, when the company was officially registered, 80 shares, each valued at £250, were held between 24 men, giving a

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ *Geelong Advertiser*, March 2, 1863, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article148906443>.

nominal capital of £20,000.⁵² Purchase of machinery and plant, and other costs claimed by the company accounted for the paid up amount of £16,958.

The mine secretary, Joseph Coulson, and his previously lead-mining relatives from Allendale in Northumberland, as well as eight men from Nieder Weisel in Germany, a Dane, a Welshman and a Scot made up a total of 14 working miners owning the majority of shares. Seven others were sleeping partners, as absentee owners were known, including John Calvert, who was married to Jane Coulson, sister of the company secretary.⁵³ Table 4 shows the name of each shareholder, his place of residence, the number of shares he held at £250 each and his place of origin.

Table 4. Details of the 24 shareholders in the Cleft in the Rock Company in February 1864

Miner	Residence	Shares	Status	Birthplace
Christian Bill	Springdallah	4	Working	Nieder Weisel, Germany
Thos Broadwood	Newtown	4	Working	Allendale, Northumberland
John Calvert	Bairnsdale	4	Sleeping	Allendale, Northumberland
William Calvert	Newtown	4	Working	Allendale, Northumberland
Chris Christensen	Springdallah	2	Working	Denmark
Hugh Coulson	Springdallah	8	Working	Allendale, Northumberland
Joseph Coulson	Springdallah	4	Working	Allendale, Northumberland
Ashton Gartside	Browns	2	Sleeping	Oldham, Lancashire
Jacob Giebel	Springdallah	4	Working	Nieder Weisel, Germany
John Gibson	Springdallah	2	Working	Ayrshire, Scotland
Conrad Hauser	Springdallah	4	Working	Nieder Weisel, Germany
Jacob Heintz	Springdallah	4	Working	Nieder Weisel, Germany
John E. Hodgson	Ballarat	4	Sleeping	Coxhoe, Durham
Bernhard Hauser	Springdallah	4	Working	Nieder Weisel, Germany
Parkin Lee	Ballarat	4	Sleeping	Allendale, Northumberland
George Leverton	Melbourne	2	Sleeping	Merton, Devonshire
Conrad Riegelhuth	Springdallah	4	Working	Nieder Weisel, Germany
Henry Ritchie	Melbourne	2	Sleeping	Not known: possibly Scotland
Robert Roberts	New Zealand	2	Sleeping	Not known: possibly Scotland
Hugh Rowlands	Springdallah	2	Working	Corris, Merionethshire, Wales
George Schimpf	Springdallah	4	Working	Nieder Weisel, Germany
Walter Skelton	Sebastopol Hill	2	Sleeping	Not known: possibly UK
Ambrosius Studt	Springdallah	2	Working	Nieder Weisel, Germany
Jacob Studt	Springdallah	2	Working	Nieder Weisel, Germany

Sources: Data from McAdie, "Mining Shareholders Index"; *Victoria Government Gazette*, February 17, 1864, 449, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

It seems probable that John Calvert had financed land purchases in Gippsland under the 1862 Land Act with the proceeds he earned working in the Cleft in the Rock mine during its first two years, as he was living at Bairnsdale on his freehold land by

⁵² *Victoria Government Gazette*, February 23, 1864, 449, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

⁵³ FreeBMD, *England and Wales, FreeBMD Index, 1837-1915*. <http://www.freebmd.org.uk/>, March quarter 1853, Vol. 10b:260a, marriage registered Hexham, Northumberland.

1862. He continued to purchase more land and was followed by his brother and brothers-in-law in 1866 and 1867, all of whom took up farming and grazing. Both Calverts Flat and Calvert Street, Bairnsdale, appear to have been named after this successful Northumberland family network. By the end of 1864, a further lease of more than 10 acres had been taken up between the Cleft in the Rock and the Try Again claims, and the company purchased for £120 the right to encroach upon the Grand Junction's adjoining lease.⁵⁴ The outlay was justified by the fact that the Grand Junction mine's gutter was an average of 25 to 30 ft wide with washdirt up to 6 ft thick.

Table 5. Yield and value of gold from the Cleft in the Rock mine

Year	Month	Yield			Value of gold		
		oz	Dwt	gr	£	sh.	D
1863	July	42	3	12	169	11	6
1863	August	121	10	6	488	13	2
1863	September	120	18	6	487	3	6
1863	October	166	0	12	669	17	3
1863	November	43	8	0	180	10	0
1863	December	107	0	6	425	7	4
1864	January	145	12	12	578	16	9
1864	February	90	18	18	361	14	4
1864	March	27	2	6	107	13	4
1864	April	141	17	6	563	17	11
1864	May	133	4	0	529	9	1
1864	June	116	6	0	462	5	6
1864	July	81	0	13	322	1	4
1864	August	69	1	15	274	11	8
1864	September	210	12	9	837	3	9
1864	October	157	9	21	626	0	4
1864	November	168	0	12	672	2	0
1864	December	92	14	0	371	19	1

Source: Reprinted from Dicker, *Mining Record*, 3:224.

Dicker reported that the value of gold mined in the Cleft in the Rock between 23 July 1863 and 12 December 1864, was £7,757/11/8 from 2,034 oz 13 dwt 4 gr, as shown in Table 5. Dicker further reported, in June 1865, when the legal manager was Hugh Spotswood, that a second puddling machine, of iron, had been erected. Men employed included thirty miners, three engine-drivers, four puddling machine men and two bracemen at £2/10/- each per week; a carpenter and a blacksmith at £3 each per week; and

⁵⁴ Dicker, *Mining Record*, 3:224.

a secretary and general manager at £3/10/- each per week.⁵⁵ One of the original shareholders, the Danish Christian Peter Christensen, was mining manager when, in early December 1866, a report from the Smythesdale Warden's Court referred to the "late" Cleft in the Rock Company at Happy Valley.⁵⁶ The Company had closed some weeks before, as tenders were invited for the purchase of the plant and machinery at the end of September, although work would continue for several weeks, into October of 1866. For sale were a 40-horsepower steam engine with winding and pumping gear complete, 200 ft of 12-inch lifts, two iron puddling machines with cast-iron bottoms, air-pipes, a blacksmith's shop, trucks, a cage, ropes, blocks and sundry items. Manager Christensen described this as "superior plant and machinery" that would provide "everything required for a mining company in full work".⁵⁷ The Cleft in the Rock Company provides a clear example of shareholding miners working in the mine in which they held an interest.

Thomas Blackburn, who was killed in the Atlas mine at Piggoreet on 12 November 1866 by a block of black clay falling on him from the roof of the drive in which he was working, is an example of a miner working for wages.⁵⁸ His widow, Mary Blackburn of Piggoreet, explained that he had been engaged to work a shift in the Atlas mine in place of William Natrass, who had gone to Melbourne. On the same shift was Isaac Holden, who also worked for wages and was not a shareholder. He told the inquest jury that the roof of the drive was black clay and that Blackburn thought it unsafe and was trying to bring it down with the pick when a great lump about 6 ft long and 3 ft wide fell on him. Once the black clay had fallen, a safe rock roof remained. Blackburn was dead before he was taken up the shaft.

These examples demonstrate the hazardous nature of working without adequate safety precautions or procedures for approaching possible hazards. As Lovejoy found in her examination of coroner's inquests at Bendigo into the deaths of Chinese miners, "mining was an extremely hazardous occupation".⁵⁹ According to Birrell, the first

⁵⁵ Dicker, *Mining Record*, 5A:274.

⁵⁶ *Ballarat Star*, December 4, 1866, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112859835>.

⁵⁷ *Ballarat Star*, September 27, 1866, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112865374>.

⁵⁸ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 180, file 1029, 14 Nov 1866, Thomas Blackburn.

⁵⁹ Valerie Lovejoy, "The Things that Unite: Inquests into Chinese Deaths on the Bendigo Goldfields 1854-1865," *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria* 7 (2006), accessed 24 September 2014, URL: <http://prov.vic.gov.au/publications/provenance/provenance2007/things-that-unite>.

attempts in the 1860s to legislate to prevent accidents failed.⁶⁰ He reported that of the 332 mining related deaths in Victoria between 1870 and 1873, nearly half were from falls of rock, and in 1874 the then Minister for Mines, Angus Mackay, introduced an Act whereby it was the mine owner who had the major responsibility for accidents and had to prove it was not his fault.⁶¹ Importantly, conferences were held at various mining centres to review the working of the Act, which naturally led to continuing improvements in the health and safety of the working miner.

The Mining Process

Before the major work of excavating the shafts and tunnels could begin, both money and time was spent on the purchase and erection of machinery and buildings, and provision of supplies of firewood for steam production and timber for slabbing the shafts and drives. William Kelly, writing in 1859 about the Victorian goldfields, remarked that timber cutting was leaving the surrounding countryside bald and bare, due to the need for fuel for steam-boilers and wood for construction of buildings and mine apparatus.⁶² Goods and services also had to be purchased, and maintenance needed to be carried out during those months when mine workers' wages had to be paid before gold was sighted. Consequently, shareholders provided the finance and hoped that their contributions would eventually be repaid.⁶³ The shareholders in the company paid part or all of the call on their shares to purchase and construct the mining machinery, equipment, buildings and pumps. The plant was often purchased from a defunct mine. At Springdallah, the ranges and cliffs provided natural impediments to transporting equipment, such as when the Grand Trunk Company in June 1861 had difficulty in getting a 5-ton boiler down the high banks of the Woody Yaloak creek.⁶⁴ The sinking of the shaft would be commenced, often by contract, and was usually a very slow process if much of the shaft had to descend through thick layers of basalt. At the end of 1861, a party of Welshmen received £6/12/6 per foot to sink through basalt rock for the Robin Hood Company.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Birrell, *Staking a Claim*, 100.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 101. This was Act 37 Victoria 480.

⁶² Kelly, *Life in Victoria*.

⁶³ Birrell, "Development of Mining Technology," 70

⁶⁴ *Star* (Ballarat), June 12, 1861, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page6464725>.

⁶⁵ *Star* (Ballarat), November 14, 1861, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page6465417>.

Often the shaft had to be lined with slabs if the sinking went through unstable layers, and the tender costs varied according to the ground being sunk through. In May 1860 the Ivanhoe Company at Slaughteryard Hill, Lucky Womans, invited tenders for sinking a shaft, “specifying with or without timber, at per foot for clay or drift sinking, and at per foot for rock sinking, until water is struck exceeding twelve 18-gallon buckets per hour”.⁶⁶ Once the shaft had bottomed on the bedrock, usually a tunnel would be driven towards where the gutter was thought to be. If an engine for pumping had not been purchased before reaching this stage, water seepage, and even flooding, as the shaft descended would make pumping essential, and the engine and other pumping equipment would be obtained. Controlling water was a major and consistent problem for the Springdallah mines. Birrell argued that the miners at Ballarat had developed the technology of deep sinking in very wet ground, a result of the move from shallow mining to deep working along buried river beds.⁶⁷ Apparently, similar conditions existed at Springdallah. Each mine was dependent upon the others to keep the water levels low by pumping, and John Rew reminisced as follows:

I stood at the engine baling water for five 8-hour shifts without a break; one-third of the time with my feet in a dish of cold water to keep me awake; in fact I know I slept dozens of times from the time the tank full of water left the well to its arrival at the discharge point but all to no purpose, and we had to give up.⁶⁸

Rew claimed that as a result of flooding that swept through the mine where he worked in about 1864, at least eight mines in the area of the Devils Kitchen, north to Scarsdale and south to the Grand Trunk mine, were flooded, putting about 2,000 men out of work.⁶⁹ The North American Company, having become flooded in early December 1860, issued an invitation for tenders for a new 20- or 25-horsepower engine.⁷⁰ Similarly, after baling 700 gallons of water per hour in June 1861, the Don Juan Company was still flooded and determined to get an engine immediately.⁷¹ The British Company, in early November 1861, had struck the gutter 300 ft from the shaft, 265 ft underground, and was erecting a

⁶⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), May 10, 1860, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72466680>.

⁶⁷ Birrell, “Development of Mining Technology,” 76.

⁶⁸ John Spring Rew, *Memorable Gold Discovery: the Happy Valley Field: Some Interesting Reminiscences* (Ballarat: Happy Valley Old Girls’ and Old Boys’ Society, n.d.). This 4,000 word article, written as a long letter of reminiscence in about 1913, has no page numbers.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Star* (Ballarat), December 3, 1860, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66336092>.

⁷¹ *Star* (Ballarat), June 12, 1861, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66339873>.

15-horsepower winding engine.⁷² They already had a 25-horsepower engine, said to be one of the best engines in the district. At the same time, their nearest neighbouring company, the Robin Hood, had just completed erecting a 30-horsepower engine with a boiler 26 ft long with a diameter of 6 ft 6 in. While most companies at this period had just two compartments in the mouth of their shafts, the Robin Hood had three. One would convey the water pumps and one the winding gear to raise and lower the washdirt trucks and miners.⁷³ When there was a third compartment, it usually had a ladder to be used in emergencies.

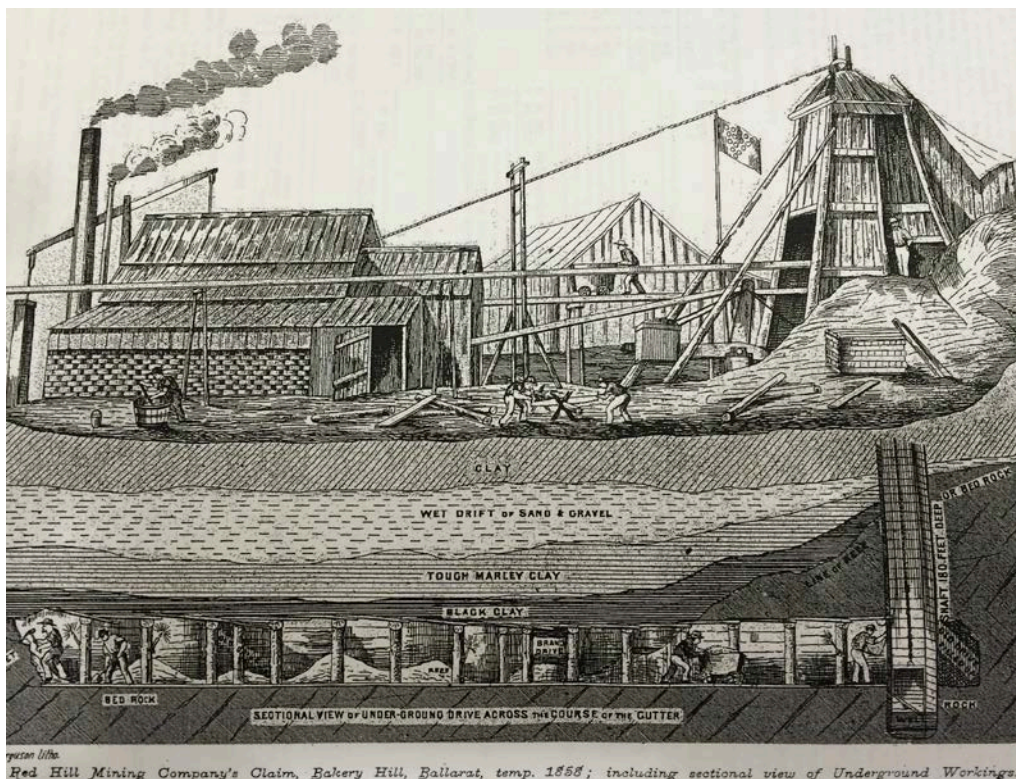


Figure 30. Deep lead alluvial mine at Ballarat

(Lithograph by Hamel and Ferguson for Dicker, *Mining Record*, 10:36)

Standing above the shaft was the poppet head, the wooden frame that supported the winding gear, as can be seen in Figure 30.⁷⁴ Miners filled large buckets or trucks from the face, and that material was then transported to the surface, where it was processed in the puddling machine. The health and safety issues that are obvious to the modern reader

⁷² *Star* (Ballarat), November 14, 1861, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66343438>.

⁷³ Birrell, “Development of Mining Technology”, 72. The section on *Deep Alluvial Mining*, from page 70 gives clear and detailed descriptions of the type of mining that was undertaken at Springdallah.

⁷⁴ Supple, “Historic Gold Mining Sites”. In this report there are many references to winding gear and other equipment being erected or in place at sites of mining companies in the Springdallah district.

were not considered dangerous work practices in mid-Victorian Springdallah. The fact that many, if not most, of the men working in the deep lead companies were shareholders may have given them a sense of ownership, so that the “them” and “us” dichotomy of some workplaces was not so apparent. The miners themselves took the initiative, mainly through the establishment of friendly societies and lodges, to provide sickness and death benefits to families of miners adversely affected by accidents or ill health.

Where washing water was scarce, there were delays, such as in May 1861 when the Criterion, Champion of the Seas and Tam O’Shanter companies’ claims were waiting upon water supplies in order to wash what appeared to be payable dirt.

Steam Power

The steam engine became ubiquitous, with its wood-fired boilers producing steam to operate machinery. Steam was one of the “technical and industrial developments that were to place Victoria at the forefront of innovative mining technology”,⁷⁵ and innovations of this kind were experienced within the workplaces of Springdallah’s communities. Steam power operated winding wheels to facilitate the raising of iron buckets full of rocks, clay, soil, conglomerate and washdirt, as well as the raising and lowering of men, in shafts that descended hundreds of feet below ground.⁷⁶ It was also essential for purposes of pumping out the constant inflows of water underground, where the miners were working the ancient buried river system.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Davey and McCarthy, “Victorian Gold Mining Technology,” 64.

⁷⁶ Garden, “Catalyst or Cataclysm?,” 30.

⁷⁷ d’Auvergne, *Deep Lead Mines*.

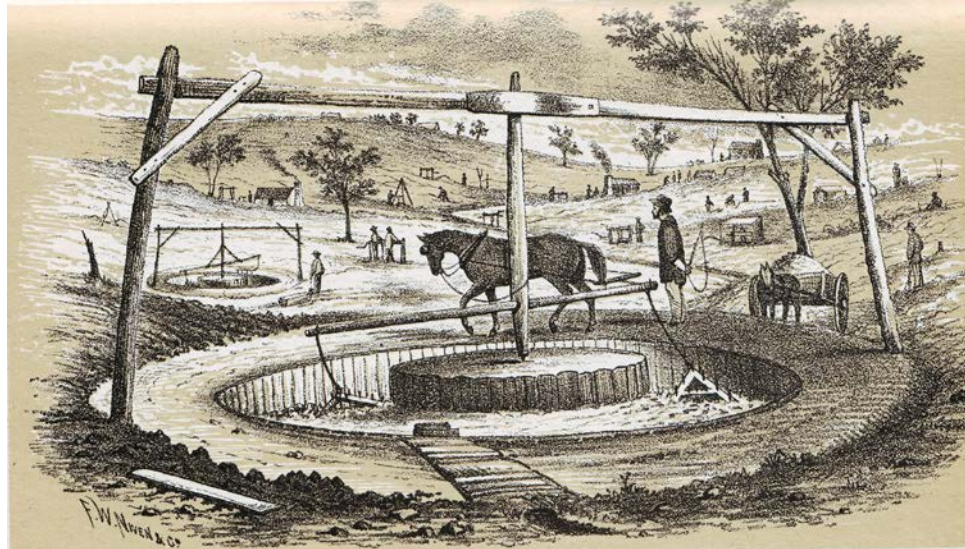


Figure 31. The first horse puddler at Pennyweight Flat, Ballarat, 1853

(Illustration by F.W. Niven. Reprinted from Withers, *History of Ballarat*, 200)

Although 115 horse-powered puddling machines, similar to the one portrayed in Figure 31, were being used locally at the end of 1859, steam engines were also well in evidence.⁷⁸ A total of 85 steam engines of 1,000 horsepower were used at that time for winding, pumping and puddling. When the report of No. 6 Smythesdale Mining Division by mining surveyor Lynch was published early in 1860, it gave his estimate that the approximate value of all mining plant was £54,000.

The necessity for all mines to install steam engines was obvious on a goldfield susceptible to underground flooding. Companies at Springdallah found that the tendency to heavy subterranean water flows throughout the ancient buried river system caused them to have to develop ever larger and more powerful pumping engines and gear. Early in 1861, the North American Company, having found that their engine was not of sufficient power to keep up with the water, purchased “for £750 the engine recently used by the Eagle Company at Spring Dallah [*sic*] (who have given up their claim as hopeless)”.⁷⁹

The very nature of deep lead mining, sinking down to buried riverbeds, meant that water seepage and flooding was a never-ending problem the miners battled to overcome. Shafts were dug to below the gutter, to create a sump from which the water was

⁷⁸ *Argus* (Melbourne), February 13, 1860, 7, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5677028>. This was an extract from the Mining Surveyors’ Reports for the month of December 1859.

⁷⁹ *Star* (Ballarat), January 5, 1861, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66336667>.

continuously pumped back to the surface.⁸⁰ Usually an elevated race would then carry the water a distance away from the shaft and deposit it in a dam, from which the water could be used for other purposes. Steam engines not only provided power for puddling machines, but also did the heavy work of raising large quantities of clay and soil from deep underground to be washed for gold extraction. Much of that washdirt comprised clay and cemented conglomerate, and had to be broken up by steam-driven engine power dragging a rake through the circular water trough as part of the separation process.⁸¹

Steam was provided by wood-fired boilers. Massive amounts of fuel were needed to power the engines with steam. This provided employment for timber cutters and wood carters, while denuding the surrounding countryside of its forests. The following examples show the extent to which timber was consumed: the Robin Hood Company in January 1863 invited tenders for supplying 400 cords of firewood in 5 ft lengths to be delivered and stacked at the company's shaft at the rate of 50 cords per week;⁸² in mid 1865 the Volunteers Company contracted for 12 months supply of firewood for an average weekly consumption of 18 to 20 cords and also wanted 40,000 ft of driving timber;⁸³ and the Grand Trunk Lead Company let a contract for six months from 7 December 1865 at £9/10/- per week for 800 cords of wood at 8 shillings and 10 pence per cord.⁸⁴ As a consequence of the demand for fuel, the valleys, slopes and cliff tops of Springdallah were soon denuded as the gold mining companies leased many acres of countryside. It can be seen that this activity, supporting and essential to mining, would have provided ongoing employment in the form of cutting and carting the timber to the many mines in the district.

Most of the miners at Springdallah were men from the north of England and from Scotland, as is more fully discussed elsewhere. Of the 441 men (in civil or common law marriage relationships) whose children's births were registered at Springdallah between 1863 and 1883,⁸⁵ 195 were English, 107 were Irish, 80 were Scottish and 15 were Welsh.

⁸⁰ Birrell, "Development of Mining Technology," 28.

⁸¹ Davey, "Victorian Mining Technology," 53.

⁸² *Star* (Ballarat), January 22, 1863, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72554335>.

⁸³ Dicker, *Mining Record*, 5C:273.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 5C:275. The Grand Trunk Lead Gold Mining Company was variously known as the Grand Trunk Company, the Grand Trunk Mining Company, and often simply as the Grand Trunk.

⁸⁵ 430 fathers were married, 11 fathers were named on the certificates but were not married to the mothers, and 14 births were to single mothers who did not name the father.

These numbers demonstrate the strength of the experienced mining workforce that came to the coal and lead mining region of northern England and southern Scotland, in particular. Of the 195 English fathers, 59 were born in Durham and 32 in Northumberland, totalling 91 men (47%) from those two counties alone. Of the 107 Irish fathers, a total of 46 were from the two counties of Clare and Tipperary. At Quin in the Poor-law Union of Ennis in County Clare, valuable lead mines opened in 1835,⁸⁶ and many Irish fathers at Springdallah gave Quin and Ennis as their places of birth. Many of the Irish miners at Springdallah may, therefore, have had mining backgrounds before emigrating.

A surprising number of Irish miners were well-educated men, such as John Lynch, the mining surveyor, who was a trained civil engineer from Ennis, County Clare, and John Henry Webb, the mine manager of the Grand Trunk Company, whose father was in Holy Orders. John Pounder Roberts, an influential mining manager, mining agent, company director and chairman, and speculator in Springdallah mining, was from Enniscorthy in County Wexford.⁸⁷ Men like these Anglo-Irish became strong leaders in the Springdallah community, involving themselves on various boards and committees. Mining had not been a part of the life experience of the immigrants from the border of Italy and Switzerland, yet they too were prominent at Springdallah and appeared to have adapted well to the new lifestyle and work experience.

Early Gold Mining Companies

Supple, in his investigation of heritage mining sites in the southern mining divisions of the Ballarat Mining District for Heritage Victoria, reported that one of the earliest of the mining companies to be established at Springdallah was the North American Gold Mining Company at Happy Valley.⁸⁸ The deep lead was discovered by a party including John Spring Rew in late 1857. Rew was born about 1834 in Devon, where his family ran the Magdalen Road tollhouse at Exeter.⁸⁹ Aged 15, he arrived in Adelaide with his mother and stepfather and the first four of their children,⁹⁰ overlanding to

⁸⁶ A. Fullarton, "Quin."

⁸⁷ *Argus* (Melbourne), January 6, 1860, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5694962>. John P. Roberts married Fanny Mooney, both formerly of Enniscorthy, County Wexford, Ireland.

⁸⁸ Supple, "Historic Gold Mining Sites," 9.

⁸⁹ Ancestry.com, *1841 England Census*, HO107/263, book 12, 4:3: Livery Dole toll house, Magdalen Road, Heavitree, Devon, 6 June 1841.

⁹⁰ His widowed mother had remarried, to John Ebbels, in 1842. *FreeBMD*, December quarter 1842, Exeter, Devonshire, 10:162. The Ebbels eventually had a family of seven children.

Bendigo when gold was discovered in Victoria. By 1855 he was in Ballarat, settling at Happy Valley by 1857, where over many years he supervised the erection of 11 mining plants in that district.⁹¹ He married locally in 1864 and lived in Happy Valley with his wife and family until the 1880s, when he moved to Ballarat where he died in 1917.⁹² Rew recorded that in 1858 the “shaft was sunk in the midst of a dense forest of messmate and stringy bark” by a party of 36 men.

The miners sank the first shaft for the North American Company on the deep lead that ran east-west from the direction of Happy Valley towards Piggoreet, beneath the Spring Creek to the north of Mount Erip. On that lead, over the next several years, the wealthy mines of the British, Robin Hood, Grand Junction, Volunteers and Cleft in the Rock mining companies provided employment for hundreds of men living in the Springdallah district. Figure 32 is his hand-drawn sketch from memory, of the early township sites and mining features at Happy Valley between 1858 and 1876.⁹³ Rew described the gutter, which bottomed at 180 ft, as being 70 ft in width. Such a wide gutter (the now-buried ancient riverbed) provided water seepage that warranted the purchasing of a powerful pumping engine and set of pumps. The miners sank several shafts, requiring 30 men to try to carry their smith’s shop to a new position clear of shafts and workings. Having failed to move it, one of the men, an unnamed North American broadaxe timber squarer, invented a removal appliance with an innovative axle, which they attached to the building. The McLennan brothers, who supplied wood to the mines, attached a bullock and a horse, and the whole contraption was successfully transported to the required site.⁹⁴ Despite continuing problems with influxes of water causing delays and stoppages of

⁹¹ Malcolm M. McCallum, *Ballarat and District Citizens and Sports at Home and Abroad* (Ballarat, Vic.: published by author, 1916), 85.

⁹² Ballarat and District Genealogical Society, *Ballarat Cemeteries and Crematorium Indexed Transcripts of Memorials to the Old & New Cemeteries and Burial & Cremation Registers*. Compiled and transcribed by members of the GSV and the BDGS. (Melbourne: The Genealogical Society of Victoria, 2006). John Spring Rew, buried in Ballarat New Cemetery, CE5 graves 8–9, 9 November 1917.

⁹³ Rew, *Memorable Gold Discovery*, 1–3.

⁹⁴ Rew, *Memorable Gold Discovery*, 2. Rew claims that the McLennan brothers (William and John), who later had a successful removalist business in Fitzroy, were the first house removers on that principle in Australia.

work, by mid 1861 the mine was reported to be the best paying claim in the district, “giving magnificent returns”.⁹⁵

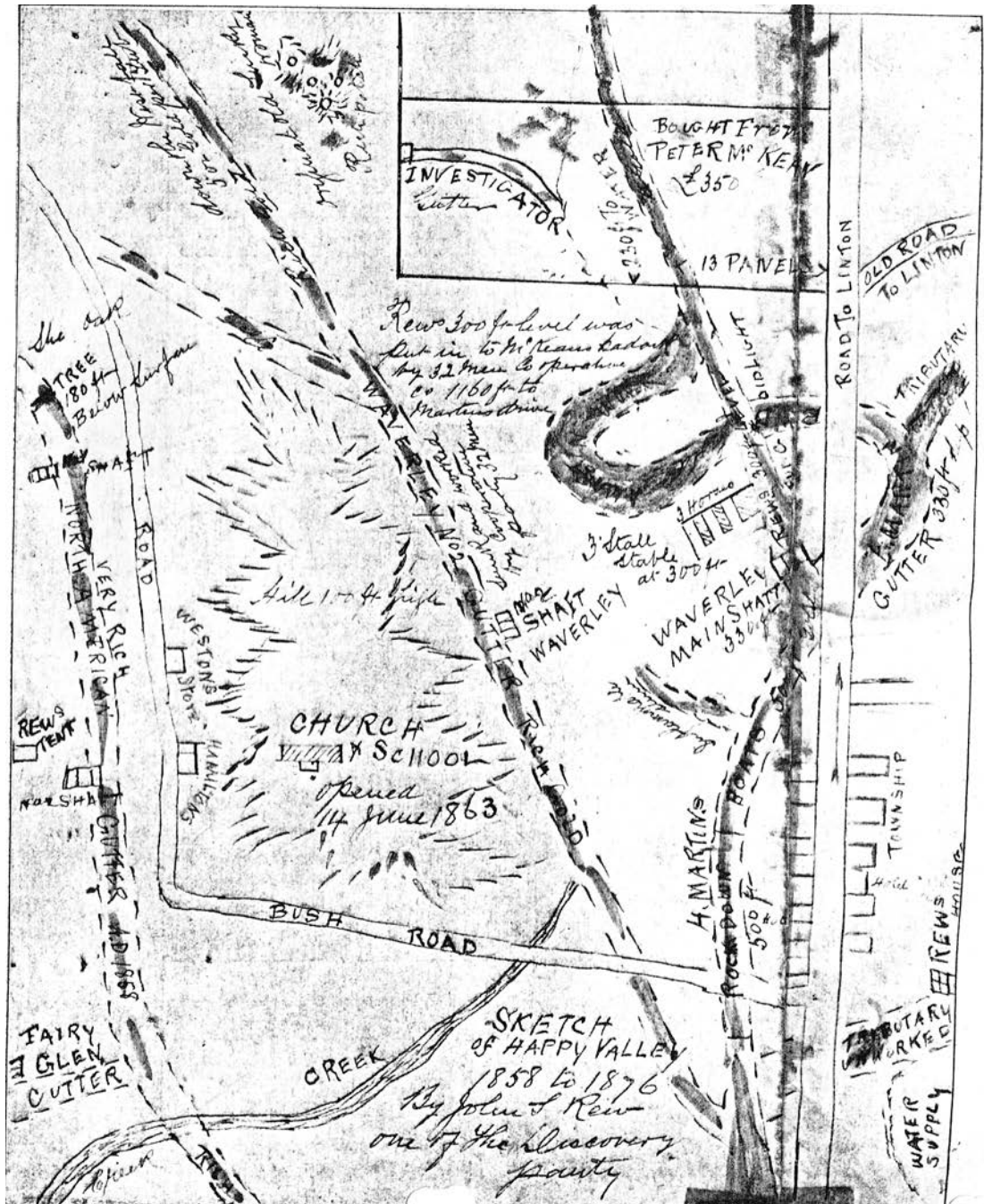


Figure 32. Sketch of Happy Valley 1858 to 1876

(Reprinted from Rew, *Memorable Gold Discovery*)

In early 1862 the North American Company sold 260 ft of pumps to the nearby Lucky Company after erecting a larger steam engine.⁹⁶ Rew then joined the Fairy Glen

⁹⁵ Supple, “Historic Gold Mining Sites,” 18.

and Waverley companies. His writings demonstrate the tendency of underground networks of drives to interconnect with older workings, often in dangerous circumstances. The most amazing revelation he made is about the use of boats below ground in flooded old workings, particularly of the Lucky mine.⁹⁷ Rew described three boats built by a Scottish-American mine manager named John Henry Marshall. Each was capable of carrying two men and tools, and was used to travel “a distance of 500 ft from the shaft at a depth of 330 ft below the surface”. The boats were used underground in the Lucky mine for 12 months.

Rew was but one of many men who lived locally for years, building on and sharing their expertise as mines were worked out and other leads were exploited, often with rich results. There were many skilled and innovative pioneers of the Springdallah goldfield, whose enterprise and adaptability brought many benefits to their communities. They not only enhanced the social life of communities, but also the working environment, which helped to increase families’ earning capacity. Several new shafts of various mining companies, such as the Shamrock, Criterion, Champion of the Seas, Tam O’Shanter, Ivanhoe, Don Juan, Albion, Lucky, Centaur, Robin Hood and Grand Junction, as well as the North American, had become established by the beginning of 1861.⁹⁸

The first official report of work having started on the Try Again Gold Mining Company at Piggoreet was in September 1859.⁹⁹ It took the company six months to put a tunnel 350 ft into the hill between the Devils Kitchen and the Springdallah Creek on the western or Happy Valley side, a feat regarded at that time as “one of the greatest undertakings in the district”.¹⁰⁰ At the end of 1860, they abandoned that site and moved to within the Devils Kitchen, where they sunk the shaft, as shown in Figure 33.¹⁰¹ An area of almost 50 acres was granted as a mining lease for 10 years, the amount of capital being

⁹⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), January 9, 1862, 1, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66330656>. The 260 ft of pumps (hose or pipes), which in metric terms were about 80 metres long, etc., were sold to the Lucky Gold Mining Company, a short distance from the North American Company.

⁹⁷ Rew, *Memorable Gold Discovery*, 5. The Lucky mine mullock heap exists to this day opposite the water standpipe where the road to the school building branches south from the main Happy Valley road.

⁹⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), February 20, 1861, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66337510>.

⁹⁹ Supple, “Historic Gold Mining Sites,” 152.

¹⁰⁰ *Star* (Ballarat), April 21, 1860, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72466330>.

¹⁰¹ Supple, “Historic Gold Mining Sites,” 152.

£3,000,¹⁰² and by March 1863 they had doubled their capital and were gaining nearly £135 per week.¹⁰³ William Maughan was both legal manager and secretary on 5 October 1864 when 50 men and 3 boys were employed by the company. Of the men, 33 were miners, and the others were engine-drivers, blacksmiths, bracemen, machinemen, chambermen, sluicemen, a carpenter and a general manager. The boys drove the horses, for which they each received £1/10/- per week.¹⁰⁴ Overheads at the mine included candles, ironmongery, timber and firewood, powder and fuse, horses and harness, along with horse-feed. At the same period, shares in the mine were being sold for £45 each. Local Piggoreet residents held numbers of shares, such as the publican of the Try Again Hotel, John Liddle (also known as Liddell, and related to many ex-Northumberland immigrants), who had 32 shares. Eight Piggoreet residents held 24 shares each, and several had 12. The mine worked out before the end of 1873, by which time it was recorded that the mine had produced an amount of 1714 lbs of gold in its 13 years.¹⁰⁵



Figure 33. The Try Again Gold Mining Company, Devils Kitchen 1861

(Adapted from photograph courtesy of Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria [H1689])

¹⁰² *Star* (Ballarat), November 12, 1860, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66335723>.

¹⁰³ *Geelong Advertiser*, March 2, 1863, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article148906443>.

¹⁰⁴ Dicker, *Mining Record*, December 1864, 3:224.

¹⁰⁵ Supple, "Historic Gold Mining Sites," 154.

The Try Again mine was the scene of an accidental death demonstrating the hazards of working with steam-engine driven machinery. The inquest, held at the Archer Hotel in Piggoreet by Coroner Thomas Hopper, was held on 21 January 1865. William Handasyde, a 37-year-old Scot, married with two children, had lived in Victoria since 1852.¹⁰⁶ He was working at the steam-powered puddling machine, removing large stones from it by reaching into it while it was not working. Suddenly it started, and the arm of the machine crushed him against a nearby post. A starting warning, using rappers, was always given before the engine was started, but on this occasion, the engine-driver simply moved the engine very gently in order to take off the pump rods. He was unable to see the puddling machine from the engine he was driving. The machine arm broke when it crushed Handasyde, and he fell to the ground, where he complained of his ribs being broken. Other miners carried him to his house, where Dr Thomas Foster examined him but was unable to prevent his death some hours later. Some of the jurors thought that there was insufficient room between the arms of the machine and the walls of the building within which it was enclosed.¹⁰⁷

Quartz Mines

Few deep mines at Springdallah were quartz or hard rock mines, although occasionally a deep lead mine would strike a quartz reef and extract the gold in that as well as from the washdirt. The Springdallah Quartz Mining Company, within the Devils Kitchen, was a rare quartz mine that was active from the early 1860s.¹⁰⁸ Of the approximately 50 Springdallah mining companies working during the early 1860s, it was the only one that was specifically mining quartz rock, an example of which is shown in Figure 34.

¹⁰⁶ PROV, VPRS 24/PO, Unit 153, File 1865/63, William Handasyde. He worked at the Try Again mine with his father-in-law, John Thompson.

¹⁰⁷ *Ballarat Star*, January 24, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66059628>.

¹⁰⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), November 21, 1862, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66328877>. It was noted that a large percentage of pyrites in the stone was found, and gold found in the pyrites.



Figure 34. Gold in a quartz reef in underground mine at Sovereign Hill`

(From author's collection)

Some others were a combination of deep lead alluvial mining with occasional quartz mining if a reef was struck. By March 1864 the company was being referred to as “the old Springdallah Quartz Mining Company”,¹⁰⁹ and it was expecting a rich yield from crushing the quartz with a battery.

Davey studied the contribution of Cornish technology, particularly on the Ballarat field, and explained the connection between those ex-copper miners and hard rock mining, in which they were most experienced. However, much of Victoria's gold, and certainly the gold at Springdallah, “was derived from sources other than hard rock”.¹¹⁰ This may explain the much greater representation at Springdallah of miners originating from Durham, Northumberland, Cumberland, Yorkshire and Scotland, in contrast to the lesser numbers of Cornish miners. Mining Surveyor Lynch reported in February 1860 that of the 7,700 miners in the No. 6 Smythesdale Mining Division, less than 4% were quartz miners.¹¹¹ Consequently, neither documentary nor material evidence of quartz-crushing machinery, such as stamp batteries or Chilean mills, is found at Springdallah. Similarly,

¹⁰⁹ *Star* (Ballarat), March 24, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72514558>.

¹¹⁰ Christopher J. Davey, “The origins of Victorian mining technology, 1851-1900,” *The Artefact*: 19 (1996): 52.

¹¹¹ *Argus* (Melbourne), February 13, 1860, 7, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5677028>. There were 6,500 European alluvial miners and 900 Chinese, and 300 European quartz miners making up the total mining population.

rock drills were not required, and comparatively few instances of miners' phthisis appear as causes of deaths at Springdallah.

Successful Gold Mining Companies

Among the most productive companies in the No. 6 Smythesdale Mining Division was the British Gold Mining Company at Happy Valley.¹¹² Registered under Pyke's Act, its capital was £30,000 in one thousand shares of £30 each. The general manager and secretary was Edward William Spain from at least 1862 until 1866, and Robert Armstrong was the mining manager throughout that period. Fifty acres were held under lease from the Crown. It was situated on the North American Lead, adjoining the North American Company to the south and the Lucky Company to the north. The Robin Hood Company was north-east of the British claim. The first shaft, between the Happy Valley township and Spring Creek, was 207 ft deep, sunk through basalt and clay. Miners who were contracted to sink the shaft worked as two men below for six hours and two men at the brace for twelve hours, with a 12-hour break between shifts. Until the pump was connected, the men bailed water with buckets. The rectangular shaft measured the usual 6 ft by 3 ft and was 234 ft deep, sunk through 92 ft of basalt before bottoming. In June 1864 it was regarded as one of the richest claims in the Ballarat district, with a yield the previous week of 540 oz. It was common to obtain 100 oz in each puddling machine wash. Serle agreed with Coghlan's estimate of approximately £4 per ounce as the price of gold during this period, and at that rate the yield of just one week's work would have been valued at £2,160.¹¹³

By October 1865 a tunnel had been driven eastwards for 340 ft and the gutter reached, which was followed for a length of 640 ft. The gutter of the lead at its widest was 45 ft and came in close contact with the Robin Hood claim. Tributary gutters from the Fairy Glen Lead and the Lucky Lead came within the British lease and were also worked, and the winding nature of the gutter provided the company with more length of reef wash than expected. An average of 50 oz of gold per week was not an uncommon

¹¹² Dicker, *Mining Record*, 5B:203.

¹¹³ Timothy A. Coghlan, *Labour and Industry in Australia: from the First Settlement in 1788 to the Establishment of the Commonwealth in 1901* (Melbourne: Macmillan, 1969), I:587, quoted in Serle, *Golden Age*, 390.

yield towards the end of 1865, which at £4 per ounce would have brought £200.¹¹⁴ Many miners working for wages would have benefited financially from the steady income, supplemented by the often generous dividends from their investment in shares.

The Zuyder Zee Gold Mining Company, abutting on Piggoreet West, David Clarke's pastoral run, was first registered in 1862 for 60 men's ground on the Main Trunk Lead running north-south from Haddon to Pitfield, and was later renamed the Golden Lake Gold Mining Company. John Pounder Roberts, regarded as a leading mining magnate of the district, was a director of this and at least 57 other companies in which he held more than 150,000 shares in the 1860s to 1870s, often as a legal and mining agent.¹¹⁵ As one of the three directors of the Golden Lake Company, Roberts appointed three captains of shifts, who in 1868 were earning weekly wages of £2/15/- each. By early 1865 the water flow was heavy, despite installing a double column of pumps, the report in the middle of that year stating that the "quantity of water baled from the shaft is enormous, probably the greatest stream from one shaft in the district".¹¹⁶ In 1867 mines on the north-south belt were swamped, whereupon an agreement was reached that all mines would pump continuously for 16 weeks to try to overcome the problem.¹¹⁷ By the time the Golden Lake was worked out in mid 1875, it was regarded as one of the best and steadiest mines in the district.¹¹⁸ This mine provides a good example of a not uncommon problem in regard to water overwhelming the underground workings and the difficulties in overcoming that problem. An overabundance of water was, however, only one of many challenges to be met in deep lead mining.

MINING PROBLEMS

Accidents and Hazards

The hazards of working below ground with equipment and materials needing to be transported by machinery became apparent when 32-year-old Welshman David Evans

¹¹⁴ This accords with values from the Try Again mine reports in December 1864 of £3/19/6 per ounce in Dicker's *Mining Record* (Dicker, *Mining Record*, 3:225).

¹¹⁵ McAdie, *Mining Shareholders Index*. John Pounder Roberts held positions as mining agent and mining manager in several Springdallah companies, including the Grand Trunk, which he helped to establish.

¹¹⁶ Supple, "Historic Gold Mining Sites," 187.

¹¹⁷ Robertson, *History of Piggoreet*, 7.

¹¹⁸ Supple, "Historic Gold Mining Sites," 189.

was accidentally killed in the shaft of the Lucky Gold Mining Company at Lucky Womans in October 1861.¹¹⁹ He and James Walker were sinking the rectangular 6 ft long and 3 ft wide shaft. Until the shaft had been completed, enabling the construction of a cage, the men used the bucket to lower and raise themselves. The iron bucket, 26 inches high and slightly wider at the mouth, was raised and lowered by the steam engine driver, another Welshman, named William Thomas. Evans had filled a bucket at the 121 ft depth, and while standing against the broad side of the shaft, he sang out to the man above to heave away, but after rising from the bottom of the shaft to about level with his head, the bucket struck the wooden frame of the shaft. It then rebounded against Evans' head and fractured his skull. He fell on the shaft bottom. The man at the top, known as the banksman, called across to the engine house for the driver at the lever of the engine to stop, but the steam could not act to reverse the engine in time. The mine manager and another miner then descended in the emptied bucket and found Evans collapsed with head injuries. They got him into the bucket, and he was brought up by the mine manager. David Evans died an hour later, shortly after being examined by Dr John Currie of Linton. The inquest jury thought the accident could have been avoided had Evans stood at the end instead of the side of the shaft, a simple occupational health and safety issue that had apparently not been made a rule of work behaviour.

In the British Company mine shaft in July 1863, William Quick had his skull fractured when a stone fell down the shaft and struck his head; he left a widow and three children to mourn their loss due to an unexpectedly simple event.¹²⁰ After a cave-in 200 ft below ground at the Try Again mine in the Devils Kitchen, an inquest into the death of Samuel Brusey was held in May 1867 at the Atlas Pic Nic Hotel next to Dr Foster's house overlooking Piggoreet township.¹²¹ About five o'clock on the morning of 24 May, several miners were blocking out by removing ground from an area about 20 ft wide and 6 ft high. They were nearly 15 minutes walk from the shaft and were installing timbers as they removed the ground. Hugh Spotswood was putting up props while Samuel Brusey was removing a truck full of dirt. Although the roof of the drive was covered with

¹¹⁹ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 101, File 1861/842, David Evans. The inquest was held at the Lightwood Hotel, Slaughter Hill, Lucky Womans (Happy Valley). Evidence indicates that Slaughterhouse Lead, Slaughterhouse Hill and Slaughter Hill were all on the rise to the east of the school site.

¹²⁰ *Star* (Ballarat), July 14, 1863, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72515713>.

¹²¹ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 190, file 1867/388, death of Samuel Brusey.

wooden laths, a large quantity of clay and gravel above and near the face, and some of the timber, suddenly fell, covering the men. About 16 men working below came to help and moved Brusey and two other injured men up the main shaft and into the engine house, where Dr Foster attended to their head wounds, broken legs and injured organs. James Dixon gave evidence that the claim had been flooded with water for 13 or 14 weeks, and the men had been back at work for six weeks since it had been pumped out. John Coxon, a wage-earner in the mine, stated that the ground had given way from the rock above. A fourth witness, William Bath, knew that Brusey was 42 years old, from Brixham in Devonshire and had been separated from his wife for 14 years since he had come to Victoria. The great distances of the drives are indicated by Bath's evidence that he was working 2,000 ft from Brusey. It was generally agreed that no blame could be attributed to anyone in this tragedy.

Problems could cause further delays, such as flooding, breakdowns of machinery, or foul air often caused by the accumulation of gases in confined spaces. Poor ventilation could lead to unconsciousness and death. In mid June 1861, the North American Company found they were unable to work because of foul air, and lost time fixing air pipes in order to proceed.¹²² Some mining companies were successful in clearing foul air by burning fires underground; others cascaded water down one side of the shaft to force the foul air to move up the other side; and canvas windsocks were usually introduced to direct fresh air down the shaft. Occasional days were lost in necessary tasks such as cleaning out the boiler. Innovative technology arose from the necessity of adapting to particular requirements created by the Springdallah mining environment.

In discussing accurate shaft sinking, Birrell stated that because "the gutter wandered like a present day creek or river only a few shafts hit near the gutter".¹²³ A report on the British and Robin Hood companies exemplified this situation:

From surveys that have been made of the workings in the two mines it appears that the gutter has a very tortuous course in both claims, bending back on itself in several "horse shoe bends".¹²⁴

As one consequence, a straight tunnel being worked from the shaft could hit paydirt or miss it at any given point. On the other hand, if the tunnelling pursued the paydirt it could unintentionally encroach on an adjoining company's lease. In May 1864 "the British

¹²² *Star* (Ballarat), June 12, 1861, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66339873>.

¹²³ Birrell, "Development of Mining Technology," 73.

¹²⁴ *Star* (Ballarat), 30 June 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66346098>,

Company was discovered to have encroached a few feet within the western boundary of the Robin Hood claim”.¹²⁵

CONCLUSION

Working miners and their families were active participants in the establishment of the deep-lead gold mining industry at Springdallah. Most had not been born in Australia, but were attracted to Victoria from other colonies and from overseas to seek gold. Many brought skills with them, especially those miners who had worked in the coal and lead industry of Great Britain. By the early 1860s, the early gold rush diggers had become miners, frequently holding shares in the mining companies in which they laboured. They had learned about by-laws, Regulations and Acts (such as that relating to limited liability), which had become government requirements, and understood how they applied to the mining leases under which their companies were structured. Importantly, the no-liability part of the Mining Companies Act, 1871, allowed shareholders to cease having any liability for company debts.¹²⁶ These legal protections and improvements led to increased confidence among the mining population, as evidenced by the examples discussed in this chapter.

Steam engines were the most obvious of the many technological improvements to be seen at Springdallah, and their effect on machinery to improve pumping of underground water and increase production from puddling machines made them an essential part of any mining company. As the limited life of mines led to closure after, usually, between five and twenty years, the plant and equipment of mines was sold on to a company with a newly discovered mine site.

Amalgamation of original claims proved to be of great value in developing successful mining companies. When a party of miners formed a cooperative, they could claim enough ground for their lease to provide sufficient area on which to build the infrastructure to support the whole processing procedure.¹²⁷ Case studies of several mines at Springdallah have been used to illustrate the limited life of any mine, the hazards of working below ground, the successful nature of some companies, the experiences of working miners and the importance of the mines in maintaining the lifestyle of

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ *Empire* (Sydney), December 5, 1871, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article60878778>.

¹²⁷ Birrell, “Development of Mining Technology,” 62.

Springdallah communities. It was mining that shaped this community. In the overview that forms the first section of Chapter 7, the cooperative nature of the network of the nine communities is examined through the perspectives of both regulating bodies and the often entrepreneurial initiatives of the local residents themselves.

Chapter 7: SPRINGDALLAH COMMUNITY NETWORK - AN OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the changes and improvements in mining technology and experiences of working miners were linked with the benefits of cooperation that were an essential part of an effective community. That discussion demonstrated how attention to legislation and regulation helped create an efficient and successful industry at Springdallah, with improved working conditions being introduced to safeguard the physical and financial health of the mining population. It further demonstrated that the development of mining technology and processes had an impact on the social and living conditions of mining families and others whose dependence on the industry was total. The focus of this first section of Chapter 7 is to provide a general overview of the cooperative nature of those communities beyond the workplace and to show how the network of communities across the nine settlements responded and related to the governing and regulating bodies. It develops the notion of the mining community as agents of social change, in which they themselves became changed as they effected changes to their working and living environment.

It is this chapter that most pointedly emphasises the sociological construct of community as first expounded by Ferdinand Tönnies, the 19th-century German sociologist,¹ a theory introduced in the first chapter of this thesis. Tönnies' theory is generally supported by more recent writers such as American anthropologist and social scientist George P. Murdock in the 1940s,² the English anthropologist and historian Alan Mcfarlane in the 1970s³, and Australian archaeologist and social historian Susan Lawrence of recent years.⁴ The three elements that Tönnies described as indicators of community can be discerned in the daily living and working arrangements of the residents of Springdallah: bonds of kinship are revealed, a shared geographical boundary is identifiable and a sense of belonging to a group is apparent. The major group for

¹ Tönnies, *Community and Society*, 223–31.

² Murdock, *Social Structure*.

³ Macfarlane, "History, Anthropology and Communities."

⁴ Lawrence, *Dolly's Creek*.

Springdallah is that which shared a work environment, the gold mining industry, within which other bonds such as family, religion, ethnicity and class provided emotional, social and domestic support and purpose. Macfarlane⁵ restated the three elements as being of blood, place and mind. He further posited Tönnies' three-fold theory as a useful means of collecting and organising data dealing with people and social relationships within a locality to facilitate study, which is a major purpose of this thesis. The entire population of Springdallah, like the majority of immigrant Victorians, were making a new home for themselves and their families, in many instances having travelled so far from their places of origin that few would ever imagine returning. Many had arrived unmarried, so their life partners frequently came from different parts of the world, and their children born in the colonies usually knew no other life than the goldfields. The following three sections of this chapter concentrate in detail on the functional, social and economic nature of the three separate commercial centres, each with their two smaller settlements.

Demographic analysis based on the birth registrations at Springdallah from 1863 to 1883 provides evidence of the large numbers of miners with backgrounds in the north of England, Ireland and Scotland. That so many of the immigrants came with extended family networks and kinship links lends support to the notion that cooperation and community spirit was strong at Springdallah. Fahey argues that the skills that gold seekers brought with them “offered opportunities for the development of ‘up country’ urbanisation”,⁶ a view supported by the findings in relation to the mining population of the Springdallah goldfield.

The impact of government, at both state and local level, on the working and social lives of the residents is explored, along with other issues that were part of the miners' lives. The need for improvements in infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and public buildings, by-laws governing behaviour, and other such matters was identified by the people themselves, and action was sought and achieved by outspoken leaders. The establishment of administrative structures of local government bodies such as the Woody Yaloak District Roads Board, the Grenville Shire Council and the Linton's, Brown's,

⁵ Macfarlane, “History, Anthropology and Communities.”

⁶ Charles Fahey, “Peopling the Victorian Goldfields: From Boom to Bust, 1851-1901,” *Australian Economic History Review* 50, no. 2 (2010): 148–61, accessed April 12, 2014. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8446.2010.00298.x.

Springdallah, Happy Valley and Lucky Woman's Gold Fields Common is discussed, and their importance illustrated. Similarly, issues relating to law and order and the need for police protection are identified and related to the theme of community development.

A major issue in the 19th century that had an effect on the Springdallah network of communities was land acquisition. As gold production by the mines of the district fluctuated throughout the 1860s, and particularly as it started to wane in the 1870s, the land acts that enabled selection of small plots for mixed farming became increasingly important to the mining population. The effects of the 1869 Land Act in particular are explained and illustrated with various cases from the land selection files of Springdallah residents. The implications of the later opening up of large areas for selection in the Wimmera, Mallee, Gippsland and northern Victoria are also discussed as a link to the earlier experience of miners at Springdallah.

The residents of the settlements across Springdallah convened meetings at which issues that affected their lives were discussed and action decided upon. They took on membership of the Woody Yaloak District Roads Board, which pre-dated the Grenville Shire Council, and many other committees that influenced their social and domestic lives. The people themselves cooperated to gain improvements within their daily lives when they created their own social entertainments, such as sporting events, performances and dances in local hotels, sing-a-longs and local picnics. Friendly societies sprang up to provide assistance when illness or death occurred. These aspects of community life are explored and discussed in this chapter and developed further in discussions about the three major centres of Springdallah.

SPRINGDALLAH

As the long-term nature of the mining industry became established beyond doubt, the three townships of Piggoreet, Happy Valley and Golden Lake and their nearby settlements became home to many mining families, where they raised and educated their children and set the direction for their futures. The three townships became commercial centres with schools and churches, each at their peak supporting hundreds of families. Piggoreet was within easy walking distance of both Grand Trunk and Exchequer to the south. Happy Valley, also known as Lucky Womans, and Old Lucky Womans near Dreamers Hill covered a large area. Golden Lake, also known as Brownsvale, was a smaller town to the north but within walking distance of Piggoreet and Derwent Jacks.

In early 1864 at the Cleft in the Rock Gold Mining Company, midway between Happy Valley and Piggoreet,⁷ nearly every shareholder was identifiable as a working miner supporting his family living nearby. That a similar situation existed within the many other mining companies at Springdallah is demonstrated in the latter three sections of Chapter 7. The degree of economic independence through sharing of profits provided these families with agency, or a mode of action, within their lives. There is strong evidence that miners such as those shareholding workers, with their wives and families, contributed strongly to the creation of the stable communities of Springdallah over the next several decades.

The People

The descriptions by archaeologist Susan Lawrence of the Dolly's Creek "poor man's"⁸ diggings near Morrisons, south of Buninyong, provide an interesting comparison with the Springdallah communities, who lived in an area of rich washdirt production. The miners at Springdallah, unlike the subsistence miners at Morrisons, worked for large and successful mining companies and generally did well enough to be able to purchase shares in the profitable mines in which they worked. In the communities of the Springdallah goldfield, many families had been settled for at least several decades and had established their lifestyles in substantial cottages. The residents of the Springdallah communities behaved in ways that showed they believed they would be living there permanently.

The Lucky Womans school, built of brick in 1874 and replacing an earlier wooden structure,⁹ is clear evidence that despite some mines being worked out, there was an optimistic expectation that the township, also known as Happy Valley, would survive in the long term. At Dolly's Creek, residents came and went seasonally, but at Springdallah there was a strong and populous core of permanent residents, many creating families that grew to adulthood, having undertaken all their education in the one classroom, attending the local church of their denomination, and creating the friendships and relationships that in a large number of instances became marriages. While the mining companies supplied their income, a combination of shares dividends and occasional extra labour provided further financial income.

⁷ *Victoria Government Gazette*, February 17, 1864, 449, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

⁸ Lawrence, *Dolly's Creek*, 10.

⁹ *Ballarat Courier*, January 21, 1875, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article191558619>.

Lawrence believed that the more frequent and detailed the face-to-face interactions, the stronger are the bonds of community.¹⁰ Such interaction may have occurred for men, women or children on Sundays at the Presbyterian, Wesleyan or Anglican churches at Piggoreet or the Catholic, Wesleyan, Primitive Methodist or Anglican churches at Happy Valley; on any day in Gartside's general store at Piggoreet or John Hart's post office at Happy Valley; on weekdays at the schools in Piggoreet, Grand Trunk, Golden Lake and Happy Valley; and for men in particular at their places of work in one of the many mining companies dotted throughout the goldfield, and after work at any public house similarly dotted about the landscape within and between the settlements. As well, the mechanics' institutes at Piggoreet and Happy Valley attracted many adults during their leisure hours. When extended families meet at kin gatherings those face-to-face interactions are reinforced, according to Lawrence, and family networks of that kind were strong at Springdallah. Philipp added the view that the "kinds of lives and relationships that were fashioned within the community speak to values and aspirations held and experience registered".¹¹ Consequently, commonly experienced backgrounds would have reinforced the religious beliefs, value systems and cultural aspirations of the various ethnic groups living within the Springdallah communities.

As Lawrence noted, "each person knows and is known in a variety of situations and contexts".¹² She discussed the interaction and opportunity for confirmation of community membership when people share activities, and both Ballarat and Geelong newspapers abound with items of sporting events, especially turf club race meetings, athletic sports, Sunday school picnic days, concerts, and meetings of friendly societies and lodges, as part of the goldfields' entertainment agenda in any one year at Springdallah. So, the cementing of a sense of community occurred both formally and informally. Examples of interactions between the residents of Springdallah are presented as case studies in the detailed explorations in each of the three following sections of this chapter. Of course, not all community interactions were necessarily harmonious, and instances of severe divisions are documented in public records when local leaders have acted on decisions for which there was not unanimous agreement. Differences arose

¹⁰ Lawrence, *Dolly's Creek*, 13.

¹¹ Philipp, *Poor Man's Digging*, xiii.

¹² Lawrence, *Dolly's Creek*, 13.

between commercial and mining interests, and between the managers of companies and those labouring in them.

Demographics

Although the 1871 population returns for the Census of Victoria report 78 residences at Piggoreet and 110 at Happy Valley,¹³ census records for the Springdallah area do not exist for some years and some places. There are no returns at all for Golden Lake, for instance. In 1861 no return was made for Piggoreet, but the number of residences in Happy Valley was given as 307, with a total population of 1,008, made up of 698 males and 310 females. The real growth period was in the early years of the decade between the census dates of 1861 and 1871, which were poorly recorded for Springdallah. For this reason, the birth registrations for Springdallah (the registration district name by which Piggoreet was known until July 1885)¹⁴, are invaluable in providing an insight into demographic issues of the district.

A total of 1,086 births were registered at Springdallah between 1863 and 1883, representing 430 married couples and 25 single women (of which 11 registrations provided the name of the father). These numbers indicate 455 couples. Of the 430 marriages, 325 took place in Australia, which is 75% of the marriages. Three couples married in New South Wales, three in Tasmania and six in South Australia. However, the remaining 313 couples who had children born at Springdallah between 1863 and 1883 married in Victoria, which is 69%. While these figures are not definitive, the evidence does indicate that most immigrant gold seekers were unmarried at the time of their arrival in the colony, supporting Serle's claim that in 1861 in Victoria "almost half the men over 20 were unmarried".¹⁵

The population of Springdallah was made up of settlers of English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh origin, native-born Australians, Europeans mainly from Germany, the Swiss-Italian border and Norway, and some Americans and Canadians, as discussed in Chapter 5. An analysis of the Springdallah birth registrations reveals that Englishmen predominated as fathers of children born at Springdallah. A further analysis of those English fathers shows that the most populous group was from County Durham in northern England, with 59 Springdallah fathers giving that county as their place of origin. The next

¹³ Watson, *Lost and Forgotten Towns*, 202, 361.

¹⁴ *Victoria Government Gazette*, July 24, 1885, 2046, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹⁵ Serle, *Golden Age*, 373.

most represented group was from the adjoining northern county of Northumberland, with 32 fathers having been born there. When these two northern counties' numbers are added to Yorkshire with 11 and Cumberland with 8, the number of men from northern England totals 108 out of 441 fathers named in the birth registrations. Thus men from the Northern Pennines, generally experienced miners of lead and coal, make up 24% of the population of fathers of children registered at Springdallah between 1863 and 1883. This compares with only 15 fathers from Cornwall, or 8% of the total fathers living at Springdallah. The 15 Cornishmen included 1 carter, 1 engine-driver, 2 carpenters and 11 miners, all occupations that could be linked with the mining industry. These figures reveal that, in contradiction to the perceived high rate of Cornish miners on the Ballarat goldfield, at Springdallah miners from the north of England predominated.

Nearly 24% of fathers whose children were born at Springdallah between 1863 and 1883 were Irish, and may have had some mining experience, especially if they came from County Clare. Of those 107 fathers, 23% were born in County Clare, and 20% were born in County Tipperary. There was productive lead mining at Ballyhickey near Quin and Ennis in County Clare¹⁶, where a number of Springdallah fathers had been born. Tipperary had been worked continuously from the 16th century for lead, silver, zinc and copper. However, Irish fathers tended not to provide the names of towns where they were born, so there is no firm evidence to show whether they brought with them skills gleaned from previous mining experience. However, 67% of those Irish fathers worked as miners at Springdallah, 8% were farmers, 6% were publicans or beer sellers, 5% were timber workers, 5% were carters or labourers and 2% were police officers, while the remaining 5% sold household goods and foods.

Aborigines in the Springdallah district visited the mining townships, sometimes undertaking labouring work. In March 1862 a letter to the editor of the *Star* newspaper referred to the Woody Yaloak tribe at Linton, appealing for some means of preventing persons from supplying them with liquor.¹⁷ Five months later, a report of the Mount Emu men felling and splitting trees for firewood noted that Aboriginal people went from door

¹⁶ Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland, comprising the several counties, cities, boroughs, corporate, market and post towns, parishes and villages with historical and statistical descriptions*, 1:478 (London: S. Lewis, 1837), accessed May 24, 2015. <https://books.google.com.au/>.

¹⁷ *Star* (Ballarat), March 20, 1862, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66332223>.

to door requesting work to earn money.¹⁸ The link between the harsh winter and the need for Aborigines to gain employment was reinforced by an item in the *Argus*, copied from the *Grenville Advocate*:

The Mount Emu tribe of aboriginals must have been pretty hard pinched for food this winter, as they were never before known to be so keen to get employment from Europeans as they have shown themselves this season at Linton. A gentleman of that town who is laying out some ground for arboriculture, has engaged the tribe to carve him some lightwood uprights for an alcove, as the timber sheds the bark. It is intended that the carved designs will represent a serpentine coil, similar to that on the shields that the chiefs of the tribe use in times of warfare.¹⁹

At the same time, it was reported that Aborigines associated with Mount Emu²⁰ had been provided new blankets, much needed by “the poor shivering creatures”.²¹ In June 1864 Andrew Porteous, local corresponding secretary of the Central Board for the Protection of Aborigines, provided rugs and blankets to 24 members of the Mount Emu tribe when King Billy invited Porteous to a corroboree at the next full moon.²² Porteous, in September 1867, provided evidence for the size of the Aboriginal population from the area when he offered to “supply” 40 corroboree dancers for a display at Buninyong for the visit by the Duke of Edinburgh.²³

The deep lead mining community of Springdallah comprised working men employed within, or supplying services to, the 50 to 60 mining companies of the district.²⁴ While most worked in the mines, others had incomes from associated support employment such as carting, timber cutting, carpentry, provision of supplies including food and drink, and providing accommodation. Their wives, mothers, daughters, sisters, growing children and other dependents often added to the family income by supplying the important family support network. Often family members milked cows and goats, kept pigs and poultry (for both eggs and chicken on special occasions), created gardens of berries and leafy and root vegetables, and cultivated orchards of fruit (ideal for jam making, pies and fruit puddings, as well as fresh fruit). Women made comfortable homes

¹⁸ *Argus* (Melbourne), August 26, 1862, 7, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5720827>.

¹⁹ *Argus* (Melbourne), September 4, 1862, 7, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5721505>.

²⁰ Mount Emu is approximately 25 km north-west of Happy Valley.

²¹ *Geelong Advertiser*, August 23, 1862, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article149829596>.

²² *Star* (Ballarat), June 10, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66345554>.

²³ *Geelong Advertiser*, September 21, 1867, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article147773662>.

²⁴ McAdie, *Mining Shareholders Index*.

in which varied meals were prepared, and clothing and household bedding and linen were laundered regularly. It is likely that rabbit trapping would have extended the diet, as would wild-growing mushrooms and blackberries. Supplies of homemade ginger beer were available, supplemented by commercially available cordials and other goods, such as flour and sugar, at the general stores.²⁵

The cooperative nature of the network of nine communities brought about improvements within their daily lives. Local leaders saw the need for services and facilities and acted to implement them, to the benefit of the district. Residents gathered for meetings to formally request support services and public institutions such as schools, churches, protection by staffed police stations and courthouses, public halls and other marks of civilised society. Their representatives began petitioning local government bodies to make roads and build bridges, to clear stumps from thoroughfares and improve them with gravel and drainage, to provide culverts and crossings on main roadways, and in other ways to support the infrastructure that made the little townships comfortable and well resourced. Almost exclusively, the appointees or elected holders of official positions were local residents, as in the case of electoral registrars, councillors, council officers, pound keepers and tollkeepers, school board committee members and registrars of births, deaths and marriages.

Government Representation

The strong sense of community is affirmed by newspaper accounts of public gatherings, where matters of social importance were attended by large numbers of Springdallah residents. An example is the large audiences attending political speeches. The Victorian Legislative Assembly was created in 1856, but the electoral districts named then were replaced in 1859, and the Grenville electorate representation changed to two members. The earliest close contact the Springdallah district had with a general election was at the close of 1865. Mark Morell Pope, a Ballarat district mining manager and mining agent, who had been elected at a by-election in 1862, sought re-election, and three others stood as candidates for the two seats.²⁶ They were Butler Cole Aspinall of Melbourne, a barrister; Henry Henty of Melbourne, a merchant; and the experienced parliamentarian, Francis Murphy of Melbourne, described as “knight”.²⁷ Murphy, a

²⁵ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 219, File 1869/45.

²⁶ *Ballarat Star*, December 30, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112866123>.

²⁷ *Bendigo Advertiser*, December 22, 1865, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article87929012>.

former surgeon, had previously chaired the first Central Road Board in 1853,²⁸ had served as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly for some years, had been ousted from the Murray Boroughs he had formerly represented, and was apparently pursuing a safe and available seat, no matter that it was well outside his usual constituency.²⁹

Murphy and Henty visited Springdallah and addressed 120 people gathered at Henry Coe's Court Royal Hotel at Piggoreet on 20 December 1865, and also spoke at several nearby gold mining towns.³⁰ This first ever meeting of political figures aspiring to represent the Springdallah community raised a high degree of interest. Murphy was well known to the miners, at least by name, having supported the introduction of occupation licences by which land was made available for small farms, and Henty declared himself in support of the Land Act.³¹ Aspinall's non-appearance at an advertised meeting at Coe's hotel at Piggoreet the following week was not well received, the audience dispersing after a long and fruitless wait.³² After the election, the poll for Grenville was declared on New Year's Day 1866 at Buninyong, and despite negative press, Murphy gained the most votes,³³ as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Voting results in Grenville

Candidate	Votes
Francis Murphy	1003
Henry Henty	939
Mark Morell Pope	660
Butler Cole Aspinall	611

Source: Data from *Bendigo Advertiser*, January 2, 1866, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article87957262>.

²⁸ Bernard Barrett, *The Civic Frontier. The Origin of Local Communities and Local Government in Victoria* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1979), 87.

²⁹ *Ballarat Star*, December 29, 1865, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112866092>.

³⁰ *Ballarat Star*, December 22, 1865, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112865957>.

³¹ Beever, Margot. "Murphy, Sir Francis (1809–1891)." *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. (Canberra: National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 1974). <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/murphy-sir-francis-4275/text6913>, accessed 20 July 2015.

³² *Ballarat Star*, December 29, 1865, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112866098>.

³³ *Bendigo Advertiser*, January 2, 1866, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article87957262>.

Henty served for less than two years,³⁴ while Murphy finished his term in 1871, followed in the next decade by well-known and popular local men from the Woody Yaloak goldfields area. One was civil engineer John Montgomery, who lived with his large family at Linton, remembered across the wider goldfields for having introduced and carried By-law 10 in 1857, which allowed extended areas for mining claims.³⁵ After him were mine manager Richard Henry Lock of Smythesdale, grazing landowner and Wesleyan lay preacher John Bird of Scarsdale, and merchant ex-mayor of the Borough of Browns and Scarsdale, Alexander Young. Reports on this election, and others during the decade when mining communities were becoming established, demonstrate the high interest shown by miners in representation of their interests at state level. As Bate says of the mining community, “they were heartily for selection, for protection, and for constitutional reform”.³⁶ That such large numbers turned out to hear candidates speak points also to the entertainment that the population sought at a local level. Newspapers often published the speeches, including the usually humorous interjections from the audience, all of which sometimes elicited letters to the editor and other responses. There was no lack of outspokenness by the public at large.

Local Government

Part of the “civic network”³⁷ that historian Bernard Barrett argued led to the growth of local communities, was local government. Community leaders represented the interests of the families with whom they worked and socialised, and those spokesmen shared the same concerns about and aspirations for the infrastructure and support services as their neighbours. In many ways, despite the need for roads and bridges right across the Victorian goldfields, the demand for improvements was parochial in nature, as shown by the minutes of the local road boards that later became shire councils.

³⁴ Although his father, James Henty, held the South Western Province seat for the Victorian Legislative Council from 1856 until 1882, the year of his death.

³⁵ *Illustrated Australian News for Home Readers* (Melbourne), June 17, 1873, 98, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page5734136>.

³⁶ Weston Bate, “Ballarat: Built for Federation,” *Becoming Australians: The Movement Towards Federation in Ballarat and the Nation*, edited by Kevin T. Livingston, Richard Jordan, and Gay Sweely (Kent Town, SA: Wakefield Press, 2001), 21.

³⁷ Barrett, *Civic Frontier*, 243.

The Woody Yaloak District Roads Board

A major complaint from local residents of the goldfields related to the state of the roads. At a public meeting held at Buninyong in August 1859 by the electors of Grenville, Richard Henry Lock, a candidate shortly to become the member of the Legislative Assembly, remarked that “poor miners trod many a mile through bad and marshy roads”.³⁸ Local road boards across Victoria were gradually proclaimed under the jurisdiction of the Central Road Board.³⁹ That body was abolished in 1857, to be replaced and improved by the Board of Land and Works, and eventually the local road boards became shires, with wider local government powers.⁴⁰

On 18 September 1861 the first meeting of the Woody Yaloak Roads Board was held at the Black Swan Hotel in Linton. The nine members were residents of the Springdallah, Linton and Pitfield area, all well known at the southern end of the Woody Yaloak goldfields.⁴¹ A point of discussion was the alleged illegal election of a road board held at Black Hill near Scarsdale,⁴² and it was decided to retain a barrister to defend the actions and legality of the Woody Yaloak Road Board for a year.⁴³ When the first annual meeting was held on 15 September 1862, it was found that ratepayers at Smythesdale had advertised a meeting at Henry Wrathall’s Odd-Fellows Arms Hotel, which was on the Ballarat road north of Smythesdale township, to form a road board in opposition to that already formed.⁴⁴ The determination of opposing communities to gain recognition was revealed by such actions and underscored the parochial views held by those communities.

Legal formalities had not been complied with, but despite the resultant inability of the proposed meeting to form a new board, the established board took the decision to attend and to convey parties of ratepayers from Springdallah. Some hilarity was created when about 25 horsemen arrived in the main street of Smythesdale, causing sotto voce queries as to whether it was a hunt club gathering. Cheers and loud applause greeted the arrival of three of the current board members: Benjamin Fernald of Pitfield, John Irwin Hart of Lucky Womans and John McDonagh of Scarsdale. That response was interpreted

³⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), August 10, 1859, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66054582>.

³⁹ Barrett, *Civic Frontier*, 89.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 93.

⁴¹ PROV, VPRS 6349/P1, Unit 1.

⁴² The existence of a second road board would have been an illegal duplication.

⁴³ PROV, VPRS 6349/P1, Unit 1, 31 October 1861, the fourth meeting of the board.

⁴⁴ *Star* (Ballarat), September 17, 1862, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66327212>.

as warm approval of the manner in which the members had discharged their board membership duties to date. The meeting was called to order by Mr Lock, JP, who ruled that the Act had not been complied with, so the meeting could not be held, and he declared it lapsed. In an atmosphere of confusion, some attempted to censure Mr Lock, but the meeting was adjourned, and no more was heard of an opposition board.

Business during the first year related to appointments of officers, setting rates of salaries, deciding about map making, printing of forms, administration arrangements, the water supply for Linton, arrangements for signing of cheques and, most importantly, the selection of an assessor and collector of rates. The council officers included the secretary, treasurer, engineer, auditors, valuers, revenue and dog inspector, and inspectors of slaughterhouses (who were police officers).

By mid 1862 the board was communicating with the Commissioner of Roads and Bridges about grant entitlements, and John Montgomery was appointed surveyor and engineer at a salary of £60 for the term of the road board year.⁴⁵ Over the next decade or so, James Dodds, the secretary of Grenville Shire Council, which emerged from the Woody Yaloak Roads Board on 16 February 1864, wrote frequently to the Commissioner of Lands and Survey in Melbourne. His correspondence confirmed the need for and use of grant moneys for various roads throughout the parishes of Clarkesdale and Argyle to provide easier access for the residents of the Springdallah goldfield.⁴⁶

The construction of roads and bridges was the main priority, for ease of movement throughout the goldfields. This occasionally caused conflict with mining companies whose works encroached on the roadways between Smythesdale and Pitfield. The opinion of the police magistrate and warden John Prendergast Hamilton was that the board had no power to proceed against the companies under the Road Act until the road had been proclaimed.⁴⁷ Correspondence was immediately despatched enquiring about the declaration and survey of roads between Linton and Pitfield, and between Linton and Lucky Womans. A report on the Woody Yaloak Roads Board in March 1862 stated that the district, with a population of 8,660 and an area of 139 square miles, was “important

⁴⁵ PROV, VPRS 6349/P1, Unit 1, 29 May 1862.

⁴⁶ PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 122, File 4080/49.18, 3 June 1874. Letter from James Dodds to Assistant Commissioner of Lands and Survey.

⁴⁷ PROV, VPRS 6349/P1, Unit 1, June 4, 1862.

and populous; roads very bad naturally”.⁴⁸ Figure 35 shows much of the area, between Smythesdale and Cape Clear near Pitfield, that was the responsibility of the Woody Yaloak District Roads Board.

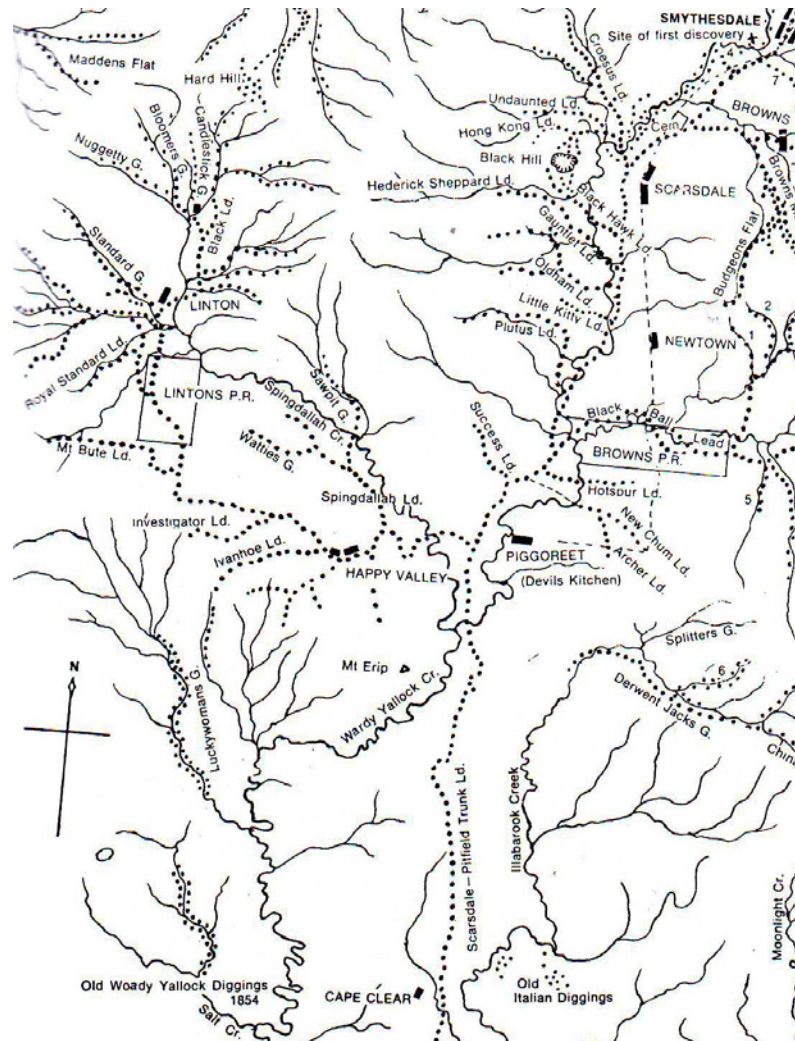


Figure 35. Plan of the Woody Yaloak goldfields and leads south-west of Ballarat

(Reprinted from Flett, *History of Gold Discovery*, 324)

Despite memorials, petitions and letters from Italian Gully, Browns Diggings, Bulldog (Illabarook) and as far away as Burrumbeet, the main business of the Woody Yaloak Roads Board concentrated on the Springdallah and Linton goldfields. Consequently, by early 1863 a deputation from the parishes of Burrumbeet and Windermere requested the Woody Yaloak Roads Board to consent to their transfer to the Ballarat Road District, which was confirmed.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), March 21, 1862, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66332237>.

⁴⁹ PROV, VPRS 6349/P1, Unit 1, January 7, 1863.

The paramount necessity of bridge building was illustrated by an accident reported in August 1864.⁵⁰ A delivery cart and its driver, returning to Scarsdale from the Devils Kitchen, were swept away at the ford that crossed the Italian Gully Creek at Brownsvale on the main thoroughfare between Smythesdale and Pitfield. The major roadway and bridge at Brownsvale had not been completed by the end of 1864 when consideration of its construction was postponed at the shire council meeting⁵¹ and consideration was postponed again in January 1865.⁵² A tender for £732/16/11 for building the bridge was accepted at the July 1865 meeting.⁵³ Eventually, on 2 November 1865, it was announced that “the new bridge at Brownsvale, together with the approaches, is all but completed, and will be finished in a day or two”.⁵⁴ Considering the functioning of many mining companies in the area after 1859, the long delay in completing a reliable and well-made bridge until six years later must have made travel between the several townships hazardous and difficult. Increasingly, roadwork contracts in the form of grubbing, clearing and quartz or bluestone metalling approaches to crossings and bridges over creeks, and providing culverts became the order of the day and continued for several years.⁵⁵

The Shire of Grenville

The Shire of Grenville was proclaimed on 16 February 1864.⁵⁶ Samuel Lewers, as Returning Officer for the council of the new Shire of Grenville, announced that the result of the election held on 11 August 1864 was as shown in Table 7.⁵⁷

⁵⁰ *Star* (Ballarat), August 27, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66347599>.

⁵¹ *Star* (Ballarat), December 26, 1864, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66350768>.

⁵² *Ballarat Star*, January 7, 1865, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66059253>.

⁵³ *Ballarat Star*, July 13, 1865, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112877228>.

⁵⁴ *Ballarat Star*, November 2, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112880113>.

⁵⁵ *Ballarat Star*, February 10, 1869, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112883215>.

⁵⁶ *Victoria Government Gazette*, February 16, 1864, 363, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

⁵⁷ *Star* (Ballarat), August 13, 1864, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66347256>.

Table 7. Voting results in election of councillors for the Shire of Grenville, 1864

Candidate	District	Votes
Henry Luth	Linton	139
William Rowe	Naringal	125
Thomas William Lloyd	Cardigan	123
Peter McKean	Happy Valley	68
Francis Leopold Hooper	Linton	66
Robert Wreford	Happy Valley	50
Alexander Christie	Scarsdale	34

Source: Data from *Star* (Ballarat), August 13, 1864, 1S,
<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66347256>.

The business of managing the shire, according to the minutes, smoothly spanned the old and new bodies, the appointment of slaughterhouse inspectors being resolved on 9 August 1864 and matters of timber valuation and road construction reaching resolution on 22 August.⁵⁸ It was unanimously resolved that requests by companies to undermine roads were not within the authority of the council. Consequently, the council resolved that

managers of the different mining companies be informed that the Council will not allow shafts to be sunk on any road: but when from the depth of sinking no injury is likely to result no objection will be raised to mining under the road.⁵⁹

The Gold Fields Common

Responsibility for provision of improvements and facilities rested with several government bodies, such as the Board of Land and Works, and the Central Board of Roads and Bridges. The Governor in Council was legally entitled to proclaim, within the meaning of the Act of Parliament 24 Victoria No. 117,

that any Crown Lands in the vicinity of any Gold Field shall be a Common for the use of all holders of miners' rights, business licences, and carriers' licences, and other residents on such gold field, and every such holder or other resident shall, from the time of such proclamation, be entitled to depasture his horses and cattle on such Common, subject to rules and regulations hereafter to be made.⁶⁰

It was reported in the press that the *Public Lands Circular* gave notice of the abolition of the 7,000 acres Linton's and Brown's Gold Fields Common,⁶¹ that had been proclaimed

⁵⁸ PROV, VPRS 7232/P2, Unit 1, 84, 9 August 1864; PROV, VPRS 7232/P2, Unit 1, 89, 22 August 1864.

⁵⁹ PROV, VPRS 7232/P2, Unit 1, 104, 16 November 1864.

⁶⁰ *Victoria Government Gazette*, February 6, 1861, 257, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

⁶¹ *Star* (Ballarat), May 25, 1863, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72557235>.

on 28 January 1861,⁶² “and in lieu thereof the setting apart of 8200 acres for the use of the miners at Linton, Browns, Happy Valley, Springdallah, and Lucky Womans”.⁶³

In early 1862 the Woody Yaloak District Roads Board supported a motion that a gold fields common should be proclaimed in the neighbourhood of Lucky Womans, separate from the inaccessible Linton goldfields’ common, “owing to the precipitous cliffs of Spring Creek and the dense scrub in the neighbourhood”.⁶⁴ The 1862 Land Act allowed for the abolition of the Linton’s and Brown’s Gold Fields Common, proclaimed on 28 January 1861.⁶⁵ It was replaced by the Linton’s, Brown’s, Springdallah, Happy Valley and Lucky Woman’s Gold Fields Common, comprising 8,200 acres. Managers of the common were holders of miner’s rights and were elected by the local population.⁶⁶ They devised rules for the functioning of the common and reported regularly to the Mining Board.⁶⁷

Law and Order

Before the end of 1860, it was reported that a police force was expected to be stationed at Lucky Womans.⁶⁸ A butcher named McIntyre had been robbed of cash, nuggets and jewellery valued at more than £70 while he was asleep in bed. A police presence was in place at Springdallah by at least the end of 1864, when a refund of rates paid by the government on the premises occupied by the police was repaid to the Inspector of Police.⁶⁹

The murder of Australasian Bank manager Thomas Ulick Burke of Smythesdale between the Alchemist Hotel and the Coach and Horses public house on 10 May 1867 was a tragic event that outraged the district.⁷⁰ Her husband having failed to return to his home that Friday evening, Burke’s wife raised the alarm. A search party found his body, still seated in the buggy, in the bush at Derwent Jacks near the turn-off to Piggoreet. He had been shot in the head and robbed of gold as well as the remains of £1,200. He had

⁶² *Victoria Government Gazette*, February 6, 1861, 255, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

⁶³ *Star* (Ballarat), May 25, 1863, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72557235>.

⁶⁴ *Star* (Ballarat), January 24, 1862, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66330953>.

⁶⁵ *Victoria Government Gazette*, June 12, 1863, 1304, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

⁶⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), October 28, 1863, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72518256>.

⁶⁷ *Ballarat Star*, October 11, 1865, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112879555>.

⁶⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), December 3, 1860, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66336092>.

⁶⁹ *Star* (Ballarat), December 22, 1864, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66350657>.

⁷⁰ *Ballarat Star*, May 13, 1867, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112874877>.

started out with that money to purchase gold from individuals and storekeepers on the goldfields near Rokewood and to pay the miners employed at the Break o' Day Company. The subsequent intensive police enquiry resulted in the arrest of George Ballan and Joseph Searle, who were tried by Redmond Barry, found guilty and hanged at Ballarat gaol in August 1867.

Lesser crimes than murder were common enough in the developing community network. John Phelan, a miner who lived near the Grand Trunk Company claim, had a quantity of drapery, which he had bought at Brighton House in Smythesdale, stolen from a stable where he had left his horse, saddle and bundle.⁷¹ Sly-grog selling, or dealing in spirits without a licence to do so, was a famously common problem on the goldfields, and the prevention of illegal sales of wine and spirits by Springdallah storekeepers was overseen by a diligent shire revenue officer John Robertson, who pursued them. James Kinnear had a store at Lucky Womans, where grog to the value of £300, including 14 cases of gin, was seized in December 1862.⁷²

At a time when the township of Piggoreet was called the Devils Kitchen and Springdallah was the name of the registration district only, Francis Parkes appeared before the Linton Police Court, charged with stealing a ring from a hawker named Philip Solomon at the Devils Kitchen, for which he was committed to three months in Ballarat gaol.⁷³ James Rowett was taken to court by the police in July 1864 for not keeping a lamp burning over his door at the Happy Valley Hotel and was fined one shilling and five shillings costs.⁷⁴

Catherine Ryan was charged with the theft of drapery items from the shop of Anne Handasyde at Piggoreet in October 1867.⁷⁵ Ryan was given the benefit of the doubt after a hawker could not quite remember whether he had sold her the cloth or not, and she was discharged on that count. However, she was then charged with stealing from the shop of George Johnson of Piggoreet on the same day. A witness, widow Margaret Morcombe, living near the Grand Trunk Company's claim at the time, proved that Ryan had given the piece of cloth to her to make into a dress for Morcombe's daughter. Ryan was then

⁷¹ *Ballarat Star*, September 11, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112878761>.

⁷² *Star* (Ballarat), December 22, 1862, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66329702>.

⁷³ *Star* (Ballarat), August 13, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66347250>.

⁷⁴ *Star* (Ballarat), July 30, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66346849>.

⁷⁵ *Ballarat Star*, October 31, 1867, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112871602>.

charged with having stolen a pair of books from Henry Dyson's drapery store at Piggoreet on the same day. The bench discharged Ryan on the first and third charges but committed her to gaol for 14 days on the second charge. Taking into account that Ryan stated that she had a large family, the bench remarked that the sentence was the lightest punishment that could be inflicted.

Despite a number of serious crimes being reported and dealt with in and around Springdallah, the Piggoreet cause books and petty sessions registers show that most transgressions were minor. They included non-payment of board and lodging, unpaid calls being overdue on shares, neglecting to cause children to attend school, contravention of alcohol laws, furious riding, being absent from hired service, using abusive language and payment being due on goods purchased.⁷⁶

Land Selection

Crown land could not be sold at auction until it was surveyed, but in the 1860s large swathes of land in gold mining districts became available for occupancy without purchase. Following on the work of the Victorian Land League, constitutional and land reform was debated and proposals considered. By 1871 Victoria was divided into more than 2,900 parishes, which were then surveyed into allotments. That process, often referred to as "unlocking the land" enabled the government to record the sale and transfer of land from the Crown to selectors.⁷⁷

The Sale of Crown Lands Act 1860, also known as the Nicholson Act, was the first piece of land legislation passed by the Victorian Government.⁷⁸ That act also provided for occupation of Crown land under residence and cultivation licences within mining districts.⁷⁹ This meant that miners could cultivate some crops or graze animals where they lived to provide extra income for their families. In 1860 two gold-miner

⁷⁶ PROV, VA 875 Piggoreet Courts, VPRS 1370/P0, Court of Petty Sessions Cause List Books (1865-1884), Unit 1.

⁷⁷ Cate Elkner, "Putting Colonial Victoria on the Map: The 1862 Land Act and its 'big map'," *Provenance: The Journal of the Public Record Office Victoria* 6 (2007), accessed August 12, 2014. <http://prov.vic.gov.au/publications/provenance/provenance2007/colonial-victoria-on-the-map>; Birrell, *Staking a Claim*, 91.

⁷⁸ Charles Fahey, "Unlocking the Land," *Lands Guide: A Guide to Finding Records of Crown Land at Public Record Office Victoria*, edited by Sebastian Gurciullo and Kasia Zygmuntowicz, 194. Melbourne: Public Record Office Victoria, 2009.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 197.

brothers Thomas and Joseph Milburn took up 20 acres of land under an Occupation Licence (see Figure 36) just north of Happy Valley township, and by the following year had fenced the land.⁸⁰

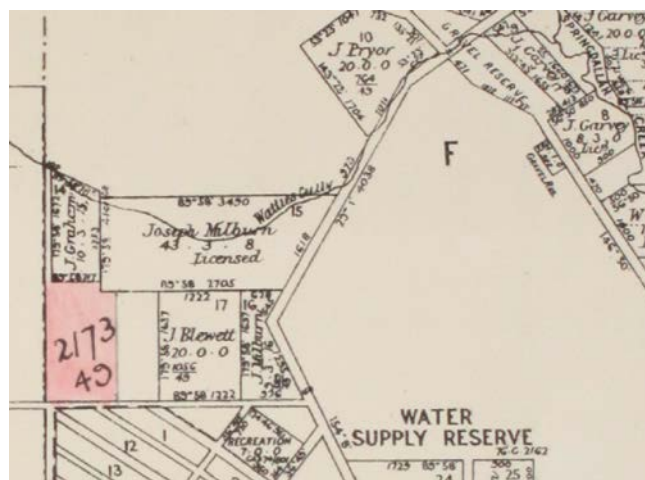


Figure 36. Land held under licence by the Milburn brothers

(Courtesy of Public Record Office Victoria [PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 80, File 2222/49 and 2173/49])

The next land acts, passed in 1862 and 1865, improved the means by which settlers, particularly miners, could hold land under licence on which they could live and make improvements. For most Springdallah mining families, those acts were too early to have an impact on their situation. Joseph Milburn applied in 1867 under the 42nd section of the 1865 Land Act to hold 20 acres under a licence, but this was objected to by the Waverley Gold Mining Company, who claimed that the land was auriferous and they had priority.⁸¹

However, it was the 1869 Act that had a profound influence on the lives of Springdallah residents. It made Crown land, including unsurveyed land, available for selection throughout Victoria. In order to be approved to hold land by licence under the 1869 Land Act, an application form had to be submitted and improvements had to be made before the applicant received a Crown grant of the property. Anyone over 18 years, excluding married women, could select land up to 320 acres for £1 per acre and the cost of survey. The land was held for three years, after which the land could be purchased. Land historian J. M. Powell argued that this was the “Free Selection which the reformers of the fifties had demanded”.⁸²

⁸⁰ PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 77, 2113/49.

⁸¹ PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 80, File 2222/49.

⁸² J.M. Powell, *The Public Lands of Australia Felix: Settlement and land appraisal in Victoria 1834-91 with special reference to the Western plains* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1970), 153.

However, for most of the Springdallah licensees, objections by the Mines Department, due to the land being auriferous, or the Railways Department, due to the possibility of the land being needed for railways, meant the granting of the land was often delayed for years. Janet Low of Happy Valley was the widow of James Low, a 40-year-old miner, who died in a fall of earth in the Nonpariel claim in April 1877.⁸³ She applied in May 1879 to purchase the four-acre allotment in Section H, allotment 9, within the township of Happy Valley, which James had held under licence since 14 May 1870, but her application was refused. Surveyor John Lynch notified the Lands Department that the land had been included in a mining claim and might still be auriferous.⁸⁴ Low had been living there with his wife, Janet, since 1866 in a four-room wooden house. He grew crops there, and their six children were born there between 1866 and 1877. His widow had remarried and moved to the Gisborne area by the time the land was eventually granted on 1 April 1881.

A commission of three men met at the Smythesdale Court House on 29 September 1869.⁸⁵ Mr Lewis represented the Crown Lands Department, Mr H. Morris was the district surveyor, and Mr John Lynch was the government contract surveyor. Their purpose was to investigate applications under the 42nd section of the 1869 Amending Land Act. Applicants provided required information, as a result of which the commission either recommended or refused the applications. Five applicants from the Parish of Clarksdale were present, all of whom had their applications for between 6 and 60 acres recommended. For working miners, the opportunity to take up land cheaply for small mixed farming was a valuable opportunity for them to improve their financial circumstances. However, throwing land open for selection was not universally popular. On 22 July 1871 a meeting of about sixty residents and miners of Happy Valley, Old Lucky Womans and Springdallah was held in an attempt to stop auriferous lands of the district from being selected.⁸⁶ A protection association was formed, made up of prominent mining personalities, and a petition was signed by 100 miners, to be forwarded to the Ballarat Mining Board.

⁸³ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 356, File 328/1877.

⁸⁴ PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 35, file 287/49, 13 May 1879.

⁸⁵ *Ballarat Star*, September 30, 1869, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112854762>.

⁸⁶ *Ballarat Star*, July 28, 1871, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197564641>.

The experience of many families at Springdallah provides evidence of local land acquisition under the land acts that often led to larger property acquisition in the Mallee and Wimmera as the gold at Springdallah gave out and they turned to farming. The parents who had made the great sacrifice of leaving their homelands may not always have reaped the benefits, but they often passed them on to their children, whose economic and social status improved with ownership of farming property and homes when land in the Wimmera, the Mallee and Gippsland became available. Numerous Springdallah families by the second and third generations, as wills and probate records demonstrate, benefited in this way.

Entertainment and Sport

Of the more substantial buildings in the main streets of Piggoreet, Happy Valley and Golden Lake, and along the main roads that networked the three main townships, the hotels are most notable. Hotels were used for meetings of gold mining companies and their shareholders, such as when the Golden Gate and Great Wonder Company met at Fletcher's Lightwood Hotel at Lucky Womans in April 1862.⁸⁷ On all goldfields, including Springdallah, hotels performed an important service for their local mining population. Particularly for single miners, the provision of board and lodging, and the companionship of others, could mean comfort, warmth and friendship along with well-cooked meals and bedding. The experiences of long-term bachelors on the goldfields are not well documented, although Thomas Stoddart, who in later years became a great benefactor to the city of Ballarat,⁸⁸ is known to have lived at Happy Valley and Lucky Womans from at least 1862 until mid 1865, during which time he owned many shares in gold mining companies.⁸⁹ Stoddart remained a bachelor throughout his life, later living in Ballarat, where he made a great success of his life. Hotels were also gathering points for many purposes and helped to reinforce the sense of community and neighbourliness.⁹⁰ On Tuesday 13 December 1864, a Grand Opening Ball and Supper was held at Edward

⁸⁷ *Star* (Ballarat), April 15, 1862, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66323350>.

⁸⁸ *Ballarat Star*, March 27, 1882, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article200668961>; *Ballarat Star*, February 21, 1905, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article210350140>.

⁸⁹ McAdie, *Mining Shareholders Index*. Thomas Stoddart of Happy Valley had 25 shares valued at £10 each in the Great Estate Gold Mining Company at Pitfield on 25 November 1864 and 10 shares valued at £10 each in the Australasian Gold Mining Company at Pitfield Plains on 24 December 1864, among others.

⁹⁰ *Star* (Ballarat), May 12, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66344836>.

Hall's Royal Mail Hotel, Piggoreet, with "dancing to commence at eight o'clock. Tickets to admit lady and gentleman, 5s".⁹¹

The Licensed Victuallers Association developed out of a perceived need by publicans to more effectively protect the interests of their trade.⁹² It was believed that the ease with which licences were granted to nearly every applicant had led to a deterioration in the standing and respectability of the licensed victuallers. It appears that sly grog dealing was damaging to the hotel trade throughout the goldfields. Members of the association included many hotelkeepers from Springdallah, representing hotels at all the commercial centres. They were well represented by their organisation, as shown by the 1862 annual report. It noted several grievances it had raised with the government, and which were now before the Legislative Assembly, such as the requirement that hotelkeepers provide "a lamp over the door where the publican is rated for lighting the street".⁹³ The association also stressed the problem of competition with storekeepers who were "unlicensed vendors of spirits".

Early in 1868, publican Andrew Scott Ward complained to the Grenville Shire Council that beer shops and grog shanties were allowed to have signs and the word "Hotel" painted in the front of their houses, despite the revenue officer being authorised to demand such signboards be removed from all unlicensed houses.⁹⁴ The Springdallah publicans felt obliged to take more direct action in November 1874 when the Shire of Grenville announced that it would increase the cost of hotel licences, in lieu of which the ratepayers would bear the necessary increase in revenue.⁹⁵ Twelve Springdallah hotelkeepers met at Egan's Court Royal Hotel in Piggoreet to form a union to close their houses unless the present cost of licences was reduced to £10, or to decide on some other course of action that would lead to that end.

Often a hotelkeeper was the instigator of public entertainment for local residents, as on the occasion in 1864 at the British Queen Hotel of a dancing match between a famed Irish dancer named J. T. Trembath and a Welsh harper named Llewellyn Thomas,

⁹¹ *Star* (Ballarat), December 10, 1864, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66350365>.

⁹² *Star* (Ballarat), April 2, 1863, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72556004>.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ PROV, VPRS 7232/P2, Unit 1, 398, 23 January 1868.

⁹⁵ *Ballarat Courier*, November 3, 1874, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article191561144>.

who played for both his opponent and himself.⁹⁶ Sometimes a committee was formed to arrange sporting events, particularly those that involved interest and expertise brought with the miners from their native places, such as Cumberland-style wrestling.⁹⁷ Cumberland-style wrestling matches were great attractions on the Springdallah goldfield, judging by advertisements such as that of George Lowe, proprietor of Lowe's Golden Lake Hotel, who offered £25 for the winner of a match held in the Christmas season of 1864. A committee planned a wide programme of other sports for the occasion.⁹⁸ Those sports probably included various leaping virtuosos who performed the standing high leap and running high leap. Two men, G. Tindal and Thomas Coulter, were matched for a standing high leap for £5 at the Mount Erip Hotel, Springdallah, on 4 October 1862.⁹⁹ Other sports included cricket, but when a cricket club was formed at Happy Valley, the 16-acre reserve in allotment 18 of Section F was not a popular site. The cricketers played on ground further to the west. The original site was pegged out and claimed by the mining farmer Joseph Milburn.¹⁰⁰ In June 1860 a horserace was arranged at Happy Valley, to be followed by a grand ball and supper at the Lightwood Hotel, the publican Fletcher matching his horse with a mare from Carngham.¹⁰¹

Welfare and Charity

Historian John Hirst revealed friendly societies to be mutual benefit associations, whose benevolence translated from England to the Victorian goldfields, where they were highly popular for their social activities as well as the services they provided for the sick and needy.¹⁰² Hirst stressed the importance, in the 19th century, of community support organisations such as lodges of Oddfellows, mechanics' institutes, and charities of all

⁹⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), September 13, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66348039>. The umpires decided in favour of the Welshman, who won £10.

⁹⁷ *Carlisle Journal* (Cumbria, England), July 3, 1857, www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk. This article mentions several Weardale wrestlers with surnames that were common at Springdallah, such as Emerson, Featherstone, Lee and Lowe.

⁹⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), November 24, 1864, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66349987>. The Cumberland-style wrestling event was advertised for 23 and 24 December.

⁹⁹ *Star* (Ballarat), September 30, 1862, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66327540>.

¹⁰⁰ PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 80, file 2222/49.18.

¹⁰¹ *Star* (Ballarat), June 28, 1860, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66056705>.

¹⁰² John Hirst, *Sense and Nonsense in Australian History* (Melbourne: Black Inc. Agenda), 2009, 141.

sorts that had committee memberships inclusive of Catholics and Protestants, Irish and Scots.¹⁰³ At Springdallah, the social sharing provided by church or lodge membership demonstrates the support the network of communities provided there.

At Springdallah, it was proposed in 1864 that an orphan asylum be erected in and for the district.¹⁰⁴ A grand fete was held under the patronage of the Oddfellows and Foresters of Linton, Lucky Womans and Piggoreet. A procession of about 200 members of the orders assembled and marched in procession to Peter McKean's paddock, where a programme of sports was conducted for one shilling per adult and sixpence per child. Included in the events were a 400-yards walking match, a running high leap, a standing high leap, vaulting and tilting. There was also football, dancing on the green and on the stage, a brass band and bagpipes, and horseracing, and seven booths helped provide the alcoholic beverages and other refreshments. The orphanage did not eventuate, and orphaned or homeless children from Springdallah were obliged to seek admission at the Ballarat and district orphanage, the first wing of which was opened on the Melbourne road in July 1866.¹⁰⁵ The funds raised at Springdallah were donated to the Ballarat project.

Friendly societies provided financial and social services to individuals in need. As an example, after the death of Thomas L. Thomas, a member of the Ancient Order of Foresters, a fundraising entertainment including a performance by the Happy Valley minstrels was held at the Prince of Wales Hotel.¹⁰⁶ Another instance was when Henry Coe, publican of the Court Royal Hotel at Piggoreet, had his arm amputated after a ginger beer bottle exploded.¹⁰⁷ Three local lodges, the Ancient Order of Foresters, the Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows and the Ancient Order of Oddfellows conducted a complimentary ball and supper at his hotel to raise funds to help recoup the losses Coe had sustained after his accident. If members became sick, they would receive an allowance to help them meet their financial obligations from the sick and funeral fund.¹⁰⁸ The society often had a doctor whom the members could consult for

¹⁰³ Ibid., 14, 303.

¹⁰⁴ *Star* (Ballarat), December 29, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66350816>.

¹⁰⁵ *Australian News for Home Readers* (Melbourne), July 20, 1866, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article63170621>.

¹⁰⁶ *Ballarat Courier*, September 6, 1871, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article191431709>.

¹⁰⁷ *Ballarat Star*, November 11, 1867, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112871883>.

¹⁰⁸ *Ballarat Star*, November 2, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112855709>.

free. The Loyal Prodigal's Return Lodge at Piggoreet advertised for tenders from "legally qualified medical gentlemen willing to supply the members, their wives and families of the above lodge with medical attendance and medicines for the ensuing six months at per member per annum".¹⁰⁹ Dr Thomas Hoskins was reappointed surgeon to the Loyal Cosmopolitan Lodge of Oddfellows at Happy Valley in 1865,¹¹⁰ and Dr Thomas Foster of Piggoreet was elected in 1866 as the lodge surgeon by the Prince Alfred Lodge Independent Order of Oddfellows.¹¹¹

To celebrate its first anniversary in October 1864,¹¹² the Cosmopolitan Lodge, United Independent Order of Oddfellows, attracted 130 members and friends of the order, including about 50 ladies, to the Prince of Wales Hotel at Lucky Womans, where the host, Brother Thomas Aristotle Freeman, displayed a 26-lb Murray cod at the head of the table of "all the delicacies of the season". During speeches, a toast was drunk to Dr Lewis, the medical officer. Dancing followed the speeches after dinner, and the event concluded well after midnight.¹¹³

The Linton and Springdallah District Relief Fund committee was formed at the beginning of 1870 at the Prince of Wales Hotel in Happy Valley, with representatives from Piggoreet, Happy Valley and Linton.¹¹⁴ The fund was to be sustained by fetes, concerts, picnics and other sources of revenue, and applications for assistance were invited. A monster picnic held on 27 December 1869 raised funds towards the establishment of a district relief fund, to be known as the Springdallah and Linton District Fund. The astonishing attendance figure of 1,400 was given, and the event was described as "a gaily-dressed throng of holiday-seekers",¹¹⁵ supported by seven Oddfellows' friendly societies of Piggoreet, Linton and Happy Valley, raising more than £50 for the fund. A procession headed by a drum and fife band started from Coe's Royal Foresters' Hotel at Piggoreet in mid morning, the various Oddfellows marching with their insignia along the road towards and through Happy Valley to the paddock where the sporting events and picnic, with the usual publican's booth, took place.

¹⁰⁹ *Ballarat Star*, July 6, 1865, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112877039>.

¹¹⁰ *Ballarat Star*, October 16, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112879679>.

¹¹¹ *Ballarat Star*, November 28, 1866, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112859710>.

¹¹² *Star* (Ballarat), October 25, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66349144>.

¹¹³ *Star* (Ballarat), October 25, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66349144>.

¹¹⁴ *Ballarat Star*, January 31, 1870, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112858287>.

¹¹⁵ *Ballarat Star*, December 30, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112857326>.

A ball and supper was held in May 1864 to mark the first anniversary of a friendly society called The Court Star of the West¹¹⁶ at Walters' Crown Hotel in Lucky Womans, and it was reported that about 150 ladies and gentlemen were present. Prodigal's Return Lodge of the Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows had a celebratory supper and ball at Piggoreet in November 1865.¹¹⁷ That Lodge had advertised for a "legally qualified Medical Gentleman willing to Supply the Members, their Wives and Families of the above lodge with Medical Attendance and Medicines" four months prior to this event.¹¹⁸ Prince Alfred Lodge of the Independent Order of Oddfellows elected Dr Foster as its lodge surgeon in November 1866.¹¹⁹ The Cosmopolitan Lodge of Oddfellows at Happy Valley held a celebration supper and ball at the Prince of Wales Hotel in October 1869, attended by sixty couples "including the wives, sisters, and sweethearts of the brethren", where it was announced that £300 was the current balance in the "sick and funeral fund".¹²⁰ After the social upheaval of early gold rush years, community support networks emerged as a feature of the developing goldfield settlements into the 1860s, and the friendly societies are a fine example of that mutual community care.

Health

As early as late 1859, a public vaccinator against smallpox had been appointed by the Chief Secretary to the Linton and Lucky Womans goldfields, in the form of Dr John O'Connell, surgeon.¹²¹ Dr Thomas Foster, living at Piggoreet, became the public vaccinator for Springdallah in October 1864.¹²² He held that position for nine years, until he resigned to take up residence and a new practice in Colac.¹²³ Dr Charles Howard Clarkson was then appointed in his place.¹²⁴ Vaccination was made compulsory by law, which was effective, as one report stated that "were it not for the fine to which parents are

¹¹⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), May 12, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66344836>.

¹¹⁷ *Ballarat Star*, November 24, 1865, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112880691>.

¹¹⁸ *Ballarat Star*, July 6, 1865, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112877039>.

¹¹⁹ *Ballarat Star*, November 28, 1866, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112859710>.

¹²⁰ *Ballarat Star*, 2 November 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112855709>.

¹²¹ *Victoria Government Gazette*, November 22, 1859, 2484, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹²² *Victoria Government Gazette*, October 14, 1864, 2293, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹²³ *Colac Herald*, October 6, 1876, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91997531>.

¹²⁴ *Victoria Government Gazette*, October 15, 1875, 1940, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

liable, one-half at least of the children in the colony would be unprotected".¹²⁵ In all, 1,224 young children were vaccinated against smallpox at Springdallah between 1864 and 1880, aged on average from one month to four years, although some were several years older.¹²⁶ Most vaccinations were administered by Dr Thomas Foster and recorded by George Woodhouse, the chemist and deputy registrar of births and deaths at Piggoreet. Figure 37 shows the numbers of children from the Springdallah district and nearby who were vaccinated by Thomas Foster, indicating their places of residence. They total 1152, the remaining children living well beyond Springdallah, and not included in the analysis.¹²⁷

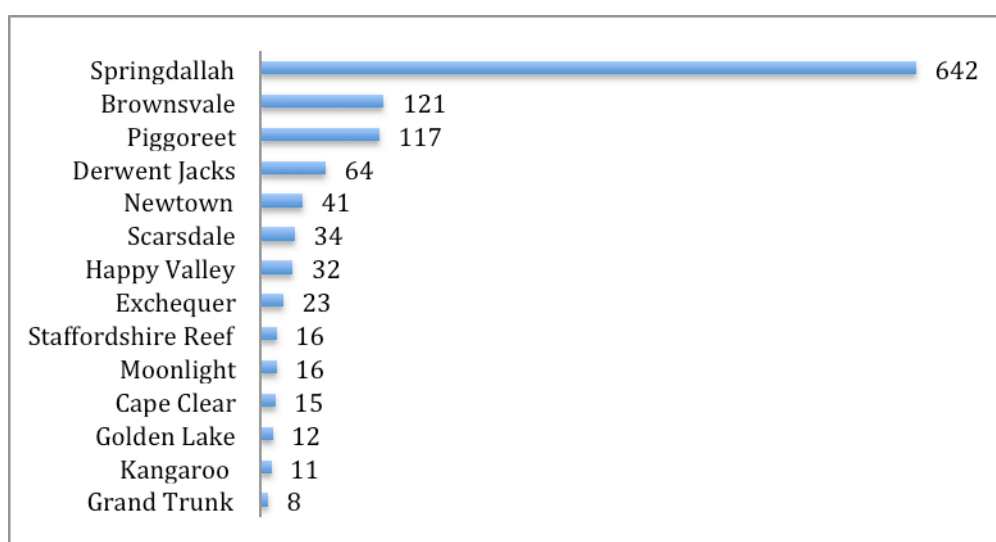


Figure 37. Numbers of children vaccinated at Springdallah against smallpox (1864-1880) by their places of residence

The chances of death in mining accidents were as great as deaths in early childhood. It was a precarious existence on the goldfields. An Accident Relief Fund was established at Happy Valley in October 1865, confined to the British Company, where subscriptions and benefits attached only to the workers in that mine. The existence of this fund indicates that the provision of financial assistance by local friendly societies was possibly inadequate to cover all contingencies. However, recognition was given to the

¹²⁵ *Farmer's Journal and Gardener's Chronicle* (Melbourne), January 8, 1864, 11, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article179479158>.

¹²⁶ Woody Yaloak Historical Society, "Springdallah Vaccination Register (27 April 1864 – 4 July 1879)." Smythesdale, Vic. This is a photocopy of the original (now missing) but previously held at Public Record Office Victoria, Ballarat Archives Centre.

¹²⁷ Note that Kangaroo is the early name for Berringa, north-east of Derwent Jacks. Children not included came from, for instance, Whim Holes near Enfield, Skipton, Haddon, and Horsham.

need for medical aid more generally when the Robin Hood Gold Mining Company shareholders voted in January 1866 to donate £10 to the Ballarat Hospital and a similar amount to the proposed Grenville District Hospital.¹²⁸ About 40 men had attended a meeting at the Piggoreet courthouse on 3 November 1865 to consider the advisability of establishing a district hospital.¹²⁹ A report was presented to the meeting, indicating that nearly 300 clergymen, magistrates, squatters, bank officials, business people, managers and secretaries of mining companies, and others were favourable to its establishment. The concept of a local hospital was approved, and fundraising, including a grant-in-aid of £1,000 was discussed. The fact was raised that miners in the district numbered 5,000, exclusive of women and children, and a provisional committee was formed. John Montgomery, the shire engineer, opposed the idea in favour of giving better financial support to the Ballarat Hospital, but stronger views did not support him. A later meeting appointed a committee to select a site south of David Clarke's home station of Piggoreet West.¹³⁰

In October 1866 the Grenville Hospital committee donated £100 to the Ballarat Hospital. This was following the September meeting at which a letter had been received from Ballarat intimating that funds from the Grenville district had diminished noticeably since the local hospital project had been mooted.¹³¹ The Grenville committee members, after much discussion, agreed that their project had failed, and that an amount of £100 (not including the donation) be invested in two life governorships in the Ballarat District Hospital and £50 in a life governorship in the Geelong Hospital. No more was heard of the idea of establishing a local hospital at Springdallah.

CONCLUSION

Goodman's comparative exploration of the gold rushes of Victoria and California revealed that, in the early years of gold-digging, social commentators expressed fears of what they perceived as radical, irresponsible, greedy and immoral behaviour on the

¹²⁸ *Ballarat Star*, January 16, 1866, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112866551>.

¹²⁹ *Ballarat Star*, November 6, 1865, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112880210>.

¹³⁰ *Ballarat Star*, November 29, 1865, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112880822>.

¹³¹ *Ballarat Star*, October 1, 1866, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112858345>; *Ballarat Star*, September 7, 1866, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112864886>.

goldfields.¹³² Such views were ill-founded, as the years of settlement were to prove, when mining families showed a high degree of responsibility, undertaking long-term employment, valuing education, selecting land, and establishing local libraries and other support groups.

The discussion in this overview included matters that related to the Springdallah goldfield as a whole, equally applicable to the nine settlements that are the focus of this study. The following three sections explore aspects of social and occupational life that are reflected through the specific experiences of the mining families living in three general areas centred around Piggoreet, Happy Valley, and Golden Lake respectively.

¹³² Goodman, *Gold Seeking*, 57. This comparative discussion ranges across chapters entitled “Understanding the Gold Rushes” and “Order”.

Chapter 7: SPRINGDALLAH COMMUNITY NETWORK

7.1: PIGGOREET, GRAND TRUNK, EXCHEQUER

INTRODUCTION

This section of Chapter 7 will reconstruct the community of Piggoreet and its associated settlements of Grand Trunk and Exchequer, named after the two mines around which mining families set up their homes. Early development history of the Piggoreet district will be examined, and case studies of family networks will exemplify the demography of the communities. The growth and success of mining companies, and issues that arose from their functioning will be examined, and institutions and commercial interests will be shown to support the economic growth of the district. Discussion of sporting, entertainment and social activities will demonstrate the concept of community strongly underpinning the functioning of the Piggoreet area.

THE COMMUNITY

The commercial centre that was known first as the Devils Kitchen,¹ then Springdallah, before becoming Piggoreet,² was never officially proclaimed a township. It nevertheless had all the features of a township. About two miles south of the township, Grand Trunk came into existence near a smaller settlement called Exchequer, for which there is evidence at least as early as November 1862.³ Most of the institutions and social facilities at this community were established during the first half of the 1860s, at a time when public buildings and hotels in the main street and surrounds of Piggoreet were important in helping to create a cohesive social environment. Here the residents could meet, share ideas and experiences, and plan for improvements to their developing community.

Mining reports indicate that families were setting up their homes in the vicinity of the Devils Kitchen from about 1859, and a bushfire at the end of December 1862 was reported to have destroyed several houses, tents and bark huts at five places that included

¹ *Star* (Ballarat), November 20, 1863, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72511598>. Ratepayers at the Devils Kitchen prayed that crossings be made over the Springdallah and Woody Yaloak Creeks.

² *Argus* (Melbourne), July 28, 1864, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5751050>.

³ *Star* (Ballarat), November 21, 1862, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66328877>.

both the Devils Kitchen and Happy Valley.⁴ However, it was not until 1864 that the signs of community structure became apparent. A newspaper report in October 1864 stated that a score or two of wooden houses made up a “juvenile township”⁵ just starting into existence. At the same time it was elsewhere described as consisting of about thirty wooden houses and a Church of England.⁶ Thomas Dicker, editor of the *Mining Record*, added a revealing description of the Devils Kitchen at the end of 1864 demonstrating the social and economic development:

Within the last twelve months, chiefly during the latter part of it, quite a large population has sprung up there, and the impetus given of late to mining in the district has had the effect of imparting to that township a business aspect, which goes far towards eclipsing many of its elders in that respect.⁷

The *Wathawurrung* people continued to use their land even after gold mining companies had started operating in the Devils Kitchen, and a large population of miners, many with families, were residing there. When an inquest was held on 23 May 1864 into the death of 26 year old George,⁸ described as the son of King William of the Mount Emu tribe, his brother-in-law gave evidence that George had been at a gathering of Aboriginal people for a corroboree at the Devils Kitchen on 16 May 1864. George went hunting for opossum with a tomahawk and returned with a cut on his forehead, caused when he had cut himself while up a tree. He had not been well for some time, but became ill at the Devils Kitchen with pain in his right shoulder, and died from heart disease when he was being taken home to Carngham. From previous evidence it is clear that the flat through which the creek flowed, surrounded by high cliffs, was crowded with miners and their domestic and industrial buildings, but the *Wathawurrung* people still used the natural amphitheatre for ceremonial purposes.

Hotels, churches, a bank, stores selling groceries, ironmongery, footwear and clothing, and a post office, school and police camp, were all established by the end of 1864. The miners’ homes, many of canvas and bark construction, were supplemented by new wooden cottages. In mid-1864 it was reported that Piggoreet was to be the official

⁴ *Age* (Melbourne), January 2, 1863, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article154970772>.

⁵ *Australasian* (Melbourne), October 8, 1864, 9, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article138035482>.

⁶ *Argus* (Melbourne), September 30, 1864, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5738597>.

⁷ Dicker, *Mining Record*, 3:221, December, 1864.

⁸ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 141, file 1864/392. George was described as living at Carngham, and was married with no children. He died on 22 May 1864.

name of the place previously known as the Devils Kitchen on the Springdallah Creek.⁹ The creek that created the natural phenomenon was the Woody Yaloak, into which its tributary, the Springdallah, flows a mile to the south of the township. George Woodhouse, a chemist, was appointed the Deputy Registrar of Births and Deaths for the District of Springdallah in June 1864.¹⁰ Confusion was created by the use of two names, Piggoreet for the commercial centre and Springdallah for the registration district. It was not until midway through 1885 that the Governor in Council approved of the name of the Registration District of Springdallah being changed to Piggoreet.¹¹

The first allotments surveyed at the Devils Kitchen were sold on 20 July 1864,¹² as shown in Table 8, where the purchaser is named and the occupation given, with the allotment number, and the area of the allotment in acres, roods and perches:

Table 8. Purchasers on 20 July 1864 of first allotments surveyed at Piggoreet

Name	Occupation	Lot	Area
George Woodhouse	Chemist and Deputy Registrar	1	0 ac 1 rd 0 p
John Liddell	Publican, Try Again hotel	2	0 ac 2 rd 1 p
Donald Jamieson	Blacksmith	3	0 ac 1 rd 2 p
Edwin Moon	Mine manager	4	0 ac 1 rd 32 p
Henry Dyson	Draper	7	0 ac 1 rd 15 p
George William Paul	Butcher	8	0 ac 3 rd 20 p
Joseph Gartside	Storekeeper	9	0 ac 1 rd 20 p
Joseph Gartside	Storekeeper	10	0 ac 0 rd 29 p
Samuel Brown	Mining shareholder	11	0 ac 0 rd 32 p
David Murton	Butcher	12	0 ac 0 rd 34 p

The surveyed allotments ranged along either side of the track that became the main street of Piggoreet, as shown by the survey of allotments in Figure 39.

⁹ *Argus* (Melbourne), July 28, 1864, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5751050>.

¹⁰ *Victoria Government Gazette*, June 21, 1864, 1339, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹¹ *Victoria Government Gazette*, July 24, 1885, 2046, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹² PROV, VPRS 3563/P1, Unit 1, Allotments at the Devils Kitchen, 24 June 1864.



Figure 38. First allotments at the Devils Kitchen

(Source: PROV, VPRS 3563/P1, Unit 1, Lithographed 24 June 1864)

The track from the main Ballarat to Pitfield road took a sharp turn where its arrival at a chasm in which the Woody Yaloak Creek flowed forced the miners to head south, over a hill, into the circular cliffs of the Devils Kitchen. In December 1864, the Grenville Shire engineer recommended the formation of four chains of roadway at Piggoreet, the construction of a stone culvert and approaches between the Try Again hotel and the Union bank, and the forming and metalling of the approach to the bridge from the main street to cross the Woody Yaloak Creek to enable access to the track to Happy Valley.¹³ At this time, the roads in the general area of Springdallah were partly constructed and partly the old tracks that had been used since the mid 1850s. According to one report, in January 1865, “beyond Scarsdale, a new metal road is just about being finished as far as the Monkey Gully bridge, beyond which the traveller to Piggoreet and Bulldog must still content himself with the old tracks”.¹⁴

¹³ *Star* (Ballarat), December 22, 1864, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66350657>.

¹⁴ *Ballarat Star*, January 24, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66059628>.

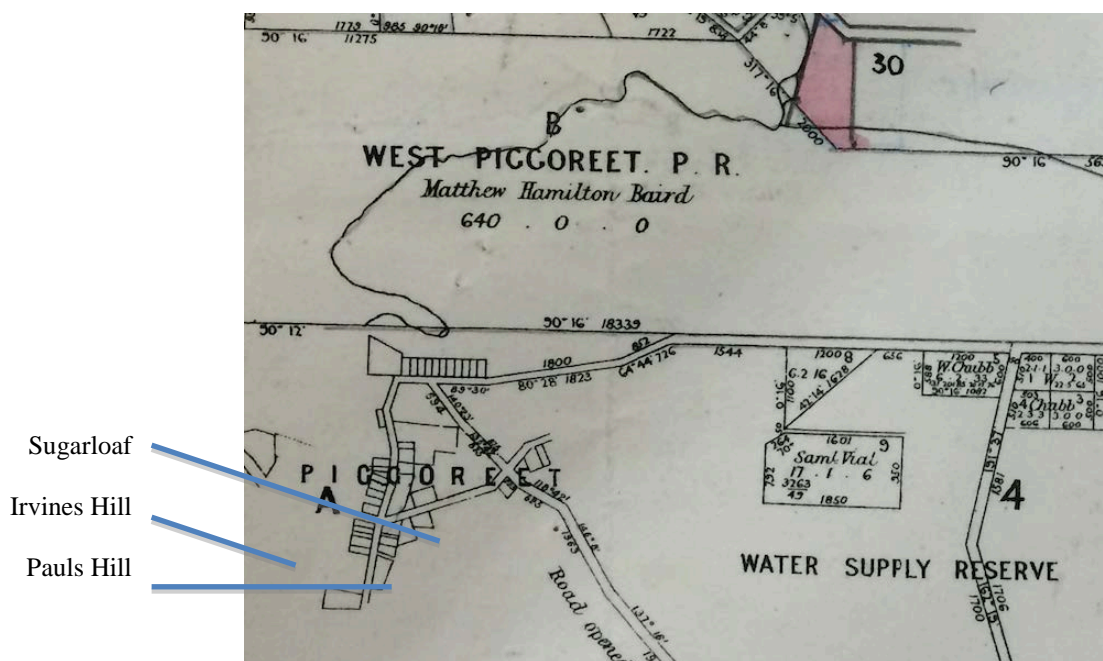


Figure 39. Surveyed allotments south of Piggoreet West pre-emptive run at Piggoreet

(Source: Clarksdale Parish Plan, Land Selection file, PROV, VPRS 439/P0)

Figure 40 shows the road, skirting the southern boundary of the Piggoreet West pre-emptive home station, coming from the east, past William Chubb's Coach and Horses Hotel site on the south-east corner of the intersection that led to Grand Trunk and Pitfield. Opposite a row of surveyed allotments on the north side of the incoming road, where chemist George Woodhouse lived, is a road running south-east towards Derwent Jacks. It turns sharply southwards at Reid's Point, where Robert Reid had an orchard in the 1860s and the Clementson family later lived and built their home. The main street of Piggoreet then travels over Irvines Hill and on to Pauls Hill where the police camp was situated, with the police station, court house and lockup, and the Church of England.¹⁵ A road runs from the main street towards the back road along the north side of Sugarloaf Hill. By February 1864 Matthew Veal's line of coaches travelled along those roads to and from Ballarat via the Devils Kitchen twice daily at 7.15am and 1.30pm.¹⁶ At the same time Henry Wrathall advertised his Smythesdale line of four-horse coaches that travelled through Piggoreet daily, stopping at Liddell's Try Again Hotel.¹⁷

¹⁵ *Victoria Police Gazette*, January 4, 1866, 7. The police station was still listed in 1893.

¹⁶ *Ballarat Star*, January 28, 1865, 1, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72513395>.

¹⁷ *Ballarat Star*, February 3, 1865, 1, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112884507>.

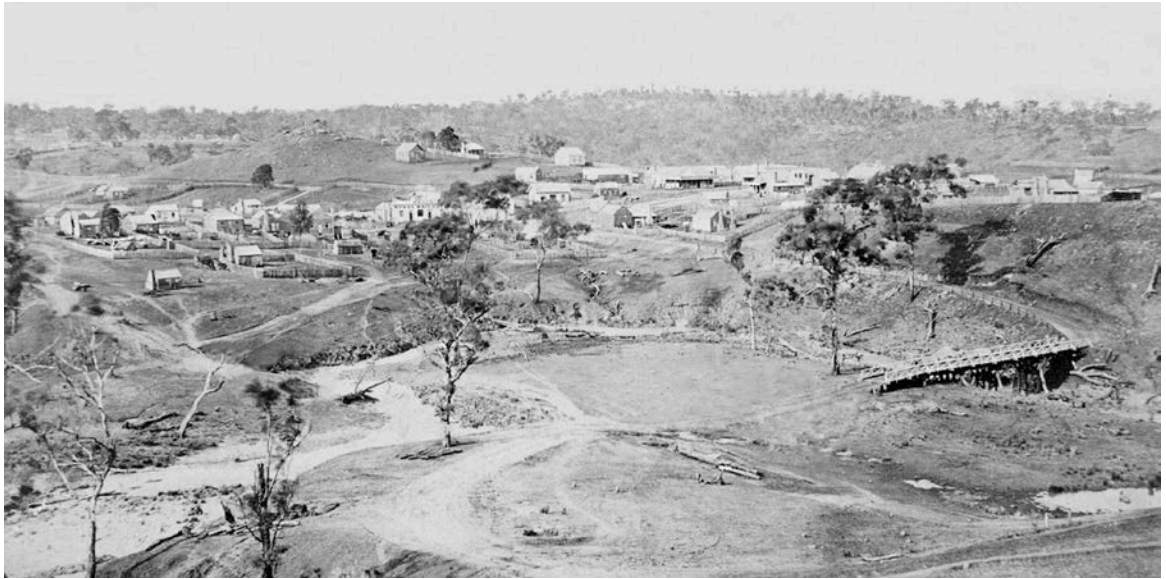


Figure 40. Piggoreet in 1866 showing the bridge across the Woody Yaloak Creek

(Photograph courtesy State Library Victoria)

The 1866 view of Piggoreet shown in Figure 41 has been taken from the high ground where Dr Thomas Foster lived, overlooking the township eastwards, with Irvines Hill to the south, leading into the Devils Kitchen. Ashton Gartside's general store was opposite Henry Coe's Court Royal Hotel on Irvines Hill. The photograph shows three hotels along the main street, the small wooden school and Wesleyan church on Sugarloaf, Japp and Johannson's property at the junction of the road to Happy Valley that crossed the bridge over the Woody Yaloak Creek

A branch of the Union Bank was managed by 20 year old Henry Curwen Walker at Piggoreet from October 1864,¹⁸ when Francis Stephenson, manager of the Atlas Gold Mining Company, advertised a call of 15/- on shares.¹⁹ Stephenson was so appreciated by the Atlas Company that the shareholders gave a testimonial dinner on his behalf in September 1869.²⁰ A small party working in a tunnel at the Devils Kitchen, called The Band of Hope Company, was reported to have sold 6 oz 19 dwt of gold at the Union Bank in Piggoreet in early August 1865,²¹ but the branch appears to have closed early in 1867.

¹⁸ *Argus* (Melbourne), June 8, 1909, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article10697417>. Henry Curwen Walker born 1844 Tasmania. BMD, *Edwardian Index*, Reg. 4303, Henry Curwen Walker, died 1909 in Ballarat.

¹⁹ *Star* (Ballarat), October 8, 1864, 3. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66348685>.

²⁰ *Ballarat Star*, September 7, 1869, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112854205>.

²¹ *Ballarat Star*, August 14, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112877973>.

A strong community leader and local roads board member, David Clarke, presided over a public meeting in February 1864 to plan the establishment of a post office at the Devils Kitchen.²² By the end of July that year mail was being conveyed to and from Piggoreet, when Matthew Veal of Smythesdale was contracted for the six months from 1 July 1864 at the rate of £14/10/- for the period.²³ The Springdallah Post Office was opened on 1 July 1864 at Henry Dyson's store at the base of Sugarloaf Hill near the school, as a Post Office Savings Bank, with Dyson as first postmaster.²⁴ It became a telegraph office from March 1875.²⁵ Mails were received and despatched three times each week. Dyson was followed by Francis Blythman from 1874 until 1876 when Emily Blythman became postmistress until 1882.²⁶

The second sale of allotments in the main street took place on 10 March 1871, when properties in Section A were purchased, as shown in Table 9.²⁷

Table 9. Purchasers on 10 March 1871 of allotments surveyed at Piggoreet

Name	Occupation	Lot	Area	Value
Asmus Japp	Carpenter/undertaker	14	0 ac 1 rd 5.7 p	£110
Seth Sharp	Publican/coachman	15	0 ac 1 rd 0 p	£100
James Healy	Bootmaker	33	0 ac 1 rd 19.1 p	£35
Edward Hall	Publican	36	0 ac 36 rd .8 p	£400
William Pattinson	Storekeeper	19A	0 ac 0 rd 20 p	£90

The 1871 census revealed that there were 78 homes in Piggoreet, accommodating 278 males and 234 females, a total of 512 inhabitants.²⁸ A decade of the deep lead mining industry had by this time brought Piggoreet to its most stable period as a community.

David Murton, the butcher who owned allotment 12, in March 1869 was refused the application to Council by him and his brother James Wilson Murton for a slaughtering

²² *Star* (Ballarat), February 13, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72513601>.

²³ *Argus*, July 27, 1864, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5750992>.

²⁴ *Star* (Ballarat), June 20, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66345824>.

²⁵ Victoria. Post Office and Telegraph Department, and George David Langridge, *Report Upon the Affairs of the Post Office and Telegraph Department for the Year 1880* (Melbourne: Robt S. Brain, Government Printer, 1881), 48.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ballarat Star*, March 11, 1871, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197561096>.

²⁸ Watson, *Lost Towns of Colonial Victoria*, 361.

license “at their premises in the township of Piggoreet”.²⁹ In March 1871 eleven ratepayers at Piggoreet presented a petition against the issuing of a slaughtering licence within the township, but the Murtons produced an alternative petition signed by 49 persons in favour of the licence being granted.³⁰ After councillors discussed the objections to a “stinkpot under their nose”,³¹ a motion that no licence be granted was carried. Common sense prevailed against a potentially offensive smell.



Figure 41. GoogleEarth image of Piggoreet - Devils Kitchen at left of Pauls Hill escarpment

(Source: GoogleEarth image 2 February 2014)

In Figure 41, the Woody Yaloak Creek can be seen curving around the west side of the Piggoreet township site, where the sharp and perpendicular cliff can be discerned at the western edge of the the bare high flat that was Pauls Hill. This was the site of the police camp and Church of England, south of the main street.

RESIDENTS

In Chapter 5 it was demonstrated that large numbers of single young men and women were marrying in Melbourne, Geelong, Ballarat and on the Woody Yaloak goldfields during the early 1860s, as well as at Springdallah. Many settled at Piggoreet and began raising their families, with kinship networks interlinked across generations.

²⁹ PROV, VPRS 7232/P2, Unit 1:511, March 11, 1869.

³⁰ *Ballarat Star*, March 11, 1871, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197561096>.

³¹ *ibid.*

The following family network studies were selected as examples of particular demographic groups, and to demonstrate how the Piggoreet community benefitted from the skills the immigrants brought with them.

English

One grandmother, Jane Forth, who signed as the informant on her grandson Thomas Gardener Beecroft's birth on 26 December 1865, brought eleven family members across three generations to Piggoreet.³² Born in 1811 in Rainton, Durham, she was married when only sixteen, and lost both her father and her brother in coal-mining accidents.³³ She was widowed with five children by 1841, the same year that she remarried to Eli Forth, a coal miner from Moorsley near Hetton-le-Hole in Durham. She then had four more children before emigrating in 1862. By December 1863 the family had settled at Piggoreet, when Eli signed a petition for the school to be built, stating that they lived half a mile from the proposed school site. Jane's grand-daughter Catherine Brown was born there on 12 December 1863, the seventh birth recorded in the Springdallah register,³⁴ and Jane assisted at the birth of her grandson Thomas Beecroft on Boxing Day, 1865. At least four of her married children came with Jane and Eli to Piggoreet, each with families already established, which they then extended. John Nixon Brown, whose brother married Jane Forth's daughter Jane Gardener, was an engineer; John Beecroft, who married another daughter Mary Gardener, was a stoker, and all the men in the family had mining experience from the Durham coalfields. Jane herself was midwife to a number of women who gave birth in Piggoreet. As the Piggoreet gold mines were worked out, Jane Forth's family joined a network of Springdallah mining families that moved to the Wallsend area of Newcastle in New South Wales, where a large coal mine provided on-going employment.³⁵

³² PROV, VPRS 7666, B/207:4, *Elizabeth Ann Bright*, September 23, 1862 from Liverpool. The Forth family are incorrectly transcribed as North; the Peel family as Pell.

³³ *Newcastle Courant* (Newcastle upon Tyne), November 4, 1826, death in High Downs Pit near Hetton Colliery of Thomas Harland, 42 years; Durham Mining Museum, www.dmm.org.uk/collier/e001.htm, January 28, 1836, death in Downs Pit, Eppleton Colliery, Hetton of Robinson Harland, 23 years; Durham Mining Museum, "In Memoriam Robinson Harland," accessed July 12, 2015. <http://www.dmm.org.uk/individ0/i01086.htm>.

³⁴ Catherine Brown was the daughter of Jane Gardener who married Robert Nixon Brown.

³⁵ This was the Newcastle-Wallsend Coal Company (1861-1934). Jane Forth died at Wallsend in 1892 (Reg. 13153).

Another kinship group, from the Alston Moors in Cumberland (now Cumbria), were connected through three sisters, Ann, Mary and Margaret Woodmass who arrived one by one over several years and established their families at Piggoreet. Margaret had married Robert Hodgson, a Cumberland lead miner, at Gretna Green in Scotland,³⁶ before emigrating in 1856, and they had ten children, four of whom died in childhood. Robert aged 11 and Martin aged 9 drowned together in the long swimming hole in the Woody Yaloak Creek near the Golden Horn mine on 21 December 1867.³⁷ Robert Hodgson was a director of the Atlas Gold Mining Company in the 1860s, and was a member of the jury at an inquiry held on 12 July 1867 after an attempt was made to burn down the Royal Mail Hotel owned by Edward and Maria Hall at Piggoreet. Margaret's sister Ann Woodmass arrived in Melbourne on the *Great Britain* in April 1863, aged 28 years. She married John Lee before they settled with Margaret and Robert Hodgson at Piggoreet, where they had six children over the next decade, before moving to Pleasant Creek (Stawell). The third and youngest sister was Mary Woodmass who took the father of her first child, Annie Louisa Woodmass, to court in an affiliation case.³⁸ William Armstrong would have been requested to sign a legal document declaring that he was the father of the child, but the case was withdrawn. The problems between this couple seemed settled by 1871 when they married and eventually also settled at Stawell with their growing family.³⁹

Irish

About one in every five fathers of children registered at Piggoreet between 1863 and 1883 was Irish. 64% stated they were miners, while 9% gave their occupation as farmer. The remainder were mostly hotelkeepers, labourers or carters, and many had two occupations at the same time. Mining reports help explain men working in mixed occupations when sometimes for many months companies were not able to employ miners due to flooding.⁴⁰

An Irish brother and sister whose surname is variously spelt in the records as McKeogh, Keogh, Keough and Kough, arrived in Victoria before 1858, the year that

³⁶ Gretna Green became famous as a village just over the Scottish border where "irregular marriages" could be performed, often by the incumbent blacksmith, from about 1754 until 1939.

³⁷ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 198, 1054/1867.

³⁸ *Ballarat Star*, September 7, 1865, 4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112878621>.

³⁹ BMD, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 1482. William Armstrong married Mary Woodmass in 1871.

⁴⁰ *Argus* (Melbourne), July 15, 1869, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5824070>.

Bridget McKeogh married John Shelton.⁴¹ Patrick, a son of Bridget and John Shelton, married Eliza Taylor, the daughter of a Springdallah couple who had married in Ballarat in 1856.⁴² Robert Taylor and his wife Mary Hayes had twelve children, ten of whose births were registered at Springdallah. Two of the Taylor daughters married two Shelton sons, Eliza marrying Patrick Shelton at Smythesdale in 1887, and Ann Taylor marrying James Shelton four years later. Mary Hayes, wife of Robert Taylor, had two brothers, Michael and James. Michael Hayes married Mary Carmody in 1868 and had a family of six children, all born at Springdallah.⁴³

The limited income to be earned from goldmining at Springdallah as the mines were worked out is demonstrated by the fact that Michael Hayes and other local men were obliged to find work in the Creswick mines, 30 miles north of Springdallah, by the early 1880s. Several local Springdallah men, including Michael Hayes, drowned in the Australasian mine disaster at Glendonald near Creswick when 22 men lost their lives in December 1882.⁴⁴ Also among the dead were the Bellingham brothers from Happy Valley, and James Carmody, the brother of Mary Hayes (nee Carmody) of Springdallah. Michael Hayes' brother James Hayes married Catherine Theresa Shelton, a distant relative to Patrick Shelton, already discussed, in 1870 in Ballarat.⁴⁵ They had twin daughters at Springdallah the following year. Catherine Hayes (nee Shelton) had two brothers and a sister living on the Victorian goldfields. Her sister Mary Shelton in 1867 married Timothy McKeogh, the brother of Bridget, already discussed,⁴⁶ and they had six children, all born at Springdallah. David Hickey, a shoemaker from Ennis in County Clare married Catherine Brennay in 1859 in Ballarat,⁴⁷ where their first three children were born, the remaining five later born at Springdallah where they were close neighbours of the Hayes and Taylor families. Hanora Hayes married Patrick Hickey in 1870,⁴⁸ their first four children registered as born at Springdallah, before they moved to

⁴¹ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, 1858:2924, John Shelton married Bridget McKeogh.

⁴² BDM, *Pioneers Index*, 1856:1413, Robert Taylor married Mary Hayes.

⁴³ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, 1868:2834, Michael Hayes married Mary Carmody.

⁴⁴ *Age* (Melbourne), January 10, 1883, 6. This report listed the names and ages of all the widows and children of the deceased miners.

⁴⁵ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, 1870:2768, James Hayes married Catherine Shelton.

⁴⁶ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, 1867:431, Timothy McKeough (sic) married Mary Shelton.

⁴⁷ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, 1859:447, David Hickey married Catherine Brennan (sic).

⁴⁸ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, 1870:2790, Patrick Hickey married Hanora Hayes.

Birregurra in the late 1870s to take up land. In all birth registrations the place of origin of the parents of these families is County Clare.⁴⁹

A mine manager who was a significant community leader in the district was John Henry Webb. Webb, an Irishman from Skibbereen near Kinsale in County Cork, who arrived in Australia in 1852 with his brother Henry, was father of sixteen children from two marriages. All his children were born at Springdallah, and he died at his home there. He was not only both legal and general manager of the Grand Trunk Gold Mining Company for decades, but took a leading role in the development of educational facilities in Piggoreet and district. Webb held shares in the Alchymist, Alpha, Cape Clear, Exchequer, Lallah Rookh and Main Lead Consols gold mining companies between 1863 and 1872.⁵⁰ When Webb's wife Emily went into labour only seven months into her pregnancy in July 1882, she was assisted by local neighbouring women, Catherine Thompson, Ellen Hewitt, and Maria Burke who came immediately to help her when Emily's 11 year old daughter Ada sought their help.⁵¹ That community support was commonplace.

Swiss Italian

Families by the name of Campigli, Quanchi, La Franchi, Cerini and Perinoni demonstrated the long-term Swiss Italian presence at Piggoreet. The manager and shareholders of the Happy-Go-Lucky Gold Mining Company of Piggoreet, when their company was registered on 4 January 1865, were Stefano Bolla, Guiseppe Cerini, Guiseppe Danchi, Andrea Danchi, Adami Giovani, Guiseppe Jemini, Antonio Laloli and Gioganni Pozzi. When 44 year old Guiseppe Jemini died in a cave-in in their tunnel in the Devils Kitchen on 16 April 1866,⁵² his friend Alexander Quanchi, whose family had a long association with Piggoreet, stated that Guiseppe was born in the Brugiasco valley in Switzerland and that he had lived in Victoria since 1854, leaving a wife and eight children in the Swiss Canton of Ticino.

The Campigli men came from Vallemaggia in Ticino. Giacomo Luigi Campigli, known as Louis, whose grandmother was a Quanchi, married an Australian girl from

⁴⁹ Database compiled by this author from birth registrations at Springdallah 1863-1883.

⁵⁰ McAdie, *Shareholders CD*.

⁵¹ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 440, 1882/752, inquest held 31 July 1882 re William Webb.

⁵² PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 173, File 1866/353.

Many mining families lived on the high, flat promontory on the western side of the Devils Kitchen, known as the Tableland, as shown in Figure 42, a sketch from memory of the period 1867 to 1872, created by an unnamed past resident of Piggoreet.

Robert Reid was an Irish miner from Londonderry, who married Scottish Helen Reid in Edinburgh in 1851, before emigrating and settling at Piggoreet, where two children were born, and where he cultivated an orchard on the land that was later granted freehold to the Clementson family.⁵⁶ He was a prize-medal winning judge at the 1865 Carngham Floral and Horticultural Society show, the 1865 Grenville Horticultural Society show, and the 1866 Carngham Horticultural Society show.⁵⁷ The shows demonstrated the wide range of fruit, vegetables, pot plants and cut flowers that local residents were already producing to a high standard. Vegetables included cabbages, cauliflowers, carrots, horse-radish, turnips, onions, kidney potatoes, round potatoes, lettuces, peas and beans.⁵⁸ Reid was one of the 17 shareholders in the Try Again mining company in September 1864.⁵⁹

Edwin Moon, manager of the Archer mine in the 1860s, lived on the south-east corner of the Sugarloaf Hill road, with his wife Clara Ann and their first three children, born at Piggoreet up to 1870.⁶⁰ Asmus Japp who was in business as a carpenter and undertaker with John Johansson had his home and shop on the south-west corner of the turn to Happy Valley. Asmus and Catherine Japp were both born in Holstein, Germany but were married in Melbourne in 1864.⁶¹ Their seven children were all born at Springallah between 1865 and 1876, and three of them died there. Maria Elizabeth Japp died aged 10 days on 25 February 1866 from congestion of the brain; Johann Peter Nicholas Japp aged 2 years and six months died from injuries when he fell on a broken yeast bottle on 13 February 1869, and Louisa Magdalena Japp died aged eight months from whooping cough on 27 March 1873.

⁵⁶ Parish of Clarkesdale, Piggoreet allotments, Section A, Lot 47U, M. Clementson.

⁵⁷ *Ballarat Star*, November 24, 1865, 2S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112880723>; 14 March 1866, 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112868031>; 29 November 1865, 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112880837>.

⁵⁸ *Ballarat Star*, December 3, 1869, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112856600>.

⁵⁹ *Star* (Ballarat), September 17, 1864, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66348122>.

⁶⁰ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg.18764, Edwin Arthur Moon, born 1865 at Springdallah; Reg. 24770, Alice Moon, born 1867 at Springdallah; Reg. 26447, Ellen Moon, born 1870 at Springdallah.

⁶¹ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, 1864:3376, Asmus Japp married Catharina Prinz.

MINING

Ten mining companies were established within easy walking distance of Piggoreet in the early 1860s, including the Try Again, which was the earliest deep lead alluvial company to start work in the Devils Kitchen, in September 1859. Initially they drove a tunnel into the cliffs beneath the Tableland eastwards from the Springdallah Creek, alongside another tunnel being dug by a party of Italians. When Guiseppe Jemini died in 1866,⁶² James Kensington Davies gave evidence that more than fifteen tons of boulders of cement had fallen across Guiseppe's legs when he was working in an unsupported side cutting. Figure 43 illustrates the tunnels.



Figure 43. Adits and tunnels in the cliffs of the Devils Kitchen

(Photograph courtesy of Dean Anthony)

Despite the infancy of the settlement, it was reported in October 1864 that 23 mining companies around Piggoreet were working 28 engines, and with their paid-up capital of £115,000 they employed 760 men.⁶³ Poor returns by the Try Again mine meant the tunnel was abandoned after 16 months.⁶⁴ The Company then leased just over 49 acres from the Crown on 21 March 1861 within the Devils Kitchen, at a rental of £122/18/- a year for 20

⁶² PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 173, File 1866/353.

⁶³ *Argus* (Melbourne), September 30, 1864, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5738597>.

⁶⁴ Supple, *Historic Gold Mining Sites*, 152.

years,⁶⁵ and sank a shaft at the extremity of their claim to avoid 150 ft of basalt rock. In March 1863 it was reported that nearly £135 per week was being gained by the Try Again company in “as rich dirt as ever was known hitherto”.⁶⁶ The average weekly yields of gold from the Try Again mine during the six months from the end of 1863 to June 1864 were 117 oz per week.⁶⁷ A dividend of £24 per man was paid in the fortnight ending 21 April 1864.

William Maughan was mining manager of the Try Again during this period,⁶⁸ when he earned £4/10/- per week.⁶⁹ The mine force he managed included an underground manager, three sluicemen, and a blacksmith each earning £3/10/-; two machinememen, two chambermen and two bracemen who worked twelve hour shifts for £3/-; three engine drivers who each received a weekly wage of £2/10/-, as did the assistant blacksmith and the carpenter; and three boys employed for £1/10/- to drive the horses. Then there were the 33 miners who were paid £2/10/- per week, making a total strength of 50 men and three boys. This was a large workforce for a successful mine, a view of which is shown in Figure 44. According to Smyth, the Try Again company had gained 1357 lbs of gold by 1869 when his book was published.⁷⁰ Maughan was so well regarded that he was presented with a gold hunting watch and chain at a dinner at the Try Again Hotel in January 1868.⁷¹

⁶⁵ Dicker, *Mining Record*, June 1863, 2:145; December 1865, 5C:306.

⁶⁶ *Geelong Advertiser*, March 2, 1863, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article148906443>.

⁶⁷ *Star* (Ballarat), December 24, 1863, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72512416>; April 21, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66344362>; June 15, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66345701>.

⁶⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), March 1, 1864, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72513952>.

⁶⁹ Dicker, *Mining Record*, December 1864, 3:224.

⁷⁰ Smyth, *Goldfields and Mineral Districts*, 188.

⁷¹ *Star* (Ballarat), January 13, 1868, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113600384>.



Figure 44. The Try Again mine in the Devils Kitchen in the 1860s

(Courtesy of the late Max Standish, private collection)

By October 1865 it was necessary to erect a third puddling machine, at a cost of £220/10/-.⁷² In June 1866 the miners found a good run of gold alongside a sand bank in a bend of the gutter, and when they began to block back from the bend they discovered the junction between the (north-south) Smythe's Creek lead and the Happy Valley (east-west) leads, as shown in Figure 45.⁷³

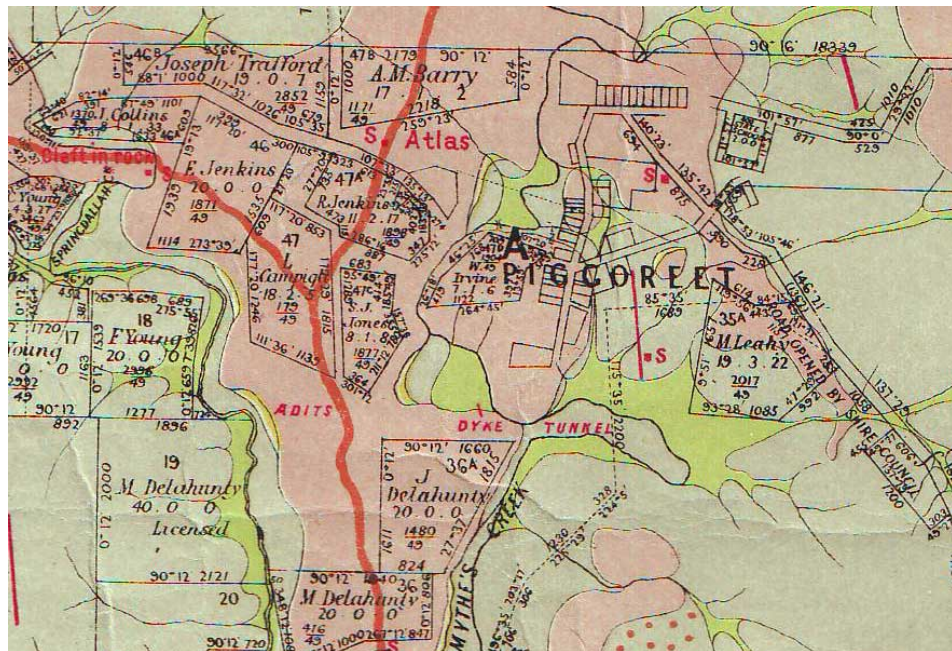


Figure 45. Mining and natural features in the Piggoreet district

(Adapted from Department of Crown Lands and Survey, Melbourne)

After extensive works to access that junction, 2000 ft from their shaft, they made a siding so that horses could be got close to the workings. The company paid £3,960 in

⁷² Dicker, *The Mining Record*, 17 October 1865, 229.

⁷³ Dicker, *The Mining Record*, 30 June 1866, 51.

dividends in the October quarter of 1867.⁷⁴ The Try Again was reported as having produced approximately 1880 lbs of gold between 1860 and 1873, the year when mining ceased at Piggoreet.⁷⁵

Shareholders in these mining companies included many familiar Piggoreet names, showing that it was relatively common for miners to purchase shares in local mines. Many gave their occupation in various records simply as ‘miner’. There is no hint of agitation or mob behaviour at any period at Piggoreet, unlike the southern New South Wales mining district where “there was widespread dissatisfaction with the level of earnings at a time when the companies were still seen as very profitable”.⁷⁶ At Piggoreet, many were sharing in those very profits, earning £2/10/- per week during this boom period when subsistence wages were defined as about 12s 6d a week.⁷⁷ Given that the mining companies employed well over 70% of local residents, whether as miners, carters, blacksmiths, stokers, carpenters or engineers, it is clear that the success of the gold mining industry was imperative to the families of Piggoreet in the 1860s. Provision of services for carters, including water carters from the reservoir half a mile to the south-east of the township, the several hotels which provided board and/or lodging to many of the bachelor miners, and work for splitters and carters of wood to the mines, clearly establishes the interdependency of mining companies and townspeople.

The percentages of occupations given by parents registering their children to attend Piggoreet School no. 726 between 1863 and 1869 are shown in Figure 46.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ *Argus* (Melbourne), October, 11, 1867, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5780328>.

⁷⁵ Robertson, *History of Piggoreet*, 10.

⁷⁶ McGowan, “Class, Hegemony and Localism”, 93-113.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 106.

⁷⁸ Ballarat Historical Society, “Piggoreet Common School No. 726 Register, 1863-1866.” Gold Museum Collection, Sovereign Hill, Ballarat, Vic.

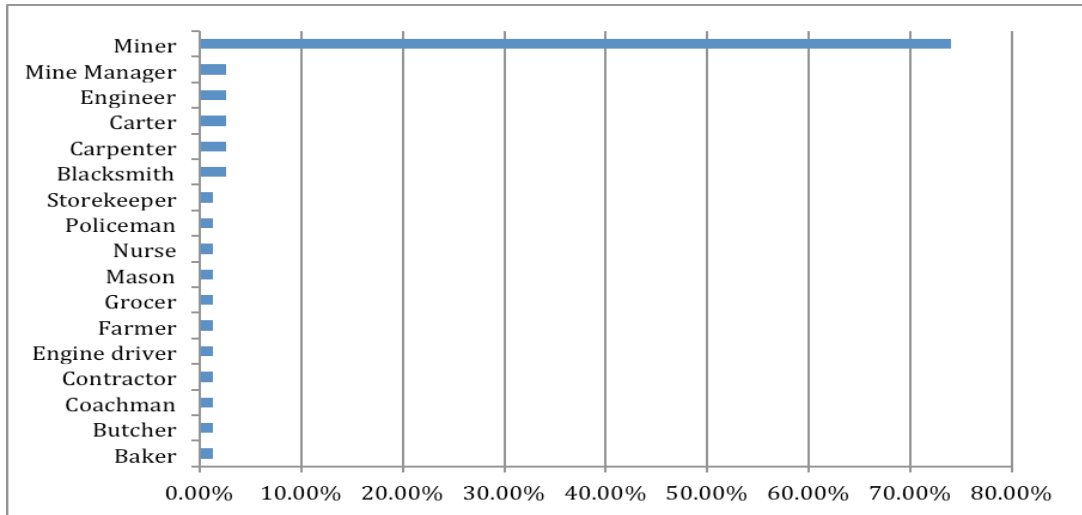


Figure 46. Percentage of Piggoreet occupations 1863-1869 per school registrations

The Piggoreet community was clearly reliant on mining, with 74% of occupations given as miner, increasing to 83% when the associated occupations of mine manager, engineer and engine driver, and blacksmith are included. The remaining occupations provided services such as coach driving, policing, nursing, selling commodities and so forth, which would have been necessary to the domestic lives of the mining families of Piggoreet.

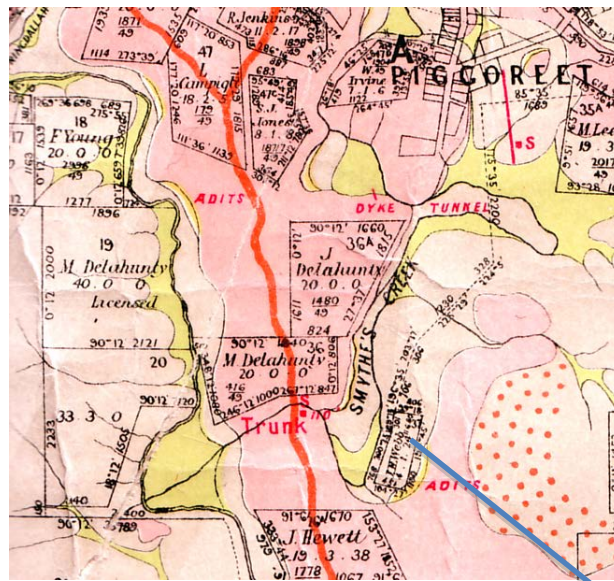


Figure 47. Grand Trunk mine on the Trunk Lead at Woodyaloak creek

(Adapted from Department of Crown Lands and Survey, Melbourne)

Webb home

The lease for the Grand Trunk Gold Mining Company just south of the Devils Kitchen was taken up at the end of December 1860, and although plagued by problems of flooding proved to be the richest mine on the main lead running north-south from the township. It was immediately north of the Exchequer mine, near the junction of the Springdallah and Woody Yaloak (Smythe's) Creeks. The shaft is on the north-south deep

lead (red) close to the 4 acre allotment and weatherboard residence of John Henry Webb, legal manager of the Grand Trunk Gold Mining Company, shown in Figure 47.

The Grand Trunk in June 1865 was yielding richly, regularly paying £20 per original share per fortnight. Its richness and its extent made it one of the best prospects in the Ballarat district. In its first five years it produced 915 lbs of gold.⁷⁹



Figure 48. The Grand Trunk mine in the 1860s looking south
(Courtesy of Ballarat Historical Society)

Problems with water flooding “driving the miners out of their shafts”,⁸⁰ were ongoing throughout the life of the Grand Trunk mine, shown in Figure 48. The north-south lead from Brownsvale to Pitfield was affected once the Galatea tapped a natural reservoir in the basalt, and claims lower down the lead experienced water percolating into their shafts.⁸¹ As long as the Great Extended/Galatea continued to pump, the drainage was relatively slight and manageable, but when the pumps were stopped a plan was needed. Co-operation by five companies took the form of subsidising the Galatea to an amount of £500 for eight weeks’ pumping, then £350 for a further eight weeks, thereby assisting in unwatering the lead.

The Exchequer Gold Mining Company was reported to have held £12,000 in 2000 shares of £6 each, all of which had been issued.⁸² In May 1866 two cast-iron puddling

⁷⁹ Supple, “Historic Gold Mining Sites”, 173.

⁸⁰ Dicker, *Mining Record*, February 26, 1867, 120.

⁸¹ Dicker, *Mining Record*, February 26, 1867, 120.

⁸² Dicker, *Mining Record*, November 7, 1865, 305.

machines were purchased from Martin's foundry in Scarsdale for £370, when it was stated that the Exchequer shaft would be sunk to 310 ft.⁸³ In April 1867 at the quarterly meeting 10 shareholders were present, representing 860 shares.⁸⁴ The claim and plant of the Exchequer Gold Mining Company were sold by auction in January 1868 to the Grand Trunk Company for £3922.⁸⁵

INSTITUTIONS

Local residents were active in furthering the interests of their community. They alerted authorities of the need to gain and improve educational amenities, and appear as committee members, supporting and organising petitions, organising fund-raising events,, and furthering acquisition of institutions to provide education for their children and themselves, through day and night school, and a mechanics' institute.

A petition signed by 27 parents of 48 children of school attendance age was submitted to the Board of Education in mid 1863, requesting support for the establishment of a school at Piggoreet.⁸⁶ The families lived within two miles of the proposed site of the school, 21 (78%) of them within half a mile. Of the signatories, eleven families were Wesleyan, eight were Anglican, seven were Presbyterian and one was Catholic. When Piggoreet Common School No. 726 opened in August 1863 with 66 children enrolled, Benjamin Scott was the head teacher,⁸⁷ apparently financially supported by the attending families at this time. The first enrolment was that of 9 year old John Delahunty, son of miner Michael and Jane Delahunty of Grand Trunk.⁸⁸ The Board of Education for Victoria advertised that it had received an application from a new school in the Piggoreet locality, and intended to grant aid from August 1864.⁸⁹ A school site was

⁸³ *Ballarat Star*, May 30, 1866, 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112862545>.

⁸⁴ Dicker, *Mining Record*, April 27, 1867, 196.

⁸⁵ *Ballarat Star*, January 10, 1868, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113600313>.

⁸⁶ PROV, VPRS 795/P0, Unit 290, 726.

⁸⁷ L.J. Blake, General Editor, *Vision and Realisation: A Centenary History of State Education in Victoria*, vol. 2 (Victoria: Education Department of Victoria, 1973), 679.

⁸⁸ Ballarat Historical Society, *Piggoreet Register No. 726, 1863-1878*. This local family name is often spelt Delahenty as well as Delahunty.

⁸⁹ *Star*, July 21, 1864, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66346602>.

temporarily reserved at Piggoreet in January 1867, on allotment 45 of Section A on the side of Sugarloaf Hill,⁹⁰ where the school had already been built.

In 1866,⁹¹ the Piggoreet school committee included William Maughan who was manager of the Try Again mining company, the Presbyterian minister Rev. William Campbell Wallace, George Woodhouse who was both the deputy registrar of births and deaths and the owner of the chemist shop on the road leading to Piggoreet, Robert Reid who had the orchard on land opposite Woodhouse's chemist shop, John Clarke of Piggoreet West pastoral run, William Irvine who ran a large store on top of Irvines hill that lead into the Devils Kitchen, and George William Paul the butcher who lived on Pauls Hill overlooking the Devils Kitchen.⁹² In order to assist in raising funds for the construction of an infant school, the Piggoreet Sacred Harmonic Society in May 1869 held an evening of singing and readings.⁹³ The following month tenders were called for the erection of the building, shown in Figure 49,⁹⁴ next to the school.



Figure 49. Piggoreet Common School No. 726 with students and teachers
(Courtesy of Cape Clear Historical Society)

⁹⁰ *Victoria Government Gazette*, January 4, 1867, 12, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>. The site was marked with a bluestone cairn and plaque in 1963.

⁹¹ *Ballarat Star*, May 14, 1866, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112862136>.

⁹² *Victoria Government Gazette*, February 27, 1866, 477, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

⁹³ *Ballarat Star*, May 4, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112888755>.

⁹⁴ *Ballarat Star*, June 1, 1869, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112889507>.

By 1878, the Piggoreet State school, “situated on a bleak, wild, barren hill, with innumerable boulders and scoria cropping out all round it”,⁹⁵ was in a poor state of repair. Although the school had an average attendance of 130, it was reported that its roof was “like a pepper pot”,⁹⁶ with rain continually dripping in wet weather. At that time, the head teacher Julius Kleeberger was paid according to an enrolment number of 150-175 pupils. His first assistant was Mary A. Weatherston and the second assistant was William Cruickshank. There were two pupil teachers, Elizabeth Clementson and Charles Kleeberger.

In February 1882, new wooden building for Piggoreet State School no. 726 was approved, at a cost of £389/16/- by Henry Bell, who had fulfilled previous contracts satisfactorily.⁹⁷ It was on a new site about half a mile distant,⁹⁸ next to the Presbyterian Church. The old school site, on which the dilapidated and derelict original school still stood, was relinquished to the Lands Department in 1883.⁹⁹

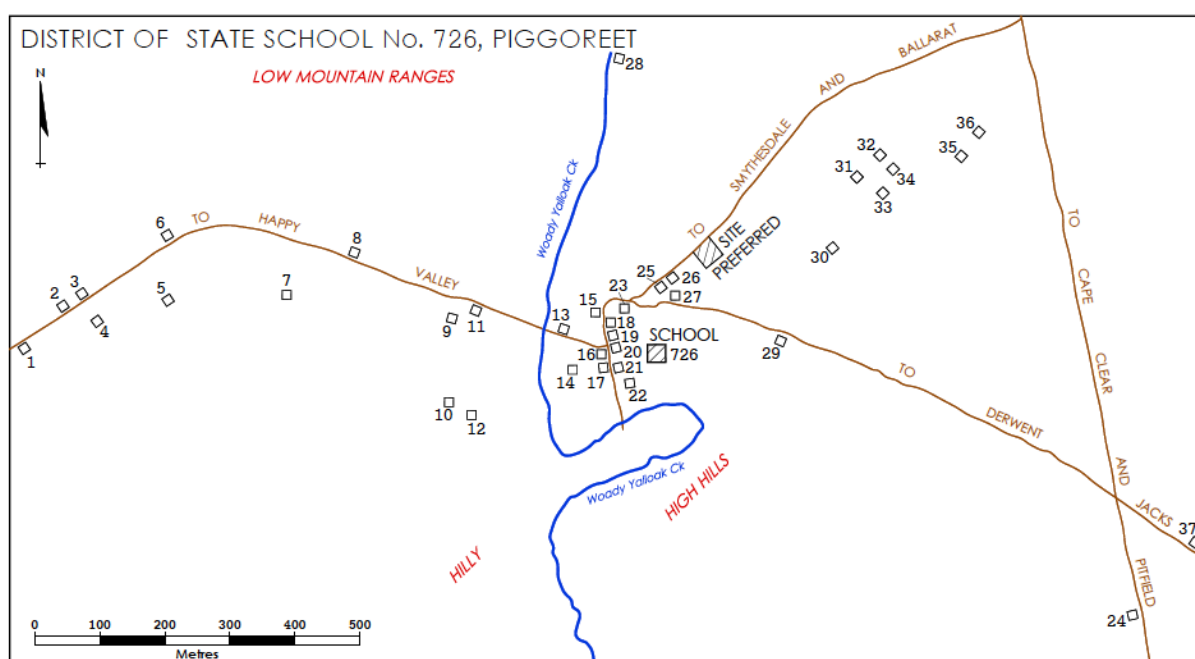


Figure 50. Family home sites at Piggoreet in 1882

(Courtesy Stephen Hunt, adapted from plan in PROV, VPRS 795/P0, Unit 2039, No. 726)

⁹⁵ *Star* (Ballarat), May 13, 1878, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article199323792>.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Victoria Government Gazette*, April 6, 1882, 819, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

⁹⁸ *Ballarat Star*, February 8, 1882, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article200666255>.

⁹⁹ PROV, VPRS 795, Unit 290, File 726. The old building was later sold to Mrs Catherine Chubb, and the site became a quarry reserve.

When the decision was made to build the Piggoreet school on a new site, density of the population was a factor, resulting in the drawing up of a plan of home sites of the 37 families with children attending the school,¹⁰⁰ as shown in Figure 50. The surnames of the families, matched to the code for their homesites, were as follows:

1 = Milburn	2 = McInney	3 = McCuskey	4 = Hart
5 = Barber	6 = McEwen	7 = Young	8 = Trafford
9 = McNamee	10 = Jones	11 = McDonald	12 = Quanchi
13 = Barry	14 = Irvin	15 = Pattinson	16 = Johannson
17 = Brown	18 = Jamieson	19 = McCormack	20 = Sharp
21 = Campigli	22 = Featherston	23 = Clementson	24 = Bedford
25 = Jobling	26 = Prolongeau	27 = Kleeberger	28 = Thorncroft
29 = Leahy	30 = Shea.	31 = Allemand	32 = Hogg
33 = McNamara	34 = Greenwood	35 = Cerini	36 = Paul
37 = Perinoni			

The school committee for Grand Trunk No. 809 was gazetted on 15 August 1865, when the five men appointed were Leander L. Bigelow, an American carpenter, and four Irishmen: Lant Power, Michael Delahenty, John Henry Webb, and John Sweeney.¹⁰¹ During a break-in at the school early in April 1868 all school books, papers and documents were stolen, including the register and rolls.¹⁰² This signalled the start of a campaign of intimidation that included a letter written on paper in the shape of a revolver, which stated: “u have received 2 notes from us Beware how u trate this one we give u to the 31 it is at your perel u open this school after May 17.” Windows were broken in open daylight, shutters wrenched off, and window sashes destroyed. It was reported that the Catholic priest used violent language against the headteacher Elija Gold because he had left the Catholic church, and school correspondent Robert McCormick of Piggoreet requested that prompt and vigorous action be taken by the police. It was, however, too much for Mr and Mrs Gold, who resigned as teachers and left, closing the school. They requested payment for both salary and results up to the date of closure, but the Education Department was not forthcoming, and the Golds were obliged to employ a Melbourne solicitor to represent their case.¹⁰³ Eventually the May salaries of £8/15/- were

¹⁰⁰ PROV, VPRS 795/P0, Unit 2039, No. 726.

¹⁰¹ *Victoria Government Gazette*, August 15, 1865, 1813, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹⁰² PROV, VPRS 892/P0/10, No. 809, 68/5070; PROV, VPRS 892/P0/10, No. 809, 68/7284.

¹⁰³ PROV, VPRS 892/P0/10, No. 809, 68, 7810.

paid as well as results payments to 31 December 1867 of £7/19/-. Between January 1867 and January 1870, 185 pupils were enrolled at Grand Trunk Common School No. 809, representing 79 families, most of whom lived at Grand Trunk and Derwent Jacks.

The Springdallah No. 18 Branch of the Hibernian Society held a meeting on 29 April 1870 at the home of the Grand Trunk school teacher, John Berkery, who became secretary of the Society.¹⁰⁴ Local officers in attendance included Andrew Scott Ward, Michael Delahunty, John Berkery, David Hickey, Lant Power, Thomas Gallaher and Denis O'Donnell. John Delahenty, who completed his pupil teacher training at Grand Trunk school, was presented with “a handsome watch and chain and a purse of sovereigns” on his departure for the Training School in Melbourne in April 1877.¹⁰⁵

The district around St Patrick's parish church was known in the 19th century as both Derwent Jacks and Grand Trunk, and the church was also given the address of Springdallah.

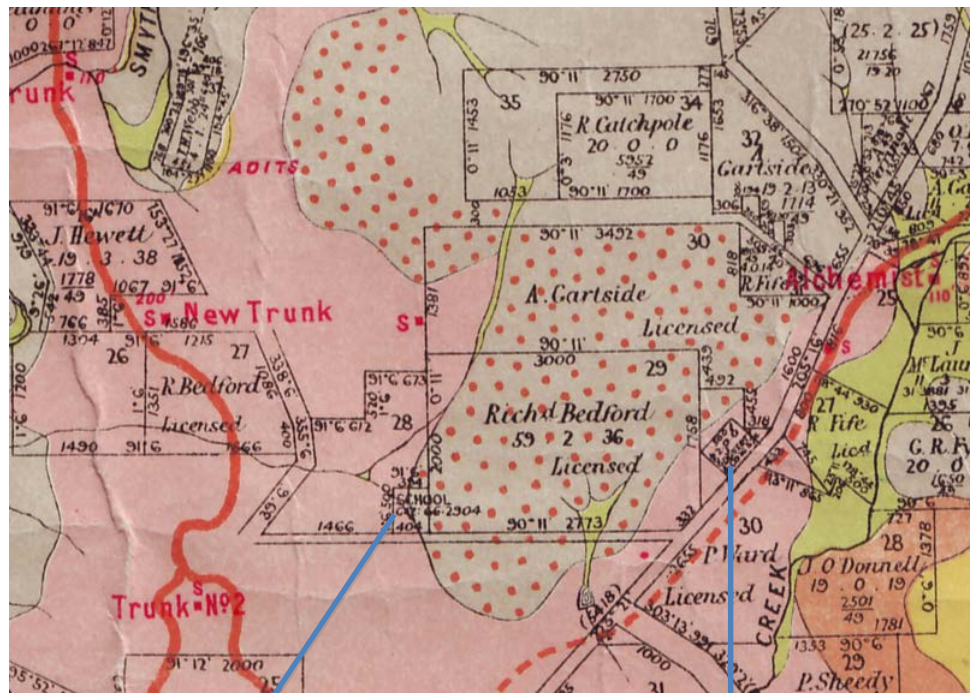


Figure 51. Grand Trunk school site left of Bedford allotment and RC school site at right
(Adapted from Department of Crown Lands and Survey, Melbourne)

Grand Trunk School No. 809

St Patrick's R.C. School-Church

¹⁰⁴ *Advocate* (Melbourne), May 7, 1870, 11, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article170150342>.

¹⁰⁵ *Ballarat Star*, April 9, 1877, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article199828188>.

Figure 51 shows the site of St Patrick's Catholic church and school, fronting the main road, and the Grand Trunk State School No. 809. By January 1879 the monthly average attendance at the State School had diminished to 22.6. That month a letter from head teacher John Berkery informed the Education Secretary that a Catholic school having opened at Grand Trunk had caused a great decrease in the average attendance, from 85 to 24, and a severe reduction in his salary.¹⁰⁶ The two schools were just a short walk apart, and caused problems for the State School, given that the district had such a strong Irish demography. The head teacher was a Catholic, secretary of the Hibernian Society.

By the early 1880s it was obvious that the conditions of the Grand Trunk school building and surrounds were unacceptable.¹⁰⁷ A Clerk of Works report on the site in January 1882 made it clear that the cattle on the adjacent common sheltered under the lee of the unfenced building so that for several yards around the exposed site was in a filthy condition. The report recommended that loads of cow manure should be removed and replaced with gravel, and that the site should be fenced with split post and rail and supplied with one large and one wicket gate. The building, also damaged by the cattle, was missing two downpipes and had leaks in the spouting. The dimensions of the weatherboard boarding, as shown in Figure 52, were 50 feet by 19 feet by 8 feet, and the flooring of the older 27 feet section was worn and broken through in places.

¹⁰⁶ PROV, VPRS 640/P0, Unit , File 809

¹⁰⁷ PROV, VPRS 795/P0, Unit 351, 80/32662, January 1882.

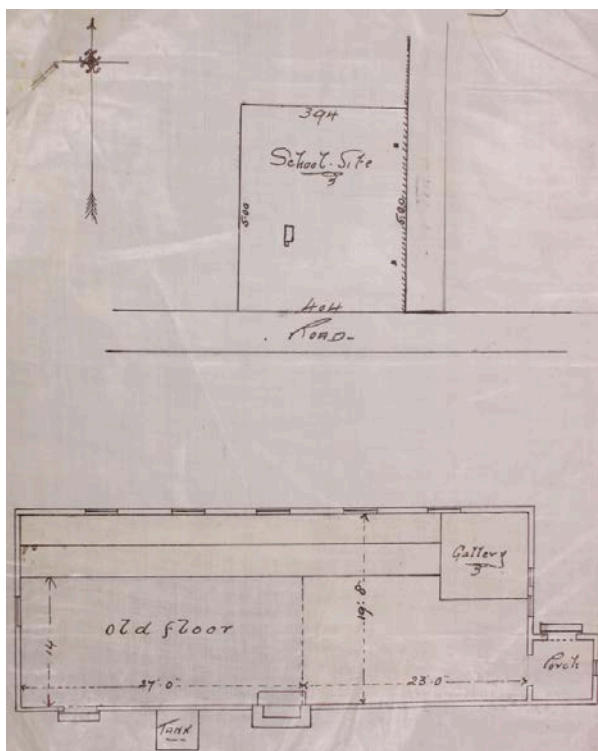


Figure 52. Grand Trunk school site and extended building plan
(PROV, VPRS 795/P0, Unit 351, File 809)

In December 1882 the Correspondent for the Board of Advice sent a request that the site be fenced.¹⁰⁸ Smith wrote that “the cattle congregate round the school and make a regular puddle in winter, while in summer their droppings attract the flies”.¹⁰⁹ When this appeal was repeated in April 1883, Smith informed the Education Department that “the Catholic school at Derwent Jacks has been closed since the end of last year, and the attendance at the Trunk school has increased”.¹¹⁰ Because the New Golden Belt Gold Mining Company was half a mile from the school, it was expected that the population in the neighbourhood would increase. Over the next several years, similar letters and reports continued to complain about the need for a fence around the school, and for improvements to the school building and furniture. At the end of 1887, when the Woody Yallock School No. 2215 at Pitfield closed, the fencing was to have been removed to Cape Clear School No. 1484, resulting in an appeal from Smith as Correspondent of the Board of Advice to reconsider due to the repeated applications made over the years by

¹⁰⁸ The Correspondent for the Board of Advice No. 154 School District of the East Riding of Grenvilleshire was George Henry Smith of Happy Valley, who later became Secretary of the Shire of Grenville.

¹⁰⁹ PROV, VPRS 795/P0, Unit 351, December 27, 1882.

¹¹⁰ PROV, VPRS 795/P0, Unit 351, April 28, 1883.

Grand Trunk School No. 809.¹¹¹ Approval was given, and the school was fenced after 23 years of existence.¹¹²

Four churches were built at Piggoreet in the 1860s: one each for the Presbyterian, Anglican, Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist congregations. Sites were officially reserved from sale for both the Church of England and Wesleyan churches in November, 1866.¹¹³ The wooden Catholic Church at Derwent Jacks, St Patricks, was used by parishioners from Golden Lake south to Pitfield.¹¹⁴

A petition was presented to a meeting of the Presbytery of Ballarat in March 1864, at which David Clarke represented Springdallah, appealing for a minister for the congregations of the districts of Clarksdale, Pitfield and Staffordshire Reef.¹¹⁵ A house and £300 salary for the minister was guaranteed. The following month the church was opened by Rev. William Campbell Wallace.¹¹⁶ Wallace was a Scot from Aberdeen who, in 1864 aged 29 years, was ordained and inducted to the charge of the congregation at Piggoreet for three years.¹¹⁷ The trustees of the church property were approved in September 1865 as Messrs David Clarke, John Clarke, William Christie, Peter Irvine, and Manx-man Samuel Watterson, the only non-Scot.¹¹⁸ The fortunes of this church provides evidence of the waxing and waning of gold mining, and its effect on the district population. Rev. Wallace resigned in early 1867 to take up a position at Batesford because his current congregation “had by changes in the mining district, become nearly extinct”.¹¹⁹ Yet, by the end of that year a request, signed by 50 Piggoreet names and 32 Staffordshire Reef and Derwent Jacks names, called for Rev David Galloway to serve at Piggoreet, which he did for nearly three years, before moving on due, again, to a

¹¹¹ PROV, VPRS 795/P0, Unit 351, February 1, 1888.

¹¹² PROV, VPRS 795/P0, Unit 351, February 23, 1888.

¹¹³ *Victoria Government Gazette*, November 6, 1866, 2441, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹¹⁴ The now disused brick church on the site in 2015 was not built until 1896.

¹¹⁵ *Star* (Ballarat), March 5, 1864, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72514078>.

¹¹⁶ *Pitfield Banner and Hollybush Times*, August 15, 1914, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article119812244>. The building was removed to Bradvale after the 1944 bushfire, later closed, and became a private residence in recent years.

¹¹⁷ *Argus* (Melbourne), January 16, 1912, 7, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article11646332>. This was the obituary of Rev. W.C. Wallace, who died in Perth on 20 January 1912, aged 75 years.

¹¹⁸ *Ballarat Star*, September 9, 1865, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112878694>.

¹¹⁹ *Ballarat Star*, February 11, 1867, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112861369>.

declining congregation.¹²⁰ After his departure in April 1870, a deputation from the Ballarat Presbytery visited Piggoreet and reported that mining prospects were brighter, so Rev. Galloway was reinstated. A further petition, signed by 30 members and 26 adherents at Piggoreet in September 1872 led to the induction of Rev. Alex McNicol,¹²¹ who stayed for nearly four years. A Sabbath school was opened and conducted in the Piggoreet Presbyterian church in 1870 by the Golden Lake school teacher, Alexander Grant.¹²² At the end of that year 60 children were examined at the church and prizes were won by Peter Young, Henry Dobbie, Helen Clarkson and Alice Reid.¹²³

A meeting of Piggoreet Anglicans was held in May 1865, to collect “subscriptions to be applied towards the minister’s stipend and the erection of a church”.¹²⁴ After a public meeting held at the Piggoreet police court house early in November 1865,¹²⁵ to decide on a suitable site for the proposed Anglican church at Piggoreet, a reserve was surveyed by the end of the month. The reserve comprised a little more than an acre, and was adjacent to the police camp at the south end of the township, “being both convenient and highly picturesque”.¹²⁶ Fund-raising to pay for the Church of England building included a tea meeting held in the grounds of Piggoreet West pastoral run in November 1865, supported by the Presbyterian David Clarke.¹²⁷ Tenders were to be received by George Woodhouse, the chemist at Piggoreet, “at whose residence plans and specifications may be seen”.¹²⁸ Prior to the church being finished, the Police Magistrate John Prendergast Hamilton permitted the congregation to use the Piggoreet court house. The contract to erect ‘the shell of the building’¹²⁹ was let to Mr Condry for £77 early in

¹²⁰ *Berringa Herald*, November 7, 1914, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article129365827>. This article was a report on the history of Piggoreet Presbyterian church on the occasion of its Jubilee celebration.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.*; Blake, *Vision and Realisation*, 728.

¹²³ *Ballarat Star*, December 30, 1870, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197559243>.

¹²⁴ *Ballarat Star*, May 24, 1865, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112886796>.

¹²⁵ *Ballarat Star*, November 20, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112880579>. The meeting took place on 17 November.

¹²⁶ *Ballarat Star*, November 27, 1865, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112880749>.

¹²⁷ *Ballarat Star*, November 4, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112880175>.

¹²⁸ *Ballarat Star*, March 2, 1866, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112867724>.

¹²⁹ *Ballarat Star*, March 10, 1866, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112867933>.

March 1866 and was to be completed within six weeks. It was reported on 25 May 1866 that it had been “completed very tastefully”, with lay reader Mr Carlyle officiating.¹³⁰

The Wesleyan Church reserve was surveyed directly west of the original school site, on the road that linked the main street of Piggoreet with the back road to Derwent Jacks, crossing Sugarloaf. This building had previously been situated at Bulldog, as early Illabarook was known. Tenders were called for its removal from its old site to Piggoreet, to be received at Mr Thomson’s or Mrs Handasyde’s by 28 January 1868.¹³¹ Mr Taylor preached at the Piggoreet Wesleyan church just before Christmas 1869, when there was a full meeting.¹³²

William Willis, president of the local total abstinence society, chaired a meeting in the Primitive Methodist church at Piggoreet in April 1868, when a lecture was given on “The drinking customs of society, detrimental to intellectual advancement”.¹³³ In February 1871 a public tea meeting was held in the building, referred to as a chapel, by the Piggoreet Sons of Temperance.¹³⁴ It was followed by a public meeting at which a talk encouraging total abstinence was given by Rev. W. Adams, the Primitive Methodist minister. The Piggoreet Harmonic Choir added to the repertoire. It is likely that the chapel, which was unable to contain all the people that attended, is the small building shown between John and Jane Liddell’s Try Again hotel and the Archer mine in Figure 11, although no survey or reserve of the site is recorded.

A two acre block of land was purchased on May 26, 1874 in the name of J. Doherty,¹³⁵ allotment 29B, on which the district Catholic church was built and named St Patrick’s, fronting the west side of the main road to Cape Clear. It was flanked on the south by the home of John Berkery, the Catholic Grand Trunk State School teacher, and on the north by Robert Fyfe’s Racecourse Hotel. A wooden building in Gothic design, with “pretty and suitable buttresses all round”,¹³⁶ opened on 6 June 1874. It was 50 ft long by 27 ft wide, with cathedral stained glass windows, the front one being richly ornamented. Its total cost was £450, partly funded by local fund-raising, such as the

¹³⁰ *Ballarat Star*, May 25, 1866, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112862437>.

¹³¹ *Ballarat Star*, January 23, 1868, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113600637>.

¹³² *Ballarat Star*, December 21, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112857065>.

¹³³ *Ballarat Star*, April 7, 1868, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113602400>.

¹³⁴ *Ballarat Star*, February 18, 1871, 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197560553>.

¹³⁵ Clarksdale Parish Plan, C374E, Section 1 of E, allotment 29B.

¹³⁶ Gallagher, “Light of Other Days”, 5:22.

concert held at Egan's Hotel, Piggoreet in January 1874.¹³⁷ The church building was used as a school for about four years from the start of 1878, with approximately 50 pupils attending.¹³⁸ The school closed at the end of 1881 when the last teacher, Jane Kennedy, left to marry.

LAW AND ORDER

Prior to the existence of a police court at Piggoreet, local cases were heard at Linton. In October 1863, Dr Hooper gave evidence about an assault with a frying pan at the Devils Kitchen, when he had been called to attend Mrs Atkinson who had a wound, apparently inflicted by the inappropriately named Ellen Makepeace.¹³⁹

By the end of 1864 the Crown Law Offices in Melbourne had appointed Piggoreet to be a place where Courts of Petty Session should be held.¹⁴⁰ There was a police station at Piggoreet at least as early as 10 May 1865, when Senior Constable Butcher reported damage to the floor in the kitchen after some burning fuel burnt a cedar table and a section of floor in front of the fire-place.¹⁴¹ Patrick Hynes of Old Lucky Womans tendered in April 1866 to supply, properly stack and cut in five feet lengths firewood at the rate of 6/6d per ton of 40 cubic ft, for a six month supply, to be delivered to the police station.¹⁴² The police also acted as bailiffs for the Lands Department, in reporting on improvements made to licensed property of applicants for grants of allotments, and making valuations.¹⁴³

A public auction of confiscated alcohol was held in August 1879, comprising a cask of beer, two bottles of ale, and four bottles of rum.¹⁴⁴ Ten years later the contravention of the Licensing Act continued to be a problem for the authorities, when 18

¹³⁷ *Courier* (Ballarat), January 27, 1874, 2.

¹³⁸ Gallagher, "Light of Other Days", 5:22. Jane Kennedy married Henry O'Beirne on 18 January 1882. The wooden church burnt down on 14 April 1896 and was replaced by the present brick building.

¹³⁹ *Star* (Ballarat), October 24, 1863, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72518181>.

¹⁴⁰ *Victoria Government Gazette*, December 9, 1864, 125:2781, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹⁴¹ PROV, VPRS 937/P0, Unit 15, K1455/2, 10 May 1865; Butcher's service number was 134.

¹⁴² PROV, VPRS 937/P0, Unit 15, L/209/65:6.

¹⁴³ PROV, VPRS 627/P0, Unit 289, file 21194/31; Unit 87, file 2475/49.4. The Crown Land Bailiff no. 1963 was Mounted Constable Edward Murphy from Piggoreet police station, 27 November 1877.

¹⁴⁴ *Victoria Government Gazette*, August 1, 1879, 75:1947, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

gallons of beer, and a bottle each of gin, whisky, rum and brandy were sold by public auction at the Piggoreet Police Station.¹⁴⁵

Senior-constable Butcher, of the Piggoreet police station, arrested James Robson, the engineer of the Exchequer company and Robert Martin, his assistant, in September 1865.¹⁴⁶ The charge against Robson was stealing four starting bars from the engine-house valued at £10, with Martin as accessory. The previous day, after a dispute about settlement of the contract for the erection of machinery, Robson had attacked James Buchanan the manager, blackening his eyes, splitting his cheek and smashing his ear, caused by the “heavy colonial gold ring” he was wearing.¹⁴⁷ The starting bars were taken to prevent the machinery being started. After a night in the Piggoreet lock up the men were charged and remanded, with bail set at £100 and £25 each. This case highlighted the problem of having no local magistrate, requiring an overnight stay to enable the travel of the Smythesdale police magistrate John P. Hamilton to the Springdallah area. In December 1867 Lant Power was fined £5 and £1/1/- costs for selling liquor without a licence.¹⁴⁸

The police camp at Piggoreet had a lockup, for which a baker named James Turner gained the tender to supply prisoners rations from 1 January 1866.¹⁴⁹ Mr Holmes, who had a confectioner’s store at Piggoreet, advertised for a baker to assist him in November 1867.¹⁵⁰ The lockup was still functioning in 1874 when the tender of Robert B. Wood was accepted.¹⁵¹

COMMERCE AND BUSINESS

Neither directories nor photographs survive from the period of this study of Piggoreet of the main street, nor do maps provide details of the businesses that made up the commercial centre of the township, and many sites remain undetermined.

In the mid 1860s there were hotels such as William Chubb’s Coach and Horses on the approach road to Piggoreet, John and Jane Liddell’s Try Again at the start of the main

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., August 2, 1889, 81:2670, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹⁴⁶ *Ballarat Star*, 16 September 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article155039223>.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ *Ballarat Star*, 23 December 1867, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112872946>.

¹⁴⁹ *Victoria Police Gazette*, January 4, 1866, 7.

¹⁵⁰ *Ballarat Star*, November 9, 1867, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112871836>.

¹⁵¹ PROV, VPRS 937/P0, Unit 24.

street, Martha Gaten's Archer Hotel on the back road to Derwent Jacks, Henry Coe's Court Royal, Edward Hall's Royal Mail, a beer house known simply as Sharp's Hotel, belonging to Seth Sharp who owned and drove coaches and carriers' wagons, Solomon Cox's Atlas Pic Nic on the Tableland opposite the Atlas mine and Dr Thomas Foster's home, and William Cross's Corner hotel.¹⁵² Cox's hotel later became the Atlas PicNic Hotel, the hotelkeeper being John Egan.¹⁵³

In the early 1860s publicans' licences were granted to other Piggoreet residents such as Robert Vincent and Mary O'Brien who had smaller, unnamed beer houses, but it was at the major hotels that Cobb & Co coaches discharged and loaded their passengers and goods. The Royal Mail Hotel, also called the Piggoreet Hotel, was owned by Edward Hall, who had the weatherboard building moved from Bunker's Hill, north of Haddon, and re-erected in the main street of Piggoreet in July 1864.¹⁵⁴ He then held a grand opening ball and supper to celebrate.¹⁵⁵ The Royal Mail Hotel was raised about three feet from the ground by posts, and in July 1867 someone attempted to burn it down by setting the joists on fire, but the attempt failed due to the dampness of the wood.¹⁵⁶ The business was advertised for sale in June 1868 when Edward Hall offered buyers "a sure fortune".¹⁵⁷ The license was transferred from Edward Hall to Seth Sharp in November 1871.¹⁵⁸

John and Jane Liddell purchased more than one acre of land at the first land sale on which they built and conducted the Try Again Hotel. Under Section 42 of the Amending Land Act 1865 they held by licence a further 3 ac 1 rd 32 p (allotment 2A of Section A) adjoining the original purchased land,¹⁵⁹ as shown in Figure 53.

¹⁵² PROV, VPRS 4442/P0, Unit 1.

¹⁵³ *Ballarat Star*, January 20, 1870, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112857923>.

¹⁵⁴ *Star* (Ballarat), September 15, 1864, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66348094>.

¹⁵⁵ *Star* (Ballarat), December 12, 1864, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66350406>.

¹⁵⁶ *Age* (Melbourne), July 9, 1867, 7, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article185508030>.

¹⁵⁷ *Ballarat Star*, June 2, 1868, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113844656>.

¹⁵⁸ *Ballarat Star*, November 17, 1871, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197574209>.

¹⁵⁹ PROV, VPRS 627/P0, Unit 73:6227.

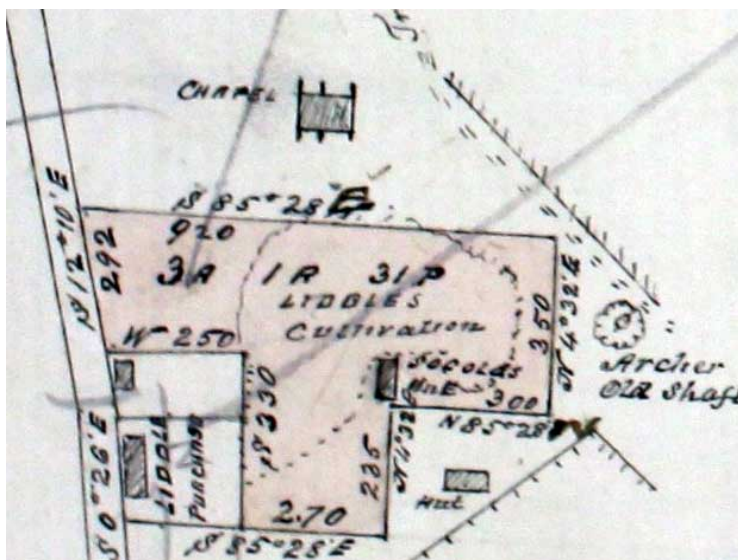


Figure 53. Site of the Try Again Hotel: John and Jane Liddell

(Source: PROV, VA 538 Department of Crown Lands and Survey, VPRS 627/P0 Land Selection Files, Section 31 Land Act 1869, Unit 73, file 6772.)

When Liddell applied to purchase the licensed allotment in March 1871, surveyor John Lynch valued the hotel, stabling, outhouses and cultivation at £400. William Godbold was granted a publican's license for the Exchequer Hotel at Springdallah in April 1867.¹⁶⁰ Eight months later Godbold pleaded not guilty to a charge of selling a glass of rum without a license.¹⁶¹ It was due to the mine near the hotel having stopped working 15 months earlier that Godbold had not continued to hold a license. He was fined £5, and £1/1/- costs, in default fourteen days' imprisonment. In October 1868 Michael Delahunty, publican of the Exchequer Hotel, appeared in court after a constable entered his premises through a window and seized the liquors it was claimed Delahunty was not licensed to sell.¹⁶² The court, however, was not impressed by the legality of the constable's mode of entry.

The several hotel sites at Piggoreet, and commercial premises such as the Murton brothers' butchery, Dyson's drapery shop, Gartside's general store, Jamieson's blacksmithy, and Japp's and Johannsen's carpentry and undertaker's business, were ranged along the main street as shown in the surveyed map of allotments at Piggoreet, in Figure 54. This map indicates how the township had developed since the first allotments were surveyed in 1864.

¹⁶⁰ *Ballarat Star*, April 18, 1867, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112874330>.

¹⁶¹ *Ballarat Star*, December 23, 1867, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112872946>.

¹⁶² *Ballarat Star*, October 19, 1868, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113848235>.

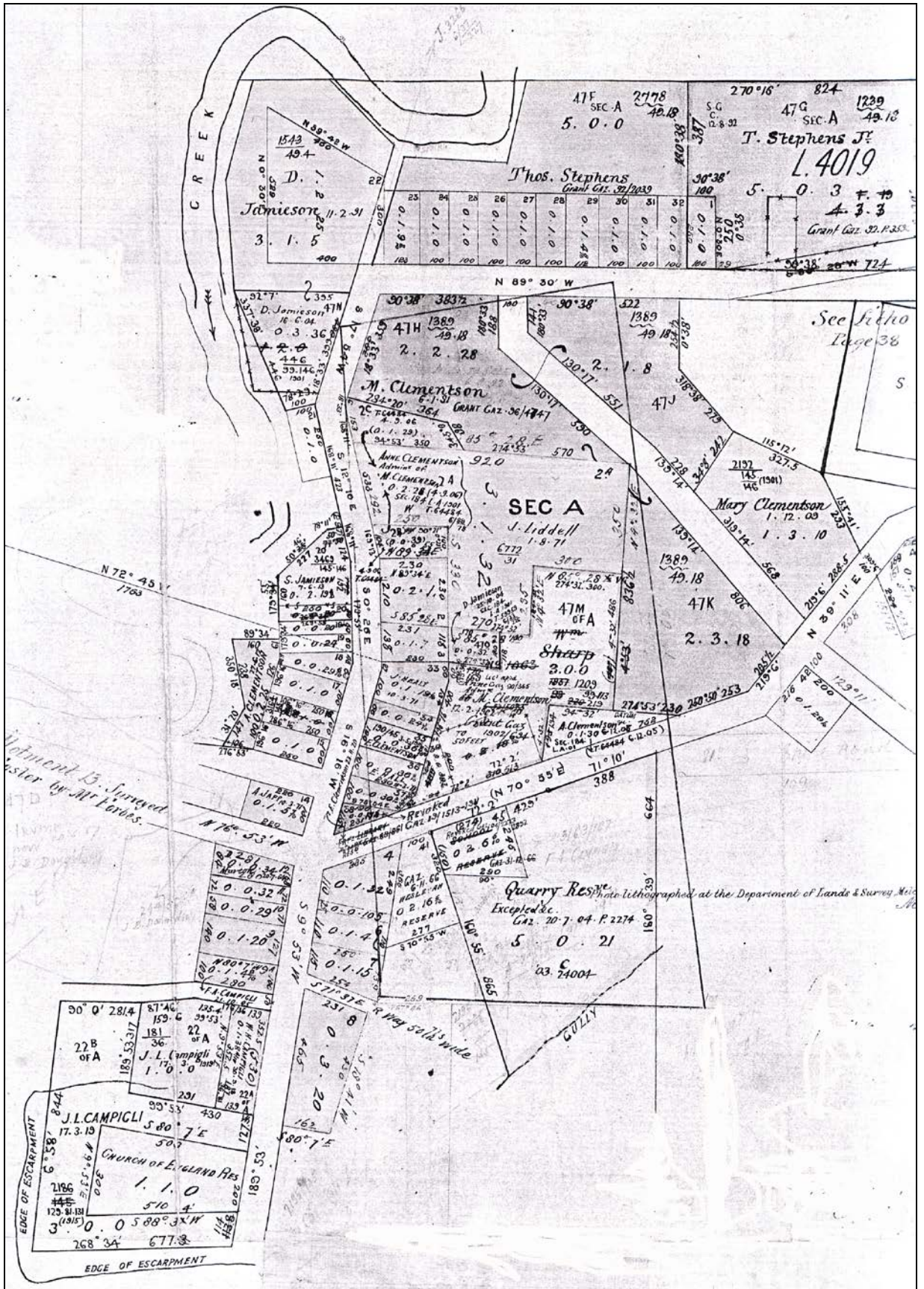


Figure 43. Surveyed allotments at Piggoreet, showing the main street at left
(Copied from Clarkesdale Parish plan)

A programme of adult education was provided for by the free library in the Mechanics' Institute. This was an initiative of the local community, that appears to have existed from about May 1868, when Dr Thomas Foster was appointed president and fund-raising was under way.¹⁶³ Financial assistance for the Mechanics Institute was provided initially by a picnic held on Easter Monday in 1868 at Piggoreet West, adjoining the Springdallah Creek, courtesy of David Clarke.¹⁶⁴ Sports, comprising cricket, quoits, football, greasy pole, Aunt Sally, swings and other forms of recreation were provided. An entertainment to raise funds for the Mechanics' Institute three years later, included the Piggoreet drum and fife band and the Golden Lake minstrels.¹⁶⁵ In 1879 the library was reported to have held 547 volumes.¹⁶⁶ One group that contributed to the social life of the community was the Piggoreet Harmonic Society, accompanied by their manager, John Dennant, playing the harmonium, who entertained at numerous events between 1869 and 1876.¹⁶⁷ Hardly a gathering was reported in the press during those years that did not include recitations, group singing, and humorous speech-making. There was, however, among the joy, some grief also on the domestic scene.

HEALTH AND HAZARDS

High childhood death rates and unexpected death and injury in the mining industry were realities the Piggoreet families frequently faced. The predominance of Australian-born in death certificates and cemetery records indicates the high death rate of infants and young children. Infant mortality was extremely high, with the common causes of death in infancy being tuberculosis of the lymph glands inside the abdomen or from congestion of the brain. Drownings in domestic waterholes or wells near their homes were very common for young children, as when 20 month old Ann Isabella Smiles, the

¹⁶³ *Ballarat Star*, May 22, 1868, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113603529>. However, it was not until many years later, that the *Victoria Government Gazette*, March 8, 1889, 22:861 announced the approval of a site for a free library at allotment 38 of Section A.

¹⁶⁴ *Ballarat Star*, April 15, 1868, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113602568>.

¹⁶⁵ *Ballarat Star*, August 7, 1871, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197564905>.

¹⁶⁶ Pam Baragwanath and Ken James, *These Walls Speak Volumes: A History of Mechanics' Institutes in Victoria* (Melbourne: Angus & Robertson, 2015).

¹⁶⁷ *Ballarat Star*, February 18, 1871, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197560553>; September 6, 1876, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article199830577>.

daughter of Robert Smiles of Piggoreet, fell into a waterhole adjacent to her father's house and drowned.¹⁶⁸



Figure 44. Home site of Dr Thomas Foster overlooking Piggoreet – Atlas mine on horizon
(Photograph courtesy of Gary Hunt)

Thomas Foster, surgeon, who was the first public vaccinator for Springdallah district,¹⁶⁹ lived on an allotment overlooking Piggoreet, as can be seen in Figure 55, on the road towards Happy Valley. His was the predominant name on birth and death registrations, coroners' inquests, and accident reports.¹⁷⁰ His family home was next to the Atlas gold mine and opposite the Atlas hotel (also known as the Atlas Pic Nic Hotel), run by John Egan, as shown in Figure 56.

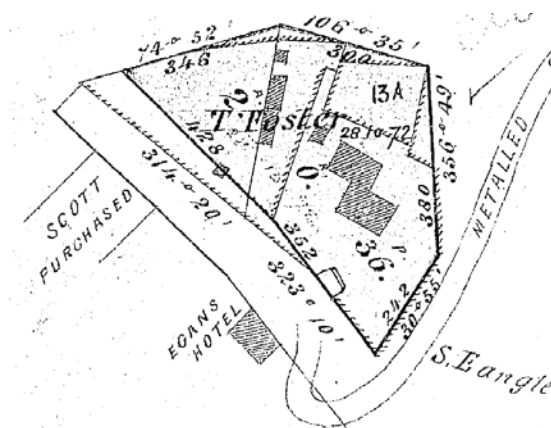


Figure 45. Survey of allotment of Dr Thomas Foster opposite the Atlas hotel
(Courtesy Landata Central Plan Office Put Away Plans)

¹⁶⁸ *Ballarat Star*, November 21, 1867, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112872184>.

¹⁶⁹ *Victoria Government Gazette*, October 14, 1864, 2293, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹⁷⁰ Landata, Clarksdale parish plan, Section A, Allot 13A.

Further examples of the realities of death amongst life include that of William Handasyde who was killed in January 1865 at the Try Again mine after being struck by the engine handle.¹⁷¹ Thomas Blackburn died in the Atlas mine in November 1866 when a large quantity of earth fell on him.¹⁷² A fortnight later a miner named Robert Macksey and his wife Jane went to Piggoreet in the evening to purchase some groceries, but after drinking a nobbler of wine at an hotel she fell ill and died at the roadside.¹⁷³ Dr Foster had her body conveyed to Coe's Court Royal Hotel to await the coroner's arrival, at which evidence was given that she was only 31 years old, with three children, yet her death was due to heart disease. The infant son of Sarah and James Laidler died aged 7 months at Piggoreet where his father was a miner, from inflammation of the lungs.¹⁷⁴ The Try Again claimed another life when Samuel Brusey was killed by a fall of earth in May 1867 and two men were severely hurt with leg and back injuries.¹⁷⁵

The high cliffs at Piggoreet, shown in Figure 57, were a unique hazard for the local residents. In his letter to his brother in Allendale, Northumberland, dated 22 August 1864 William Armstrong, who lived at the Devils Kitchen, commented on the high number of accidents that had occurred locally, among which was that of Daniel, the 10 year old son of a dairyman Daniel Morrison, who suffered concussion of the brain when he "accidentally fell over what is called the precipice, at the Devils Kitchen".¹⁷⁶ Armstrong wrote that "There was a boy in pursuit of some goats the other day and fell over some rocks at the Try Again. He fell about sixty feet was sorely hurt and not likely to recover".¹⁷⁷ Yet Daniel did recover, and later married and fathered a family. The jury of a coroner's inquest held at the Atlas hotel found that 12 year old Margaret Yates of

¹⁷¹ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 153, file 1865/63.

¹⁷² PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 180, file 1866/1029; *Argus*, November 15, 1866, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5778676>.

¹⁷³ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 185, file 1866/341; *Argus*, November 29, 1866, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page217461>.

¹⁷⁴ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 162, file 1865/995.

¹⁷⁵ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 190, file 1867/388; *Argus*, May 25, 1867, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5767884>.

¹⁷⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), August 11, 1864, 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66347157>.

¹⁷⁷ William Armstrong, Letter to his brother, Devils Kitchen, 22 August 1864. http://www.richardson.org.au/letters_from_australian_gold_diggers.html. Accessed November 12, 2015.

Piggoreet, when rounding up goats for her mother, fell from the Tableland down the cliff to the rocks below in the Devils Kitchen and died from her injuries on 5 June 1873.¹⁷⁸



Figure 46. The Devils Kitchen natural amphitheatre looking to the south-east
(Photograph courtesy of Gary Hunt)

In September 1868 Robert Rice, a miner in the Grand Trunk Company at Springdallah had about a dozen trucks of earth fall on him, but his workmates cleared away the earth and pulled him out. Despite being very severely hurt about the head and shoulders, he was not fatally injured.¹⁷⁹ While deaths were well recorded through coroner's inquests, the many accidents were occasionally reported in newspapers. One case was when a man named Webb lost the sight in one eye in a blasting accident in a drive in the Grand Trunk mine in May 1863.¹⁸⁰ Three years later, Joseph Squires suffered spinal injuries when a lump of black clay fell on him from the roof of a drive in the Grand Trunk claim in May 1866.¹⁸¹ He lingered for three months before dying in hospital on 22 July, from exhaustion brought on by the injuries he had received. Another accident occurred in May 1868 when Richard Williamson was injured in the Grand Trunk mine.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁸ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 299, 1873/154.

¹⁷⁹ *Ballarat Star*, September 4, 1868, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113847163>.

¹⁸⁰ *Star* (Ballarat), May 19, 1863, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72557104>.

¹⁸¹ *Ballarat Star*, July 25, 1866, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112863810>.

¹⁸² *Ballarat Star*, May 26, 1868, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113603629>.

He was admitted to Ballarat hospital after his feet were severely crushed by a mine truck that overtook him while he was pushing a truck in the drive.

LAND

The families settled close by one another, working in the mines around Grand Trunk, while farming the land they leased and eventually purchased there. County Clare accounted for 23% of all the Irish fathers, the second highest being 20% from Tipperary. The remaining 26 counties named had less than four fathers recorded as coming from them. Those who gave their occupation as miner amounted to 64%, while 9% said they were farmers. Men occasionally gave different occupations as an alternative to that of miner, such as farmer, hotelkeeper, labourer or carter. Mining reports help explain that situation, when sometimes for many months mines were not working due to flooding.¹⁸³

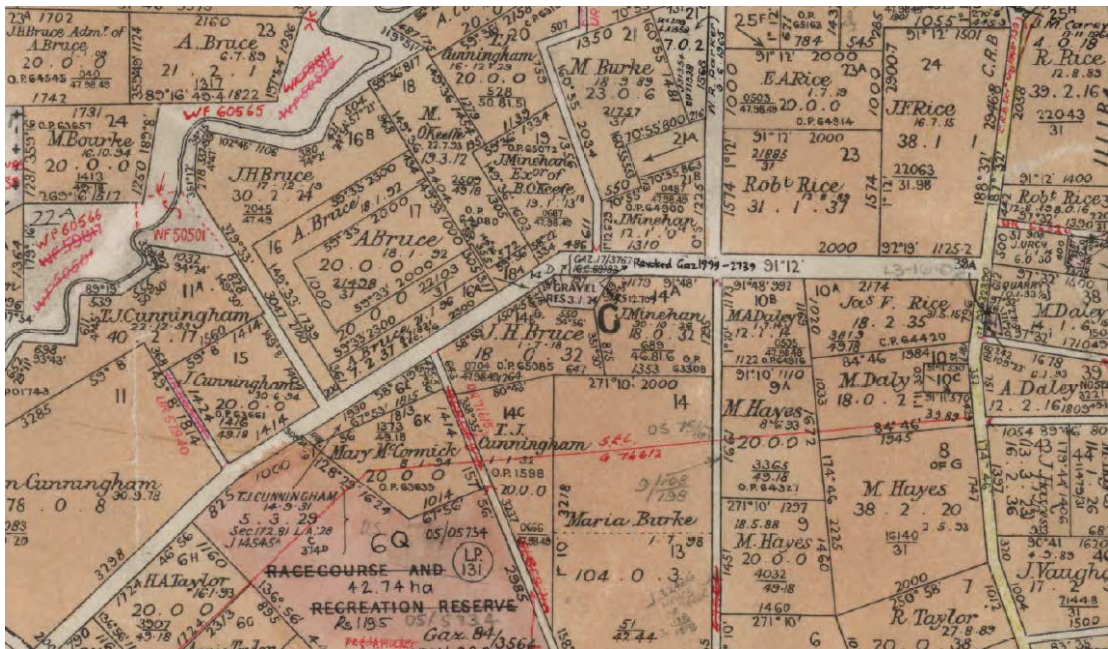


Figure 47. Allotments owned by Irish miners at Grand Trunk and Exchequer

(PROV, VPRS 16171/P1, Parish Clarksdale)

The social and familial links between these families are apparent on the portion of the Clarksdale parish plan in Figure 58, with Irish names of Hayes, Taylor, Daley, Vaughan, Bourke, Bruce and Hickey close by the Grand Trunk and Exchequer mine sites.

¹⁸³ *Ballarat Star*, July 15, 1867, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112876901>. At that time the Try Again, Atlas, Golden Horn, Golden Lake and Scarsdale Extended companies were all pumping co-operatively to try to keep the flooding to a minimum.

CONCLUSION

This section of Chapter 7 has revealed the history of Piggoreet and district from the 1860s until the 1880s by use of family case studies and data relating to the institutions and businesses functioning there at the time, including the mining industry. Probate and land records show that the mining industry was starting to give way to farming by the early 1870s when the Land Acts legislation was starting to take effect. Around Piggoreet 45.16% were farmers, while 38.7% still worked in the mining industry, an indication of the economic and industrial change that was taking place following the peak of deep lead mining in the 1860s and the subsequent working out of the previously rich gold leads. To the west, across the Springdallah Creek, another gold mining township was flourishing, known as both Lucky Womans and Happy Valley, that had many similarities but also specific unique features that will be discussed in the following section.

Chapter 7: SPRINGDALLAH COMMUNITY NETWORK

7.2: HAPPY VALLEY, LUCKY WOMANS, DREAMERS HILL

INTRODUCTION

The previous section of this chapter reconstructed networks of families and the gold mining industry at Piggoreet and district to demonstrate how that community functioned during the peak of deep lead gold mining in the 1860s and 1870s. The Happy Valley community, as this section argues, included the areas known as Lucky Womans and Dreamers Hill, was totally dependent upon the mining industry, and functioned socially and economically as a cooperative network within the Springdallah goldfield. Figure 59 shows the deep lead on which the mines were established,¹ running east-west along Happy Valley, with its tributaries and major features.

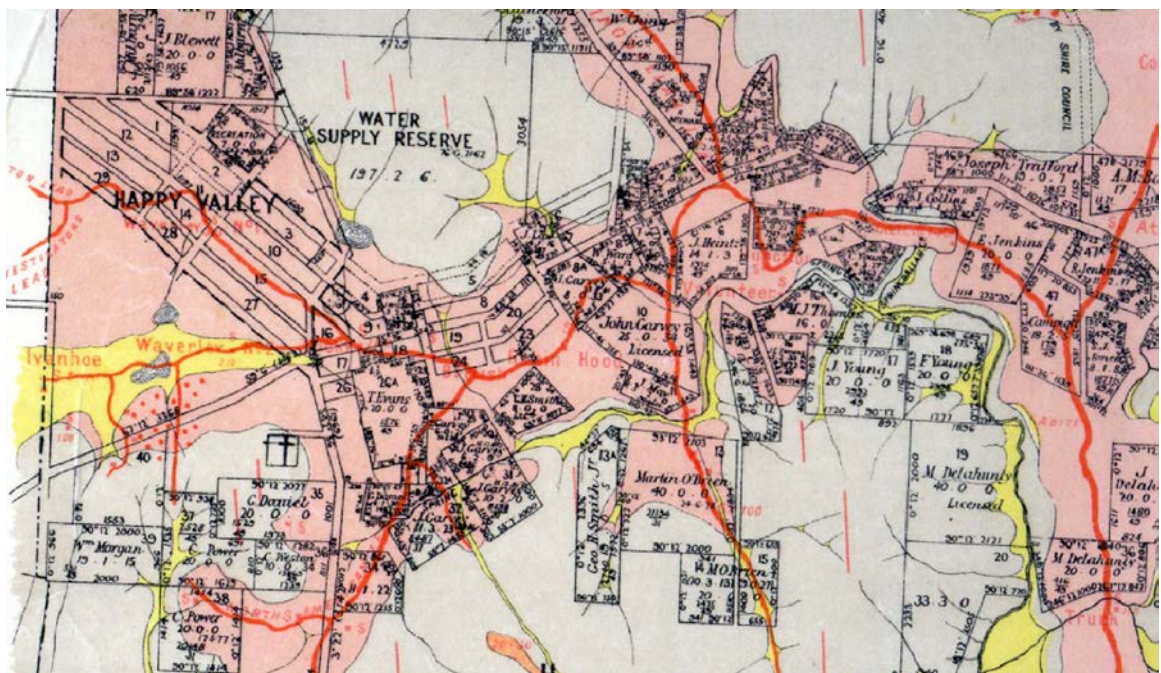


Figure 48. Geological map of Happy Valley area overlaid by surveyed allotments and sections
Red lines indicate location of leads. (Adapted from Department of Crown Lands and Survey, Melbourne)

¹ Crown Lands Department, *Clarksdale*, <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/12892279>.

THE COMMUNITY

Evidence of early settlement at Happy Valley shows it was both sporadic and peripatetic. Population numbers and diggings sites fluctuated for several years after the initial population rushes of 1855.² The area of Springdallah that came to be known as Old Lucky Womans, or Argyle, and Dreamers Hill were just within the eastern boundary of the Parish of Argyle, but Lucky Womans and Happy Valley lay within the Parish of Clarksdale. Small mining companies were formed, attracting long-term settlement, a situation recognised by government, resulting in Happy Valley becoming the only officially surveyed township on the Springdallah goldfield in the 1860s. A strong and cooperative network of families raised and educated their children here, supported by and supporting the features that, despite the uncertainties and difficulties that goldfields living presented, provided the necessary social and economic structures for healthy community life.

The original Lucky Womans Gully Diggings developed on part of the 15,000-acre Emu Hill pastoral station, originally held under a depasturing licence by the Linton family about the end of 1839,³ the boundaries of which (subdivided into No. 1 and No. 2) are shown in Figure 60, overlain on the later township sites of Linton and Happy Valley.



Figure 60. Boundaries of Emu Hill pastoral run held by licence

(Adapted from Spreadborough and Anderson, *Victorian Squatters*, 122)

² *Argus* (Melbourne), May 10, 1855, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4807899>.

³ Jillian Wheeler, *Linton Makes History: An Australian Goldfields Town and its Past* (Carlton: Melbourne University Publishing, 2015), 5.

In December 1855 a “great rush” occurred at Lucky Womans Gully, two miles from Happy Valley, so-called because of “a lady digger being the first to commence sinking in it”.⁴ The first sign of commercial activity was in January 1859, when two small stores were reported as providing for about 200 diggers in the gullies of Lucky Womans and Happy Valley Diggings.⁵ One of these stores may have been the property of William Johnston, draper and general storekeeper, who in April 1860 advertised the sale of his paying business at Lucky Womans Gully, comprising a residence, a large general store and drapery establishment called the Lucky Womans Store, and a manageable farm.⁶

The naming of Happy Valley, Lucky Womans and Dreamers Hill was confusing and ambiguous. Andrew Porteous, the Carngham farmer who had a strong relationship with the *Wathawurrung* people of the district, recorded some words from the group of people he called the Mount Emu tribe.⁷ According to Porteous, Happy Valley was called *Melong-gap*, Lucky Womans was *Workgoger* and Mount Erip was *Nollo*. It is uncertain which areas the early diggers regarded as Lucky Womans or Happy Valley, both names frequently being applied to the same place at the same time.

By mid 1859, it was reported that “large numbers are daily arriving, a street is being formed of stores, &c., and business has the appearance of being in a flourishing condition”.⁸ In September 1859, the No. 6 Smythesdale Division of Ballarat Mining District surveyor, John Lynch, reported that the Linton area, including Hard Hills, Happy Valley, Lucky Womans and various other gullies, had a total population of 2,700 Europeans and 240 Chinese, of which 950 were alluvial miners and 150 were surface digging, but there was no-one undertaking quartz mining.⁹

In January 1861 a grocery and provision business was being conducted by G. W. James at Slaughteryard Hill, Lucky Womans, when he advertised for a smart, active lad who could canvass for orders and manage a horse and cart.¹⁰ Further evidence of the

⁴ *Age* (Melbourne), January 7, 1856, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article154866069>.

⁵ *Star* (Ballarat), January 28, 1859, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66333650>.

⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), April 16, 1860, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72466216>.

⁷ R. Brough Smyth, *The Aborigines of Victoria : with notes relating to the habits of the natives of other parts of Australia and Tasmania compiled from various sources for the Government of Victoria*, Vol. II (Melbourne, Government Printer, 1878), 179.

⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), July 1, 1859, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66053892>.

⁹ *Age* (Melbourne), September 27, 1859, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article154827977>.

¹⁰ *Star* (Ballarat), January 24, 1861, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66337005>.

growing stability and commercial development of Lucky Womans is provided by the advertisement in Figure 61, where in September 1861 the site of a proposed township is said to be on the Lucky Mining Company lease, exactly where the Happy Valley township did eventuate.¹¹ Clearly, the township area was known as both Lucky Womans and Happy Valley.

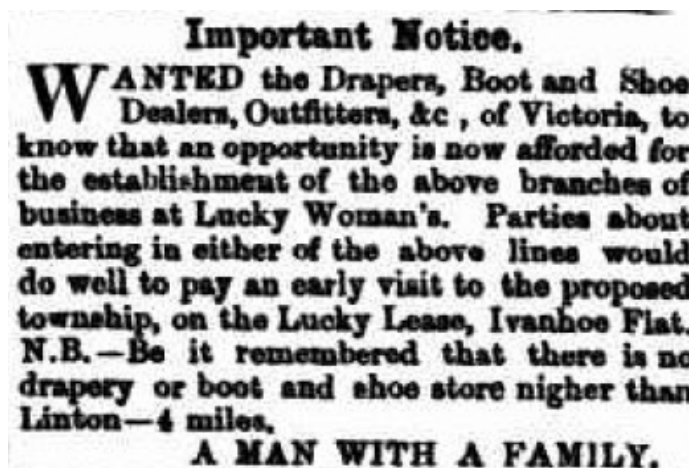


Figure 49. Advertisement mentioning site of proposed township

(Reprinted from *Star* (Ballarat), September 3, 1861, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66341779>)

Evidence for the confusion of placenames appears in an advertisement in January 1862 for the sale of McDonald's hotel, built of pine and respectably finished, situated in the midst of a prosperous mining community "at Lucky Womans Gully, Happy Valley Goldfield".¹² A description of Happy Valley in December 1862 reported that the population had been gradually increasing within the previous two months, "new buildings being in course of erection on all sides",¹³ an example of which can be seen in Figure 62.

¹¹ *Star* (Ballarat), September 3, 1861, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66341779>.

¹² *Star* (Ballarat), January 2, 1862, 1, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66330521>.

¹³ *Star* (Ballarat), December 15, 1862, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66329487>.



Figure 50. McLean's boot and shoe shop in Happy Valley

(Painted by William Tibbits. Photograph courtesy of Linton Historical Society)

An area of 960 acres was permanently reserved from sale as the site for a town at Lucky Womans gold workings, according to the *Victoria Government Gazette* of January 9, 1863.¹⁴ It was described as bearing east from the north-east angle of portion 19, Parish of Argyle. The plant and workings of the gold mining companies contributed to the permanent appearance of the township, one report claiming that the Waverley Company buildings, put up by contract in March 1863, “comprise acres of weatherboards and shingles”.¹⁵

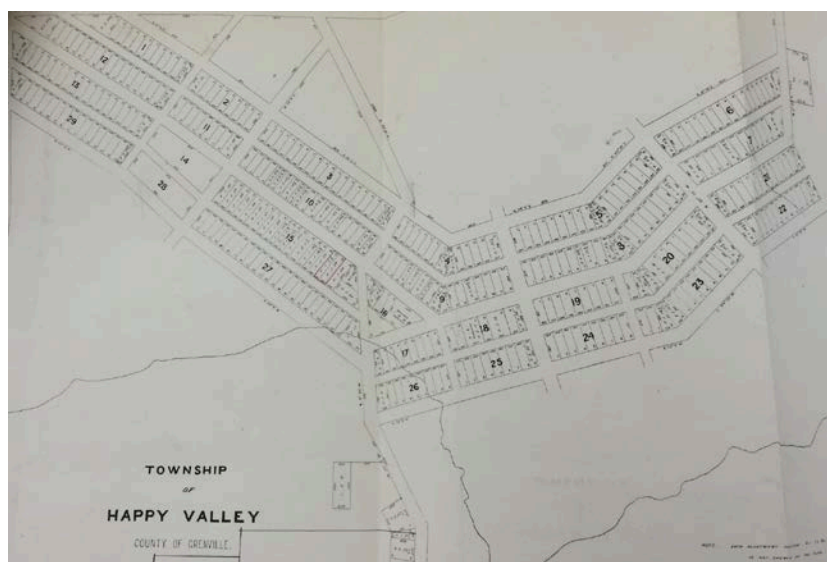


Figure 51. Township of Happy Valley showing sections and allotments

(Courtesy of Public Record Office Victoria [PROV, VPRS 627/P0, Unit 254, 20148/31])

¹⁴ *Victoria Government Gazette*, January 9, 1863, 3:66, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹⁵ *Geelong Advertiser*, March 2, 1863, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article148906443>.

It was not until April 1871, however, that the full survey of roads, sections and allotments was carried out as shown in Figure 63.¹⁶ Surveyor Thomas Forbes measured 394 allotments from a total area of 126 ac 3 rd 13.3 p. By the end of 1873, surveyor Lynch noted in a memo that the township of Happy Valley had been reduced from its original dimensions to the lines of allotments along the main streets. The decision to reduce its size, made less than three years after the original survey, was very likely based on the declining population and a recognition that the gold mining industry there was beginning to wane.

RESIDENTS

As with the other settlements at Springdallah, the Happy Valley community comprised unmarried men and women as well as families, some working exclusively at mining or at providing support or professional services, and others undertaking mixed employment. Natural leaders came forward and appeared in many records as organisers of meetings and events in the community, representing groups, arranging appeals, presenting petitions, and generally helping to improve the living and working conditions for all on the goldfield. The community was well represented, for instance, by the local Church of England schoolteacher, Thomas Lea, who requested at an early meeting of the Woody Yaloak Roads Board that “in fixing polling places for the District, Luckywomans would not be overlooked”.¹⁷ As well as undertaking his role as head teacher of the school, Lea was appointed Deputy Registrar of Births and Deaths for the district of Happy Valley from 5 October 1863 until 1867, was a trustee of the Church of England reserve,¹⁸ and was the electoral registrar for the Woody Yaloak division of the Grenville district and the South Western Province from August 1865 to 1867.¹⁹

Welsh

Happy Valley attracted men from Wales who frequently had slate-quarrying experience, such as the Rowlands family network from the village of Corris in the parish of Talyllyn in Merionethshire. John and Eleanor Rowlands were the parents of ten children, eight of whom survived childhood. A daughter Elizabeth married and remained

¹⁶ PROV, VPRS 627/P0, Unit 254, File 20148/31. Township plan in file of Catherine Power.

¹⁷ PROV, VPRS 7232/P2, Unit 1, 24 September 1863, 4.

¹⁸ *Victoria Government Gazette*, September 8, 1863, 91:1977, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹⁹ *Age* (Melbourne), August 3, 1865, 7, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article15504141>.

in Wales, but all seven brothers emigrated to Victoria, as did a cousin Evan Rowlands (1826–1894). Figure 64 shows the smithy, known as The Forge (*Yr Efail*), which was opposite the family home in Minffordd Street, Corris. Generations of Rowlands men worked there, and others were employed in the slate industry. The Rowlands brothers and cousin followed one another to the goldfields over a period of nearly a decade, settling at Ballarat, Sebastopol and Happy Valley. One brother, John Corris Rowlands (1829–1908), and his cousin Evan (1826–1894) were the first to leave Wales, arriving on the *Anglesea* in December 1852 with Evan’s wife, Ann (nee Jones).²⁰ John Corris Rowlands married in 1860 and settled at Sebastopol for nearly 50 years,²¹ becoming a councillor on the first Sebastopol Council.²²



Figure 52. Yr Efail (The Forge or Smithy), Minffordd Street, Corris

(Photograph courtesy of Gary Hunt)

Three other brothers arrived together on the *Marco Polo* on 4 September 1857²³ and spent some years at Happy Valley, where Evan (1835–1896), Edward (1827–1895), Humphrey (1837–1873) and William Rowlands (1832–1902) became gold miners. Edward Rowlands moved from Happy Valley and settled at Sebastopol after marrying in 1865.²⁴ Humphrey died aged 37 years in a mining accident when a fall of earth smothered

²⁰ Kevin Rowlands, “Personal papers of the Rowlands family.” (Interview held February 2011, with Kevin Rowlands, great grandson of John Corris Rowlands. Kevin died 1 March 2014).

²¹ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 3162, John Rowlands married Ellen Wilson in 1860.

²² Rowlands Street, Sebastopol, is named in recognition of John Corris Rowlands.

²³ PROV, VPRS 7666, *Marco Polo*, 4 September 1857.

²⁴ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 1319, Edward Rowlands married Maria Kelly in 1865.

him in his shallow claim at Watties Gully, Happy Valley, in 1873,²⁵ and William returned to Wales about February 1862.²⁶ No shipping records survive for Rowland Rowlands (1845–1880), who married Mary Ann Monk in 1867,²⁷ and died aged 34 years in Ballarat. James (1841–1910), who may have travelled from Wales with his brother Rowland, became a dairy farmer after a period of mining and lived the rest of his life with his wife and family overlooking the Yarrowee Creek at Fawkner Street, Ballarat.²⁸

Evan Rowlands (1835–1896) married Ann Thomas (nee Lewis) from Glamorganshire in 1874 and lived the rest of his life at Happy Valley.²⁹ Although they had no children together, Evan married into the family his wife had made with her first husband, Thomas Llewellyn Thomas from Carmarthenshire, Wales. The Thomas family had strong associations with Happy Valley for many decades. Ann and her first husband had already had three sons (one of whom died in infancy) at Happy Valley when the fatal accident occurred that made her a widow.³⁰ In April 1871, Thomas was returning home to Happy Valley from the Scarsdale sports, swiftly riding a horse blind in one eye, as a consequence of which it did not correctly judge how close it was to the shaft of a spring-cart being driven by an unnamed Chinese man.³¹ The collision resulted in the mortal injury of Thomas and the horse, and the Chinese man was badly hurt. The fortuitously passing Piggoreet coach transported Thomas to his home, where he lingered long enough to be attended by Dr Hoskins, but died on the following evening. At this time, Ann was expecting another child, who was born six months after her husband died,³² and three years later, she married the 40-year-old bachelor, Evan Rowlands.³³

There were several unrelated families at Happy Valley by the surname of Thomas, at least two of which were very prominent in the affairs of the district and who had long-

²⁵ *Ballarat Star*, August 11, 1873, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article199006554>.

²⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), May 6, 1862, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66323784>.

²⁷ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 4253, Rowland Rowlands married Mary Ann Monk in 1867.

²⁸ PROV, VPRS 7591/P0, Unit 449, File 116/528.

²⁹ BDM, *Federation Index*, Reg. 9853, Evan Rowlands, died 1896.

³⁰ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 4267, David Thomas, died 1869. He was aged 11 months.

³¹ *Ballarat Star*, April 18, 1871, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197561988>.

³² BDM, *Birth Certificate*, Reg. 23668, Thomas Lewis Thomas, born 22 October 1871 at Happy Valley.

³³ BDM, *Marriage Certificate*, Reg. 2012, Evan Rowlands married Ann Thomas (nee Lewis) on 24 September 1874 at Linton.

lasting connections, taking up land and turning from gold mining to farming, and remaining in the district to the present day. John Thomas from Caernarvonshire in Wales married Ann Joyce from Galway in Ireland in 1862³⁴ and raised nine children in Happy Valley. Both John and Ann died at their home on the five-acre allotment 7 in the Happy Valley main road, shown in Figure 65, having had a long-standing and active interest in gold mining, shareholding and farming near the junction of the Spring and Springdallah creeks.³⁵ One son, Alfred “Gomer” Thomas (1875–1943), became a schoolteacher and maintained his links with Happy Valley throughout his life.³⁶ A daughter, Margaret Beatrice (1878–1848), married a neighbour, John Thomas Garvey (1872–1960), continuing a pattern of intermarriage with community families.



Figure 53. Five-acre allotment 7 on Happy Valley main road owned by John Thomas (Courtesy of Public Record Office Victoria [PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 69, File 2527/49])

English

The Welsh were strongly represented at Happy Valley, but other miners and miner-farmers from elsewhere, particularly England, also established their families for the long term. Henry Crosier, an engine-driver from Longhorsley in Northumberland, who lived for many years at Happy Valley, married twice.³⁷ His first wife, Agnes Nicholson from Edinburgh, died in July 1861 at Browns Diggings after having three children.³⁸ He

³⁴ BDM, *Marriage Certificate*, Reg. 16, John Thomas married Ann Joyce on 16 January 1862 at Ballarat.

³⁵ PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 69, File 2527/49, part Clarksdale Parish Plan.

³⁶ BDM, *Death Index*, Reg. 19048, Alfred Gomer Thomas, died 1943 at Happy Valley. He was aged 68 years.

³⁷ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 2644, Henry Crosier married Agnes Nicholson in 1856.

³⁸ Hunt, *Smythesdale General Cemetery*, Section 9, Grave 99, Agnes Crosier, buried 13 July 1861.

remarried to Mary Hogan in 1864,³⁹ and they raised eight children at Happy Valley. Crosier had 11.5 of acres freehold land at Happy Valley with a six-room weatherboard house built on it.⁴⁰ His livestock included a pony, two cows, three calves and poultry, and over the years he held licensed and freehold land across much of Happy Valley.⁴¹

Theophilus Gribble, after an adventurous early life, settled with his family at Happy Valley for at least 45 years. Born in May 1830, he had left his birthplace of Newton Abbot in Devonshire as a youth. When Theophilus was 21 years old, he was employed as a footman to a family living in Jersey in the Channel Islands, where he had arrived with his seaman's ticket. He would almost certainly have worked his passage to Australia, which accounts for the lack of a shipping passenger arrival record. He married in Geelong in 1858 to 20-year-old Margaret McBain from Edinburgh, and by 1864 they had settled at Happy Valley with their two young sons. Over the next 20 years, they extended their family to 14 children while living at Murphys Gully between Happy Valley and Lucky Womans, south of the school on the Old Happy Valley Crossing road. A dramatic event for the district occurred when Margaret gave birth to triplet daughters in July 1879, named Faith, Hope and Charity. Joy turned to tragedy when each of them died within three weeks of their births.⁴² Theophilus occupied himself in community activities, such as a councillor on the Grenville Shire Council in 1888 and steward at the Grenville Turf Club racing in February 1890. Both he and his wife Margaret died locally and were buried at Pitfield cemetery.⁴³ Their son Theophilus junior, known as "Tops", born in October 1870, married and raised his family locally, and continued living at Happy Valley all his life.

George and Mary Coxon, born in Newcastle upon Tyne, emigrated to Melbourne from Liverpool on the *John Barbour*, arriving on 4 December 1857 with their seven

³⁹ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 1180, Henry Crosier married Mary Hogan in 1864. Crosier descendants living at Happy Valley continue to farm the land taken up in the 1860s.

⁴⁰ PROV, VPRS 7591/P2, Unit 651, File 81/189.

⁴¹ PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 83, File 1404/49.18; PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 83, File 0775/48.98.6; PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 83, File 433/44.81.87; PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 83, File 311/44.81.87.

⁴² Hunt, "Faith, Hope and Charity."

⁴³ *Grenville Standard*, June 12, 1909. Newspaper cutting from private collection of Jill Harvey; BDM, *Death Certificate*, Reg. 2925, Margaret Gribble, died 7 November 1910 at Lucky Womans.

children aged between infancy and 13 years,⁴⁴ and created a network of extended family at Springdallah. They were living at Happy Valley and Lucky Womans by 1860 when their eighth and final child, Bert, was born.⁴⁵ George Coxon was a shareholder in the Nonpariel Gold Mining Company in the 1860s and worked as an engineer. Their eldest child, Ann, married Robert Stamp from Easington in Durham, where he had been a shoemaker. Robert's brother John Barrass Stamp had arrived in August 1856 on the *Red Jacket*.⁴⁶ John's wife, Mary Ann, with their 10-year-old son Richard Bulmer Stamp, and John's brother Robert then came as passengers on the *Oceania*, arriving in Melbourne in May 1862.⁴⁷ By 1864 John Barrass Stamp was the manager of the Investigator Freehold Gold Mining Company in Happy Valley but had moved to Maryborough by mid 1877, where he became a blacksmith and coachbuilder.⁴⁸ Ann Coxon married Robert Stamp at Scarsdale in 1866, and their first child, Mary Coxon Stamp, was born in 1868 in Happy Valley. They later moved to Casterton and then Maryborough, where both Ann and Robert died. Mary, the second child of George and Mary Coxon, married William Milburn from Stanhope in Weardale, County Durham, and their first child was born in 1865 at Happy Valley, before they moved to Casterton, where their 11 children were born. The years at Happy Valley had enabled the Coxon-Milburn-Stamp family network to establish themselves, taking advantage of the land selection legislation as their children grew to adulthood. The waves of movement away from Happy Valley invariably continued the good fortunes of the families, as they took up either larger farming properties or more stable occupations.

One mining family that suffered in an occupational tragedy was that of Timothy Bellingham. He was the brother of Thomas Bellingham, who ran the Roebuck public house at Happy Valley. Timothy and Anna Bourne had married in 1853 in Dudley, Staffordshire, and came to the goldfields with their first son Jabez.⁴⁹ Six more children completed the family, born between 1861 and 1872 at Happy Valley and other nearby

⁴⁴ PROV, VPRS 7666, *John Barbour*, December 1857, 137:5.

⁴⁵ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 13921, James Edward Coxon, born 1860. This child was always known by the name "Bert".

⁴⁶ PROV, VPRS 7666, *Red Jacket*, August 1856, 110:6.

⁴⁷ PROV, VPRS 7666, *Oceania*, May 1862, 202:5.

⁴⁸ PROV, VPRS 7591/P2, Unit 324, File 95/668.

⁴⁹ FreeBMD, *England and Wales, FreeBMD Index, 1837-1915*. <http://www.freebmd.org.uk/>, September quarter 1854, 6c:181, birth registered Stourbridge, Jabez Bourne Bellingham [*sic*].

goldfields. However, in December 1882 Jabez, now married and living at Creswick, and his brother Benjamin were drowned in the disastrous flooding at the Australasian gold mine at Glendonald near Creswick.⁵⁰

One resident of Happy Valley with an English convict background was the widow, Mary Fitches (1802–1887), mother of 10 children born in Tasmania between about 1825 and 1841.⁵¹ Mary was convicted at the Nottingham Assizes for receiving stolen goods and transported for 14 years.⁵² She married at Hobart Town on 15 September 1828, and in 1835 was assigned to her husband, William Fitches, who had been granted his ticket of freedom. After her husband's death in Melbourne in 1852, Mary moved to Happy Valley in 1860 with her daughter Sarah⁵³ to join her unmarried sons William (1825–1862) and James (1837–1883), who had already settled there.⁵⁴ William Cullen Fitches died in April 1862, aged 37 years, at Slaughteryard Hill,⁵⁵ Lucky Womans, when earth fell on him while excavating for the construction of a dam near his party's claim, just a few yards from the family home.⁵⁶ John Fitches (1827–1895) was another son who never married and who spent some years mining at Happy Valley.⁵⁷ Another son, Henry (1829–1890), was widowed at Stawell in 1865 and came to live and work in Happy Valley with his five children so that Mary and her daughter Sarah (1841–1898) could help him to raise them.⁵⁸ A married daughter, Jane Burrows (1830–1888), was also living in the main street of Happy Valley in the late 1870s. Of Mary's nine children who reached adulthood, four did not marry, and the three who did marry had no

⁵⁰ *Age* (Melbourne), January 29, 1883, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article190597427>.

⁵¹ Jeff Atkinson, *Mary Proctor: Convict, Pioneer and Settler* (Dural, NSW: Rosenberg Publishing, 2005), 189.

⁵² Phillip Tardif, *Notorious Strumpets and Dangerous Girls: Convict Women in Van Diemen's Land 1803-1829* (North Ryde, N.S.W.: Angus & Robertson, 1990), 593.

⁵³ Atkinson, *Mary Proctor*, 164.

⁵⁴ Martha Wilkinson, "Happy Valley Residents in 1880s", unpublished manuscript list of residents in order of occupancy of allotments, compiled by memory by Martha (nee Pryor, born 1872, Happy Valley). Copy in author's collection.

⁵⁵ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 112, 1862/415. Inquest into death of William Cullen Fitches.

⁵⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), April 15, 1862, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66323335>.

⁵⁷ Atkinson, *Mary Proctor*, 199.

⁵⁸ Henry's son George Henry Fitches (1856–1929) in August 1899 was appointed State Inspector of Machinery and Mines for Ballarat District (*Victoria Government Gazette*, August 11, 1899, 67:3193, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>).

children, Henry and Alfred being the two whose children carried the Fitches name from Happy Valley. Mary's convict background was irrelevant to her ability to contribute positively to the community life of Happy Valley. Her children, despite being born to parents who had been convicts, were responsible contributors to the township and its industry, and later generations included people who held prestigious positions and were highly respected members of society.

Scots

The Cameron family exemplify very well the experiences and background of the Scots who mined the deep lead mines at Springdallah. Born about 1802 near Glengarry in Invernesshire, Ewen Cameron married Ann McDonnell in 1833. They started their married life in the Kilmonivaig parish near Fort Augustus, Invernesshire, where Ewen was a stonemason. The Camerons embarked with seven children, aged from 17 months to 17 years, on board the *Chance*, which departed from Liverpool on her maiden voyage on 24 July 1852.⁵⁹ The family were Catholic, and it seems likely that the illiterate parents spoke both Gaelic and English. By December 1861, they were living at Lucky Womans Diggings, where Ewen was a juryman at an inquest into the drowning death of a young boy who had been swimming in a dam.⁶⁰ The family was well settled, and possibly financially secure, by December 1864, when Ewen purchased 12 shares valued at £5 each in the Young Australia Gold Mining Company at Bulldog (later known as Illabarook).⁶¹ Their 24-year-old daughter Ann married a local man, James Honan, in 1862, and then the eldest daughter, Mary, married Owen Sullivan, who also lived locally. Their son Ewen junior married the daughter of a local Scottish family, Mary McGruer, after he had applied for 20 acres of land in the bordering Parish of Mannibadar in July 1866, under licence according to the 42nd section of the 1865 Land Act. Ewen and Mary and their seven locally born children took up land near Charlton after 1877, after the government had the Wimmera surveyed and thrown open for selection. In the meantime, Ewen senior was appointed the herdsman to the Argyle and Linton Farmer's Common in September 1865,⁶² when he would have been about 63 years old and possibly no longer wanting to do heavy work mining underground. In September 1867 Ewen senior, giving his

⁵⁹ PROV, VPRS 7310, 7:53, 63, 65, 66, *Chance*, July 1852.

⁶⁰ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 103, File 1050, 15 Dec 1861.

⁶¹ McAdie, *Mining Shareholders Index*.

⁶² *Ballarat Star*, September 26, 1865, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112879171>.

occupation as farmer, applied for a licence to hold 14 acres at Lucky Womans on the site of the now worked-out Try Again gold mine, having gained written permission from the remaining shareholders, who indicated that the mine was finished.⁶³ Ewen purchased that allotment in December 1871 and held a further 12 acres by May 1872. However, he died on New Year's Day of 1876. He bequeathed his real and personal property, amounting to £375, to his wife Annie and son Lewis, being more than 32 acres in the Parish of Argyle with 26 head of cattle, 40 acres in the Parish of Mortchup, and 246 acres in the Parish of Wycheproof, also with cattle. The estate was to be administered by his sons Lewis and Duncan Cameron of Linton.⁶⁴ Ewen and Ann Cameron appear to have raised their socio-economic status by coming to Australia, their earlier years in Scotland having borne the hallmarks of poverty and disadvantage, exemplified by their lack of education, a state overcome by their children. The correspondence in their land files clearly show that their children had attended school, most likely at Lucky Womans School No. 376, and in adulthood, all of them became very well established on large properties in the Wimmera.

German

Members of the Bolte family, who emigrated from central Germany, were among the very earliest settlers at Lucky Womans.⁶⁵ They showed a particularly adventurous nature, arriving in the colonies by way of London. George Bolte left his family and village of Zwergen in Hesse-Casse, aged 32 years, apparently due to high unemployment there. He was living in London by March 1851 where he worked as a sugar baker or confectioner in Sugar House, Whitechapel, with a large number of Europeans.⁶⁶ His brother Philipp who married after arriving in London, stayed there for the rest of his life, working as a tailor.⁶⁷ On his own, then, George arrived at Melbourne on the 658-ton *Persia* in September 1852,⁶⁸ 12 months after gold was discovered, and appears to have

⁶³ PROV, VPRS 627/P0, Unit 57, File 5562/31.

⁶⁴ PROV, VPRS 7591/P2, Unit 24, File 14/253; PROV, VPRS 28/P2, Unit 46, File 14/253.

⁶⁵ This area was later known as Old Lucky Womans, or Argyle, and was close by Dreamers Hill.

⁶⁶ Ancestry.com, *1851 England Census*, HO107/1545, folio 587, 7. In the 1851 census, George Bolte, aged 29 years, is listed with 40 other men of similar age and background employed in the sugar bakery.

⁶⁷ Ancestry.com, *National Probate Calendar*, Ancestry.com, *England and Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1966* [database on-line]. Philip Bolte died at 26 Howland St., Middlesex, 85 years, 18 Nov 1907, 1b:31.

⁶⁸ PROV, VPRS 7666, B/07:01, *Persia*, September 1852.

spent some time on the central Victorian goldfields. By late 1854, George Bolte had travelled from mid Victoria to Hahndorf in South Australia, where he met up again with Caroline Fehring and her brother Johannes, both from Zwergen. Caroline and George married early the following year, in Adelaide, and over the next few years moved into Victoria and eventually settled at Old Lucky Womans (Argyle), where their third child was born in 1859.⁶⁹

Another German family whose arrival at Springdallah was via a port far from their home town, was that of George Yüing from Frankfurt who married Christina Weller in New York on 12 May 1849, before arriving in Melbourne on the *Wings of the Morning* on 24 October 1854, with the first three of their eventual family of 12 children.⁷⁰ By 1863 they had settled at Springdallah, where their seventh child, Amelia, was born.⁷¹ George Yüing died in August 1877 in the All Nations gold mine at Derwent Jacks, discussed more fully in the section covering that district.

MINING

The coloured map published by the Geological Survey of Victoria shows important detail about the Lucky Womans and Happy Valley deep leads, with codes to indicate the sites of company shafts and the type of gold mining that was being undertaken.⁷² Equally important information includes the roadways, marked in brown, and many fence lines, which make it a simple task to orientate across both Clarksdale and Argyle parish plans. Figure 65 shows a part of this map. By early 1861, many of the mines shown on the map were already established,⁷³ and meetings about their progress were being reported upon in the press.

The Lucky Gold Mining Company's shaft is marked slightly south-east of centre, at the intersection of the main road and the Dreamers Hill road that led south-westerly towards Dreamers Hill and Old Lucky Womans. The Lucky mine is the focus of the centre of Happy Valley surveyed township. Another road leads due south from that road

⁶⁹ BDM, *Birth Certificate*, Reg. 13408, Dave Bolte, born 11 March 1859 at Happy Valley. George and Caroline Bolte were the grandparents of a Premier of Victoria, Henry Bolte (1908–1990).

⁷⁰ PROV, VPRS 7667, F/027:2, *Wings of the Morning*, October 1854.

⁷¹ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 4782, Amelia Yüing, born 1863 at Springdallah.

⁷² Finlay and Douglas, *Deep Leads Map 6*.

⁷³ *Star* (Ballarat), February 20, 1861, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66337510>; Finlay and Douglas, *Deep Leads Map No. 6*.

towards Happy Valley Crossing. A short broken line of dashes marks the avenue to the hill on which the school and the Church of England sites were reserved, and to the north-west of that hill are the Ivanhoe, Criterion, Tam O'Shanter and other mining companies that are mentioned as being at Slaughteryard Hill. The Ivanhoe Mining Company gained a five-year lease of 17 ac 0 rd 15 p of alluvial ground at Slaughteryard Hill, Lucky Womans, in June 1861,⁷⁴ and the site of that mine is described as "950 metres west of the intersection of the road from Dreamers Hill and the Happy Valley Road",⁷⁵ as shown in Figure 66.

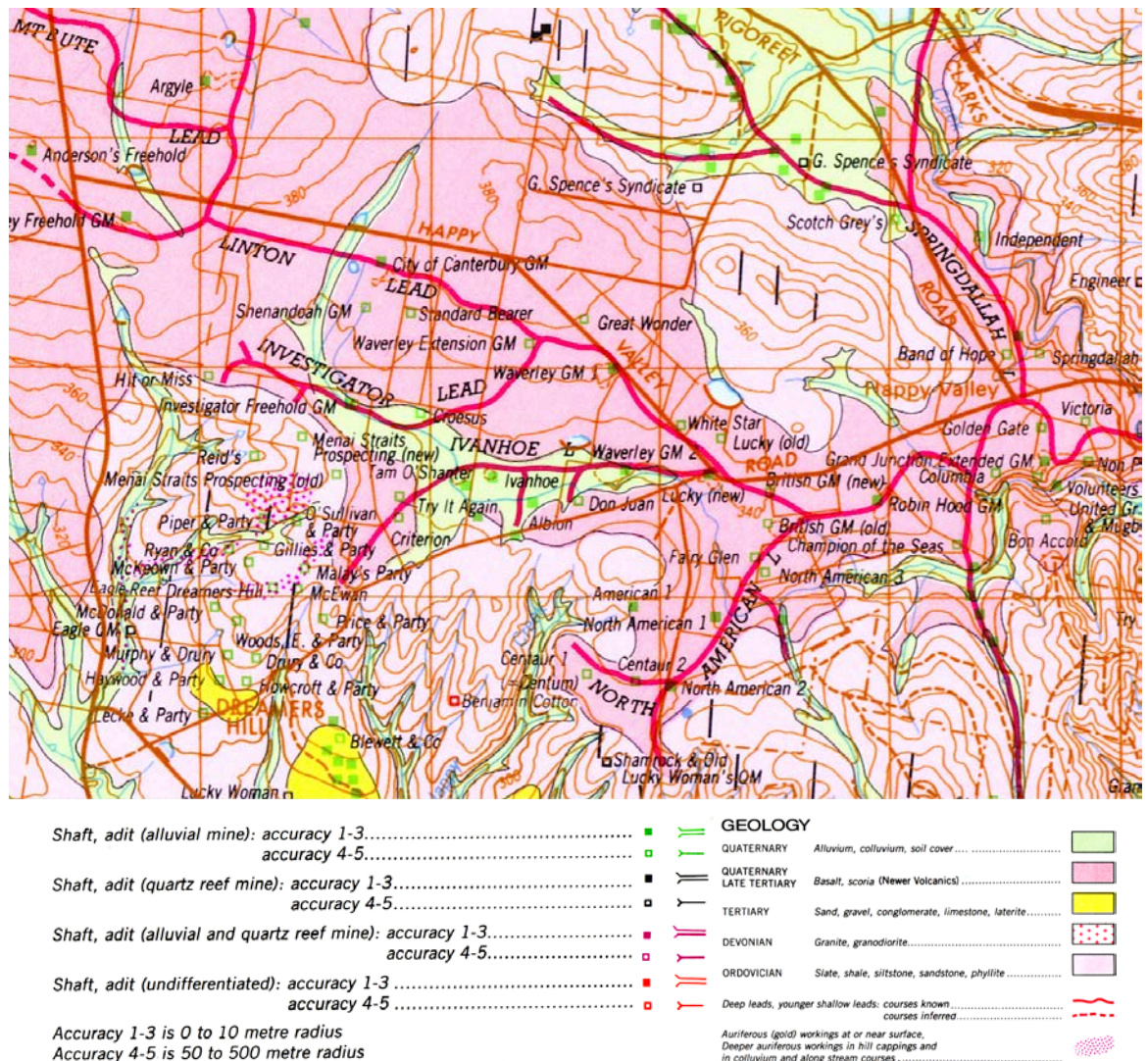


Figure 54. Lucky mine at road intersection, Ivanhoe and Tam O'Shanter mines to the west
Red lines indicate location of leads; brown lines are roads and fence lines. (Adapted from Finlay and Douglas, *Deep Leads Map 6*)

⁷⁴ Star (Ballarat), June 24, 1861, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66340146>.

⁷⁵ Supple, "Historic Gold Mining Sites," 23.

An early record of a gold find in a reef at Dreamers Hill was in August 1860,⁷⁶ and John Irwin Hart had set up a store there by mid 1861.⁷⁷ However, apart from that store, which soon moved to Happy Valley township area, and John and Isabella McKay's Sutherland Arms public house, the residents of Dreamers Hill would always have had to travel to Happy Valley for food and other supplies, children's education, church attendance, mail collection and postage, and access to transport and other services. Several inquests into deaths in the area indicate that a number of single men and families lived around the Dreamers Hill area.⁷⁸

The shallow ground at Dreamers Hill seemed to be exceptionally rich, and many parties did very well, such as Gleeson and party of four men, who washed 240 oz of gold from four loads of washdirt at Dreamers Hill just after Christmas 1861,⁷⁹ and another party obtained 63 oz from 15 loads.⁸⁰ Mining surveyor John Lynch reported that the gold "was found all the way down from the surface to the cement encrusted on the bottom".⁸¹ Eccles Woods and party were crushing at Dreamers Hill in mid 1862, although it seems the material they crushed was not quartz, but rather the hard conglomerate of material the miners called cement.⁸² From its earliest days as a goldfields settlement, Dreamers Hill attracted prospectors and small parties of miners, and the only reasonably large mining company to sink a shaft in that vicinity was the Eagle, in 1860.⁸³ It lasted a few months only, selling its plant and machinery in December that year.⁸⁴

The major mines of Happy Valley followed the main deep lead that ran east-west below the ground on which the Spring Creek flowed. The tributaries that branched from that lead but close to it were the North American, the Ivanhoe, the Investigator and the Linton leads, which ran from the main lead. The Lucky, British, Robin Hood, Volunteers,

⁷⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), August 4, 1860, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66057462>.

⁷⁷ *Star* (Ballarat), June 1, 1861, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66339610>.

⁷⁸ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 126, File 1863/321. Frenchman Auguste died 4 May 1863.

⁷⁹ *Star* (Ballarat), December 28, 1861, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66330413>.

⁸⁰ Smyth, *Gold Fields*, 353.

⁸¹ Lynch, "Mining Surveyors' Reports," December 1861, 3:532.

⁸² *Star* (Ballarat), July 5, 1862, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66325315>.

⁸³ *Star* (Ballarat), October 12, 1860, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66058792>.

⁸⁴ *Star* (Ballarat), December 15, 1860, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66336309>.

Grand Junction and Cleft in the Rock were the major mining companies situated along the main deep lead.⁸⁵ The leases of those companies are shown in Figure 67.

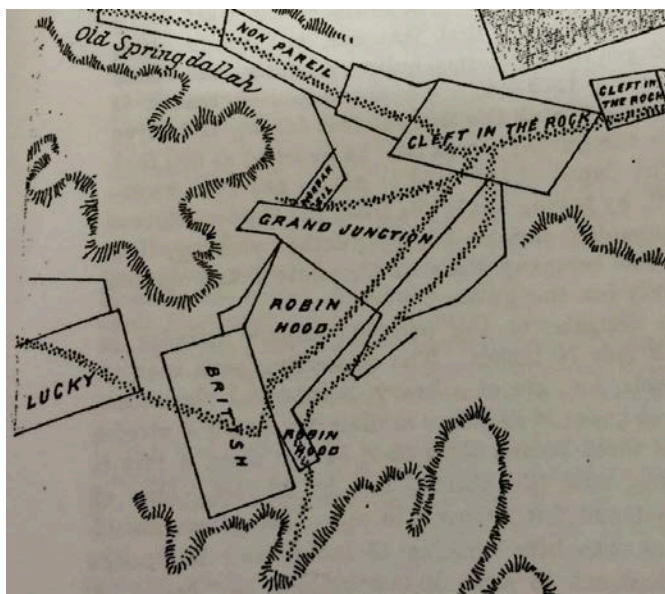


Figure 55. The main mining company leases at Happy Valley

(Reprinted from Dicker, *Mining Record*, 8:121)

The Lucky Gold Mining Company sank its shaft between the main street of Happy Valley township and the bridge over Spring Creek on the road to Dreamers Hill. In November 1860 the Lucky Gold Mining Company was noted as being at Slaughteryard Flat, Lucky Womans.⁸⁶ By 14 November 1861, the Lucky Company had sunk 151 ft in the rock.⁸⁷ The miners had to blast through hard reef rock, and progress was slow.⁸⁸ The mine had been worked out and closed by 1866.

Both the Robin Hood Company and the British Company held leases of 50 acres, and were adjoining claims.⁸⁹ By May 1862 the Robin Hood miners were erecting machinery and attending to their new boiler.⁹⁰ In December 1862 it was reported that the North American lead had several companies extracting gold from it, such as the Centaur, which was a small company of nine shareholders who had achieved rich weekly dividends and had several years remaining on their lease.⁹¹ The common use of horses

⁸⁵ Dicker, *Mining Record*, 2:143.

⁸⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), November 21, 1860, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66335878>.

⁸⁷ *Star* (Ballarat), November 14, 1861, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66343438>.

⁸⁸ *Ballarat Star*, February 8, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112884600>.

⁸⁹ *Star* (Ballarat), June 30, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66346098>.

⁹⁰ *Star* (Ballarat), May 30, 1862, 2S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66324445>.

⁹¹ *Star* (Ballarat), December 15, 1862, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66329487>.

underground and the innovation of boats negotiating flooded workings have already been discussed, but the Robin Hood added to entrepreneurial practice in December 1862,⁹² by using india rubber to waterproof the joints in the construction of their two wholly cast-iron puddling machines.

In June 1865 it was reported that the gutter, that is, the buried riverbed from which the gold was retrieved, in which the Grand Junction Company miners were working was about 50 ft wide.⁹³ The claim adjoined the Volunteers Company, and many of the mines along the Spring Creek below Mt Erip were quite close together. One consequence was seen in June 1866 when the Volunteers Company took the Grand Junction to court for alleged encroachment, with damages laid at £10,000.⁹⁴ Surveyor John Lynch gave evidence that his survey was correct, while surveyor Thomas Cowan from Ballarat caused some debate. The Volunteers Company miners believed the Grand Junction miners had encroached, and evidence was given that the timbers in the drive in question had been removed to allow the ground to fall in, to disallow a survey to be undertaken, indicating guilt in an illegal act. The judge awarded £7,500 damages and £71 costs in this case that was indicative of the difficulties that could arise when claims were so close together.

Describing its place of operations as Slaughteryard Flat, Lucky Womans Diggings, the Ivanhoe Company initially sold 44 shares of £40 each by October 1860.⁹⁵ There were 43 shareholders, one holding two shares and the rest just one each. Twenty shareholders were from Lucky Womans, 17 from Linton, 3 from Smythesdale and 3 from Ballarat. It is likely that there were many working shareholders among them, such as the father and son Joseph Weir senior and junior, David Evans, and Gerald Fitzgerald, who was the manager of the company, but local farmers such as George Bull and Armstrong Kerr were also listed.

During the decades covered by this thesis, there were numerous attempts to legislate for mining on private property, but no laws were passed.⁹⁶ All mining deals made with private owners were, in effect, illegal, because minerals belonged to the Crown despite the land being owned privately⁹⁷ and mining wardens were not involved. The one

⁹² *Star* (Ballarat), December 4, 1862, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66329193>.

⁹³ *Argus* (Melbourne), June 16, 1865, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5735061>.

⁹⁴ *Ballarat Star*, June 15, 1866, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112862917>.

⁹⁵ *Star* (Ballarat), October 12, 1860, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66058802>.

⁹⁶ Birrell, *Staking a Claim*, 103.

⁹⁷ Serle, *Golden Age*, 226.

instance in which gold could legally be mined on private land was if the owner himself was the miner, provided he held a miner's right.⁹⁸ It was not until the 1884 Mining on Private Property Act (48 Vict. 796), that leases and agreements became legal for both owners of property mining on their own land and for miners leasing from owners. Serle pointed out the problems that arose from auriferous land having been sold for farming purposes, citing the case at Clunes when 4,000 diggers had rushed that private land.⁹⁹

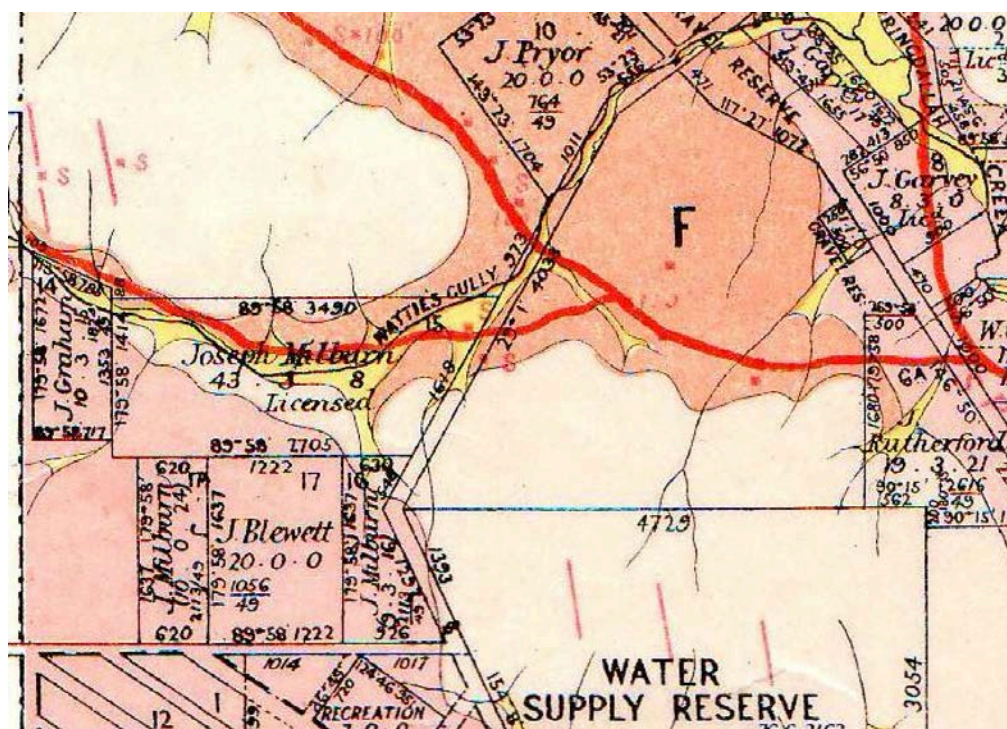


Figure 56. Allotments selected by J. Milburn north of Happy Valley township

Dotted line at left marks the boundary between parishes of Argyle and Clarksdale. (Adapted from Department of Crown Lands and Survey, Melbourne)

When Joseph Milburn applied for the unsurveyed Crown land above the southwest corner of the township of Happy Valley, shown in Figure 68,¹⁰⁰ the file notes bore a memo that “the adjoining land was put up for sale in 1857”.¹⁰¹ In fact, 21 country lots, varying from 31 to 100 acres were advertised for sale in September of that year, at £1 per lot in the Parish of Argyle, where “the soil is well adapted for agriculture, part good black soil, and part rich chocolate soil; the land is stoney and moderately timbered with sheoak,

⁹⁸ This fine point was applicable, of course, to all mining companies who had purchased the land on which their mine was situated, as the shareholders would have held miner's rights.

⁹⁹ Serle, *Golden Age*, 226.

¹⁰⁰ Crown Lands Department, *Clarksdale*, <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/12892279>.

¹⁰¹ PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 80, File 2222/49 and 2173/49.

lightwood and gum".¹⁰² Given that there were reports of large numbers of diggers working the surface alluvium within the adjoining countryside, it is not surprising that the land sold for agricultural use was later found to be auriferous, a situation that provided the ingredients for conflict between the two communities of miners and farmers. That potential conflict was avoided, as discussed below in this chapter, is to the credit of all concerned within the Happy Valley community.

The main purchaser of the several 43- to 70-acre allotments in 1857 was John Payne Lloyd, the property being allotments 17, 18 and 19 of the Parish of Argyle. Lloyd, a sheep farmer, owned extensive property throughout Queensland and western Victoria.¹⁰³ William Trewin also purchased several 75- to 100-acre allotments and may have been instrumental in others of his family purchasing some of Lloyd's land later, as Peter McKean did.¹⁰⁴

At Springdallah, common sense seemed to prevail, and mutually beneficial arrangements between miners and farmers were negotiated. For instance, when the Investigator Gold Mining Company arranged to purchase the 208-acre farm owned by George Trewin in October 1864, it was revealed that it was the fourth farm, all in the same family, that had been sold recently for mining purposes.¹⁰⁵ The purchase price was £3,000. The Trewin farmers were from Cornwall. Brothers Nathan Trewin (1833–1898) and John Cossey Trewin (1831–1898) had arrived at Geelong on the *John Knox* in 1851 and married maternal cousins Elizabeth (daughter of George Trewin and Susannah Prout) and Selina Trewin (daughter of William Trewin and Jane Prout).¹⁰⁶ The Trewins bought farming land at Waubra and Coghills Creek, where their families continued to thrive, as demonstrated by William Trewin junior's will, in which his estate was calculated at £15,750.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰² *Age* (Melbourne), September 5, 1857, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article154831087>.

¹⁰³ *The Australasian* (Melbourne), July 23, 1910, 45, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article142929247>.

¹⁰⁴ McKean was another farmer at Argyle who later sold his land to a mining company.

¹⁰⁵ *Star* (Ballarat), October 27, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66349205>.

¹⁰⁶ Their mothers were the sisters Susannah and Jane Prout, who married Trewin men.

¹⁰⁷ PROV, VPRS 7591/P2, Unit 182, File 46/405, William Trewin, died 10 August 1891. Estate valued at £6,242/1/8; PROV, VPRS 7591/P2, Unit 394, File 99/746, William Trewin, died 16 April 1906. Estate valued at £15,750. The Trewins at Coghills Creek and Waubra left estates to the value of thousands of pounds in the next two generations.

Three months after the Investigator Company purchased land, it was reported that 70 acres of Trewin's paddock had been leased for 10 years for mining purposes under the name of the Shenandoah Gold Mining Company.¹⁰⁸ In February 1865 Ann, Mary and Nathan Trewin each purchased five shares at £5 each in the Shenandoah Company, and Thomas and William Trewin each purchased 10 shares at £10 each.¹⁰⁹ William Trewin sold a detached portion of his Westgate Farm in 1864 to his nephew for £750, and when the Shenandoah Company purchased the right to mine that same land they paid his nephew £1,050. The extended Trewin family was part of the Happy Valley community for some years, holding membership on the Woody Yaloak Roads Board¹¹⁰ and participating in ploughing matches.¹¹¹ A haystack on Nathan Trewin's property caught fire in the summer of 1862, threatening the stored grain from the whole year's produce as well as valuable machinery such as the thresher.¹¹² Neighbours and the family all assisted to fight the fire and remove machinery.

INSTITUTIONS

Survey plans of townships across Victoria normally included Crown reserves for institutions such as churches, halls, mechanics' institutes and free libraries, schools, and recreation reserves of various kinds. At Happy Valley, this occurred in a very limited way. There is no sign on the official survey plan to indicate the sites of important meeting places for the community. Buildings used for institutional functions were usually designated by the residents, and sometimes were indicated on later maps or referred to in documents. For most, there is no visual evidence of where the institutions once were, although the school, known under various names over the years but always number 376, is the only building still standing at Happy Valley.

The Lucky Womans School No. 376 opened in February 1860, with head teacher Thomas Lea.¹¹³ In May 1861 Lea reported that the schoolhouse would be moved from that place (later called Old Lucky Womans) to Ivanhoe Flat, where most of the

¹⁰⁸ *Ballarat Star*, February 8, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112884600>.

¹⁰⁹ *Victoria Government Gazette*, February 20, 1865, 721:499–500, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹¹⁰ *Star* (Ballarat), January 9, 1863, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72554046>.

¹¹¹ *Ballarat Star*, July 21, 1865, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112877407>.

¹¹² *Age* (Melbourne), February 28, 1862, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article154845199>.

¹¹³ Blake, *Vision and Realisation*, 647. Thomas Lea was at the school for at least seven years, later being transferred to Osbornes Flat near Yackandandah by March 1879.

schoolchildren lived.¹¹⁴ This places its new position to close to the township site of Happy Valley. The first denominational school classes were held in the small weatherboard building also used as the Church of England, on the slopes overlooking the flat on which the Ivanhoe Gold Mining Company was working. Figure 69 shows the new site of the church and school.¹¹⁵



Figure 57. School and Anglican church sites south of township

(Courtesy of Public Record Office Victoria [PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 108, File 3338/49.18])

The Common Schools Act that became law on 18 June 1862 provided for the abolition of both the Denominational and National School Boards, replacing them with the Board of Education.¹¹⁶ Section 10 of the 1862 Act disallowed government funding for two schools within two miles,¹¹⁷ thereby creating a problem for the two church schools at Happy Valley, as the Catholic school was in Section 18 in the main street,¹¹⁸ as shown in Figure 70.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴ *Star* (Ballarat), May 10, 1861, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66339133>.

¹¹⁵ Ivanhoe Flat was beyond the road to the left of the school site shown on the map.

¹¹⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), December 15, 1862, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66329487>.

¹¹⁷ Ann R. Shorten, "The Legal Context of Australian Education: An Historical Exploration," *Australia New Zealand Journal of Law Education*, 1:1 (1996): 13, accessed July 25, 2015, URL: <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/ANZJILawEdu/1996/2.pdf>.

¹¹⁸ Note that Section 18 is Township of Happy Valley; Section H refers to the Parish of Clarksdale, within which the township is situated, so that lots 26A and 29 are in the parish.

¹¹⁹ Victoria. Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure. Central Plan Office. *Put Away Plans: Old Parish Township Plans*. John Lynch, Authorised surveyor, Central Plans Office [C374/B5, Application No. 82/1576/49, 28 October 1882

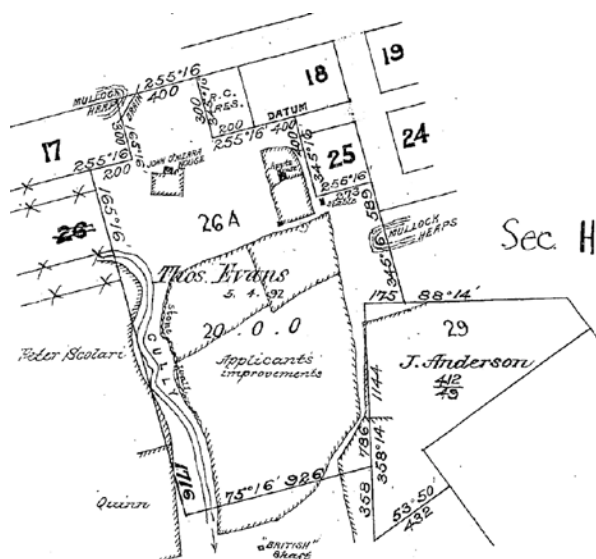


Figure 70. Catholic church reserve, section 18, fronting the main street at Happy Valley
(Adapted from Central Plan Office, 374/B5, Application No. 82/1576/49, 28 October 1882)

About 90 children were in attendance at Lucky Womans Common School No. 376 in 1863, and the wooden building had to be doubled in size and then extended again. By September 1870, three men, Joseph Rowlands, James Prior and James Davis, were appointed by the Board of Education as members of the local school committee.¹²⁰ In March 1873 John Montgomery, MLA for Grenville, presented to the Minister of Public Instruction a signed petition from residents of Happy Valley requesting that their school be made a state school¹²¹ under the superintendence of Miles Barrowclough, the incumbent head teacher. The building belonged to the Church of England denomination, so the petitioners requested that the church trustees be asked on what terms they were willing to hand over the property, which needed enlargement, to the government.

In November 1873 a site consisting of 1 ac 2 rd was reserved for state school purposes, to be vested in the Minister of Public Instruction.¹²² The survey commenced at a point next to the Church of England site. On 11 January 1875 a new brick building was opened, constructed at a cost of £1,177/13/6. It was calculated to accommodate 250 children,¹²³ but 270 were present on that occasion, and there were 303 children on the

¹²⁰ *Victoria Government Gazette*, September 9, 1870, 61:1325, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹²¹ *Argus* (Melbourne), March 19, 1873, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5850270>.

¹²² *Victoria Government Gazette*, November 28, 1873, 83:2087, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹²³ *Ballarat Courier*, January 21, 1875, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article191558619>.

roll. The building, illustrated in Figure 71,¹²⁴ had three rooms: one 65 ft by 20 ft, the second 40 ft by 20 ft, and the third 20 ft by 20 ft.

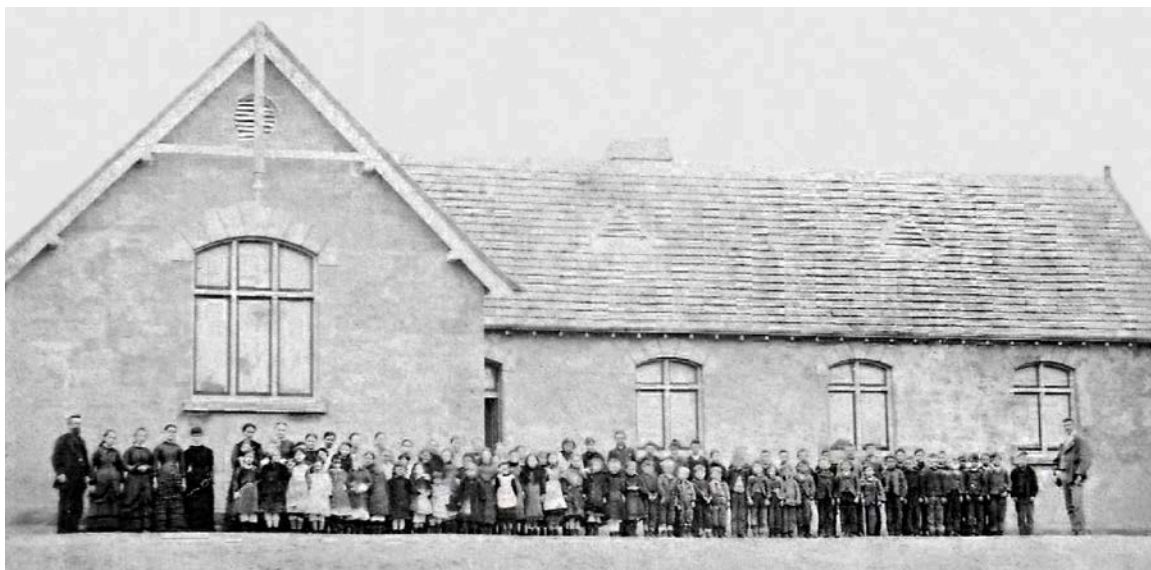


Figure 58. Lucky Womans State School No. 376 about 1874 with head teacher Miles Barrowclough
(Courtesy of Linton Historical Society)

As part of the celebration, over 400 children sat down to enjoy a substantial evening meal. The old wooden building was sold for £10 to Charles Weston, who removed it to his store on the road to Happy Valley Crossing just south of the school.¹²⁵ Table 10 shows the staff at the school by March 1878.

Table 10. Staff names and positions of Lucky Womans State School in March 1878

Name	Position
Miles Barrowclough	Head teacher
Margaret MacKay	1st assistant
Amy E. Barrowclough	2nd assistant
Annie Victoria Barrowclough	Pupil teacher
Edward Morgan	Pupil teacher
Mary Thomas	Pupil teacher

Source: Data from PROV, VPRS 640/P0, Unit 222, File 376, Lucky Womans school.

In March 1878 the average attendance was 202, which had dropped to 105 by March 1884. The declining mining population led to the school going from two assistant teachers to just one by 1883, when long-serving head teacher Miles Barrowclough

¹²⁴ It is likely that Miles Barrowclough is the man standing at far left; his daughters and wife are known to have assisted at the school, so he is probably standing next to them.

¹²⁵ PROV, VPRS 640/P0, Unit 222, File 376, Lucky Womans school.

succeeded in gaining a transfer to a larger school to maintain his income. This was at a time when teachers were paid according to the numbers of students enrolled at the school.¹²⁶ His departure was recorded with the comment that “as a citizen he has endeavoured in every way to promote the welfare of this district during the 14 years he has resided therein”.¹²⁷

A group of Catholic men formed a “Roman Catholic Church Committee, Luckywomans”,¹²⁸ and met at John Irwin Hart’s post office store, shown in Figure 72, on 15 July 1862. It comprised Messrs Hart, Bourke, O’Meara, Shanahan and Power, who voted “to forward the erection of a much required place of worship and school in our rising locality”.¹²⁹ Within a fortnight, the same group met again under the title of the Catholic School Committee. The premises adjoining Hart’s store were altered and improved for a Catholic school, and a temporary chapel was built for a celebration of Mass held on Sunday 3 August 1862. The Catholic school became Common School No. 818. In April 1865 there were 39 children at the school, being taught by Miss Kate Gannon. Both common schools 818 and 376 requested financial aid in August 1865 from the Board of Education.¹³⁰ Archdeacon L. Sheil, DD, of the Ballarat Catholic Presbytery, applied for funding to pay salaries for a headmaster and assistant female teacher for the non-vested Infant Common School, which had 70 pupils on the roll in August 1865.¹³¹ In 1866 Miss Mary Anne Stowe took over as teacher, but in August of that year, she married Matthew Gargan of Meredith,¹³² and the school had closed by September 1866.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ PROV, VPRS 640/P0, Unit 221, File 376, letter 15 October 1884 from John C. Fraser.

¹²⁸ Gallagher, “Light of Other Days,” 4:22.

¹²⁹ Ballarat Catholic Diocesan Archives, Notes of meeting, Archive Box 29/1, Item 4.

¹³⁰ PROV, VPRS 640/P0, Unit 222, File 376, August 22, 1865.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 1449, Matthew Gargan married Mary Anne Stowe in 1866.



Figure 59. The Catholic church and school to the right of Hart's store

(Courtesy of Linton Historical Society)

Churches built in the township area of Happy Valley serviced the whole district, and no record survives of any church or chapel at Old Lucky Womans or Dreamers Hill.

A visiting priest from Mt Moriac parish, Father M. Farrelly, had been saying Mass at Lucky Womans since 1859.¹³³ Three years later, fundraising commenced by subscription from local people, who gained the support of Father Farrelly in having a church built in the locality. The Catholic church reserve on the south side of the main street at Happy Valley was where the church was erected.¹³⁴ Mass was celebrated in the new church on Sunday 21 August 1862 attended by about 200 persons.¹³⁵ The church was closed soon after and was later demolished. By the mid 1860s, Lucky Womans had been moved out of the Mt Moriac parish into the Ballarat parish.¹³⁶

By the end of December 1862, due to the large and increasing congregation, an amount of nearly £100 had already been subscribed towards a new Church of England building. Ballarat architect Henry Richards Caselli called for tenders in January 1863 for a wooden Anglican church to be built, the drawings and specifications to be viewed at the schoolhouse.¹³⁷ On 24 June 1863 it was announced that “an Anglican Church has been

¹³³ Gallagher, “Light of Other Days,” 4:22.

¹³⁴ PROV, VPRS 627/P1, Unit 304, File 21694/31.

¹³⁵ Gallagher, “Light of Other Days,” 4:22.

¹³⁶ Ibid. Part of the demolished building is believed to have been used in extensions, possibly the sacristy, to the Linton church, and part was incorporated into the home of Thomas Kennedy at Springvale, now called Pittong.

¹³⁷ *Star* (Ballarat), January 22, 1863, 1, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72554345>.

erected at Happy Valley”,¹³⁸ situated on the hill directly south of the township. The estimated cost of the building was £300, of which £128 came from local contributions, and £135 was voted from the Council of the Diocese.¹³⁹ The minister, Mr Scott, had a house made available to him, on which the sum of £20 was expended. The one-acre allotment, shown with the building in Figure 73, was temporarily reserved for a Church of England by Order of the Governor in Council on 10 August 1863.¹⁴⁰



Figure 60. St Mark's Church of England at Happy Valley

(Courtesy of Jill Harvey, private collection)

The following month, the reserve trustees appointed were teacher Thomas Lea, mine secretary Thomas Davies, mine investor and shareholder Edward Morey, mine manager Edward George Milligan and storekeeper Charles Weston.¹⁴¹ By November, the church was appealing for a second-hand harmonium at a cost of less than £20.¹⁴² A tea meeting was held in May 1864 to celebrate the first anniversary of St Mark's, attended by 250–300 people, at which the choir entertained.¹⁴³ The congregation celebrated the church's 20th anniversary on 9 November 1884 in the state school building, when a

¹³⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), June 24, 1863, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72515235>.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ *Victoria Government Gazette*, August 19, 1863, 84:1823, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹⁴¹ *Victoria Government Gazette*, September 8, 1863, 91:1977, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>; *Argus* (Melbourne), September 10, 1863, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article6488872>.

¹⁴² *Star* (Ballarat), November 7, 1863, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72511260>.

¹⁴³ *Star* (Ballarat), May 26, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66345190>.

public tea and concert of vocal and instrumental music were held,¹⁴⁴ an example of the many fundraising activities used to liquidate the churches' debts.

In August 1864 tenders were called for the removal from Browns Diggings of a Wesleyan church (specifications could be seen at the parsonage there) and its re-erection at Happy Valley.¹⁴⁵ It is shown in Figure 743.

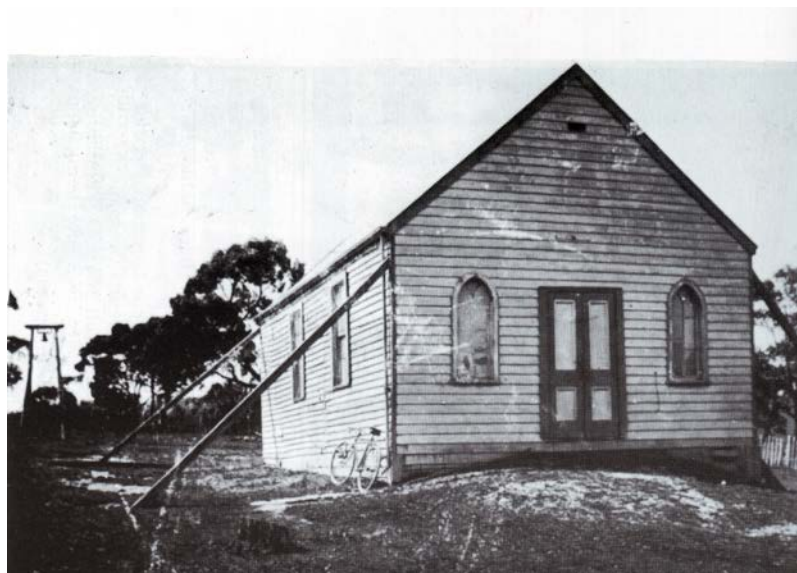


Figure 61. Wesleyan Methodist church at Happy Valley

(Courtesy of Linton Historical Society)

It was reported in October 1863 that the members of the Presbyterian Church at Happy Valley had formed a church committee and wanted to establish a service amongst them.¹⁴⁶ The congregation must have been formed from the strong Welsh community at Happy Valley, because after services were held there in November 1864,¹⁴⁷ two Welsh Presbyterian chapels were opened the following month.¹⁴⁸ By February 1865, it was reported that a new Welsh Congregational church had been established at Happy Valley,¹⁴⁹ the newspaper reporting that about 240 people met for a tea meeting in the Wesleyan chapel, which was made available for the purpose. Nothing more was reported

¹⁴⁴ *The Church of England Messenger and Ecclesiastical Gazette for the Diocese of Melbourne and Ballarat* (Melbourne), January 12, 1884, 21, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197131372>.

¹⁴⁵ *Star* (Ballarat), August 26, 1864, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66347564>. This building was demolished and rebuilt in March 1916 (*Ballarat Courier*, March 24, 1916, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article74505420>).

¹⁴⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), October 10, 1863, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72517835>.

¹⁴⁷ *Star* (Ballarat), November 25, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66350017>.

¹⁴⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), December 23, 1864, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66350708>.

¹⁴⁹ *Ballarat Star*, February 9, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112884630>.

about the Welsh Congregationalists after that date, and it is likely that the Wesleyan Methodist church in Figure 73 became the non-conformist place of worship for the district.

LAW AND ORDER

At the end of 1859, a Lucky Womans butcher named Burgess, known occasionally to carry as much as £100, was attacked by two men who stole his money and broke his jaw, leaving him in a ditch.¹⁵⁰ One of the perpetrators was known to Burgess, who reported the incident to the police at Pitfield. As a result, four days before Christmas, detective officer Daly, stationed at Smythesdale, arrested and charged John Mellday with violent assault and robbery at Lucky Womans.¹⁵¹

There was a police station at Happy Valley by the end of 1865, when the building was used as a polling station for the Legislative Assembly elections.¹⁵² However, within three years, the Victoria Police Gazette announced that the Happy Valley Police Station had been abolished, presumably due to the proximity of both Linton and Piggoreet police camps, between which Happy Valley was situated.¹⁵³ Community response was vocal, a letter to the editor claiming that “numerous outrages and rows which took place ever since the station was broken up” included a recent stabbing case.¹⁵⁴ The newspapers reported cases of pigs being allowed to wander, dogs worrying cows, furious riding, non-payment of debts due, and premises not being licensed to carry on certain activities, with very few instances of serious crime, and the Happy Valley Police Station was never reinstated.

A case brought before the police magistrate, John Prendergast Hamilton, at Smythesdale at the end of August 1866 involved petty theft and a harsh punishment.¹⁵⁵ James Robinson had been residing at Edmund Walters’ Crown Hotel at Happy Valley when he stole three teaspoons valued at 1 shilling and 6 pence, each marked “Crown

¹⁵⁰ *Argus* (Melbourne), December 6, 1859, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5693082>.

¹⁵¹ *Star* (Ballarat), December 21, 1859, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72463922>.

¹⁵² *Ballarat Star*, December 30, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112866123>.

¹⁵³ *Ballarat Star*, February 3, 1868, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113600885>. The newspaper reported on the Police Gazette announcement.

¹⁵⁴ *Ballarat Star*, May 22, 1868, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113603525>.

¹⁵⁵ *Ballarat Star*, September 1, 1866, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112864734>.

hotel”, identified by Walters as his property. With a previous record counting against him, he was sentenced to 14 days imprisonment with hard labour in Ballarat gaol.

COMMERCE AND BUSINESS

Hotelkeeper Thomas Bellingham was the hotelkeeper of the Roebuck Hotel at Happy Valley in July 1863 when he joined the Licensed Victuallers Association.¹⁵⁶ He had been granted a publicans’ licence at the Linton Police Court on 25 June,¹⁵⁷ and lived with his family in a cottage, rather than within the hotel. Constable Boyne took Bellingham to court in November 1863 for “keeping a closed hotel at Happy Valley”.¹⁵⁸ A man named Robins gave evidence that he was in possession of the Roebuck Hotel, and that the building and furniture were his, the consequence being the cancellation of Bellingham’s licence. Bellingham was a provisional director of the Standard Gold Mining Company of Happy Valley (bounded on the north by the British and Lucky companies).¹⁵⁹ On 18 July 1867 the windows of his cottage were completely smashed, apparently an act of retribution against him for having given evidence against George Boulton (alias Harry Barbour) for robbery.¹⁶⁰ Barbour was convicted of having stolen £41 from the jacket of John Textor, of the firm of Textor and Hyatt, butchers of Happy Valley, Bellingham having deposed that the prisoner had come to him at the Lucky mine and had handed him a £10 note to mind. The statement in court was sufficient to incriminate Barbour.

In January 1861 it was reported that Mr McKeeman had removed his post office store to a site that became Happy Valley township. John Irwin Hart appears to have taken over the post office store until 1866,¹⁶¹ when he left for New Zealand. The widowed Margaret Tynan was postmistress in the 1880s,¹⁶² and a freehold grant of five acres in Sections 19 and 24 of the township was made to her in December 1884.¹⁶³ Her obituary

¹⁵⁶ *Star* (Ballarat), July 2, 1863, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72515442>.

¹⁵⁷ *Star* (Ballarat), June 29, 1863, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72515350>.

¹⁵⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), November 27, 1863, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72511750>.

¹⁵⁹ *Ballarat Star*, March 22, 1865, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112885530>.

¹⁶⁰ *Age* (Melbourne), July 23, 1867, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article185503628>.

¹⁶¹ Gallagher, *Light of Other Days*, 4:22.

¹⁶² Post Office and Telegraph Department, and Langridge, *Affairs of Post Office*, 65.

¹⁶³ PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 83, File 20148/31 and 2335/49. This allotment adjoined her 5 acres of freehold land fronting on the Happy Valley main street.

indicated that she had lived at Happy Valley since about 1867.¹⁶⁴ Her husband, William Tynan, had been a police constable in Ballarat from 1861¹⁶⁵ and was one of the first police at Piggoreet, with Mounted Senior Constable Butcher.¹⁶⁶ A Kilkenny man, William had married Margaret Malone and with their two infant daughters, Dorah and Mary, had emigrated to Liverpool by 1855 when their son James was born.¹⁶⁷ After their fourth child, William John, was born in Liverpool in 1858, William arrived on the Ballarat goldfields, joining the police force and sending for his wife and children. They arrived on the *Star of Brunswick* in May 1862 and joined William, settling in Happy Valley, apparently about 1867, where William and Margaret both died.¹⁶⁸ Their daughter Mary Tynan was postmistress after her mother's retirement.

A bank at Happy Valley was recorded when the Staffordshire Reef Quartz Company sold a bar of gold weighing 74 oz 3 dwt there in September 1865, the result of a fortnight's work.¹⁶⁹ Mr W. H. Comyns' gold office was advertised from at least 17 September 1862, eventually becoming a branch of the Bank of Australasia, of which he was manager in September 1866.¹⁷⁰ At the start of that year, the Union Bank had caused the disposal by sale of the Lucky Gold Mining Company plant and property, realising £820.¹⁷¹ The branch was closed early in 1867.¹⁷²

SOCIAL LIFE

The earliest sporting facility at Happy Valley was a gazetted cricket reserve.¹⁷³ By July 1876, however, it was claimed that the ground had never been played upon, and that the cricket club had ceased to exist more than two years previously and in any event had

¹⁶⁴ *Leader* (Melbourne), January 1, 1898, 24, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197306646>.

¹⁶⁵ *Star* (Ballarat), October 1, 1861, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66342433>.

¹⁶⁶ *Berringa Herald*, May 20, 1916, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article130111750>.

¹⁶⁷ FreeBMD, *England and Wales, FreeBMD Index, 1837-1915*. <http://www.freebmd.org.uk/>, March quarter 1855, 8b:2, birth registered Liverpool, James Tynan.

¹⁶⁸ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 2569, William Tynan, died 1875; BDM, *Federation Index*, Reg. 12926, Margaret Tynan, died 1897.

¹⁶⁹ *Ballarat Star*, September 25, 1865, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112879144>.

¹⁷⁰ *Ballarat Star*, September 26, 1866, 1S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112865339>.

¹⁷¹ *Ballarat Star*, January 12, 1866, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112866459>.

¹⁷² *Avoca Mail*, May 25, 1867, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article190705077>.

¹⁷³ *Victoria Government Gazette*, May 1, 1874, 28:801, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

chosen to play on a ground at a different site.¹⁷⁴ Of the many sporting events held throughout the 1860s and 1870s, most took place in paddocks, courtesy of local farmers. This was also true of picnics, outdoor dancing, band playing and other community activities. Most fundraising events, such as tea meetings, included singing and music of all kinds, recitations and readings.

HEALTH AND HAZARDS

Dr John O'Connell provided medical care, including vaccination services, to the Lucky Womans and Happy Valley area from about 1859.¹⁷⁵ However, it was Dr Thomas Hoskins who took over from him and maintained medical services for many years through the 1860s and 1870s.¹⁷⁶ The district coroner, Dr Thomas Hopper, was appointed in October 1860¹⁷⁷ and conducted a great many inquests throughout the next two decades. By 1874 Dr Andrew Clarke, MD, continued the public vaccinator role and was called upon, as the previous medical men had been, to attend births and the ill and injured, and to officiate at registrations of deaths.¹⁷⁸

A Scottish shepherd named Thomas McDonald was employed by David Clarke of Piggoreet West and was stationed on the plains between Lucky Womans and Pitfield in October 1865 when Thomas Hopper held an inquest into the death of McDonald's child.¹⁷⁹ The boy, Colin McIntyre McDonald was 16 months old when he died in his mother's arms from diphtheria. The inquest was held at John McKay's Sutherland Arms Hotel at Old Lucky Womans.

When 54-year-old John Zanolli died from inflammation of the right lung at Lucky Womans in December 1866, an inquest into his death was held, again at the Sutherland Arms.¹⁸⁰ His friend Giovanni Madalena, who had travelled in the same ship, gave evidence that Zanolli, a miner and splitter, was from the Canton Ticino in Switzerland, where he had left his wife and four children 12 years previously. His evidence, that Zanolli was a very drunken man who lived alone in a bark hut in great destitution and had

¹⁷⁴ PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 80, File 2222/49, Joseph Milburn, letter, 15 January 1877.

¹⁷⁵ *Victoria Government Gazette*, November 22, 1859, 183:2484, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹⁷⁶ *Victoria Government Gazette*, September 12, 1865, 121:2070, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹⁷⁷ *Victoria Government Gazette*, October 19, 1860, 132:1961, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹⁷⁸ *Victoria Government Gazette*, March 6, 1874, 16:456, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹⁷⁹ *Ballarat Star*, October 13, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112879613>.

¹⁸⁰ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 181, File 1866/1174. John Zanolli died on December 27, 1866.

recently been ill, indicated that Zanoli was like many men in a similar situation and condition living without the support and comfort of their own family. Unlike the men who brought their families with them, or created them at Springdallah, their loneliness and depression often led to emotional and mental debilitation, probably exacerbated by alcohol.

Sometimes the injuries sustained in accidents were beyond the abilities and resources of local medical people, and Ballarat Hospital was the last resort. When James Kent had a quantity of earth fall on him in the Lucky Company claim at Lucky Womans in 1864, he injured his back and fractured his left leg, and had to be admitted to the hospital in Ballarat.¹⁸¹ At the end of September 1878, Joshua Peart, a Happy Valley miner, injured his kneecap in an accident at the Little Golden Horn claim and was admitted to the Ballarat hospital, where it was found necessary to amputate the leg.¹⁸² Several other men from Happy Valley were admitted to the Ballarat Hospital,¹⁸³ as shown in Table 11.

Table 11. Happy Valley men admitted to Ballarat Hospital 1869–1883

Name	Age	Born	Admitted	Discharged	No.
William Brightwell	42	London	1869, Mar 01	1869, May 18	1179
Michael Duggan	31	County Clare	1878, Aug 17	1878, Nov 21	9970
Robert Park	65	County Sligo	1878, Aug 20	1878, Sep 30	9980
George Bolte	58	Germany	1879, Jan 14	1879, Mar 06	10260
Samuel Burrows	52	County Down	1883, Apr 03	1883, Sep 01	13595
Joseph Moschetti	72	Switzerland	1883, Apr 20	1883, May 08	13632

Source: Data from Ballarat and District Genealogical Society, "Ballarat Hospital Admissions Register, 1857–1913".

Two major hazards on any goldfield in the 19th century were water and fire. At Happy Valley on the last day of May 1873, the store and dwelling of Johnstone and Annie Wilson were destroyed by fire.¹⁸⁴ The children had gone to bed when the kerosene lamp hanging in the store fell while Johnstone was in the stable seeing to the horse. The servant raised the alarm, but other than the very young children, there was nothing saved. The premises were insured with the Imperial Company for £300, and it was hoped that

¹⁸¹ *Star* (Ballarat), December 19, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66350601>.

¹⁸² *Ballarat Star*, October 3, 1878, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article199344668>.

¹⁸³ Ballarat and District Genealogical Society, "Ballarat Hospital Admissions Register, 1857–1913". Microfiche.

¹⁸⁴ *Ballarat Courier*, June 3, 1873, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article192280504>.

gold that Wilson, as a gold buyer, had among the property would be recovered by washing the debris.

LAND

The experience of some early immigrants to the west of Melbourne was that land was difficult to obtain. Murray demonstrated this in his work on the Scots from Moidart in the remote western highlands of Scotland, from which place more than half the population arrived in Victoria in the 1850s.¹⁸⁵ In comparison with the Moidart households, the families at and near Happy Valley and Lucky Womans provide evidence of local land acquisition under the Land Acts that often led to larger property acquisition in the Mallee, the Wimmera and Gippsland as the gold at Springdallah gave out and they turned to farming. Serle argued that the “hallmark of success” for immigrants to Victoria was the possession of land,¹⁸⁶ and the decisions made by the gold mining community around Happy Valley support his claim. The paper trail provided by the land selection files shows that occupancy by licence, eventually leading to freehold grant of their acreage, was the aim of many who were raising families at Springdallah.

Different viewpoints in regard to the alienation of auriferous land still existed as late as 1871 in the district of Happy Valley, where land purchase for farming purposes had been allowed under the 42nd section of the 1862 Land Act, despite the contiguity to the gold mining industry. Spurred by news that a petition from the Happy Valley Mining Association had been referred to the Mining Board by the Minister of Lands, a writer to the editor of the *Ballarat Star* in August 1871 expounded on the issue, referring to “acts of injustice to the tub and cradle digger”.¹⁸⁷ He claimed that what he called the farming mania had meant land was taken up right to the edge of the old workings at the old Woody Yaloak diggings (Springdallah), claiming that the mining men had protested at the time against auriferous ground being granted but to no avail. An appeal to the Mining Board had not been replied to.¹⁸⁸ “They are not satisfied with having got snug farms on

¹⁸⁵ Michael J. Murray, “Prayers and Pastures: Moidart emigrants in Victoria, 1852-1920.” Doctoral Thesis. Geelong, Deakin University, 2006, 247.

¹⁸⁶ Serle, *Golden Age*, 133.

¹⁸⁷ *Ballarat Star*, August 10, 1871, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197564995>.

¹⁸⁸ *Ballarat Star*, September 12, 1871, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197565807>.

Lucky Womans under the 42nd clause”, stated the correspondent, also advising that auriferous land should not be fenced in.

The 1869 Land Act, known as the second Grant Act, came into force in February 1870.¹⁸⁹ Several of its sections, particularly the 19th, 20th, 31st and 49th section conditions, enabled the mining population of Springdallah to take up land under licence, although it often passed through several selectors’ possession before being granted freehold. Its purpose was to expand land ownership in Victoria, and it simplified the process as well as the conditions. It was possible to gain the land freehold after holding the licence for three years, but, in effect, this rarely happened at Springdallah, mainly due to the restrictions on purchasing auriferous ground or ground that might in future be required for a railway reserve.¹⁹⁰ Consequently, the alternative was usually a seven-year lease, during which the balance of the purchase price could be paid in instalments.

On 13 December 1870 a licence to occupy 11 ac 1 rd 22 p was issued to Daniel Rickard, a miner of Happy Valley.¹⁹¹ He erected a four-roomed dwelling at a cost of £30 and fenced the land securely with post and two-rail fencing with close palings, which cost him over £50. The mounted constable, acting as bailiff, reported that the house, erected in 1863, measured 24 ft by 20 ft and was weatherboard with a galvanised iron roof. The improvements included an outhouse with weatherboard sides and a bark roof, and pig styes similarly constructed. Rickard, who lived on the allotment with his family, had cleared seven acres, grubbed trees and stumps and cleared scrub, and had dug a waterhole 20 ft by 10 ft by 6 ft. Despite his hard work and achievements, he found he was unable to meet the rent when it became due and was obliged to forfeit his holding.

¹⁸⁹ Powell, *Public Lands*, 153.

¹⁹⁰ Phillippa Nelson and Lesley Alves, *Lands Guide: A Guide to Finding Records of Crown Land at Public Record Office Victoria*. Edited by Sebastian Gurciullo and Kasia Zygmuntowicz (Melbourne: Public Record Office Victoria, 2009), 215.

¹⁹¹ PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 108, File 3338/49.18.

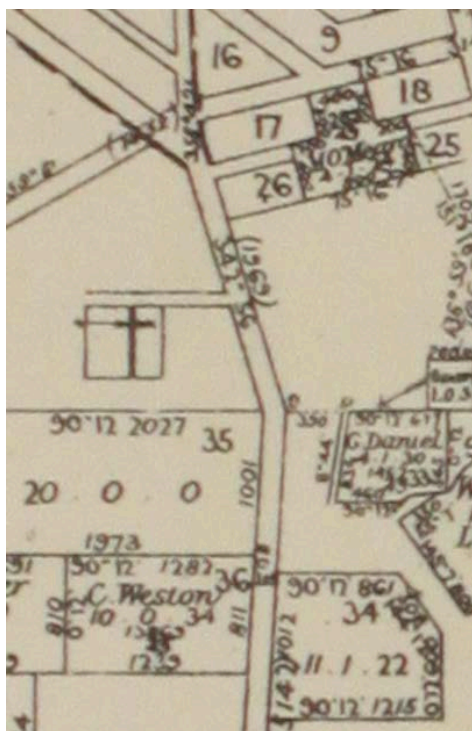


Figure 62. Allotment 34 at lower right, Section H, south of Happy Valley

(Courtesy of Public Record Office Victoria [PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 108, File 3338/49.18])

The next applicant was also a miner, William Piper, of Happy Valley. Described as opposite Charles Weston's allotment,¹⁹² the allotment was in Section H, allotment 34, shown south of the township and school site in Figure 75, opposite Charles Weston's store. The bailiff reporting on improvements was Constable Denis Barry of Piggoreet Police Station, who noted that the waterhole was made by a mining company before the land was taken up by Rickard. It is likely that the claim by Rickard that he had dug it meant that he had enlarged or improved it. Although the grant of the approximately 12 acres of land was approved for Piper, he transferred it to Sarah Gribble, who was the 18-year-old daughter of Theophilus Gribble, and lived nearby. Despite Sarah Gribble's recent marriage to William Charles Groves, the land was granted freehold to her. Consequently, the name on the cadastral plan is that of Sarah Groves, and hers is the final signature on the filed lease form in correspondence file 3338/49.18. The abandonment, transfer and change of name of the previous holders, Rickard, Piper and Gribble, are not easily found, a point made by land historian J. M. Powell in his discussion of selection under the 1869 Act.¹⁹³

¹⁹² Charles Weston was a storekeeper of long standing on the road leading to the Happy Valley crossing over the Woody Yaloak Creek on the road from Happy Valley to Cape Clear.

¹⁹³ Powell, *Public Lands*, 270.

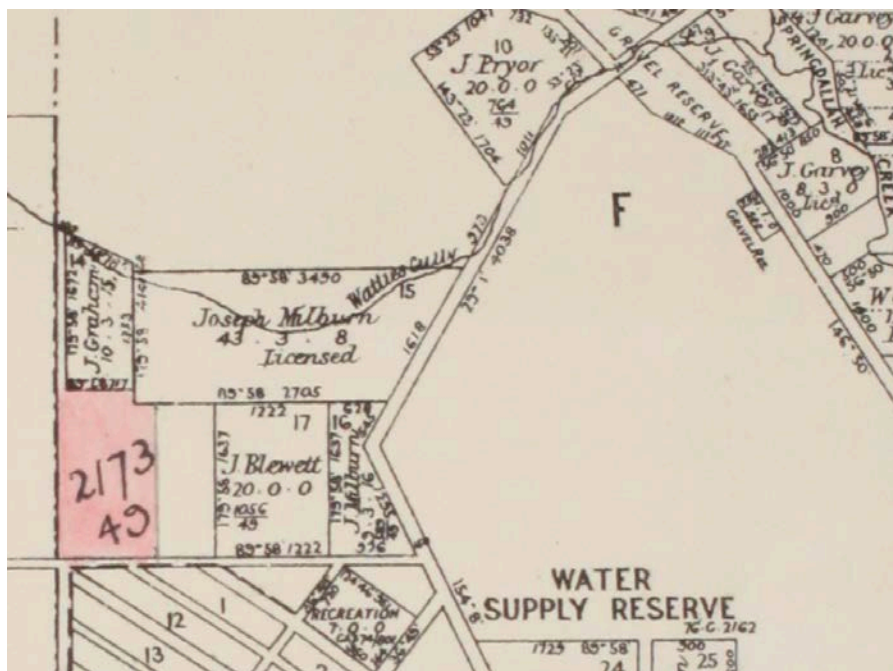


Figure 63. Allotments selected by Joseph Milburn north of township

(Courtesy of Public Record Office Victoria [PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 80, File 2222/49 and 2173/49])

Joseph Milburn, whose land holdings are shown in Figure 76, was a miner born in 1828 at Bents, near Cowshill, Durham, where his father was a lead miner and farmer.¹⁹⁴ Joseph had extensive lead mining experience before arriving in Melbourne on the *Heart of Oak* in September 1853.¹⁹⁵ He married Mary Stephenson, who was born in 1843, at St John’s Chapel, just three miles east of Cowshill. Mary migrated to Melbourne on the *Norfolk* with her 60-year-old father and three brothers Thomas, John and Francis, arriving in February 1861.¹⁹⁶ By the end of the next month, her father had died, and in December 1861 Mary married Joseph Milburn,¹⁹⁷ who was a slaughterman living at Lucky Womans. Of Joseph Milburn’s four brothers and one sister, Thomas (1834–1916) and William (1838–1918) followed him to Happy Valley, where Thomas and Joseph went into business together as slaughtermen and butchers.¹⁹⁸ Thomas married Harriet Loveland in 1860, and their first six children were born at Happy Valley, before they purchased land and farmed at Wycheproof. William Milburn married Mary Coxon, daughter of the

¹⁹⁴ Ancestry.com, *1851 England Census*, HO107/2388, 86:18, Bents, Cowshill, Stanhope, Durham, 30 March 1851.

¹⁹⁵ PROV, VPRS 7666, B/51:1, *Heart of Oak*, September 1853.

¹⁹⁶ PROV, VPRS 7666, B/187:3 and 5, *Norfolk*, February 1861.

¹⁹⁷ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 4313, Joseph Milburn married Mary Stephenson in 1861.

¹⁹⁸ *Mount Wycheproof Ensign and East Wimmera Advocate*, November 24, 1916, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article154460672>.

Happy Valley miner George Coxon and his wife, Mary Dodgson. The Coxons, already discussed), came from Newcastle upon Tyne in Northumberland and were part of the great movement of northern English miners of lead and coal who arrived and took part in the growth of the mining industry at Springdallah in the mid 19th century.

CONCLUSION

Happy Valley and district existed only because of the deep-lead gold mining industry that developed there after the gold seekers had largely worked out the shallow alluvial deposits. The commercial centre that provided the social infrastructure supporting miners' families was stable over several decades, as long-term domestic life developed around the productive mines. Those families demonstrated cooperative support and connections, despite adversity and the hazards associated with life and work in a 19th-century mining environment. Their endeavours were often directed by natural leaders and entrepreneurs from among their number, resulting in a multi-layered community of people from various ethnic backgrounds, religions, educational status and work experience. Many networks of extended family connections were present, often contributing to the stability and support consistent with healthy community life, strongly represented by immigrants from Wales, England and Scotland. This section of Chapter 7 has indicated the many movements away from the district as the gold deposits diminished and mining companies closed, in concert with the new Land Acts that opened up opportunities for farming in the Mallee, Wimmera, Gippsland and the north-east of Victoria. It has been shown that Happy Valley and district has demonstrated itself to have been functional and both economically and socially supportive to the gold mining families that settled and raised their families there, as part of the wider Springdallah goldfield.

Chapter 7: SPRINGDALLAH COMMUNITY NETWORK

7.3: GOLDEN LAKE, BROWNSVALE, DERWENT JACKS

INTRODUCTION

The networks of mining families in the districts of Piggoreet and Happy Valley were the focus of the previous two sections of this chapter, when the development of the communities they created was investigated and discussed. In this final section the growth and establishment of a cohesive social community will be explored and revealed in relation to the Golden Lake district. It is argued that the change from a pastoral environment to the gold mining industry, and the associated relationships between property owning pastoralists and mining interests, required and achieved adjustment, accommodation and cooperation. This section illustrates how the expression of those relationships is reflected in the workplace, within the family, at institutions such as the church and school, and in the public spaces created by sporting and other leisure activity, often provided by local hotels.

THE COMMUNITY

Golden Lake township was named after the major mine in the area, although there were at least two other major mines within a short distance of it. The population was centred at Golden Lake and to a lesser extent at Derwent Jacks,¹ as miners sought stable domestic and economic lifestyles through long-term employment in the mines at both places.

Early History

The auriferous Crown land on which the township of Golden Lake became established lay between two freehold pre-emptive properties, or home stations, each of 640 acres. Moppianimum, or Section A, was purchased by John Browne (1818-1895) in 1850.² Piggoreet West, or Section B, was purchased by Matthew Hamilton Baird (1819-

¹ This term was often used to describe ex-convicts from Tasmania, and may have referred to early gold rush diggers in the area.

² *Geelong Advertiser*, February 4, 1850, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article93134203>.

1899) in December 1853, when it was reported that “the buildings consist of a cottage and wool shed”.³

Moppianimum Pastoral Run

First occupied in 1841 by Captain Charles Henry Ross,⁴ this 30,000 acre pastoral run passed through the hands of several licence holders before it was transferred to John Brown.⁵ One consequence of the gold rush in the district, was that Brown’s flocks were decimated by the diggers’ dogs,⁶ so he sold his 640 acre property and took up land at Anakie near Geelong.⁷

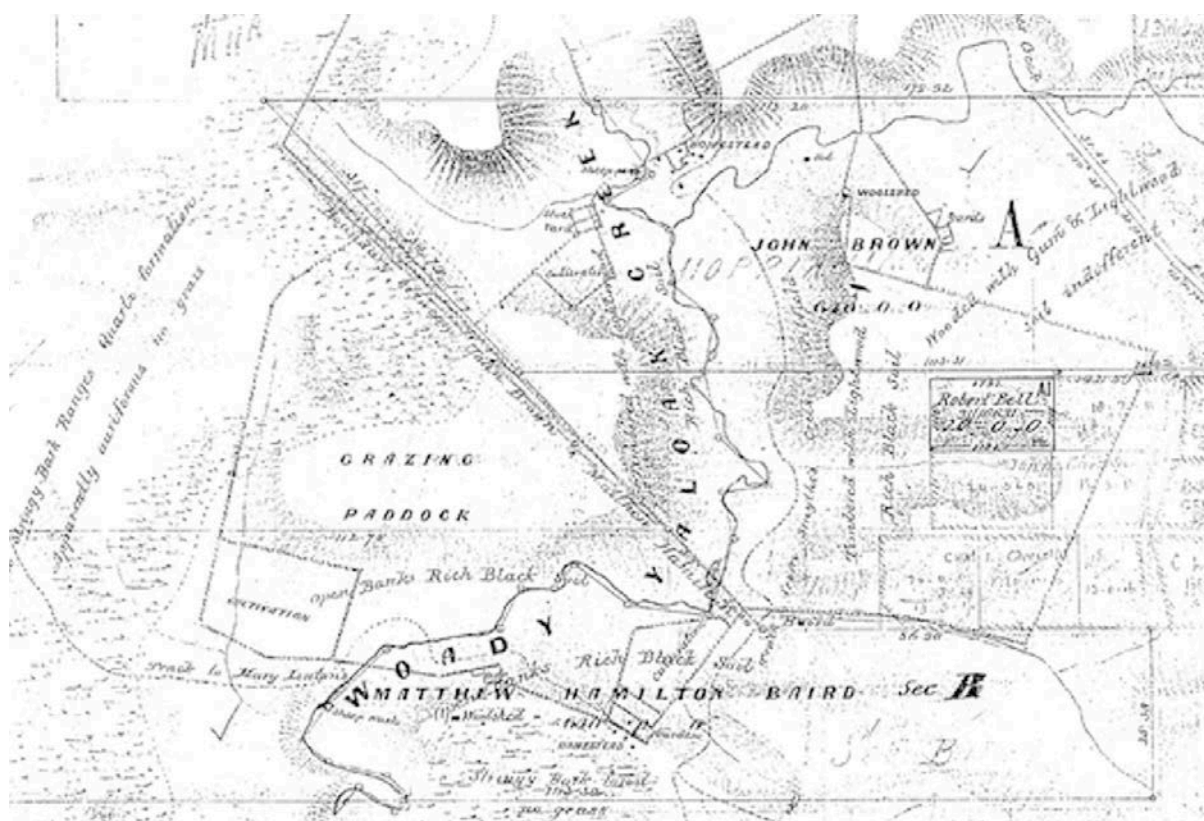


Figure 64. Plan of portions of Crown Land purchased under pre-emptive right by Brown and Baird
(Copied from Landata, Central Plan Office, Put Away Plans, Old Parish Township Plans)

³ PROV, VPRS 5920/P0, N117, C53/9432, December 19, 1853, Western Piggereet [sic].

⁴ Hunt, *Forest and Field*, 7.

⁵ After Ross, it was held by George Forbes, then Brown and Sproat, then Brown (also known as Browne) alone.

⁶ Parliamentary Papers, *John Browne of Moppianimum Run*, July 25, 1860.

⁷ McGrath and others, *Browns and Scarsdale*, 16. ‘Narada West’ at Anakie is still owned by descendants of John Browne and his wife, Eliza Tennant (formerly Linton).

Figure 77 is a plan, dated 5 March 1855,⁸ that shows the boundaries of both Moppianimum and Piggoreet West. It indicates the sites of the homestead, woolshed, stockyard, and cultivation along the Woody Yaloak Creek on John Brown's one square mile of freehold land. Brown's leasehold was transferred to the Scarsdale Great Extended Company in 1859, when the company purchased the freehold property, thereafter known as the Brownsvale Estate.⁹ It is clear that the Brownsvale Estate property was used for mining, agricultural and pastoral purposes. The 320 acre freehold paddock was let by tender for 7, 14 or 21 years for a royalty and premium, with the contractors holding permission to subdivide the land for mining purposes.¹⁰

In May 1865, the property was again advertised for sale, as comprising about 14,000 acres of "good grazing land, together with a Lease of the Scarsdale Great Extended Gold-mining Company's Property of 960 acres for agricultural and grazing purposes".¹¹ For some years the pastoral aspect of the Brownsvale Estate was managed by an Anglo-Irish settler from Dublin, William Newcomen,¹² whose specialty was thoroughbred stock. The week before Christmas in 1866, Newcomen's daughter, Mary Jane, married John Clarke,¹³ son of the owner of Piggoreet West.

Piggoreet West

To the south, the plan shows the pre-emptive freehold property purchased from Matthew Hamilton Baird by David Clarke (1810-1886), who occupied the home station and 50,000 acre leasehold from July 1854,¹⁴ with his wife Jean Buie (1815-1886), and their two children, Helen (1835-1923) and John (1837-1919), all born in Aberdeenshire, Scotland. This pastoral property remained in the possession of the Clarke family,

⁸ Maurice Weston, Asst surveyor, Central Plans Office, G55/14, C374², PR M-11, 5 March 1855.

⁹ *Star* (Ballarat), April 2, 1862, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66323035>.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Argus* (Melbourne), May 23, 1865, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5740310>.

¹² Newcomen's name was William Westenra Warner Rossmore Newcomen, usually given as William WWR Newcomen. He took up the Taminick station at Glenrowan as a grazier, but died at his daughter's home at Piggoreet West in 1908.

¹³ *Argus* (Melbourne), December 22, 1866, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5781759>. John and Mary Jane Clarke lived at Emu Hill for many years, where they raised their eight children, and later took over Piggoreet West.

¹⁴ *Star* (Ballarat), June 17, 1919, an obituary of John Clarke, son of David Clarke.

although mining took place within the boundaries of the privately owned home station, and Clarke maintained good relations with the mining interests in the area.

Signs of community spirit became apparent as the mining families employed by the Zuyder Zee, Golden Horn, and Scarsdale Great Extended companies banded together to petition authorities for improvement to roads, provision of educational facilities, religious support, and access to land on which to build their homes. Building of roads and bridges throughout the Brownsvale area continued for many years, as heavy traffic from the direction of Ballarat, Smythesdale, and Scarsdale to the Springdallah gold fields, and via Pitfield to both Geelong and Portland Bay had to traverse the Brownsvale Estate, which was private property.

Dependent for its existence upon a small number of deep lead mines, the Golden Lake township started to develop slowly from about 1862. Miners and their families began living around the workings after the alluvial deep lead companies started large-scale and long-term gold mining in the area shown in Figure 78.¹⁵

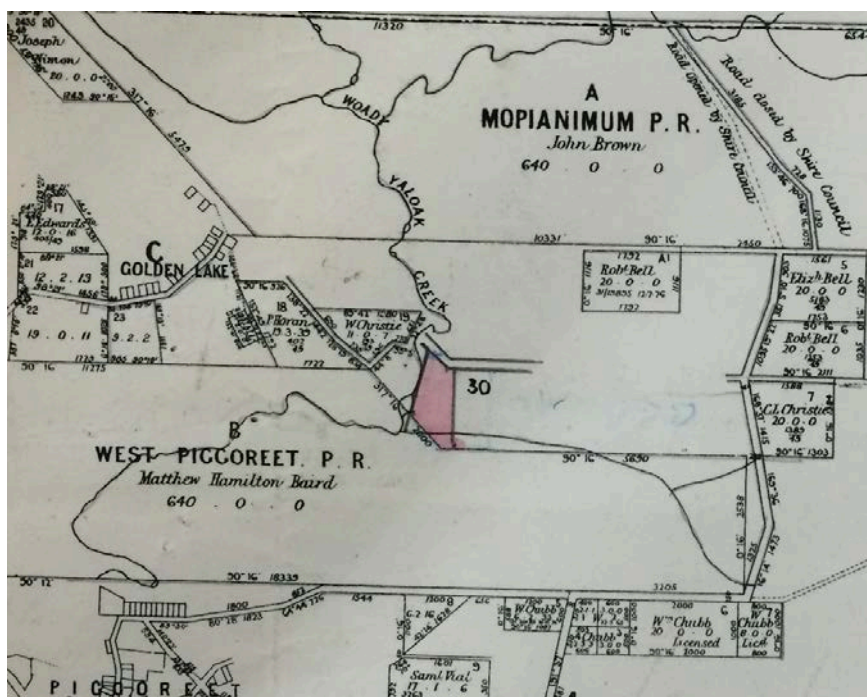


Figure 65. Golden Lake and Brownsvale north of Piggoreet

(Part of Clarksdale Parish Plan, in PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 18, 3703/49.18)

It was not until May 1868, however, that a report described the beginnings of the new community that was to become Golden Lake township:

¹⁵ PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 18, 3703/49.18. The pre-emptive run, Moppianimum, had a variety of spellings over the years, including Mopianimum, Moppianimum, and Moppianum. Its origin is unknown.

A number of miners connected with the Galatea Company, whose claim adjoins, are also re-erecting and building new cottages at the same place, and what with the number of buildings already erected, and the building and painting now going on, the appearance of the place is really spirit-stirring, especially when contrasted with the general dullness of the surrounding localities. The site of the new township of Brownsvale is elevated and healthy, and judging from the promising state of all the five adjacent mines, the place is likely to be a flourishing little spot for several years to come.¹⁶

The Victorian government approved the survey of some allotments for sale, recorded on Survey Plan L4290 dated 19 December 1874. Table 12 was compiled from the details on that plan, combined with a list of residents who provided their occupations when they purchased shares locally in August 1873.¹⁷

Table 12. Owners of allotments in Section C in the mid 1870s

Name of owner	Occupation	Lot	Ac – rd - p
Ballantine, William	Storekeeper – shareholder	1	1 – 0
Not sold		2	1 – 0
Green, John Sydney	Draper	3	1 – 0
Green, John Sydney	Draper	4	1 – 0
Skinner, George Christopher	Publican (Criterion), miner, shareholder	5	0 – 32
Skinner, George Christopher	Publican (Criterion), miner, shareholder	6	1 – 4
Watters, John Robert	Storekeeper	7	1 – 0
Osborne, John Dunne	Shoemaker, shareholder	8	0 – 32
Ormiston, Mark	Miner, shareholder	9	0 – 32
Young, John		10	0 – 36
Ten Brink, Conrad	Traveller		
John Dinneny	Miner	11	1 – 0
Higgins, James	Publican (Golden Lake Hotel)	13	1 – 0
Garvey, John; Patrick Horan	Publican (Galatea Hotel)	12	1 – 0
Ormiston, Margaret	Publican (Golden Horn Hotel)	14	
George Lowe	Publican (Golden Lake Hotel)		1 – 0
Not sold		15	0 – 23
Younghusband, Thomas	Publican (Barb Hotel)	16	1 - 21.7
Higgins, James	Publican (Golden Lake Hotel)	17	12 – 0 – 6
Horan, Patrick	Publican (Galatea Hotel), shareholder	18	19 – 3 – 39
Christie, William	Farmer	19	11 – 0 – 7
Nimon, Joseph, jnr	Farmer	20	20 – 0 – 0
No name	(The site of the Success mine shaft)	21	12 – 2 – 13
No name	(The site of Margaret Ormiston's lot)	22	19 – 0 – 11
McNally, J.	Miner	23	9 – 2 – 2
Robertson, William	Miner	24	12 – 0 – 0

¹⁶ *Ballarat Star*, May 25, 1868, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113603611>. Golden Lake and Brownsvale were both used to name the settlement that later became Golden Lake township.

¹⁷ *Ballarat Star*, August 21, 1873, 4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article199006828>. Landata, *Allotments at Golden Lake*, L.4290, 19 December 1874 and shareholders of Golden Lake in Prince of Wales Gold Mining Company, 21 August 1873.

Hall, William	Miner	24A	20 – 0 – 0
Nimon, Joseph	Farmer	25	20 – 0 – 0
Morton, William	Carpenter, shareholder		
Sinclair, George Peace	Mining manager, shareholder		
Leask, William Bankier	Miner, shareholder		
Robins, Richard	Butcher, shareholder		
Hanby, Sarah	Married woman, shareholder		
Patten, William	Miner, shareholder		
Thorncroft, Stephen	Carpenter, shareholder		
Worcester, Frederick Samuel	Miner, shareholder		
Duff, Alexander	Miner, shareholder		
Black, Alexander	Miner, shareholder		
Brown, William	Miner, shareholder		

The table gives the name and occupation of the purchaser of land matched to the allotment number and its area in acres, roods and perches. This plan and other evidence indicates that Robertson’s estimate of a population of 2,000 at Golden Lake was a highly inflated estimation.¹⁸ Golden Lake was at its peak in the early 1870s, but no firm evidence as to population numbers exists. It declined quickly as the mines began to be worked out, and had all but disappeared by the mid to late 1880s. Some miners who had selected land here had strong links to families in other Springdallah settlements, and the following case studies are examples of family networking that strengthened the community during its existence.

RESIDENTS

Owners of allotments at Golden Lake originated mainly from Scotland, England, Ireland, Germany and Wales. At Derwent Jacks, south of Italian Gully, there were many Swiss-Italians, as well as Scots. Most were miners, who stayed for more than a decade, raising their families in a close-knit community that worked cooperatively to provide stability and security to the benefit of all.

Scots

The network of Scots who depended upon and assisted one another is illustrated by the Ballantine and Morton families. William Ballantine (1831-1913), born at Auchinleck in Ayrshire, arrived in Victoria with his brother James (1835-1878) in January 1854.¹⁹ On 5 August 1859, William married Euphemia Moore Morton, also born

¹⁸ Robertson, *Piggoreet and Golden Lake*, 9.

¹⁹ PROV, VPRS 7666, B/061:5, *Marco Polo*, January 1854.

in Auchinleck in 1842. They were married by the Scottish Presbyterian minister, Rev. John Gow,²⁰ at her father's house at Oldham Gully, north of Brownsvale.²¹ In 1870, Euphemia's father, William Morton, was granted a licence to the land on which he had been living for some years, comprising 41 ac 2 rd 1 p, under the 42nd Section of the 1869 Land Act.

Of the eleven children born to William and Euphemia Ballantine, the first four died within three months in 1868 from diphtheria.²² Eight children were born at Golden Lake before the family moved to Waterloo near Beaufort. William Ballantine was at various periods a miner, engine-driver, and storekeeper at Golden Lake on his purchased allotment.²³ James and Isabella Ballantine were living at Springdallah when their son John was born in 1871,²⁴ when James was an engine-driver. This family's place of origin, Auchinleck near Cumnock, had been a site of quarrying, deep pit mining, and ironworks, from the 1830s. Their engine-driving skills may have been learned at that local employment, and made a valuable contribution at Springdallah.

Euphemia's sister Mary Morton, who married George Peace Sinclair from Kirkwall in the Orkney Islands, lived in the Springdallah area on and off for more than two decades. Their 11 children were born between 1860 and 1882, when Sinclair was a community leader at Golden Lake,²⁵ correspondent for the school committee,²⁶ and

²⁰ BDM, *Marriage certificate*, Reg. 3189, Euphemia Moore Morton married William Ballantine, 1859 at William Morton's house, Smythesdale. Rev. John Gow had arrived in at Geelong with the Linton family in 1839 and was closely linked with the early pastoralists of the district.

²¹ PROV, VPRS 627/P0, Unit 316, File 22029 /31.

²² BDM, *Death certificates*, Reg. 7565, Mary Ballantine, died 5 July 1868, Springdallah; 7568, Peter Ballantine, died 9 July 1868, Piggoreet; 7570, Janet Ballantine, died 19 July 1868; 7573, Grace Morton Ballantine, died 1 September 1868, Brownsvale.

²³ PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 86, File 2452/49: 10 Jul 1871.

²⁴ BDM, *Pioneer Index*, Reg. 26509, John Ballantine, born 1871 at Springdallah.

²⁵ *Ballarat Courier*, May 12, 1870, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article191563220>. George P. Sinclair chaired a fund-raising musical entertainment that included a magic lantern show at Golden Lake school on this occasion.

²⁶ *Argus* (Melbourne), Thursday, 30 May 1872, 1, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5862963>.

mining manager of the Galatea Gold Mining Company.²⁷ He held shares in the All Nations claim at Derwent Jacks when he gave evidence at an inquest in August, 1877.²⁸

Among the many examples of networking between the Springdallah communities is that of the Christie and Ormiston families. Margaret Ormiston (previously Mrs Christie) is shown as living at the site of the Golden Lake Hotel on the plan in Figure 79.²⁹

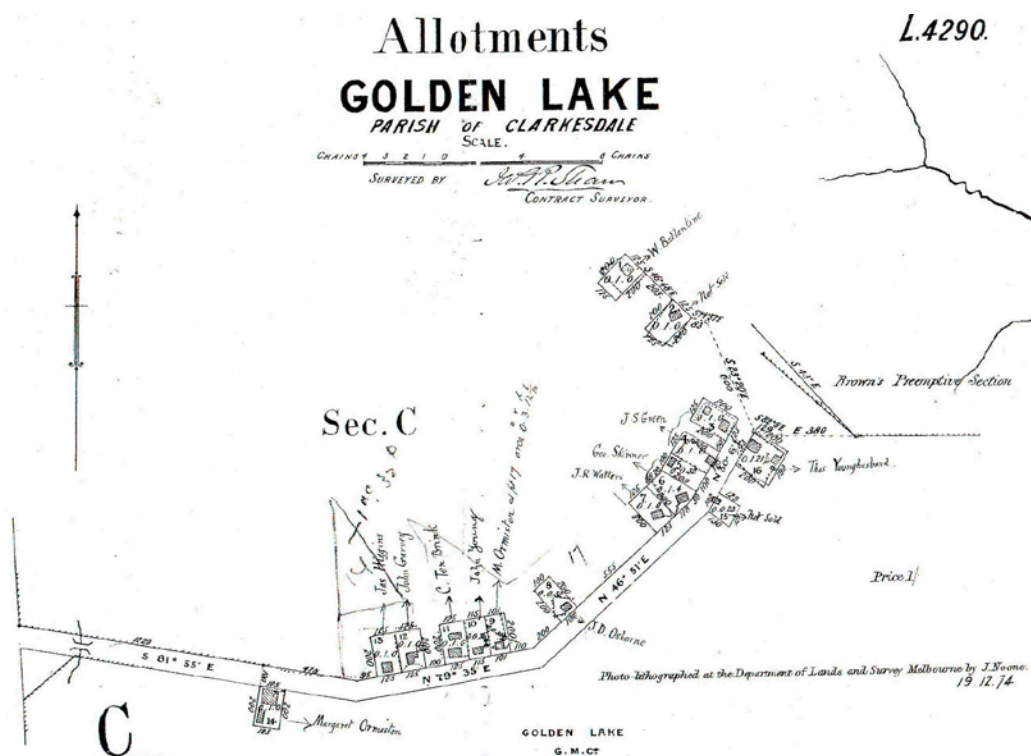


Figure 66. 1874 map of Golden Lake allotments with names of purchasers

(Copied from Landata, Central Plan Office, Put Away Plans, Old Parish Township Plans)

Mark Ormiston arrived on the *Admiral Boxer* in June 1854 as a 12 year old, with his widowed father and aunts Ellen and Susan.³⁰ They came from Haddington, East Lothian, Scotland where the Ormiston family had a long history, possibly originating in the nearby East Lothian parish and township of the same name. When Mark Ormiston senior died at Springdallah on 23 November 1871, aged 57 years,³¹ his son, Mark junior,

²⁷ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 259, File 1871/758. Donald Calder was accidentally killed on 9 September 1871 by a fall of earth in the Galatea mine where Sinclair was mining manager.

²⁸ *Ballarat Courier*, August 30, 1877, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article207821785>.

²⁹ James R. Shaw, contract surveyor, Central Plan Office, C374/L.4290, 8 June 1871.

³⁰ PROV, VPRS 7310, 11:20, 25, *Admiral Boxer*, June 1854.

³¹ BDM, *Death certificate*, Reg. 8649, Mark Ormiston, died November 23, 1871 at Springdallah.

was a 30 year old bachelor. From at least May 1868 Mark Ormiston junior shared a relationship with Margaret Christie, a deserted wife and mother of five children.

Margaret and George Christie, who ran the Waverley public house in Happy Valley in 1863, had four children, and she was six months pregnant with their fifth,³² when he travelled to New Zealand in January 1867 on the *Otago*.³³ In December 1867 Margaret was charged by John Robertson, the revenue office for the Shire of Grenville, with having sold a glass of rum without a license.³⁴ Margaret admitted the offence but explained that her husband was in New Zealand and selling alcohol was her only means of supporting herself and the children. The police magistrate, John Prendergast Hamilton, postponed the case for a month to allow her time to take out a licence.

Margaret Christie was brought before the Piggoreet Court on 2 September 1868 when she was again charged with “carrying on business on Crown lands without a license”, and was fined 1/- and 5/- costs.³⁵ Her public house in November 1868 was identified as the Golden Horn Hotel at Golden Lake when she transferred the licence to Hugh Hughes.³⁶ By then she had started her relationship with Mark Ormiston, because their first child, Henry, was born at Brownsvale on 15 February 1869.³⁷ The year of George Christie’s return is not known, but he died at Geelong hospital on 10 September 1880, by which time his estranged wife Margaret, and Mark Ormiston, had five children, all born at Springdallah. Two years later their sixth and last child was born. They married at Smythesdale on 26 July 1887, when Margaret disclosed that she had ten living children and one deceased.³⁸

³² BDM, *Death certificate*, Reg. 1272, 29 March 1868, Christina Ormiston, 11 months.

³³ PROV, VPRS 3506, 3, *Otago*, January 1867.

³⁴ *Ballarat Star*, December 19, 1867, 4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112872946>.

³⁵ *Ballarat Star*, September 5, 1868, 4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113847176>.

³⁶ *Ballarat Star*, 26 November 1868, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112881449>. Margaret Christie’s hotel site is identified on the map where the Golden Lake Hotel was later, so it may have started its life under the name Golden Horn.

³⁷ BDM, *Birth certificate*, Reg. 11847, Henry Ormiston, born 15 February 1869 at Brownsvale.

³⁸ BDM, *Marriage certificate*, Reg. 3123, Mark Ormiston married Margaret Christie (nee Muranane), 1887 at Smythesdale Catholic Church.

The McLaurin family of Derwent Jacks arrived from Glasgow in 1855, when John was the 52 year old husband of Mary, nee McDougall, and father of John junior, Mary junior, Flora, Neil, and Annie. John senior died at Derwent Jacks in 1878,⁴³ when John junior had an 18 acre allotment, of which he had cultivated 12 acres in cereal and root crops, with a dwelling house of hardwood, a stable and outhouse, a stoned and walled well.⁴⁴ Mary McLaurin junior, born about 1842 married Henry Dobbie, who was born in Perthshire in 1839. They married on 30 September 1862 at Scarsdale and had eight children born at Springdallah, before Henry died in 1875 after being injured in a fall of earth in the Golden Lake mine⁴⁵. Flora McLaurin married Peter Croy Irvine from Kirkwall in the Orkney Islands, and most of their nine children attended Piggoreet School. Neil McLaurin, who became a Springdallah mine manager, was born in 1852 and married Julia Avis Fenn in 1887.⁴⁶ Their six children, all born at Derwent Jacks, attended Grand Trunk school.

Irish

John Wilson (1799-1883) from Drumcree near Derryneskan in County Armagh, Ireland married Mary Johnston, and arrived on the goldfields as a widower. His whole family emigrated: sons Johnston (born 1825), Mordecai (born 1827), Samuel (born 1829) and John Joseph (born 1830), and daughters Hannah Jane (born 1836) and Mary Elizabeth (born 1838), but they did not all arrive together. Mordecai Wilson and John Robert Watters (1832-1915) from Waterford, Ireland met when travelling to Australia on the same ship, the *David G Fleming*, arriving in November 1859,⁴⁷ forming a long-lasting friendship that resulted in their becoming brothers-in-law. In May 1863 Hannah Jane Wilson married John Robert Watters in the Wesleyan Church in Geelong,⁴⁸ then settled as storekeepers at Happy Valley, where they raised their eight children. Watters was at first a partner with his brother-in-law Johnston Wilson, storekeeping at Happy Valley,⁴⁹

⁴³ Hunt, *Smythesdale General Cemetery*, Presbyterian Section 5:308.

⁴⁴ PROV, VPRS 439/P0, Unit 38, File 420/49, John McLaurin.

⁴⁵ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 328, File 709/1875, Henry Dobbie.

⁴⁶ Julia Fenn

⁴⁷ PROV, VPRS 7666, B/169:4, *David G Fleming*, November 1859.

⁴⁸ BDM, *Marriage certificate*, Reg. 1387, Hannah Jane Wilson married John Robert Watters, 1863 at Wesleyan Church, Yarra Street, Geelong.

⁴⁹ *Victoria Government Gazette*, August 16, 1864, 1793. The Happy Valley Co-operative Association was dissolved, and became Wilson and Watters.

from 1864 till 1869, and then storekeeping on his own at Golden Lake between 1869 and 1879.

Mordecai Wilson, a teacher, married Harriet Hanson of Scarsdale in 1864.⁵⁰ Johnston Wilson arrived at Melbourne from Liverpool, on the *King of Algeria* in November 1862,⁵¹ and in December 1868 he married Anne (nee Thompson),⁵² a drapery store keeper of Piggoreet, the widow of William Handaside who died in an accident at the Try Again mine in January 1865.⁵³ Johnston and Ann initially lived at Happy Valley, where the first three of their seven children were born. John Wilson, the widowed father of two daughters and four sons, including Mordecai and Johnston, all of whom came to Springdallah, died in 1883 on his property in northern Victoria, where the whole family, including John and Hannah Watters, had settled on land they selected for farming in the late 1870s.⁵⁴ Their circumstances demonstrate the ways in which the historical material can reveal experiences of ordinary people living through an unusual period of social change. Their occupations helped confirm the tendency of Irish immigrants to not necessarily work directly in the gold mining industry, and to pursue farming at the earliest opportunity. Eventual ownership of their own large farms near Benalla was the goal they achieved with great success, and affirmed the decisions they had made in the 1850s to leave their homeland and start a new life on the goldfield at Springdallah.

For instance, John Robert Watters and Hannah (Wilson) were storekeepers at both Happy Valley and Golden Lake, and raised their eight children at Springdallah. Analysis of their family history through FTM provided the evidence that John Robert Watters and Mordecai Wilson, brother of Hannah, who became friends on the journey to Australia, later entered into a business relationship with Johnston Wilson, a brother of Hannah and Mordecai, at both Happy Valley and Golden Lake, where the two families resided for more than a decade. John Wilson and all six of his sons and daughters emigrated, and achieved success after living initially on the Springdallah goldfields. When land became

⁵⁰ BDM, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 2924, Mordecai Wilsom married Harriet Hanson, 1864.

⁵¹ PROV, VPRS 7666, B/208:3, *King of Algeria*, November 1862.

⁵² BDM, *Marriage certificate*, Reg. 3079, Johnston Wilson married Ann Handasyde (sic) (Thompson), 1868 at Boninyong (sic).

⁵³ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 153, File 1865/63.

⁵⁴ PROV, VPRS 7591/P2, Unit 126, 34/846, John Wilson, died 1 March 1883.

available for selection north of Shepparton, the Watters-Wilson family network settled in that region, taking up hundreds of acres for farming.⁵⁵

MINING

There were three major mining companies that gave purpose to the existence of the township of Golden Lake and the community nearby. They were the Galatea, originally called the Scarsdale Great Extended Gold Mining Company, the Golden Lake, originally called the Zuyder Zee, and the Golden Horn companies. Figure 81 shows the sites of the main shafts of each of each of them.

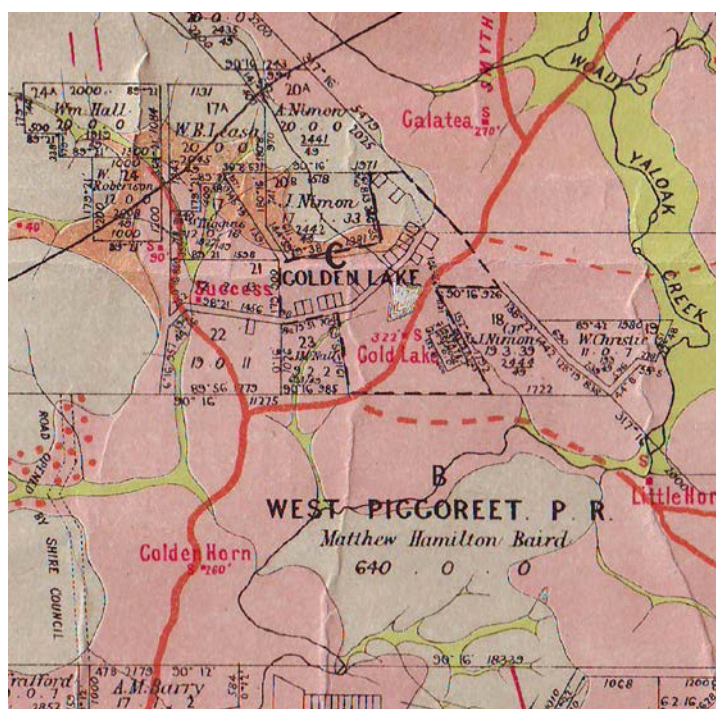


Figure 67. Golden Lake township and nearby gold mining companies

(Adapted from Department of Crown Lands and Survey, Melbourne)

The company directors of the Brownsvale Estate included men with mining experience and interests, such as Charles Kinnear, William Cook, and Thomas Loader, MLA, who was chairman of the Scarsdale Great Extended Gold Mining Company.⁵⁶ Charles Kinnear was well-known in mining circles as the founder, in 1857,⁵⁷ of the Clunes Co-operative Quartz Mining Company, which was regarded as the first attempt in

⁵⁵ PROV, VPRS 625/P0, Unit 38, File 1963/19.20; VPRS 626/P0, Unit 390, File 1963/19.20.

⁵⁶ *Ballarat Star*, February 22, 1866, 1S <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112867515>. The Scarsdale Great Extended was renamed the Galatea after the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Alfred, visited the goldfields in December 1867, in the first royal tour of Australia. HMS *Galatea* was his first command.

⁵⁷ *Ballarat Star*, July 16, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112890724>.

the colony at mining on a large scale. Kinnear advertised for tenders for the sinking of a shaft and supplying sawn timber to that company in November 1859,⁵⁸ and Brownsvale Estate became known locally as Kinnear's paddock.⁵⁹ By February the miners were through the rock, and it was expected that they would prove the deep ground before long.⁶⁰

Kinnear was the resident director of the Scarsdale Great Extended Gold Mining Company in July 1865,⁶¹ when he objected to the new road that the Grenville Shire Council proposed building through the Brownsvale Estate property without compensation being paid.⁶² Council agreed to give £20/1/- compensation for the land taken and to receive 1/- for the old road. At the same time, Kinnear successfully requested that Council grant permission to the Scarsdale Great Extended Company to mine under the new road at Brownsvale. Tensions existing between various parties were apparent when in early August 1865 Loader chaired a meeting of the Scarsdale Great Extended Mining Company in Melbourne, the main aim of which was to remove the present trustees, James Williamson and William Bertram Ochiltree, who opposed the sale of the mining claim to the Brownsvale Company.⁶³ Kinnear approached Council early in 1866, requesting that the now completed road be fenced in,⁶⁴ resulting in a motion being carried that the present fence be removed and re-erected, and necessary new fencing be added.

Under its original name of the Zuyder Zee, the Golden Lake Gold Mining Company was registered and selling shares in July 1862.⁶⁵ In February 1863 the two companies were amalgamated and the Dutch name became obsolete.⁶⁶ The importance of a mine like the Golden Lake Company was clearly demonstrated by the nature and size of

⁵⁸ *Star* (Ballarat), November 16, 1859, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page6935260>.

⁵⁹ *Star* (Ballarat), November 21, 1862, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66328877>.

⁶⁰ *Star* (Ballarat), February 7, 1860, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72464820>.

⁶¹ Kinnear was chairman of the Golden Lake Gold Mining Company in 1869 when George Peace Sinclair was the mining manager. *Star* (Ballarat), May 15, 1869, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112889085>.

⁶² *Ballarat Star*, July 13, 1865, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112877228>.

⁶³ *Ballarat Star*, August 3, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112877708>.

⁶⁴ PROV, VPRS 7232/P2, Unit 1, 201, 24 January 1866.

⁶⁵ *Star* (Ballarat), July 29, 1862, 3,

⁶⁶ Dicker, *Mining Record*, December, 1864, 3:222.

the ceremony performed at the formal starting of its machinery at the end of June 1864.⁶⁷ A large crowd of shareholders, local mine managers, and other invited guests, admired the new pumping and puddling machine engine and a smaller winding engine, both imported from Scotland. Two boilers, each 26 ft by 6 ft 6 in, were securely built in with bluestone masonry. The Black Hill Foundry at Scarsdale, owned by James Martin and company, designed and made the first-class pumping and winding gear. The poppet legs were each 60 ft long, the shaft was sunk to 112 ft in basalt⁶⁸, and the actual depth of the main lead was estimated to be at a depth of 300 ft. Glaud Pender was the manager of the mine, and Joseph Pounder Roberts chaired the ceremony, at which his wife Frances broke a bottle of champagne against the larger engine, naming it “The Britannia”. Mary Ann Telford, wife of Peter Telford and daughter of Glaud Pender, named the smaller engine “Lady of the Lake” as she baptised it with champagne.⁶⁹

The extent of the mining leases under which the Scarsdale Great Extended (Galatea) and Golden Horn mining companies operated, as shown in Figure 82, were the exact boundaries of the old pre-emptive run homestations. The homestead built by John Brown is marked among the various features.

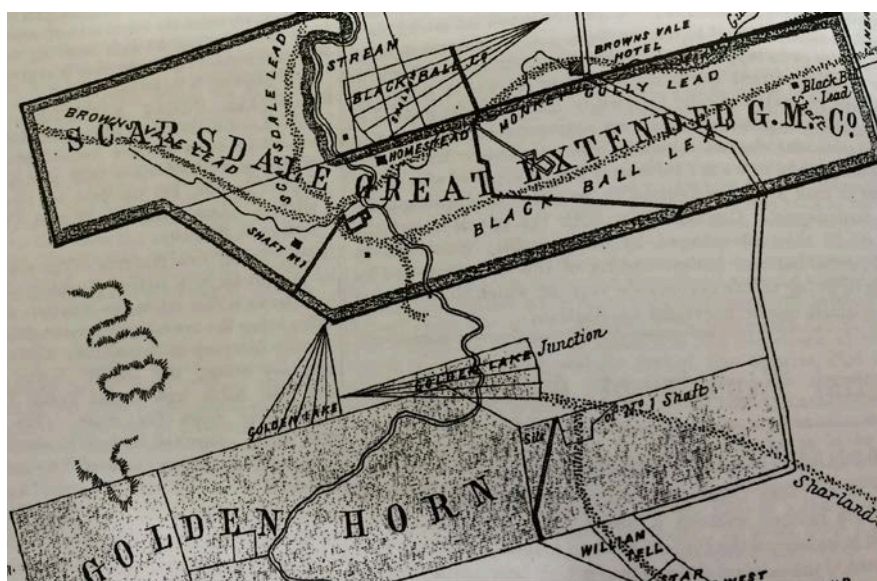


Figure 68. The Galatea, Golden Lake and Golden Horn mining leases
(Dicker's *Mining Record*, Volume and page and date)

⁶⁷ *Star* (Ballarat), July 1, 1864, 3. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66346116>.

⁶⁸ Peter Telford and Glaud Pender were prominent mining leaders in the district.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

parties at work there, and others, were doing well, mainly because the sinking was shallow and the working inexpensive.⁷⁴

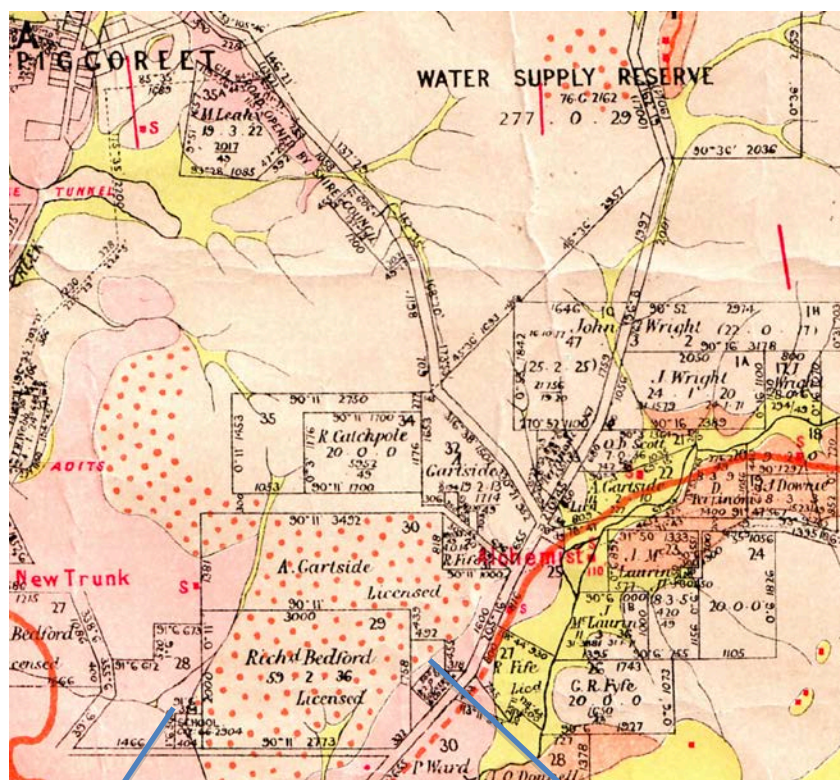


Figure 70. Derwent Jacks lead (red) and road to Piggoreet
(Map from topographical)

Grand Trunk
School site

St Patrick's Catholic
Church and school site.

Figure 84 shows the road intersection at which the Alchemist Hotel was situated⁷⁵, near the Alchemist Gold Mining Company, at Derwent Jacks. Shallow alluvial mining continued at Derwent Jacks for many years, and the mining companies there were neither significant nor long-lasting. The Alchemist company re-erected the plant from the Rose of England's claim at Smythesdale in mid 1864,⁷⁶ and by the start of 1865 the Alchemist was one of the only companies using steam power on Derwent Jacks lead. It was using its steam engine, pumps, winding gear and puddling machines in August 1865,⁷⁷ when 20 men were employed.

⁷⁴ *Argus* (Melbourne), August 27, 1859, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5686980>.

⁷⁵ The Alchemist claim and hotel were both otherwise spelt as Alchemist.

⁷⁶ *Geelong Advertiser*, June 3, 1864, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article150462740>.

⁷⁷ Dicker, *Mining Record*, December, 1864, 3:222.

The Magnum Bonum claim adjoined the Alchemist, and its miners broke into the gutter at the end of May, 1864.⁷⁸ The Springdallah gold field was notable for almost exclusively working deep lead alluvial ground. It was therefore an unusual event when the Derwent Jacks Quartz Gold Mining Company Limited applied for registration in June 1874.⁷⁹ There were 2000 shares of £2/10/- each, of which George Peace Sinclair bought 50. There were 43 shareholders, of whom seven were miners living at Derwent Jacks. Six of those seven were Swiss-Italians: Bundi Perinoni, Martin Gaggononi, Stephen Bolla, Peter Polla, Peter Bardozie, who bought 50 shares, and Peter Cerini, who bought 100 shares. Most of the shareholders lived at Piggoreet, and the predominant occupation was that of miner. However, there was a range of occupations, and the shareholders included Swiss-Italians other than those living at Derwent Jacks, as well as Germans, British, and several women.⁸⁰

A tragic loss of life occurred in the small, appropriately named, All Nations mine at Derwent Jacks in August 1877, when George Yüing and Robert Catchpole were killed by a fall of earth.⁸¹ The shaft was only 100 ft deep, worked by a German (Yüing), an Englishman (Catchpole), and two Swiss-Italians (brothers Bondi and Dominic Perinoni).

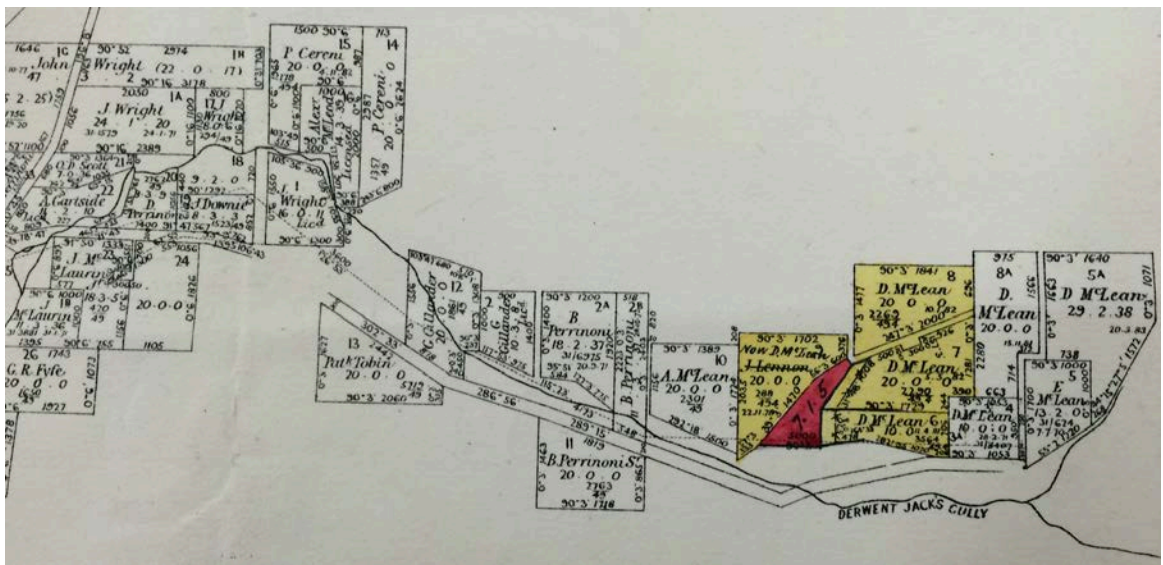


Figure 71. Derwent Jacks Gully and freehold allotments with named selectors.

(Adapted from Clarkesdale Parish Plan)

⁷⁸ *Geelong Advertiser*, June 3, 1864, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article150462740>.

⁷⁹ *Victoria Government Gazette*, 40:1146, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

⁸⁰ McAdie, *Mining Shareholders Index*.

⁸¹ *Geelong Advertiser*, August 31, 1877, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article150470932>.

Derwent Jacks was notable for the variety of backgrounds of its inhabitants, Swiss-Italians and Scots predominating, as can be seen from the property-holders' names in Figure 85. George Yüing and Christina Weller married in New York, USA, and arrived at Melbourne on the *Wings of the Morning* in October 1854 with their infant sons Jacob and Conrad.⁸² Although the family lived near the Cleft in the Rock claim to the west of Piggoreet, George was working at Derwent Jacks in 1877 when he was killed. This is an indication the majority of mines were finished by the later 1870s.

A meeting at which it was proposed to form a Victorian United Miners Association was held at the Golden Horn Hotel in Brownsvale at the end of 1869.⁸³ A committee of eight was appointed to draft a prospectus and rules, and collection of funds was reported upon. Six months later, at the same venue, the meeting room was nearly full as the Springdallah branch discussed the purposes for which the association was formed, and which now had 170 members.⁸⁴ Ventilation, an improved system of signalling, and an eight hour work day were seen to be just rights for working men,⁸⁵ along with making companies legally liable for all preventable accidents, and consultation about the rate of wages. One point of discussion was that accident funds should be amalgamated and the members should receive benefits in the same way as a friendly society. The members wanted Sunday work to cease. It was resolved that the association should be social and political, as well as a friendly society, and about 30 more members joined.

Towards the end of 1869 a complaint was made to the press that the management of the Galatea company employed Chinese miners to work the claim.⁸⁶ The European miners claimed they were responding to unfair employment of Chinese, by inserting a newspaper notice requesting other miners of Ballarat and district not to work in the Galatea. A strike was being undertaken against the introduction of Chinese labour that deprived the usual workers of their "lawful means of support",⁸⁷ according to those who inserted the advertisement. However, mine manager David Kirk responded in a letter to the editor that six Chinese, on one shift only, were employed as truckers when most of the miners refused to go below; that it was not an unusual event to do so; and that the

⁸² PROV, VPRS 7667, F/027:2, *Wings of the Morning*, October 1854.

⁸³ *Ballarat Star*, December 21, 1869, 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112857065>.

⁸⁴ *Ballarat Courier*, June 28, 1870, 4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article191567013>.

⁸⁵ The meeting was informed that some engine drivers and bracedmen had to work twelve hours.

⁸⁶ *Ballarat Star*, December 8, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112856723>.

⁸⁷ *Ballarat Star*, December 7, 1869, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112856682>.

company had the right to employ whomever they wished. A large group of miners assembled near the mine threatening a riot, but no more was reported on the matter and the trouble appears to have dissipated.⁸⁸

That Chinese did work in the Galatea mine after this incident is evidenced by the report of a miner named Ah Cow who died in an accident there in June 1874.⁸⁹ They were not employed by a company, however, as Ah Cow was a member of a tribute party.⁹⁰ He was working in a drive, putting in some timber, when his mate heard the ground fall. The European captain of the shift was assisted by others to get the man out within five minutes of the accident, but he died from his injuries. The tribute party had been formed to work at the Galatea mine in July 1873 by Ah Tan, who was discharged at Smythesdale court house after giving evidence in regard to a charge that he was one of six Chinese found in a gaming house near Brownsvale.⁹¹ The evidence showed that Ah Tan was making arrangements with the men to form the tribute party, and not actually gambling.

Ah Oon was shot by James Porter at the Galatea Company's claim at Brownsvale at the end of July, 1871.⁹² Porter was committed for trial at the coronial inquest,⁹³ and appeared at the Ballarat General Sessions on a charge of manslaughter. He was the watchman at the company's works,⁹⁴ and claimed he accidentally shot Ah Oon, who was in the sluice boxes, when the gun discharged as a result of Porter tripping over some metal tools left in his way. The jury believed Porter, found him not guilty, and he was discharged.

A fire, believed to have been deliberately lit late on a Monday night in October 1877, destroyed the Galatea mining plant.⁹⁵ By that date the mining company had been wound up, and had been purchased by mine manager and speculator David Matthew Kirk, who had insured the property. The housing being old and dry, the engine, boiler

⁸⁸ *Ballarat Star*, December 8, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112856723>.

⁸⁹ *Leader* (Melbourne), June 13, 1874, 20, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article198501805>.

⁹⁰ Tributing was a system that allowed parties of miners to work privately on parts of underground mines. Payment was made under agreement, based on the amount of gold the miners won and after paying the company back for the materials and costs involved in recovering the gold.

⁹¹ *Ballarat Star*, July 30, 1873, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article199006279>.

⁹² *Ballarat Star*, August 3, 1871, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197564794>.

⁹³ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 263, 1871/1107.

⁹⁴ *Ballarat Star*, August 18, 1871, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197565195>.

⁹⁵ *Geelong Advertiser*, October 18, 1877, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article150472399>.

houses, and bed-logs were destroyed. The blacksmith's shop and two engines in the engine-house were damaged by the heat and the burning away of the logs on which they rested, but the boilers were almost undamaged. Some Chinese fossickers lived in a small retort-house which escaped the flames, and they alerted Kirk, whose house was near the claim. These Chinese appear to have constituted the "Chinese camp at Galatea", visited by John Hartley Roberts acting as a missionary to the Chinese in the district on Sundays.⁹⁶ Roberts was head teacher of Linton school, studying the Chinese language, and was a member of the Christian Mission to the Chinese.⁹⁷

INSTITUTIONS

The limited population and compact nature of Golden Lake is demonstrated by the school being the only official institution there. The post office was included within a general store, there was no library or hall, nor police station, probably due to its proximity to Piggoreet where those facilities were to be found.

A son and daughter of Duncan Park living at the Golden Lake claim, were crossing the flooded Woody Yaloak creek to attend school at Piggoreet in September 1865, when they fell from the wooden plank into the water.⁹⁸ The current was so rapid and strong that 12 year old Jane and 7 year old William were carried nearly 40 yards before pastoralist David Clarke, who was nearby with some of his men, jumped in and rescued them. It was events like this that led to the realisation that some means of more direct access between Piggoreet and Golden Lake for foot traffic was necessary, preferably avoiding the often fast-flowing and dangerous Woody Yaloak Creek. It was felt that the growing population made it necessary to have a school located locally.

The local community worked cooperatively to secure a building and teacher from their own resources, ready for the start of the 1870 year.⁹⁹ Accommodation was provided for 100 scholars in a building to be used for Presbyterian services on Sunday afternoons. The building that became both school and church was formerly a boarding house for miners.¹⁰⁰ In January 1870 it was reported that about 200 adults and children attended a

⁹⁶ *Ballarat Courier*, November 13, 1871, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article191427278>.

⁹⁷ *Ballarat Star*, March 8, 1871, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197560996>.

⁹⁸ *Age* (Melbourne), September 6, 1865, 5. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article155040575>.

⁹⁹ *Ballarat Courier*, December 22, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article191566048>.

¹⁰⁰ Blake, *Vision and Realisation*, 728.

celebratory tea provided by the local residents “in the new Common School-house at Golden Lake, Brownsvale”.¹⁰¹ David Clarke of Piggoreet West presided, Mr Grant addressed the gathering, the Piggoreet Harmonic Society performed, and an estimated £16 was contributed towards the clearing of the debt of £70 incurred in the building of the school-house.

The Board of Education appointed twelve local men to the proposed school committee in April 1871,¹⁰² when the official enrolment was 72 pupils. As shown in Table 13, they were:

Table 13. Members of Golden Lake school committee, 6 April 1871

George Peace Sinclair	Mine manager
Charles Werner	Postmaster
Thomas Davies	Miner
Robert Good	Carpenter
William Walker	Miner
George Telford	Director, Golden Lake Co.
James Means	Miner
William Box	Miner
Robert Waugh	Miner
William Ballantine	Storekeeper
Duncan Park	Engine driver
William Baker	Miner

During the Christmas to New Year break of 1870-71, nearly 100 pupils from both Golden Lake and Piggoreet schools were welcomed into the beautiful gardens of Piggoreet West by the owners David and Jean Clarke.¹⁰³ After enjoying looking around the gardens the children were treated to ample supplies of gooseberries and biscuit at the front of the homestead, shown in Figure 86.

¹⁰¹ *Ballarat Star*, January 12, 1870, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112857676>.

¹⁰² *Victoria Government Gazette*, 23:536, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹⁰³ *Ballarat Star*, December 30, 1870, 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197559243>.

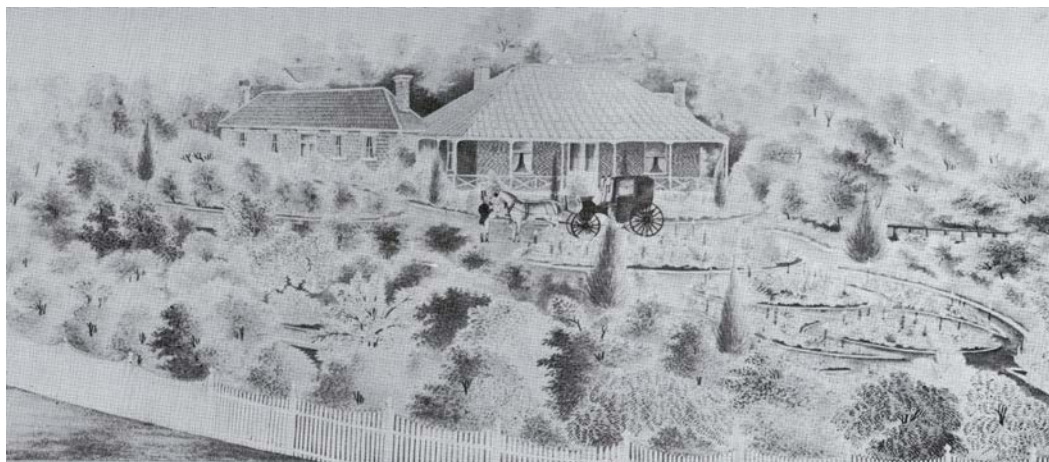


Figure 72. Piggoreet West homestead in the 1870s

(Painted by William Tibbits, photograph courtesy of Linton Historical Society)

Later in the day the parents and friends of the pupils provided confectionery, fancy bread, and cherries, while entertainment was presented.¹⁰⁴ A tea meeting was held in the Common School at Golden Lake in April 1871, with the aim of clearing the liabilities on the school.¹⁰⁵ Attended by about 200 people, it was a social and financial success, raising £20. A concert was given after the tea was over, when “some capital vocalisation was afforded by the local glee club”, and John Dennant, head teacher at Piggoreet school, played the harmonium. Activities and events such as this demonstrated the extent to which the whole community strongly supported and shared together in improving their local facilities, while enjoying themselves.

John Montgomery, MLA for Grenville, presented a memorial to the Minister of Public Instruction in March 1873, from the trustees of the Golden Lake school in the Springdallah district, offering to hand over the present school buildings and furniture valued at £200 to the Government,¹⁰⁶ in return for them becoming a state school. All three schools at Golden Lake, Happy Valley and Piggoreet had reported problems with their water supply in 1873, but in November of that year John Montgomery relayed the judgement from the building inspector.¹⁰⁷ Due to their not yet having been gazetted, the Education Department was not “justified in incurring expense for spouting and tanks”.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ *Ballarat Star*, April 10, 1871, 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197561786>.

¹⁰⁶ *Argus* (Melbourne), March 19, 1873, 4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5850270>.

¹⁰⁷ *Ballarat Star*, November 26, 1873, 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article201608274>.

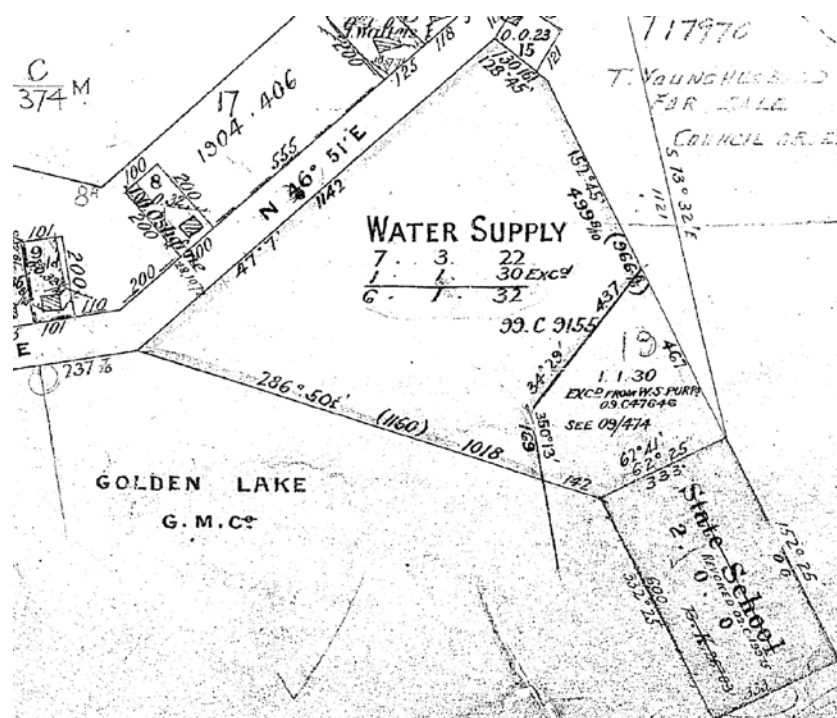


Figure 73. Site of Golden Lake school no. 1065

(Adapted from Landata, Central Plan Office, Put Away Plans, Old Parish Township Plans)

As shown at lower right in Figure 87,¹⁰⁸ a two acre site was reserved for the Golden Lake State School No. 1065 in December 1873, when the survey was measured from the south angle of allotment 16 in Section C.¹⁰⁹ By July 1874, when Edward John Hamilton was the master,¹¹⁰ the school house was described as “dilapidated and incommodious”,¹¹¹ and the Board of Advice for the east riding of Grenville Shire reported its condition to the Education Department. Harry Hardy was the head teacher when he wrote to the Department in January 1878 alerting them to repairs to be done to the school.¹¹² He sought approval to close the school while the contractors repaired the roof, ceiling, window-frames, and spouting, and erect a door.

The average attendance at the school had fallen during the preceding year, from 60 in October 1877 to 37 in June 1878, and the head teacher was then paid according to the enrolment allotment range 30 to 50. It had previously been the range 50 to 75. The rapid decrease in attendance numbers was a clear indication of the district becoming

¹⁰⁸ James R. Shaw, contract surveyor, Central Plan Office, C374^B, L.4290, 8 June 1871.

¹⁰⁹ *Victoria Government Gazette*, 86:2149, <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au>.

¹¹⁰ *Ballarat Courier*, July 15, 1874, 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article192285118>.

¹¹¹ *Ballarat Star*, July 8, 1874, 4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article199326843>.

¹¹² PROV, VPRS 640/P0, Unit 629, File 1065, January 29, 1878.

deserted as the worked out mines closed. Head Teacher Hardy raised the problem of falling enrolments in a letter to the Department in February 1879, pointing out that he was made to suffer by the reducing of the allotment through no fault of his, as in spite of all his exertions his income was as low as it had been seven years earlier. According to a supporting letter from John Bird MLA in November 1879 the attendance had been above 75 when Hardy became head teacher but was then below 50, due to families removing from the district as the mining industry waned.¹¹³ By June 1883 Hardy was appointed elsewhere, his position taken by a local young man, John J. Peart, who reported immediately that for two months most of the children had been absent suffering from ophthalmia.¹¹⁴ The following year Mary Higgins, wife of the postmaster, James Higgins, was ill with typhoid fever, in the same house where the Golden Lake pupil teacher Mary Jane Leonard had been boarding for many months.¹¹⁵ Peart appears to have been the last teacher, and the school closed in 1894.¹¹⁶

Midway through 1869 religious services were held in the open air at Golden Lake on Sunday afternoons, by Rev. David Galloway of Piggoreet Presbyterian church.¹¹⁷ Those attending agreed to obtain a building suitable for use as a place of worship on Sundays and for educational purposes during the week. That effort resulted in Rev. W. Campbell of Carngham Presbyterian church holding the first church service on Sunday 18 December 1869 in the building that was to become the Golden Lake school.¹¹⁸ A wedding was held there in August 1870, when Rev. Galloway performed the ceremony for a Golden Lake couple, James Clowes and Elizabeth Collins.¹¹⁹

Limited evidence exists for other religious congregations establishing places of worship at Golden Lake.¹²⁰ It was reported in January 1870 that the Wesleyans were building a chapel there,¹²¹ and they donated to the Springdallah and Linton Relief Fund in

¹¹³ Ibid., 17 November, 1879.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 4 June, 1883.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 12 May 1884.

¹¹⁶ Blake, *Vision and Realisation*, 729.

¹¹⁷ *Ballarat Courier*, December 22, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article191566048>.

¹¹⁸ *Ballarat Star*, January 1, 1870, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112857101>.

¹¹⁹ *Ballarat Courier*, August 18, 1870, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article191564158>.

¹²⁰ The site of any church that existed at Golden Lake is not known.

¹²¹ *Ballarat Star*, January 12, 1870, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112857676>.

November 1871.¹²² By the end of December 1873 they had established a Wesleyan Sabbath school that held its annual picnic, followed by an anniversary meeting in the church, presided over by Rev. Charles H. Ingamells of Linton Wesleyan Methodist church.¹²³ Children and adults crowded the building where singing and recitations, followed by a satisfactory collection, rounded off a successful event. A church was purchased from the Primitive Methodists of Golden Lake in May 1878, when it was carried to Berringa on behalf of the Presbyterians there,¹²⁴ providing further evidence of the failing population at Golden Lake at that time.

LAW AND ORDER

Derwent Jacks community suffered a high degree of violence in the 1860s. It became the centre of great distress when the Smythesdale bank manager, Thomas Ulick Burke, was murdered and robbed in the course of his duties on 10 May 1867, as discussed in the overview of this chapter.¹²⁵ Just the previous year, Joseph Serigny had been charged with stabbing John Mattie at Derwent Jacks Gully on 14 January 1866.¹²⁶ The press reports presented it as an Italian *vendetta* following a drunken argument at Henry Coe's Royal Mail Hotel in Piggoreet, and after the jury found the prisoner guilty, Serigny was remanded.

Three splitters occupying a bark hut in the ranges near Brownsvale returned from their day's work early in March 1867, to discover that the hut and their belongings had been burnt.¹²⁷ It appeared that both robbery and incendiarism were involved, and the jury at the fire inquest held at the Golden Lake Hotel before the district coroner, Mr Thomas Hopper, found accordingly. The Golden Horn Hotel came under attack in November 1869, when a young man named Joseph Walton broke a window.¹²⁸ On the Saturday evening he had been at the hotel, and the following morning he forced his way through a girl's bedroom window. He was fined £1 and 10/- costs, in default 48 hrs imprisonment. This same hotel was represented before the court in May 1869 when Hugh Hughes, the

¹²² *Ballarat Star*, November 30, 1871, 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197574536>.

¹²³ *Ballarat Courier*, December 30, 1873, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article192284966>.

¹²⁴ *Star* (Ballarat), May 13, 1878, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article199323792>.

¹²⁵ *Ballarat Star*, June 26, 1867, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112875986>.

¹²⁶ *Ballarat Star*, February 26, 1866, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112867601>.

¹²⁷ *Ballarat Star*, March 8, 1867, 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112873367>.

¹²⁸ *Ballarat Star*, November 2, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112855709>.

proprietor of the Golden Horn Hotel, was accused of “illegally detaining a concertina”.¹²⁹ Hughes believed he was entitled to it in payment of a bill for a number of meals provided to the concertina player, one of a party of strolling musicians and hornpipe dances who had entertained at the hotel the night before. The consequent drunkenness resulted in a quarrel, but after the concertina player had been thrown out, he made his way inside again through a window, striking one of the hornpipe dancers, who was then in bed, and who had a black eye as supporting evidence. The magistrate ordered the restoration of the concertina, with 10/- costs.

Alcohol again resulted in violence causing severe injury, when two brothers at Golden Lake, Samuel and Benjamin Holt, while drunk, had a fight in their hut and were so badly injured that Dr Thomas Foster treated them before Seth Sharp’s coach took them to Smythesdale, before they continued their journey to Ballarat hospital.¹³⁰ They stabbed and battered each other, using picks, an axe and a table knife, and smashed the window. The men stated that they were so drunk that they could not remember much about the cause or details of the affair.

Violence, occasioned by drunkenness, was frequently the cause of people presenting before the courts at Piggoreet, Linton or Smythesdale. The victim in May 1869 was Catherine Lowe, who assisted her publican husband George in running the Golden Lake Hotel.¹³¹ William Smith was charged with having struck her such a violent blow that her right eye was almost knocked out, but due to a technicality in serving the summons, the magistrate ordered a fresh summons to be issued, and nothing more was heard of the matter.

COMMERCE AND BUSINESS

Hotels and boarding houses provided residential care, meals, and social life for the many single men working at Golden Lake and the surrounding area, and were prominent in the lives of their communities. The Golden Lake Hotel was in business as early as Christmas 1865, when pigeon-shooting matches were held there, as were sporting events such as quoit-playing and many forms of athletics.¹³² Sporting activities popularly

¹²⁹ *Ballarat Star*, May 28, 1869, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112889423>.

¹³⁰ *Argus* (Melbourne), September 30, 1874, 7, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5879630>.

¹³¹ *Ballarat Star*, May 28, 1869, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112889423>.

¹³² *Star* (Ballarat), December 25, 1865, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112866021>.

followed at Springdallah had strong links back to the north of England.¹³³ They included Cumberland wrestling, standing high jumps, foot-racing vaulting and tilting, as well as pigeon racing.¹³⁴ When the Galatea Hotel was advertised for sale in September 1868 it was described as being “a first class hotel, situated in the rising township of Brownsvale, and surrounded by the rich claims of the Golden Lake, Golden Horn, Galatea, and Atlas Gold Mining Companies”.¹³⁵

The publican’s licence for the Golden Horn Hotel was transferred by Margaret Christie to Hugh Hughes in November 1868.¹³⁶ His business suffered due to competition from newly opened hotels in the district, resulting in his becoming insolvent in December 1869.¹³⁷ Hughes had tried to sell the hotel six months before his bankruptcy was declared, as Figure 88 shows, an indication that he was already in trouble then.



A Safe Investment with a Sure Fortune.
FOR SALE, those large and commodious premises known as the GOLDEN HORN HOTEL, situated at Springdallah, contiguous to, and surrounded by, the richest claims in the district, and may truly be said to be situated in a Golden Valley, where enterprise is as yet only in its infancy.

Figure 74. Advertisement describing the Golden Horn hotel and surroundings

(Ballarat Star, May 25, 1869, 3)

The fortunes and failures of commercial ventures were dependent upon the mining industry. If mines were not working for long periods due to flooding, or broken equipment, or having struck deep layers of rock, the resultant cessation of mining could mean miners being out of work, and less leisure spending in hotels and beer houses.

There were two hotels at Brownsvale, at the eastern end of the Brownsvale Estate once known as Moppianimum. One was the Brownsvale Hotel, and the other was The Barb. The Brownsvale Hotel was built beside the bridge crossing Monkey Gully creek, a tributary of the Woody Yaloak creek, and is shown in Figure 89, to the east of Brownsvale homestead, where the road runs between Scarsdale and Pitfield.

¹³³ Alan Metcalfe, *Leisure and Recreation in a Victorian Mining Community: The Social Economy of Leisure in Rural North-East England, 1820-1914* (Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Routledge, 2006), 24.

¹³⁴ *Star* (Ballarat), December 30, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112857326>.

¹³⁵ *Ballarat Star*, September 3, 1868, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113847119>.

¹³⁶ *Ballarat Star*, November 26, 1868, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112881449>.

¹³⁷ *Ballarat Star*, December 15, 1869, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112856900>.

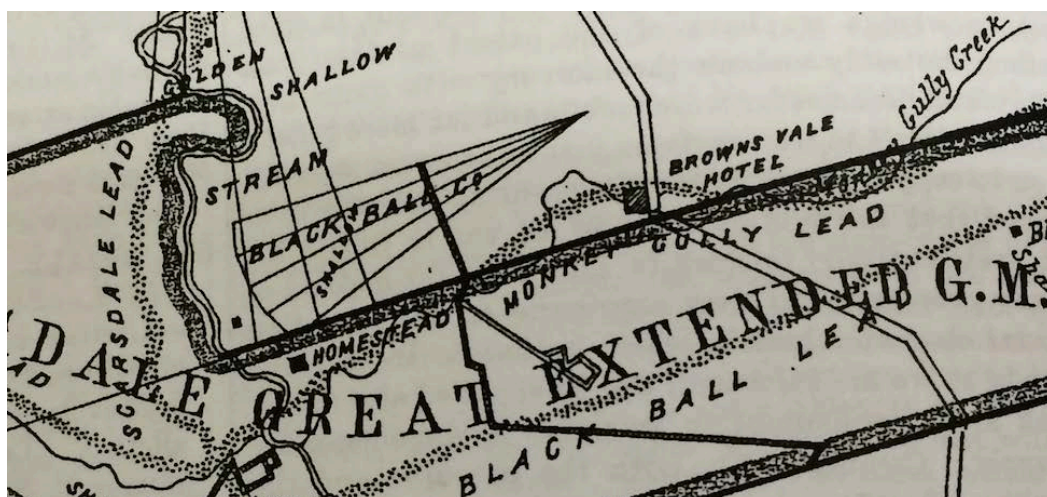


Figure 75. Site of Brownsvale hotel at bridge over creek on main road south

(Copied from Dicker's *Mining Record*, 8:121)

In December 1871 the hotels at Golden Lake were the Galatea (Patrick Horan), Golden Lake (George Lowe), and Criterion (George Skinner).¹³⁸ Hotel keepers were often Irish, the hotels changed hands frequently, and with new licence holders they often had new names. Three brothers named Michael, Patrick and Denis Horan from Burr in Kings County, Ireland, were living in Springdallah for some years. Patrick Horan, whose brother Denis ran the Happy Valley Hotel, held an allotment under licence at Golden Lake in the 1870s, but had left his Galatea Hotel site by about 1880 to take up the Madame Berry hotel at Allendale¹³⁹.

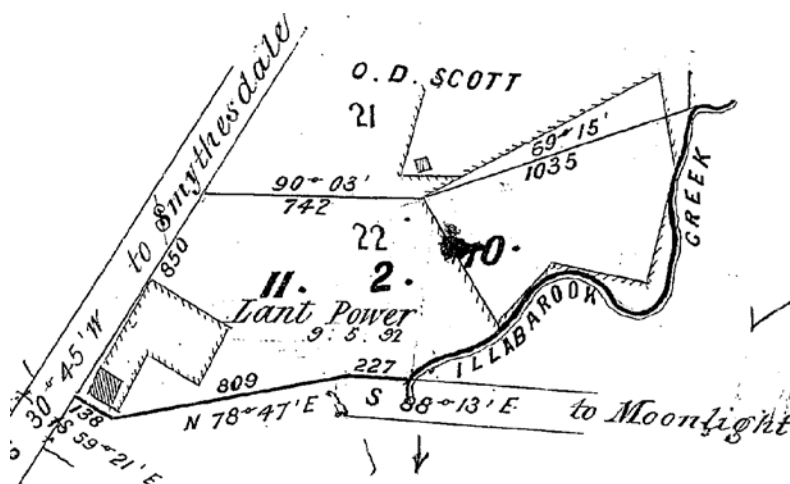


Figure 760. The site of the Alchemist Hotel

(Copied from Landata, Central Plan Office, Put Away Plans, Old Parish Township Plans)

¹³⁸ *Ballarat Star*, December 7, 1871, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197574734>.

¹³⁹ *Ballarat Star*, January 30, 1883, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article202703227>.

An hotel stood at the north-east corner of the cross roads from Piggoreet to Derwent Jacks and Moonlight, facing the Smythesdale to Pitfield Road. It comprised 11 ac 2 rd 10 p, allotment number 22, backing on to the Illabarook Creek, as shown in Figure 90.¹⁴⁰ Ashton Gartside held the licence to the site at one stage, when he conducted a store there. Lant Power (1839-1908) was in possession for many years, not necessarily consistently, from about 1864, as publican of the Alchemist Hotel hotel. It was named for its proximity to the Alchemist Gold Mining Company.¹⁴¹ When Power had his publican's licence renewed in September 1871 the magistrate remarked that the Alchemist was the first hotel to have been erected in that locality.¹⁴² The following month, Power was fined 1/- and 5/- costs for not having his lamp lit at his hotel.¹⁴³ He was still conducting his licensed premises in January 1886, having been in possession of the hotel on and off for nearly 25 years.¹⁴⁴

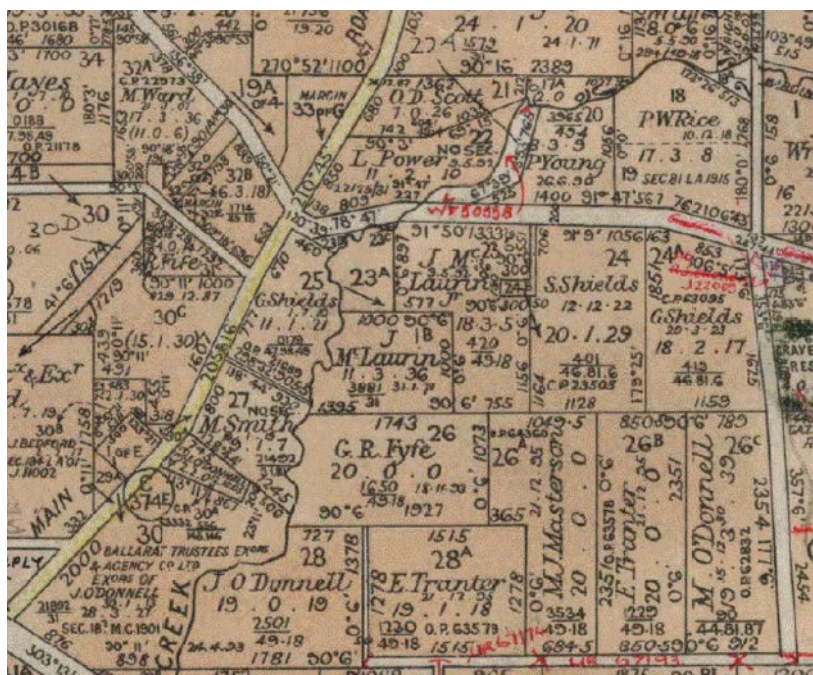


Figure 77. Owners of allotments on Illabarook Creek at Derwent Jacks

(Adapted from Clarksdale Parish Plan)

¹⁴⁰ John Lynch, authorised surveyor, Central Plan Office, 74/5-853, 24 August 1874, amended 27 May 1892.

¹⁴¹ *Star* (Ballarat), September 3, 1864, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66348692>.

¹⁴² *Ballarat Star*, September 7, 1871, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197565704>.

¹⁴³ *Ballarat Star*, October 16, 1871, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article201607377>.

¹⁴⁴ *Ballarat Star*, January 21, 1886, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article206306441>. Lant Power was eventually granted the freehold in 1892, but the hotel may have been delicensed by that year.

Andrew Scott Ward was the hotelkeeper of the Grenville Turf Club Hotel, on the opposite corner from Power's Alchemist Hotel at Derwent Jacks in December 1871.¹⁴⁵ Although unmarked, the site is identifiable in Figure 91 as allotment 32B, file 1714/49.18.¹⁴⁶ Ward's own hotel was the place where the coroner's inquest was held into the cause of his death from apoplexy in April 1878.¹⁴⁷

David Porter was granted a transfer of the Brownsvale hotel publican's licence from John Jardine in May 1869.¹⁴⁸ An event of great excitement occurred when the whole front bar of the hotel was badly damaged by two horses, drawing a cartload of pigs, who bolted down the hill and through the front door.¹⁴⁹ The painting by William Tibbits,¹⁵⁰ in Figure 92, shows the downward slope of the road and sharp turn in front of the building that contributed to the accident.



Figure 78. Brownsvale Hotel owned by David Porter, about 1868
(Painted by William Tibbits. Courtesy of State Library Victoria [H35212])

¹⁴⁵ *Ballarat Star*, December 7, 1871, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197574734>.

¹⁴⁶ PROV, VPRS 16171, Parish of Clarksdale (part).

¹⁴⁷ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 373, File 1878/358.

¹⁴⁸ *Ballarat Star*, May 13, 1869, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112889025>.

¹⁴⁹ *Ballarat Courier*, "100 Years Ago", undated cutting in collection of WYHS.

¹⁵⁰ William Tibbits, *Residence of Mr D. Porter*, 1868. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/167665509>.

The other hotel at Brownsvale was Thomas Younghusband's The Barb Hotel, owned by one family for nearly 50 years, shown in Figure 16. When The Barb won the 1866 Melbourne Cup, Younghusband's winnings were sufficient to finance the building of his hotel that he then named in honour of the horse.¹⁵¹ The Barb was the site of a gathering of the hounds when Welshman Master John Corris Rowlands advertised the event to take place at 10 am on Friday 10 September 1872 under the heading "Mr Rowlands' Hounds".¹⁵²

Patrick Bowen died in June 1865 at Derwent Jacks, aged 46 years and his widow, Catherine, was obliged to depend on charitable subscriptions for subsistence for herself and family. Within two months she presented before Piggoreet Court with five children, aged from 13 years to 6 months, who were charged with being neglected. The four older children were committed to the Ballarat Industrial School for between three and seven years, the infant Richard staying with his mother.¹⁵³ In 1871 the eldest child, Sarah Ann Bowen married Aquilini Perinoni who had arrived in Melbourne on the *Glenmanna* in February 1855 as a six-year old with his father and brothers from Someo, Vallemaggia in Canton Ticino, Switzerland.¹⁵⁴ Sarah Ann and Aquilini lived at Derwent Jacks where they raised seven children among an extended family of Swiss connections.

Small commercial centres like Golden Lake and Derwent Jacks, were serviced by very few businesses, such as a store and two or three hotels, which have already been discussed. At Golden Lake, John Robert Watters bought a store with an attached dwelling from his sister-in-law, Mary Elizabeth Wilson, in July 1869, selling groceries, drapery and ironmongery, as well as serving as a bakery.¹⁵⁵ In the early 1870s William Tibbits was employed by Watters to paint the Golden Lake store, shown in Figure 93. There was a postal service at Golden Lake from 17 January 1870, usually run by the postmaster who had a general store or a hotel.

¹⁵¹ *Argus* (Melbourne), January 26, 1929, 9S, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article3999898>.

¹⁵² *Australasian*, September 14, 1872, 12, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article137574430>.

¹⁵³ *Ballarat Star*, 24 August 24, 1865, 2. Senior Constable Butcher of Piggoreet had found the children wandering about in the bush, with no-one to help them.

¹⁵⁴ PROV, VPRS 7666, B/137:6, *Glenmanna*, 14 February 1855.

¹⁵⁵ *Ballarat Star*, July 28, 1869, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112891006>.

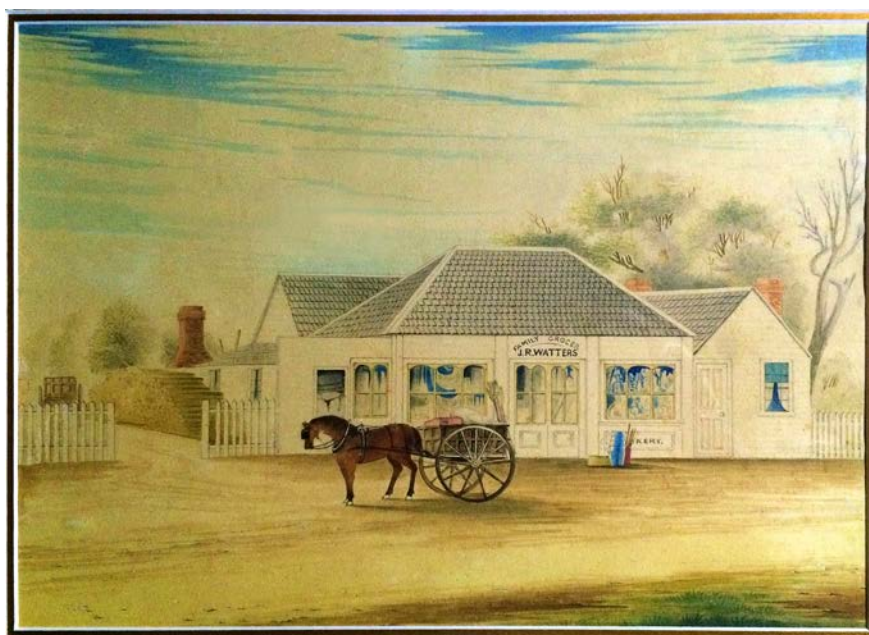


Figure 79. Golden Lake store in the 1870s
(Painted by William Tibbits. Courtesy of Trevor Watters)

The Derwent Jacks community was serviced by two hotels and a store at the intersection. Both places may have had a blacksmith working out of his own residential property, a local farmer may have supplied meat, a neighbour with a cow or goats may have supplied milk. The residents travelled to Piggoreet and Happy Valley for extra shopping, at the drapery store, the bootmaker, and the haberdashery. Holders of the post office position through the years, shown in Table 14, were:

Table 14. Postmasters and Postmistress at Golden Lake 1870-1883

Date range	Name	Usual occupation
1870 to 1872	Charles Werner	Foundryman
1872 to 1872	William Collins	
1872 to 1876	John Young	Storekeeper
1876 to 1879	John Robert Watters	Storekeeper
1878 to 1881	Mary Jane Sinclair	
1881 to 1881	Patrick Horan	Farmer and hotelkeeper
1881 to 1883+	James Higgins	Farmer and hotelkeeper

(Data from Victorian Municipal Directories)

HEALTH AND HAZARDS

There was no resident doctor at Golden Lake, and usually Dr Thomas Foster was called from Piggoreet when necessary. He appears to have been a successful surgeon, and to have been highly regarded for many years. There were many reports of accidents, both

mining and domestic, resulting in death and injury, over the period of Golden Lake's existence. A miner named Henry Stanton was killed in the Galatea mine in August 1869, and the inquest into his death was held at the Golden Lake Hotel.¹⁵⁶ The ground fell in on him when the main sets of timber accidentally gave way. He had been married for 16 years, and left a widow, four daughters and a son, aged between 12 years and 2 months.¹⁵⁷ The Oddfellows of the district initiated a subscription to set up Mrs Stanton in some business to enable her to maintain herself and her children.¹⁵⁸

Dr Foster assisted when the six year old son of Glaud Pender, manager of the Golden Lake company, broke his right thigh in January 1869.¹⁵⁹ A wagon wheel on a dray delivering a load of wood at the claim passed over the boy who had climbed upon and then fallen from the wagon, but was saved by Alexander Duff's quick action in snatching the boy away from further injury. An unsympathetic response was given to D. McKenzie who requested assistance from the directors in October 1871, after breaking his leg in the Golden Lake mine and still being unfit for work.¹⁶⁰ The directors listened to gossip that this was the second leg break by the applicant, and that drink was the cause, with Peter Telford making a facetious remark about making a levy upon the public houses, and McKenzie's appeal was ignored.

Viture Gagieti, an Italian working at the Golden Horn mine in August 1869 was badly hurt when a mass of black clay broke a cap-piece and brought down other timber.¹⁶¹ The prompt surgical assistance of Dr Thomas Foster was regarded as having saved his life. In the same incident, Robert Hall was also injured, but not so seriously.¹⁶² An accident in the Galatea Company's mine at Brownsvale could well have been more serious than eventuated.¹⁶³ A signal was given too soon, causing William Clarkson to be caught against timbering as the cage ascended, which could have killed him. Although his jaw was broken, and he suffered serious injuries, he survived the accident.

¹⁵⁶ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 227, File 1869/742, 24 August, 1869; *Leader*, August 28, 1869, 19. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article196481780>.

¹⁵⁷ *Ballarat Star*, August 26, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112891827>.

¹⁵⁸ *Ballarat Star*, August 30, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112891941>.

¹⁵⁹ *Ballarat Star*, February 1, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112882998>.

¹⁶⁰ *Ballarat Star*, October 28, 1871, 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article197573757>.

¹⁶¹ *Age* (Melbourne), August 26, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article188572514>.

¹⁶² *Ballarat Star*, 26 August 26, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112891827>.

¹⁶³ *Ballarat Star*, November 25, 1869, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112856346>.

Although most deaths were related to mining, children often died in domestic accidents, when the value of neighbourly support became apparent. Four year old Mary Elizabeth Watters drowned in a water hole behind her father's house at Golden Lake on 29 August 1869.¹⁶⁴ Storekeeper John Robert Watters and his wife Hannah Jane Wilson had three children, Ernest being 17 months older than Mary Elizabeth, and Robert two years younger. Hannah was due to give birth to their fourth child imminently. An inquest into the circumstances of the death was held before a jury of twelve local men. Mary Ann Fraser, who had worked as a servant for the Watters family for more than two years, gave evidence that she got a bucket of water from the water hole at about 8 o'clock, before breakfast, closing the lid before returning to the house.

After the family meal, she could see that the children were playing in the yard where there was the fenced in water hole. When she returned to the water hole for more water at half past twelve, there were no children around. She pushed the lid aside and immediately saw Mary Elizabeth floating in the water. She ran for help, and John Watters came and lifted the child out, and took her to Mrs Charlotte Furlong's house, nearby.¹⁶⁵ Mrs Annie Skinner, who lived next door, assisted Dr Thomas Foster, to try to revive the child. Mrs Watters had been resting in bed, delivery of her next child being imminent. The family had only six weeks earlier moved to this area, when the water hole was sunk and covered in, although the hinges on the lid of the water hole had already been broken.

Gavin Miller was just 16 years old when he drowned while crossing, in the dark, the flooded Woady Yaloak Creek between his home in Piggoreet on his way to work in the Golden Lake mine in November 1870.¹⁶⁶ Natural causes led to the deaths of relatively young people at that time, as when 29 year old miner John Ellison from Northumberland died from enteritis in June 1866.¹⁶⁷ A Chinese storekeeper at Brownsvale named Wee Yen was only 44 years when he died of phthisis in August 1874.¹⁶⁸ There were many instances of death from phthisis, but whether this was miners' phthisis from breathing in

¹⁶⁴ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 234, File 1869/226, 30 August, 1869.

¹⁶⁵ Charlotte Furlong gave evidence that she ran a boarding house at Golden Lake.

¹⁶⁶ *Ballarat Courier*, November 2, 1870, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article191642856>.

¹⁶⁷ PROV, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 146, File 1864/797: 7 October 1864.

¹⁶⁸ BMD, *Pioneers Index*, Reg. 9208, Wee Yen died, 1874.

powdered rock when blasting through basalt, or tuberculosis, is difficult to determine, given that women in their 30s and 40s were also diagnosed as dying from phthisis.¹⁶⁹

There were 21 deaths at Brownsvale between July 1868 and June 1879, according to their registrations, and a further 8 at Golden Lake for the same period. The details make it clear that Brownsvale and Golden Lake were really one and the same place. Of those 29 recorded deaths, there were 10 adults aged between 37 and 70 years, of which two died in mining accidents. The other 8 died from diseases such as apoplexy, dropsy, phthisis and aortic aneurism, while 2 of the 3 women died from cancer of the womb in one instance and puerperal convulsions in the other.

The hazards associated with surviving childhood were disease based. Of the 11 children aged between 2 and 10 years, whose deaths occurred at Golden Lake and Brownsvale, all were recorded between July 1868 and November 1879. Diphtheria killed 5, scarlatina and measles each caused 1 death, 2 died from diarrhoea, and 1 from congestion of the brain. Only 1 child had an accidental death, from drowning. Of the 8 infants who died aged between 1 day and 1 year, in the same period, 4 failed to thrive though prematurity or debility, 3 died from measles, diphtheria and erisipelas, and 1 died from blood poisoning. The deaths of the 4 Ballantine children in 1868 from diphtheria must have been a devastating experience for the small community in Golden Lake township and throughout the whole Springdallah gold field.

LAND

The means by which mining families could eventually have the opportunity to purchase their own land, were varied and complex. Initially, small parcels were available under lease and licence arrangements, according to early land legislation. Over a number of years Land Acts were introduced, amendments made to them, and by the end of the 1870s, when the deep leads of Springdallah were almost exhausted, many families who had made their start towards home and property ownership based on gold, were able to apply for large farming and grazing holdings in Gippsland, the Wimmera and Mallee, and north eastern Victoria.

¹⁶⁹ BMD, *Death certificate*, Reg. 6689, Margaret Jenkins, died 7 April 1866 at Springdallah. She was aged 43 years; Reg. 7569, Eliza Carey, died 14 July 1868 at Brownsvale. She was aged 37 years; Reg. 2882, Mary McKinnon, died 20 January 1872 at Newtown. She was aged 34 years;

It was reported early in 1865 that a committee of the Ballarat Mining Board was to consider a draft by-law relating to “the rights and privileges which may be exercised and enjoyed by the holders of business licenses”,¹⁷⁰ with the aim of giving the holders of business licenses the same privileges in relation to business areas as are now held in relation to residence areas by holders of miner’s rights. In June 1867 a memorial in favour of amending the Mining Statute stated, in part, that holders of residence and business areas should have no right to the gold within those areas, nor the right to mine them, but only to occupy them for purposes of residence and business.¹⁷¹ Further, it required the Statute to state that holders of miner’s rights should have the right to those areas for mining purposes, paying compensation to the holders for any surface damage. The memorial was based on previous experience of some residence and business areas mining on their site and encroaching on adjoining mining company claims, taking the gold that was claimed by the companies. It was pointed out that residence area licences were introduced to encourage holders of them to make permanent homes on the gold fields.

One result of the 1865 Act following on the commission was to permit Miner’s Right holders to occupy up to one acre of land on which to reside, within a goldfield area. This meant, in effect, that holding land under the Miner’s Right was a basis of title, and had important implications for miners everywhere, and is apparent at Springdallah, as free selection after survey was allowed.¹⁷² In Ballarat on 26 February 1868 there was a proposal by Isaac Wheeldon, chairman of the Ballarat Mining Board to introduce a bylaw that would not allow mining to be undertaken on ground occupied as residence or business areas.¹⁷³ This had been contentious since May 1865, and must have had an impact on the families living on the Golden Lake claim, by virtue of their business residence licences, such as A.P Boston (19 Aug 1869), Frederick Ellis (28 March 1868), Alexander and Robert Good (4 April 1868); Joseph Saulsby and Charles Tait (11 May 1868); George and Peter Telford (15 April 1868); Robert Waugh (16 April 1868) and John Williamson (21 March 1867).¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁰ *Ballarat Star*, January 5, 1865, 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article66059226>.

¹⁷¹ *Ballarat Star*, June 15, 1867, 4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112875716>.

¹⁷² *Ballarat Star*, May 8, 1865, 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112886568>.

¹⁷³ *Ballarat Star*, February 26, 1868, 4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article113601427>.

¹⁷⁴ Linton Historical Society, *Register of Business Residence Licences*.

CONCLUSION

Golden Lake township and the surrounding district was distinctive in its origin within two homestations of pastoral runs, and its having two major gold mining companies develop on the freehold properties of those runs. The particular relationships between the pastoralists and the miners, in one instance led to the purchase of the property by mining interests. They then managed the property as both a gold mining company and for pastoral and agricultural use, at Brownsvale. The other property continued in its ownership and licenced holdings by the Scottish farming family of David Clarke, while negotiating appropriate use of the land on Piggoreet West for mining purposes.

This Springdallah community fitted well with the findings of historians like Bate, Serle and Fahey, who stressed the mix of immigrant groups on the goldfields. At Brownsvale there was a Chinese camp with at least one store, where a group of tributers lived while working a section of the Galatea in the early 1870s. There was resistance to the company employing the Chinese, but the threatened riot was short lived, and strike action appears to have been averted. A good relationship appears to have existed between the mine management and the Chinese, who alerted the manager when fire broke out on the claim one night. The Swiss-Italians, with names like Cerini and Perinoni, were particularly notable at Derwent Jacks, where they applied for land licences and combined their mining with farming.

Despite there being only few mines in the Golden Lake area, they were high producers, and provided employment for approximately 1,000 workers at the end of the 1860s. One important finding in this section is that the mining industry was severely diminished by the end of the 1870s, with many workers who remained miners having to travel to find employment. The Golden Lake experience is a strong example of the movement of gold mining communities once the Land Acts of the late 1860s and early 1870s provided the opportunities for farming and grazing on properties to the north and east of Victoria.

Chapter 8: CONCLUSION

This thesis has argued that, although many goldfield histories have been written, there has been inadequate research into the unique characteristics of rich goldfields communities that comprised families whose livelihood depended upon the alluvial deep-lead mining industry of the mid 19th century. The decayed and disappeared yet once-thriving goldfields communities, in particular, have barely had their histories touched upon. The lack of comprehensive studies revealing the symbiotic relationships between families residing at their industrial workplace, in a period when mining companies were at their most productive, limits the extent to which we can fully understand the place of goldfields history in the creation and development of Australian society. Consequently, a knowledge gap exists in vital understandings of family and domestic life, and community and working life, on rich deep lead Victorian goldfields during a time of intense social change. This study makes a significant contribution to the historiography of the Victorian goldfields, by addressing that knowledge gap and providing evidence-based research about the Springdallah network of communities.

COMMUNITY

A significant theme in this study is that of community. The concept of community is important in understanding how modern Australian society has developed over time, a major reason why this study of the Springdallah communities will strengthen the current historiography of the Victorian goldfields. Mining historian Barry McGowan has argued that goldfields communities existed, which were not large by national standards, but whose presence in large numbers across the Australian landscape provided a cumulative importance “in terms of population production and regional impact”.¹ Regional historian Weston Bate has substantiated that claim of their importance with his findings that the gold production from Ballarat’s hinterland mining communities (like Springdallah), helped finance the growth of major cities such as Ballarat.² The communities comprised many families, of whom social historian Alan Mayne claimed that “the surge in family

¹ McGowan, “Hegemony, Localism and Ethnicity”, 40.

² Bate, *Lucky City*, 118.

formation that modified goldfields life has not been fully told.”³ And historian Charles Fahey confirms that “gold had a major demographic impact on Victoria [that] is to be understood...in terms of families and communities”.⁴ This thesis supports and confirms those assertions. It contributes to goldfields historiography by providing a particular and detailed case study of a network of communities and its associated formation of family life on the Springdallah goldfield.

The concept of community, for the purposes of this study, was defined as a relatively self-contained geographical area (town, village or small settlement) in which occurred all the daily occupational, social and cultural activities of its residents. One indicator of its successful functioning was the evidence exhibited, of tolerance between people from different backgrounds, exemplified by the workforce makeup of companies such as the appropriately named All Nations mine at Derwent Jacks. The greatly increased population from Britain included not only English and Scots, but also large numbers of Irish and Welsh. Europeans, particularly from Germany and the Swiss-Italian borders, were joined by lesser numbers from America and the Scandinavian countries. Diversity in country of origin was clearly demonstrated by the data analysis in this thesis, as was the high degree of tolerance and cooperation between these groups.

The theoretical hypothesis on which this thesis relied was that the nature of the Springdallah goldfield communities at the peak of deep-lead mining could be reconstructed from the rich repository of scattered documentary evidence and the remnant gold-mining landscape that survives. That contention was supported by contemporary social and cultural history theory, with its emphasis on social structure, embracing cultural, spatial, linguistic, topographical, archaeological, demographic and other wide-ranging fields and disciplines.

Fahey and Mayne argue that the goal that sustained the social lives of miners was the making of homes, families, and communities.⁵ This thesis supports that contention, and provides evidence resulting from research into family networks. It found that there was often a pattern of extended family migrating together and sharing in the remaking of

³ Mayne “Family and Community”, 238.

⁴ Charles Fahey and Alan Mayne, “All That Glitters...,” in *Gold Tailings: Forgotten Histories of Family and Community on the Central Victorian Goldfields*, ed. Charles Fahey and Alan Mayne (North Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2010), 27.

⁵ Fahey and Mayne, *Gold Tailings*, 2.

their lives in the colonies. Brothers of a wife sometimes joined the couple to travel together; adult children who had married often brought a young family as well as a widowed parent. Other family members, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, and cousins, followed to join their relatives who had successfully settled in the colonial goldfields. Shipping passenger lists hold many examples of married men travelling alone, followed a year or two later by their wives and children, once they had become financially established. Homes and work environments were created in which economic stability and a thriving social life sustained the hundreds of mining families of the Springdallah communities.

Findings from the study of the three commercial centres of Piggoreet, Happy Valley and Golden Lake, reveal that within the Springdallah goldfield communities there was a strong core of permanent residents, many creating families who grew to adulthood having attended all their school days in the one classroom, committed to the local church of their denomination, and creating the friendships and relationships that in a large number of instances became marriages that formed new families. This study found that for many of the couples who raised their families at Springdallah, either one or both parents were often poorly educated or illiterate. Attending one of the four schools on this goldfield, their children became well-educated, and many grew to adulthood better educated than their parents had been.

An important element in family life was religion. Non-conformist religious affiliation was strong at Springdallah, as this study found. While the Irish were predominantly the adherents of Roman Catholicism, with churches at both Happy Valley and Derwent Jacks,⁶ only one Church of England existed within the entire district. This situation contrasted with the Protestant non-conformist denominations that the northern English and Scots established with their several Wesleyan Methodist, Primitive Methodist, and Presbyterian churches and chapels in each of the three centres.

One finding that highlights the difference between Springdallah and many other goldfield communities of the peak period in Victoria's mining industry, was its prosperity. Archaeologist Susan Lawrence showed that subsistence goldfields were not

⁶ Conveniently and centrally located for the communities of Golden Lake, Bownsvale, Derwent Jacks, Piggoreet, Grand Trunk and Exchequer.

unusual in Victoria,⁷ peopled by self-employed miners who fossicked and undertook small-scale mining, often seasonally, and mixed with other employment, including harvesting. The study of Springdallah found, by contrast, that there were many opportunities for prosperous gain for miners through shareholding in the highly productive mining companies for which they worked.

The attitudes and values of the people permeate the records, telling of their responses when hard times struck, through their rallying round to provide emotional and financial support when other families' breadwinners were ill or injured and killed in mining accidents, when women were giving birth or mourning the loss of children or husbands, or when fires destroyed or threatened property. These occurrences, often told through eye witness accounts in coroner's inquest reports, provide an indication of the sense of community, strengthened by the high incidence of family networks often including three generations.

Lawrence argued that opportunities exist for confirmation of community membership when people share activities. There is strong evidence to show the Springdallah residents regularly organised themselves in educational and spiritual endeavours, and sporting, social and cultural activities and events. A wide variety of recreational activities was conducted within the goldfield communities at Springdallah, including sports and athletic competitions, turf club race meetings, pigeon racing and pigeon shooting activities. There were many gatherings and concerts at which singing, recitations, poetry readings, dancing, and musical bands provided entertainment. Political meetings often offered a form of entertainment along with their educational and industrial advantages. Sunday school picnic days, meetings for various purposes, and social fundraisers for friendly societies, lodges, churches and schools, and concerts, were part of the goldfields' entertainment agenda in any one year. The many examples demonstrate the cementing of a sense of community, both formally and informally. This, of course, is not to say that all community interactions were necessarily harmonious. Examples of division were found when publicans conflicted with the Shire of Grenville after being threatened with licence fee increases, and when the Grand Trunk school teacher was targeted by a clergyman after changing his religious affiliation. Differences also arose between

⁷ Also known as "Poor man's diggings", subsistence goldfields such as Dolly's Creek provided returns that were low but steady.

commercial and mining interests, and between the managers of companies and those labouring in them, but they appear to have been quickly resolved.

Life on the Springdallah goldfield was not without its moments of lawlessness and despair, evident in coroner's inquests into suicides, tragic accidents, childhood epidemics such as diphtheria, and violence, occasionally resulting in death. The realities of daily life on a deep lead goldfield had a profound effect to which each of the communities found their own responses. Those realities included high childhood death rates and adults' premature death and injury in the mining industry, and the eventual working out of the rich deep leads and consequent failure of mines. Findings from this study provided evidence that the communities overcame the low times and coped with hardship and tragedy in a variety of ways. Difficulties and problems would very likely have been part of their life's experience whether they had stayed in their countries of birth or emigrated to the colonies. Although no statistics support the view, it appears from letters and reports that few Springdallah families, if any, considered returning "home", and believed their decision to make new homes in the colonies was justified.

This study found that there was little dissension at Springdallah, despite the people coming from very different cultural, geographical, religious and social backgrounds and classes. It showed that there was little conflict reported between ethnic groups, relationships overall were amicable, and reports of verbal and physical assaults were more often than not between drunken brothers, close friends, and neighbours, usually resulting from overindulgence in alcohol. No evidence was found that starvation or homelessness were conditions of life for Springdallah residents. Instances of poverty and distress were few, sometimes the result of personal misfortune caused by mining accidents that resulted in the loss of the family's main income earner. In 19th century Australia, charity provided a safety-net to most in need, even though that support was often harsh and difficult, aimed specifically at the "deserving poor".⁸ The Springdallah community demonstrated many instances of support being provided collectively to those who struggled financially, particularly through the many friendly societies that were set up by the people themselves to provide welfare support. Evidence was found of the co-operative spirit of support reaching across religious boundaries when, for example, all

⁸ Anne O'Brien, *Charity and philanthropy*, Dictionary of Sydney, 2008, accessed October 26, 2014. http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/charity_and_philanthropy.

denominations joined to raise funds after a church had to be rebuilt after a fire. The communities were moved to plan the establishment of institutions such as a hospital and an orphanage, initially proposed for Springdallah. When it was realised that such plans could not eventuate, the communities transferred the funds and provided financial support to the same developments in Ballarat.

GOLD MINING INDUSTRY

Significant findings from this thesis related to the gold mining industry. This thesis demonstrates that gold-mining technology and innovation improved in concert with the social and living conditions of the miners and their families. Technologies already developed in coal and lead mining in northern England, in particular, were imported along with the miners who migrated here. Introduced techniques included adjustments to equipment and machinery, particularly for drainage of water from below ground, ways to cope with foul air in drives, management of horses underground, and improved means of raising cages and trucks up shafts, as discussed in Chapter 6. Innovations included the construction and use of three boats below ground in the partially flooded Lucky mine. These contributions point to an innovative and skilled work force, and the study found that problems were often overcome by combining creativity and resourcefulness. In one instance, these entrepreneurial abilities led to the establishment of a house-removal business that became prominent in the Melbourne suburbs in later years.

One aspect of this thesis related to the skills that immigrants brought to Springdallah to benefit the community. Analysis of data from Springdallah birth registrations linked to English and Scottish 1841 and 1851 census reports revealed the high level of mining experience brought by miners from the coal fields of Durham and Northumberland in north-eastern England, Lanarkshire and Ayrshire in the Scottish lowlands, and Glamorganshire in Wales. Despite an apparent lack of mining experience, the Irish were also well represented at Springdallah, although many chose to take up farming or hotel-keeping. An unexpected finding of this study supports the argument that not all gold mining areas of Victoria were dominated by the Cornish, as was the case in Ballarat and Bendigo. At Springdallah, the significant predominance of miners' places of origin was the north-east of England, particularly in Northumberland and Durham.

The alluvial deep lead gold mining industry at Springdallah was an economic unit, based on a specific industry, within a defined geographical place, upon whose success the entire community was completely reliant. Springdallah was in fact a highly productive

goldfield, the importance of and the yields from which have not being adequately recognized in gold mining history. Exploitation of alluvial deep leads with their propensity for flooding was costly and complex, requiring capital to fund the shaft sinking and underground tunnelling, the infrastructure of poppet heads, machinery, steam-engine houses, puddling machines, water pumps and sluice apparatus, the provision of vast amounts of timber for steam engine fuel, construction, and underground slabbing and timbering, and the employment of miners and support workers. The findings of this study indicate a high level of success in the mining industry at Springdallah, with all companies mentioned in reports achieving results approved by their shareholders. Mine managers were frequently given testimonial dinners and presentations by shareholders and miners, as expressions of gratitude for their management skills. The Springdallah experience compares well with other Victorian goldfields, where there were frequent reports of failed companies.⁹

This thesis has demonstrated the significant influence provided by mining companies in the economic and occupational lives of the inhabitants of Springdallah. The Springdallah community predominantly comprised employees of mining companies, who often also earned extra incomes from associated support occupations. The findings of the Springdallah study concur with those of McGowan, who found many examples of “part time or multiple occupation category” in his southern mining region of New South Wales.¹⁰ Mixed employment included mining, carting, timber cutting, carpentry, and provision of supplies and accommodation. Some miners undertook businesses with their wives, such as hotels, boarding houses, and stores, which were often a means of income for widows and spinsters. Miners’ wives, mothers, daughters, sisters, growing children and other dependants provided the important domestic support network, responsible for the comfortable homes in which varied meals were prepared and clothing and household bedding and linen were laundered regularly.

In analysing the Springdallah goldfield, its development and features have been related to the mining scene across Victoria. Local miners felt the effect of state-wide regulation and legislation. They were outspoken in expressing their views to their parliamentary representatives. Mining legislation, often introduced in Parliament by

⁹ *Argus* (Melbourne), October 25, 1862, 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article6480621>. This is one of many mining reports about “the failure of so many of the public companies” over a range of years.

¹⁰ McGowan, “Working miners”.

members who had themselves been miners, provided both support and protection for miners, mining companies, and mining shareholders. The power of the mining communities was apparent in the willingness of candidates to stand for membership of local mining boards and courts, as well as for local and state government, to travel long distances to address large mining audiences on matters of mutual interest. The presence of former miners among those representatives was a further indication of the power of the mining industry workers, expressed, for example by the legislation introduced by Vincent Pyke. The Acts that introduced limited liability and no-liability legislation protected shareholders, and were important protections for the small shareholding working miners of Springdallah. A number of Springdallah mines were developed almost immediately after the introduction of Pyke's 1860 Act. Conditions surrounding the miners' work environment were such that, at Springdallah, there was little industrial unrest and consensus was usually achieved amicably. The possession of a miner's right, available to women as well as men, provided great benefits, including the right to occupy an area of Crown Land on which to live.

LIMITATIONS

No specific study and analysis of the Springdallah goldfield communities has been undertaken prior to this thesis, despite a wealth of primary records existing in both private and public repositories. Limitations in the secondary sources available to this Springdallah project included the brevity of the few works published as newspaper articles and brochures, without reference to sources, thus making their claims unreliable. A 32 page booklet published in 1926 was largely written from hearsay, with no bibliography or citations, and is described as a compilation.¹¹ Valuable primary records such as vital statistic registrations were available for only part of the Springdallah area, which limited the extent to which the data they provided can be regarded as comprehensive.

One limitation in the usefulness of the shareholders database was that it provided occupational information only after 1870.¹² Further, no rate books for the period under study have survived for the Grenville Shire, limiting the available data that could help reveal occupancy and ownership of tenements and land for the period under study. More

¹¹ Robertson, *Piggoreet and Golden Lake*.

¹² McAdie, *Mining Shareholders Index*.

broadly, Australian census statistics do not exist for most of the Springdallah settlements for the period 1851 to 1881, which placed a limit on aspects of demographic analysis. However, considering the almost total disappearance of physical remains of the Springdallah communities, the extent of available documentary evidence is extensive and was essential to the application of the chosen methodology for this study.

DISCUSSION

Despite the eventual decline of the Springdallah deep lead alluvial goldfield, the benefits were great for the individuals who lived there during its productive years. The statistics gleaned from the life record sources helped to identify and quantify aspects of the lives of the Springdallah community, dependent as it was on the deep lead gold mining industry. This study is significant in its contribution to the body of knowledge about Australian history, specifically in the period of high gold production, when the population increased at a spectacular rate and Australian, but in particular Victorian, society became established. Consequently, the physical environment, community interactions, personal relationships and family networks as revealed in this thesis add to the body of understanding and theory of the symbiotic relationships between domestic and industrial life during a period of accelerated social change.

Economic status was revealed by identification of shareholders in mines that made good returns, evidence in wills and probate records, and the extent to which land was taken up under the various Land Acts of the 1860s, in particular. Evidence from this study supports the claim that marriages and young families formed in unusually high numbers on the Victorian goldfields, and confirms the youthfulness of the population. The miners at Springdallah, in general, established homes for their families, often with considerable improvements to their land selections, and sometimes only after extensive clearing of tree stumps and roots and rocks. Stables and dairies, dams and fencing added to the value of their properties that were often sold if and when they sought to acquire more desirable land. Many mining families took up larger land selections to become farmers in the north and east of Victoria, once land selection became possible there from about 1865, and especially as the deep leads were worked out at Springdallah. That so many miners became farmers, independently employed, echoes the question raised by McGowan, about whether the desire to be their own masters was an entrepreneurial attribute carried from the gold fields to the farming paddocks.

The mining community experience at Springdallah supports the assertion of historian Charles Fahey that “both deep leads [*sic*] mining and quartz reefing promoted the growth of towns and cities, and transformed the demography of the goldfield”.¹³ At their peak, the Springdallah communities were securely established, thriving and stable. Despite its relatively small scale when compared with Ballarat and Bendigo, which evolved into cities based on flourishing industries, Springdallah provided a strong network of communities in which family life was successfully maintained, and the gold mining industry was well managed and productive.

The limited time span and specific geographical boundaries within which this study was placed opens up opportunities for further research to be undertaken to study not only the rise and establishment, but also the decline and disappearance of other mining communities across Victoria. Further research based on the work of this thesis, followed by critical professional review, may challenge, force reassessment and revision, and open up new interpretations. It is hoped that this thesis will provide an impetus to others to undertake a comprehensive study of communities like those of Springdallah, to help shed light on the functioning of mining communities in colonial society.

This study has found that for the several decades of its existence, the residents of Springdallah enjoyed stable and productive lifestyles, exhibited vigour and enthusiasm in social and cultural endeavours, raised their families in a supportive and cooperative environment, and were empowered to move on to the next phase of their lives with social and economic benefits derived from their years at Springdallah.

¹³ Fahey, *Gold Tailings*, 8.

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