La Trobeana

Journal of the C. J. La Trobe Society Inc.

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The C J La Trobe Society Inc was formed in 2001 to promote understanding and appreciation of the life, work and times of Charles Joseph La Trobe, Victoria's first Lieutenant-Governor.
www.latrobesociety.org.au

La Trobeana is published three times a year: in March, July and November. The journal publishes peer-reviewed articles, as well as other written contributions, that explore themes in the life and times of Charles Joseph La Trobe, aspects of the colonial period of Victoria's history, and the wider La Trobe family.

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FRONT COVER
Thomas Woolner, 1825-1892, sculptor
Charles Joseph La Trobe, 1853
Bronze portrait medallion showing the left profile of Charles Joseph La Trobe, diam. 24cm.
Signature and date incised in bronze l.r.: T. Woolner Sc. 1853: / M
La Trobe, Charles Joseph, 1801-1875. Accessioned 1894
Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria, H5489

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A Word from the President

The 15th Annual General Meeting of the La Trobe Society held at the Lyceum Club in August saw the following members elected to the Committee for the next three years: Diane Gardiner – Honorary President, Loreen Chambers – Honorary Vice-President, John Drury – Manager/ Honorary Treasurer, and Dianne Reilly – Honorary Secretary. The General Committee comprises Helen Armstrong, John Botham, Shirley Goldsworthy, Susan Priestley, Daryl Ross and Fay Woodhouse.

I note with appreciation the sterling service of Loreen Chambers who worked tirelessly as Editor of *La Trobeana* from 2009 until March 2015, and has now stepped into the role of Vice-President. She succeeds Daryl Ross, a resourceful Vice-President during the past six years, who will now join the General Committee as a member of the Events Committee. I acknowledge with many thanks the work of Judy Ryles who has retired from the Committee after six years' dedicated contribution to the Events program.

Our Editorial Committee under the able direction of Helen Armstrong seems never to be at a loss when it comes to sourcing new and interesting articles for each edition of *La Trobeana*. This issue with its range of articles is no exception.

Professor Graeme Davison's presentation at the AGM is published here as 'The Governor, the Captain and the Needlewomen: How my great-great-grandmother arrived in Port Phillip'. Professor Davison held us captivated as he intertwined his own family history and the social history of Victoria in those early days, demonstrating what courageous and enterprising women and men they were to leave their homes for a new and uncertain life in this country.

The Vice-President, Loreen Chambers, recently hosted the visit to La Trobe's Cottage of a group of men who presented a photograph to the Society that commemorates their historic visit to La Trobe's grave in Litlington in 1951. As Helen Botham reports, this image will soon be on display at La Trobe's Cottage.

A new initiative, the 'Members Talk to Members' program at Domain House, has had great success. The three talks this year were given by Loreen Chambers, Dianne Reilly and Helen Botham in July, August and September. These sessions have proven very popular with members and others, and it is planned to schedule four talks in 2017.

It is with great sadness that I record the death of member Scott Strahan, an architect who was engaged by the National Trust to work on a number of projects, including La Trobe's Cottage, and of Peter Holloway, past president of the Mornington Peninsula Branch of the National Trust and a great supporter of heritage and the La Trobe Society.

La Trobe Society member and skilled indexer, Judy Macdonald has undertaken the indexing of L.J. Blake's volume, *Letters of Charles Joseph La Trobe* (1975). Judy was an indexer of the *Argus* newspaper for some years. She has now focused on augmenting the index in the Blake volume, and producing a parallel index to the La Trobe Society's enlarged collection of letters on the website. I would like to remind members what a resource the website is, not least for some fascinating letters that La Trobe wrote towards the end of his life to educationalist George William Rusden, which now have been added to the collection.

The La Trobe Society's final event for the year is Christmas Cocktails at the Gothic Bank on Friday 25 November. This will be a very special occasion since the Verdon Chambers above the ANZ Bank in Collins Street, Melbourne, are not normally accessible to outsiders. As numbers are strictly limited, I suggest that you book early, and I look forward to seeing you there.

Diane Gardiner AM
Hon. President
C J La Trobe Society

John Noone, fl.1858-1889, lithographer
William Strutt, 1825-1915, artist
Opening of the First Legislative Council of Victoria, by Governor Charles Joseph La Trobe, at St Patrick's Hall, Bourke Street West, Melbourne, November 13th 1851 (1883)
From a watercolour sketch taken at the time by William Strutt
Photolithograph
National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, 2013.87

Victoria's Parliament

By Dr Dianne Reilly AM

Dianne Reilly is an historian who was the La Trobe Librarian at State Library Victoria from 1982 until 2008. She has published widely on Charles Joseph La Trobe. An Honorary Fellow in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne, she is a co-founder of the C J La Trobe Society and is currently its Secretary.

November 2016 marks two significant anniversaries in the history of democracy in Victoria. The Legislative Council of Victoria was sworn in on 11 November 1851 and, five years later, on 21 November 1856, the first fully-elected bicameral Victorian Parliament was opened.

Prior to these dates, the Port Phillip District of New South Wales had been governed from Sydney. Almost from the moment that the District had been officially opened for settlement on 9 September 1836, and the main settlement named as 'Melbourne' in March 1837 after the then British Prime Minister, Viscount Melbourne, relations with the New South Wales government steadily soured, largely due to the minimal expenditure allocated for Port Phillip's administration and necessary public works. With La Trobe's arrival in September 1839, settlers in Melbourne expected separation from Sydney would be a top priority.

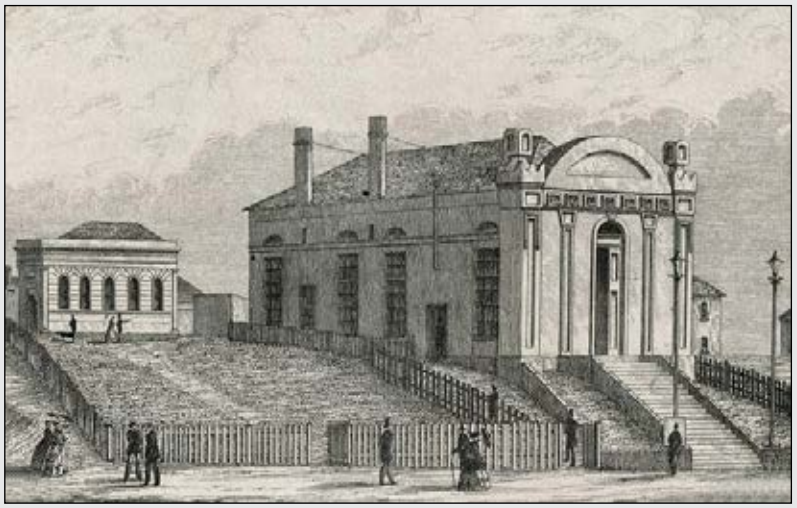
So as to pacify settlers clamouring for a better deal from the Government in Sydney, a type of Port Phillip representation was introduced. The membership of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, which advised the Governor, was expanded in 1842 from being a wholly-nominated body to one that was part-nominated and part-elected. Six of the thirty-six members would represent Port Phillip. This may have worked in theory, but those representing the Port Phillip District found the cost and time involved in travelling to and from Sydney onerous, especially when the Legislative Council consistently made decisions that favoured Sydney and other districts over Port Phillip.[1]

News of British assent to Separation reached Victoria on 11 November 1850. To assist in preparing enabling legislation, Governor-General Sir Charles FitzRoy[2] summoned La Trobe to Sydney at the end of February. He remained there until after the

prorogation of the New South Wales Legislative Council on 2 May. Separation came into effect on 1 July 1851. It was a great achievement for La Trobe, the outcome of steady and protracted manoeuvres on his part, and was cause for universal celebration in the new colony of Victoria. He could now look forward to the support of an independent Legislative Council in Melbourne, and to the opportunity of ploughing Port Phillip revenue back into services for Port Phillip.

with Alexander Dunlop, Charles Griffiths, William Haines, James Ross and Andrew Russell as non-office bearing nominees. Among the twenty elected representatives were: John Pascoe Fawkner, John O'Shanassy, James Palmer, Peter Snodgrass and William Westgarth.[5]

The Legislative Council met for the first time on 13 November 1851 at St Patrick's Hall, Bourke Street, Melbourne, with Dr James Palmer[6] elected as Speaker. The historian



David Tulloch, fl.1851–1852, engraver
St. Patrick's Hall, the first legislative house in Victoria, c.1852
Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria, H17209

On Separation Day, FitzRoy issued the writs for the election of members to serve on the Legislative Council of Victoria, completing the legal separation of the new Colony from New South Wales, and giving it a separate and independent existence. La Trobe was sworn in as Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria in Melbourne on 16 July. 'The depressing influence of our connection with Sydney is at an end', wrote the *Argus* newspaper at the time.

The Act of Separation[3] provided for a limited form of representative, self-government in the new colony. It established a Legislative Council (but not a Legislative Assembly) consisting of thirty Members, with twenty elected (only significant property owners being eligible to vote) and the remainder appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor (who was, in turn, a British appointee)'.[4]

La Trobe's appointees were:

William Lonsdale, Colonial Secretary
William Stawell, Attorney-General
Charles Ebden, Auditor-General
Redmond Barry, Solicitor-General
Robert Pohlman, Master-in-Equity

'Garryowen' reported La Trobe's arrival for the opening session: 'His Excellency was dressed in full uniform, and wore the "hat and feathers" afterwards destined to figure for years as a historical bogey, which almost frightened the *Argus* out of its propriety'.[7]

St Patrick's Hall, designed by Samuel Jackson[8] and built on land purchased by the St Patrick's Society in 1846 at 85 (now 470) Bourke Street West, was one of Melbourne's first and most commodious halls. Dedicated 'to the memory of Ireland', it opened in 1849 for Society and other meetings and as a school for Irish children. A grand fancy-dress ball was held at the hall on 28 November 1850 as part of Separation festivities. For many years it was a mustering point for the annual St Patrick's Day procession and the Druids' Easter procession. Victoria's Legislative Council sat there until the new Parliament House was ready for use in 1856. It was demolished in 1957.[9] Its original Speaker's chair is now displayed in Queen's Hall at Parliament House.

Notwithstanding this limited form of self-government, the original Legislative Council,

Speaker's Chair used in the first Victorian House of Parliament at St. Patrick's Hall, Bourke Street, Melbourne
Presented by the Melbourne Branch No.1 of St. Patrick's Benefit Society, May 1951. Photographer: Murray Thompson MLA

which served the colony for five years, may be credited with three major contributions to Victoria's parliamentary system:[10]

- It was responsible for drafting a Constitution for Victoria which provided the framework for a system of responsible government

- It introduced the secret ballot process for parliamentary elections which was a unique innovation in the world at that time.

- It initiated the building of Parliament House Melbourne in Spring Street.

The new constitution for Victoria was approved by the Legislative Council in March 1854. It achieved the necessary endorsement by the British Parliament as the *Victoria Constitution Act 1855*, received Royal Assent on 16 July 1855, was proclaimed in Victoria on 23 November 1855, and came into effect in 1856 when Victoria became self-governing.[11] The Act provided for two Houses of Parliament, closely resembling the Westminster model, with a Legislative Council and a Legislative Assembly, otherwise called the Upper House and the Lower House respectively.

Main features of the system include:

- a Governor, appointed by the British Crown but acting on Victorian Government advice, whose duties include formally summoning, proroguing and dissolving Parliament, appointing Ministers and providing Royal Assent to Bills;

- a bi-cameral parliament consisting of a Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly, with the Ministry chosen from the faction or party in the majority in the Legislative Assembly;

- ministerial accountability to Parliament; and

- a fully-elected Parliament.[12]

Victoria's first parliamentary elections were conducted during the Spring of 1856, with the new legislature meeting on 25 November 1856.[13]

Dr John Waugh, an expert in constitutional law at the University of Melbourne, summed up the role of the Governor under the new Constitution:

> Until 1855, the Governor was the head of government in substance as well as in name. Although he had the assistance of senior officials headed by the local Colonial Secretary, the Government's policy was his, not theirs… they were able only to advise the Governor and run their departments, not to make major decisions for themselves. In turn, the Governor carried out the instructions of the British government…[14]

Antoine Fauchery, 1823-1861, photographer
Edward Macarthur, c.1858
Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria, H84.167/22

On attaining full self-government in 1856, 'the Governor would remain, on paper, the local ruler of the colony. But his powers, in internal affairs, would no longer be personal.'[15] He had to act on the advice of the government of the day.

Building had commenced on Parliament House early in 1856 and was far enough advanced for it to be officially opened on 21 November 1856, by the Acting Governor-General, Sir Edward Macarthur.[16] The Parliament of Victoria met in the new building until the colonies transmuted into a Federation of States in 1901 and Australia became a nation. Until 1927, the building was the seat of Federal Parliament, and State Parliament transferred to the Exhibition Building. When Canberra became the official capital of Australia in 1927, State Parliament returned to its previous home in Spring Street, Melbourne. Parliamentary historian Raymond Wright explained the twenty-six year residency of Federal Parliament in the Parliament of Victoria:

> A condition of federation was that the new commonwealth Parliament would not sit within a 100 mile radius of Sydney. In a magnanimous gesture that surprised some of the more ardent local federationists, the Victorian Parliament therefore offered to lend its parliamentary chambers and offices to the new Parliament until such time as an appropriate location was found and a building constructed. So, following the official opening at the Exhibition Buildings, the federal Parliament met respectively as the House of Representatives and Senate in the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council chambers in Spring Street.[17]

Not only were the parliamentarians generous, but Victoria's acting Governor, Chief Justice Sir John Madden, vacated Government House in the Domain, to provide a residence for the Governor-General, the Earl of Hopetoun, while he moved into *Stonnington*, a mansion further from town in Malvern. Wright concluded: 'In a final nationalistic nod, the Parliament of Victoria lent its original wooden mace to the House of Representatives… Had Victoria's parliamentarians known that the federal parliament would remain in Spring Street until 1927, they might have been a little less accommodating'.[18]

Announcing celebrations of the 150th anniversary of self-government, then Premier Steve Bracks described it in 2005 as one of the 'democratic advances our state is founded upon'.[19] Victoria's parliamentary system has come a long way since those heady days when separation resulted in the establishment of a Legislative Council in Victoria. It may be concluded that the solid foundations on which Victoria's Parliament House is built, and its parliamentary system conceived, were established under La Trobe's aegis.

1 A.G.L. Shaw, *A History of the Port Phillip District: Victoria before Separation*, Melbourne: Miegunyah Press, 1996, pp.184-186.

2 Sir Charles FitzRoy was appointed Governor of New South Wales in 1850 and, in 1851, received the commission as Governor-General, a role which embraced the governorship of New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land, Victoria, and all Australian possessions, including Western Australia. John M. Ward, 'FitzRoy, Sir Charles Augustus (1796-1858)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (accessed online 7 October 2016).

3 *Australian Colonies Government Act, 1850,* formerly *Act for the better Government of Her Majesty's Australian Colonies*.

4 Parliament of Victoria, Legislative Council, Information Sheet 7: 'The Legislative Council's History'.

5 Raymond Wright, *A People's Counsel; a history of the Parliament of Victoria, 1856-1990*, South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1992, p.12.

6 Sir James Frederick Palmer (1803-1871), medical practitioner and politician. In 1851 he was returned to the Victorian Legislative Council for the Western District seat of Normanby, Dundas and Follett and was elected first Speaker. He served on the select committee which drafted the Constitution in 1853 and on the committee that proposed the Act for creating the University of Melbourne. In 1856, he became first president of the new Legislative Council and in 1857 was knighted. Alan Gross, 'Palmer, Sir James Frederick (1803-1871)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (accessed online 7 October 2016).

7 'Garryowen' (Edmund Finn), *Chronicles of Early Melbourne 1835-1852: historical, anecdotal and personal*, Melbourne: Ferguson & Mitchell, 1888, p.934.

8 Samuel Jackson (1807-1876), pastoralist and architect, established a brisk practice, his recorded works being: St Francis' Church, 1839 & 1841; Scots Church, 1841 (from the parapet of which he made one of the earliest panoramic sketches of Melbourne); St Patrick's Hall, 1847; St Mary of the Angels, Geelong, 1846; Melbourne Hospital, 1846; St Patrick's Church, 1850; St Paul's, Coburg, 1850; the Tower House, Flinders Street; and Colonel Anderson's' residence, South Yarra. P.R.S. Jackson, 'Jackson, Samuel (1807-1876)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (accessed online 7 October 2016).

9 Andrew May, 'St Patrick's Hall', *eMelbourne: the city past & present*, produced by the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, University of Melbourne, (accessed online 7 October 2016).

10 Legislative Council Information Sheet 7. See also Raymond Wright, *A Blended House: the Legislative Council of Victoria 1851-1856*, Melbourne: Legislative Council of Victoria, 2001.

11 Parliament of Victoria, Fact Sheet D3, 'Altering Victoria's Constitution', October 2010.

12 Legislative Council Information Sheet 7, and Wright, *A Blended House*.

13 Ibid.

14 John Waugh, 'The Brummagen Coup: the start of self-government in Victoria ', *Victorian Historical Journal*, vol.77, no.2, November 2006, p.144.

15 Ibid.

16 Edward Macarthur (1789-1872), soldier. After the Commander-in-Chief, Major-General Nickle, died in May 1855, and Governor Hotham died in December, Macarthur took over command of the military forces in the Australian colonies, and became administrator of the Colony of Victoria. A.J. Hill, 'Macarthur, Edward (1789-1872)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (accessed online 7 October 2016).

17 Wright, *A People's Counsel*, pp.113-114.

18 Ibid, p.114.

19 Steve Bracks, 'Parliament: 150th anniversary. Ministerial statement', Victoria, *Parliamentary Debates, Legislative Assembly*, 17 November 2005, p.2249. The 150th anniversary celebrations commenced with the Legislative Assembly sitting in Geelong and the Legislative Council sitting in Colac.

Charles Joseph La Trobe and contemporary Scientific Issues: mastodons, extinctions and the age of the earth

By Dr Sylvia Whitmore

Sylvia Whitmore had a professional career in software project management and development in the telecommunications and banking sectors. Upon retirement in 2001, Sylvia completed another Arts Degree with Honours majoring in Archaeology at her alma mater La Trobe University. In 2012, she completed a PhD with a thesis on divination in Mesoamerica,

During Charles Joseph La Trobe's lifetime, the emerging sciences of geology and vertebrate palaeontology challenged established widely held beliefs and led to the development of essentially new ways of thinking about the history of the world and its origins. These ground-breaking disciplines generated considerable public interest and it is evident from La Trobe's writings that he was also intrigued by them. His travels in North America, and more particularly Mexico, caused him to reflect seriously on topics such as 'the extinction of animals' and 'the age and history of the earth'. Recent discoveries in these areas called into question the belief that the earth was only 6,000 years old, a timespan that had been based on a Biblical chronology derived from a literal interpretation of Genesis.[1]

During the first half of the eighteenth century, large mega-fauna bones had been unearthed in New York, Kentucky and South Carolina. However, it was not until about fifty years later that it was confidently established that most of them represented a distinct, extinct herbivorous species related to the elephant. This massive animal was named a 'mastodon' in 1806 by respected French scientist, Georges Cuvier (1769-1832) and is scientifically known today as *Mammut americanum* (American Mastodon).[2] Cuvier was also responsible for the eventual acceptance among most naturalists by the late 1820s that some animals had become extinct.[3] Undoubtedly, it must have been very difficult for many people at that time to come to terms with the fact that gigantic animals had once roamed the earth.

In the description of his steamboat trip down the Ohio River while travelling through North America in 1832, La Trobe writes that the bones of mastodons had been found in the vicinity of the river about two decades earlier. His interest in the whole subject is clear, as he particularly mentions the geological history of the area where many of these fossilised remains were located. He writes that widespread devastation from continual earthquakes and flooding in the Ohio River and its surrounds during the years 1811 and 1812 caused the earth to break into countless fissures, leading to the exposure, in some places, of the skeletal remains of ancient mastodons and Ichthyosaurs (large marine reptiles).[4]

Although a devout Christian who believed in the authority of the Bible, La Trobe accepted that some animals had become extinct, a finding not universally accepted at that time.[5] A notable

Charles Willson Peale, 1741-1826, artist
Benjamin Henry Latrobe, 1804
Oil on canvas
Collection: The White House Historical Association
(White House Art Collection) Washington DC

example was the American President, Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) who until the day he died, did not acknowledge that the extinction of animals was possible. Jefferson personally financed expeditions to find fossil remains and to locate living examples of mammoths. He had a passionate interest in science, collected many fossilised vertebrates, and was a committed member of the American Philosophical Society, an organisation developed to foster scientific knowledge. Although realising that the establishment of settlements could lead to the eventual extermination of local wildlife, Jefferson was unable to accept the global extinction of an entire species. From his point of view, this would have implied a deficiency in God's Creation.[6] He objected, 'For if one link in nature's chain might be lost, another and another might be lost, till this whole system of things should vanish by piecemeal'.[7]

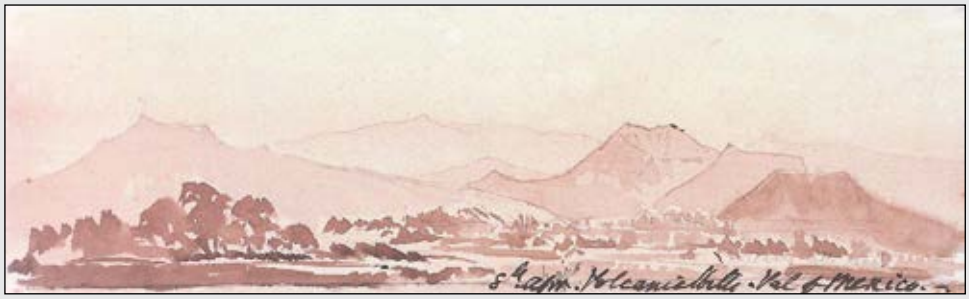
The American Philosophical Society at this time was the main centre for scientific research in North America and besides Jefferson, its members included other notable people such as La Trobe's late uncle, Benjamin Henry Latrobe (1764-1820)[8] and Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827).[9] Peale was a very well-known portrait artist with a passion for natural history, who capitalised on the public interest in the mastodon remains. With Jefferson's support Peale established a museum to house a complete mastodon skeleton that had been excavated in 1801 from a farming site in Ulster County, New York. The Philosophical Society helped to fund the dig which Peale recorded in a famous painting entitled, *Exhumation of a Mastodon* (1806-1808). The articulated mastodon skeleton received international acclaim and became his museum's star attraction.[10]

La Trobe visited Peale's museum in Philadelphia during his North American journey in 1832. Apart from his obvious interest in the museum's main drawcard, Charles Willson Peale had been a friend of his deceased uncle, Benjamin Henry Latrobe, and had painted his portrait in 1804. In *The Rambler in North America*, La Trobe specifically mentions the 'enormous fossil mastodon' that was housed in the museum, noting that its massive tusks were erroneously displayed pointing downward, in spite of the contrary opinion of 'the learned'. He writes that one of the reasons put forward by Peale for this mistake was that the room in which the skeleton was exhibited was not big enough to enable the tusks to be correctly inserted pointing upward.[11] However, according to historian Paul Semonin, the true explanation was that Charles Willson Peale and his son Rembrandt believed that mastodons were carnivorous and that their tusks were used to scratch along the shores of the lakes for shellfish, turtles and fish. Researchers such as Georges Cuvier (1769-1832) considered that these extinct massive animals were herbivorous and that their tusks should therefore point upward, a finding that is still accepted today.[12]

After the conclusion of their North American adventure, La Trobe and his two companions ventured into Mexico in 1834 and spent three months travelling through the newly independent nation. The spectacular mountainous countryside impressed La Trobe and caused him to reflect on another issue that was the source of much discussion at that time – the age and history of the earth. From a high vantage point in the mountains on his journey to Mexico City, La Trobe observed the rugged volcanic scenery of the Mexican basin that encircles the capital.[13] The following excerpt

from *The Rambler in Mexico* reconstructs the upheaval that La Trobe believed to have created this landscape. In describing what appears to be the entire arc of the horizon, he evokes imagery reminiscent of the theatrical panoramas that were very popular in museums during the nineteenth century:[14]

> Would you accuse me of yielding too freely to the play of imagination, when I thought that I could read in the sublime features of the vast scene before me, the unrecorded history of past centuries; and faintly picture to myself the convulsions of which the valley around me must assuredly have been the theatre? At the time when the earthquake was bursting those innumerable fissures and barrancas which are observable in the surface of the lower districts; raising one sheet of level country after another to its ordained elevation; and sending up one long, towering range of porphyritic mountains after another from the abyss to the sky : how little can the fancy paint the scenes of awful desolation which must have existed here—the great combustion which may have given birth to the valley, with its basins of saline waters—and the successive formation and appearance of the numberless cones before me. The world has grown old, but the records of that age are fresh around us.
>
> What must have been the signs in the earth and sky, as the ungovernable and subtle element destroyed the unseen obstacles to its escape into the upper air, and by the internal fires underneath. Here rose the huge pyramid, based upon the wall of the surrounding mountains; growing, day by day and year by year, by the accumulation of its own refuse, amid the showers of its own ashes, the flow of its lavas, and amid the sound of its own fearful thunders, till it soared to where its summit now glistens, in the cold region of ice and snow. There an abrupt cone, bursting through the level plain, or from the bosom of the waters; disgorging its load of lava and cinder: and then another, and yet a third—a cluster of smoking mountains! Here a shapeless mass of molten rock and lava, bubbling above the surface, then cooling, and as it cooled, so remaining for ages, a black and sterile monument, amid the landscape, of the forgotten reign of fire: and there again, a sudden throe at the base of some labouring mountain, opening a yawning abyss, from which amid fire and smoke, the seething lava would run down like oil upon the plain, or to the far distant sea.
>
> This is no overwrought fancy; there can be no doubt but these things were, though perhaps no eye, but His who 'looketh on the earth, and it trembleth,' and 'toucheth the hills, and they smoke,' bore witness to them![15]



Charles Joseph La Trobe, 1801-1875, artist
Volcanic belt, Valley of Mexico, 1834
Pencil and sepia wash on paper
Collection: National Trust of Australia (Victoria)
Deposited on long-term loan in the Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria

The description not only suggests an awareness of the catastrophism theory, a significant discussion topic among scientists and others at that time,[16] but also refers to the biblical Creation. The last line has a direct quotation taken from *Psalm 104*. This psalm is associated with Creation, although unlike the account in Genesis, it does not give a fixed period for the original formation of the world. By including the Biblical reference La Trobe acknowledges the omnipotence of God who, he believed, may

have been the only witness to the continuous upheavals that have shaped the Mexican basin over time.

Nevertheless, an interesting aspect of this extract is that La Trobe refers to reading 'the unrecorded history of past centuries' from the landscape. This indicates that he accepted that geology could be used to determine the history of the earth and supports my hypothesis that there is an allusion to catastrophism in his description.

François-André Vincent, 1746-1816, artist
Georges Cuvier, 1795
Oil on canvas
Public domain via Wikipedia

This theory, which was primarily associated with the French scientist Georges Cuvier, proposed that many of the geological features of the earth and its history could be explained by re-occurring cycles of volcanic and diluvian catastrophic 'revolutions' that repeatedly wiped out all life forms and created new ones, including many species of animals. These upheavals were massive, sudden and violent (such as the raising of continents and the hurling of great mountain chains into the skies) and therefore differed from any current geological activity (for instance, erosion, earthquakes or volcanic explosion).[17] La Trobe refers to 'raising one sheet of level country after another to its ordained elevation; and sending up one long, towering range of porphyritic mountains after another from the abyss to the sky'. Such devastation on a vast scale is in accordance with the theory, although the inclusion of the word 'ordained' implies that La Trobe believes God was controlling the process.[18]

Although catastrophism was widely reported in contemporary publications it is probable that La Trobe had read Cuvier's popular book, *Essay on the Theory of the Earth* (1827) which includes the French scientist's account of this hypothesis, as well as details of his ground-breaking research into fossils.[19] To explain my contention, some background information is necessary. At the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, the generally accepted view on the age of the earth was based on the Biblical chronology that had been determined from a narrow literal interpretation of Genesis undertaken by Irish Protestant Archbishop Ussher in 1650. The Archbishop calculated that Creation had occurred about four thousand years before the death of Christ. So highly regarded were his findings that his chronology was added to the *English Authorised Version of the Bible,* and was apparently accepted 'at a popular level', as part of the Old Testament itself.[20] Ussher went as far as presenting an exact date and time for Creation which he considered was on 23 October 4004 BC, according to the Julian calendar.[21] Whilst the precision of this date was questioned by scholars due to textual variations in the Old Testament, the general belief in the short age of the earth was not subjected to the same examination.[22]

This changed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, when Ussher's findings first came under significant scientific challenge from geology, particularly the study of fossils and the discovery of the remains of massive animals that no longer inhabited the earth. In addition, scientists like Georges Cuvier (1769-1832) began to realise that fossils contained in the earth's strata not only furnished the content and chronology of prehistory, but also revealed that nature had undergone a series of transformations over the course of time. Together with his colleague Alexandre Brongniart, Cuvier identified the sequence of stratified rock depositions in the Paris basin in 1811 and came to the conclusion that different populations had replaced each other, progressing layer by layer to the present. The abruptness of these transitions from one stratum to the next, therefore from one population to the next, convinced him that the species of each period were eradicated by significant geological catastrophes.[23]

A devout follower of the Lutheran faith, Cuvier was very careful not to upset the religious groups of his day and managed to separate religion from his scientific interpretations. He proposed that although the earth had gone through a series of catastrophic events, the last great cataclysm had taken place about five or six thousand years ago which was about the time generally attributed to the deluge (Noah's Flood) as recorded in Genesis. Nonetheless, Cuvier rejected Ussher's short earth age and the idea that it had been created in six days. He considered the earth to be

Ryan Somma, photographer (1980)
Warren mastodon specimen
American Museum of Natural History, New York
This mastodon skeleton was discovered in the Hudson River valley in 1845

of vast antiquity, although he argued that almost all of this lengthy geohistory had occurred before any humans inhabited the earth.[24] So topical became the catastrophism theory, that some scholars have argued that it became synonymous with geology.[25] It should be mentioned that La Trobe was not the only author of his time to evoke images of catastrophism. Lord Bryon was fascinated by this hypothesis, references being found in his play, *Cain*, and the poem, *Don Juan*.[26]

It is conceivable that La Trobe became receptive to Cuvier's hypothesis because of the eminent French scientist's impressive credentials. In addition, they had both come from French Protestant backgrounds and had similar religious beliefs. Cuvier was a highly respected scientist, now considered to be one of the fathers of palaeontology. He was also the Grand Master of the Protestant Faculties of Theology of the French University and a founder of the Parisian Bible Society.[27] The Lutherans and the Moravians shared common protestant theological traditions and both were committed to missionary work.

In his *Essay on the Theory of the Earth*, Cuvier refers to a paper written by Benjamin Henry Latrobe, which increases the likelihood that La Trobe had read this work. Benjamin Henry Latrobe had been a person of exceptional talents, particularly in the disciplines of architecture, drawing, engineering, entomology and geology.[28] He wrote a paper for the American Philosophical Society about his examination of the stratigraphy of the sand hills and sandstone quarries located near the Potomac and Rappahannoc Rivers in Virginia in 1798.[29] This article clearly impressed Cuvier who states in his book:

> Benjamin Henry Latrobe, Esq.
> has surveyed the maritime parts of Virginia, from Aquia creek to Cape Henry, with the eye and the mind of a geologist. His publication on the sand hills and sand quarries in that region, abound with interesting fact and argument. He found carbonated wood with loose stone to underlay the strata of Potomac-sandstone. The wood mixed with the stone near James's river, appeared to him less carbonated than on the Potomac and Rappahannock. In the vicinity of the latter river, at Mansfield below Fredericksburg, the largest mass of timber he had seen, lies below the freestone.[30]

Benjamin Henry Latrobe's publication reveals his own conclusion that during ancient times, the region had undergone significant geological changes.

Although I am unable to find any evidence as yet to indicate that Cuvier and Benjamin Henry Latrobe had actually met, this possibility cannot be discounted. They were both members of the Columbian Institute for the Promotion of Arts and Sciences (1816-1838), which was established in Washington DC in 1816. Cuvier was included in this group as an honorary international scholar.[31] The two men may have also had contact through the American Philosophical Society.

In *The Rambler in Mexico* Charles La Trobe indicates that he was aware of Cuvier's theories, although he does not mention him directly. He relates that while on his travels in Mexico, an entire skeleton of a mastodon was excavated in the estate of Chapingo. He was also amazed at the large number of mastodon remains that had been found in recent years on the Mexican tableland. A significant footnote in his book states there were five known species of these extinct, ancient animals.[32] This supports my idea that La Trobe had read Cuvier's publication since, as well as outlining the catastrophism theory, it lists the five different types of the ancient, extinct mastodons that were known at that time. None of the authors whom La Trobe referenced in his account of his Mexican journey, provided that information.

La Trobe was obviously intrigued by the mastodons of Mexico and tried to rationalise their presence by suggesting that, as modern Mexico did not have any beasts of burden, ancient inhabitants must have used these huge animals to transport the large stones required to build the massive causeways and pyramids he observed.[33] However, we know today that these monumental works date from the pre-Classic period, 2000 BC to 250 AD, when more complex societies had emerged from early village cultures in pre-Columbian Mesoamerica, whereas mastodons ceased to exist about 10,000-11,000 years BC.[34] This information was not known during La Trobe's time. While he was no doubt still coming to grips with the possibility that the earth may have been far older than Irish Archbishop Ussher had calculated, it should be mentioned that the debate associated with the age of the earth still continues today; some religious groups such as the Young-earth Creationists only accept the 'short age' Biblical analysis.[35]

There is no doubt that the discovery of remains of ancient massive animals raised troubling questions for some people during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, particularly when scientists concluded that these large beasts were extinct. It is a credit to La Trobe's significant intelligence that he could accommodate the new information, in spite of his deep religious faith. It is conceivable that he had read Cuvier's book, *Essay on the Theory of the Earth* and been receptive to the French scientist's catastrophism theory, which provides a possible explanation for the extinction of the mastodon.[36] Although it is not clear whether La Trobe accepted that the world is of vast antiquity, it is evident that his observations of the natural environment along the Ohio River, and more particularly in central Mexico, caused him to seriously reflect on the intriguing geohistory of the earth and God's perceived role in the formation of its surface.

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2 George Gaylord Simpson, 'The Beginnings of Vertebrate Palaeontology in North America', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, vol.86, no.1, 1942. pp.130, 150. (*Symposium on the Early History of Science and Learning in America*)

3 Mark V. Barrow, *Nature's Ghosts: confronting extinction from the age of Jefferson to the age of ecology*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011, p.19.

4 Charles Joseph La Trobe, *The Rambler in North America, 1832-1833*. London: R.B. Seeley & W. Burnside, 1835, vol.1, p.92.

5 Charles Joseph La Trobe, *The Rambler in Mexico, 1834*, London: R.B. Seeley & W. Burnside, 1836, p.145; Dianne Reilly Drury, *La Trobe: the making of a governor*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2006, pp.22-27.

6 Barrow, pp.15-23.

7 Thomas Jefferson, 'A Memoir on the Discovery of certain Bones of a Quadruped of the Clawed Kind in the Western Parts of Virginia', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 4, 1799, reproduced in Keir B. Sterling, ed. *Selected Works in Nineteenth-Century North American Palaeontology*, New York: Amo Press 1974, pp. 255-256.

8 Benjamin Henry Latrobe spelled his name as Latrobe, one word, see Dianne Reilly and Helen Armstrong, 'The Latrobe/La Trobe Family Name', *La Trobeana*, vol 12, no 3, November 2013, pp.31-32.

9 *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol.6, 1809, p.v.

10 Barrow, pp.18-39.

11 La Trobe, …*North America*, 1835, p.96.

12 Paul Semonin, *American Monster*, New York: New York University Press, 2000, pp.364-370.

13 La Trobe, …*Mexico*, 1836, pp.94-95.

14 See Ralph O'Connor, *The Earth on Show*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

15 La Trobe, …*Mexico*, 1836, pp.96-97.

16 Trevor Palmer, *Perilous Planet Earth*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp.24-25.

17 Martin J.S. Rudwick, *Worlds before Adam: the reconstruction of geohistory in the age of reform*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010, pp.11-16.

18 It should be noted that there was an opposing hypothesis to catastrophism. Uniformitarianism was originally put forward by James Hutton in 1790 and taken up by lawyer and geologist, Charles Lyell in 1832. In contrast to the sudden and violent occurrences of catastrophism, uniformitarianism proposed that continents were being slowly eroded and renewed by processes still currently in operation; these processes had operated this way in the past and they would continue in this way in the future. See Colin Renfrew and Paul Bahn, *Archaeology: the key concepts*, Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2013.

19 Georges Cuvier, *Essay on the Theory of the Earth*, New York: Kirk & Mercein, 1818.

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21 P.A Hancock, 'On Time and the Origin of the Theory of Evolution', *KronoScope*, vol.6, no.2, f.4, 2006, p.195.

22 Haber, pp.3-4.

23 Rudwick, pp.11-22.

24 Philippe Taquet, 'Cuvier's attitude towards Creation in the Biblical Flood', in *Geology and Religion: a history of harmony and hostility*, edited by Martina Kölbl-Ebert, London: The Geological Society, 2009, pp.128-131.

25 Charles Coulston Gillespie, *Genesis and Geology*: Cambridge Mass., Harvard University Press, 1996, p.102; Rudwick, p.12.

26 Mirka Horova, 'Byron and Catastrophism', in Peter Cochran (ed.) *Byron's Religions*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011, pp.253-261.

27 Taquet, p.127.

28 Darwin H. Stapleton and Edward C. Carter, ' "I Have the Itch of Botany, of Chemistry, of Mathematics... Strong upon Me": the science of Benjamin Henry Latrobe', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, vol.128, no.3, pp.173-192.

29 Benjamin Henry Latrobe, 'An Account of the Freestone Quarries on the Potomac and Rappahannoc Rivers', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol.6, 1809, pp.283-293.

30 Cuvier, p.398.

31 Richard Rathbun, 'The Columbian Institute for the Promotion of Arts and Sciences: a Washington society of 1816-1838', *Bulletin of the United States National Museum*, October 18, 1917.

32 La Trobe, …*Mexico*, 1836, pp.145-147.

33 Ibid, p.145.

34 Robert J. Sharer, *The Ancient Maya*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 5th ed. 1994, pp.76-134; Stuart Fiedel, 'Sudden Deaths: the chronology of terminal Pleistocene Megafaunal extinction', in Gary Haynes (ed.) *American Megafaunal Extinctions at the End of the Pleistone*, Dordrecht: Springer, pp.21-37.

35 Arthur McCalla, *The Creationist Debate*, 2nd ed., London: Bloomsbury, 2013, pp.209-235. See also the Institution for Creation Research, http://www.icr.org.

36 Today, according to Colin Renfrew, the science of geology represents a mixture of Lyell's uniformitarianism (see endnote 18) and scientific catastrophism. See Colin Renfrew and Paul Bahn, *Archaeology: the key concepts*, Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2013.

The Governor, the Captain and the Needlewoman: how my great-great-grandmother arrived in Port Phillip

By Graeme Davison AO

Graeme Davison is Emeritus Professor of History at Monash University. He is a graduate of the universities of Melbourne and Oxford and of the Australian National University. He has written widely on the history of Australia, especially of its cities. His books include The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne (1978 and 2004), The Unforgiving Minute (1994), The Use and Abuse of Australian History (2000), Car Wars (2004) and, most recently, City Dreamers (2016). He is a former president of the Australian Historical Association and chairman of the Heritage Council, a Fellow of the Academies of Humanities and Social Sciences, and an Officer in the Order of Australia. In 2015, after long forswearing any interest in family history, he published Lost Relations: Fortunes of My Family in Australia's Golden Age, which received the Judges' Special Prize in the Victorian Community History Award for that year.

This paper is a revised version of an address given at the C J La Trobe Society Annual General Meeting, 3 August 2016 at the Lyceum Club, Melbourne.

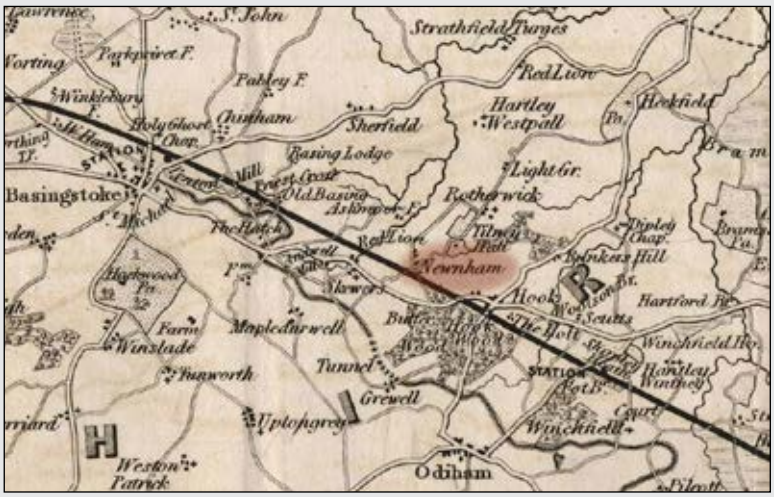
For over forty years now I have been a historian. I have written books on the history of Australian cities, on how Australians learned to tell the time, on how the car changed our way of life, on the history of my university, on heritage and museums, and on how we Australians use and abuse the past. But until recently I had never attempted what is now the most popular form of history in Australia – my own family history.

Family history is possibly the oldest kind of history. Think of all those genealogies in the Bible recording who begat who. Old as it is, however, it has recently attained a new popularity and assumed intriguing new forms. It is as old as the Old Testament and as new as the internet.

Asked about their sense of connection with the past, Australians often begin by talking about their families and point to family photos and heirlooms. Ancestry has now become one of the main gateways into the national past. Perhaps you noticed how prominent Anzac descendants were in the recent centenary celebrations of the Gallipoli landing. Even if you do not have a digger forebear, the Australian War Memorial will encourage you to adopt one.

For most of my life I resisted family history. My father warned me against it, possibly fearing what I would find. As a professional historian I secretly regarded genealogy as a lower form of history, closer to antiquarianism. I resented the noisy presence of family historians in libraries and archives. I had written critically about the perils of what I called 'speed-relating', the craze for online history and the monopolistic activities of Ancestry.com. Yet in 2013, I changed my mind. And now Allen and Unwin has published my accidental detour into family history, *Lost Relations: fortunes of my family in Australia's Golden Age*.

How did this come about? How did my private family history wind up going public? And what did I learn about the relationship



Northeast Hampshire in the 19th century
Ordinance Survey, First Series, 1817, sheet 12 (detail)
Showing the village of Newnham located on the London South Western Railway, near Basingstoke

between family history and academic history along the way?

In February 2013 my sister, now living in England, came out for a birthday celebration. At her suggestion, we made a pilgrimage to Castlemaine where we visited the house built by my great-great grandfather, Robert Hewett, and the tomb of Robert and his wife Elizabeth in the Castlemaine cemetery. Having appointed myself tour guide, I decided to do a little research. One thing led to another, gradually the thread grew longer and the plot more intriguing, and the few pages I first planned to write for my family grew into a book.

Since most of us are the descendants of immigrants, our Australian history begins with an arrival story – our Australian Genesis. This is the arrival story my mother told me:

> In 1850, before the gold rush, a widow, Jane Hewett, arrived with her eight grown-up children in Port Philip Bay. They climbed down the ship's ladder and walked across the swamp towards Melbourne, crossing the Yarra on Princes Bridge, then the only crossing, and staying their first night at the Globe Inn in Swanston Street.

That was all. My mother learned the story from her father, who learned it from one of the eight children, also called Jane, who died in the Old Colonists Homes in 1928 aged 96. My grandfather had written it down in a notebook together with a simple genealogy. The Hewetts, it said, came from Redding in Hampshire and five of the eight siblings, including my great-great grandfather Robert Hewett, married shipmates. The emigrant boat was evidently a nineteenth century love boat!

This was the discovery that really piqued my interest. What did go on between the young people on that boat? There were some puzzling aspects to the story too: why did the ship's company have to climb down a ladder, instead of being landed by tender, and walk all the way to the town?

Some years earlier a distant cousin had sent me a fuller genealogy which showed that the Hewetts came, not from Redding [i.e. Reading], which after all is in Berkshire, but from Newnham, a picturesque village only twenty minutes drive from where my sister now lives, on the Hampshire-Surrey border. One afternoon after Sunday lunch we had actually visited Newnham and found the grave of Jane Hewett's husband John, a yeoman farmer, who died in 1839 aged forty-two leaving his wife and eight children aged between five and seventeen.

Visiting that churchyard stirred emotions that took me by surprise. As a historian, I had often visited cemeteries but this was *my* great-great-great grandfather. In some indefinable way his life was linked to mine: I began to wonder how. And the visit also prompted questions. Why did they leave? The question hung in the air until recently when I began to piece together the chain of calamities – the economic depression of the 1840s, the coming of the railway, the decline of agricultural prices, the death of their landlord and the sale of his estate in 1846, the propaganda of emigration agents – that led to their decision to emigrate.

What did the Hewetts think about these events? I began to wonder. Because they were family we think we can more easily know them. We imagine ourselves sitting in the farmhouse by the fire chatting to John and Jane, as one would to a long lost relation. But the past is a foreign country where they do things differently. So does this mean that the past is closed to us? Not entirely. By carefully reconstructing the situations our forebears faced, including the values and expectations of the time, we can begin to think our way into their minds, even if we cannot understand them completely.

It is at this point that a famous person enters my story. The emigration reformer Caroline Chisholm had recently returned from New South Wales. She was worried about the perils that awaited young unaccompanied women aboard ship and in the new colony. In 1849 she began a new project, a Family Colonisation Society. Rather than sending out young women on their own, it aimed to recruit whole families, especially those of good character with suitable skills. The widow Jane Hewett and her eight adult children might almost have been poster people for such a scheme. Thanks to John Hewett's wise provision in his will, all four Hewett boys had acquired useful trades: Henry, a farmer, John, a butcher, my great-great grandfather Robert, a carpenter, and Richard, a miller.

Remember I said that five of the Hewett children married shipmates? The only thing I knew about Elizabeth Fenwick, who married my great-great grandfather Robert the carpenter, was that she was born on the Old Kent Road. As you will recall Old Kent Road is at the other end of the Monopoly board from Park Lane and Mayfair. Its name evoked a South London of dockyards, tanneries and gasworks, cloth caps and jellied eels and the cheeky old music hall song *Knocked 'em on the Old Kent Road*. But I knew nothing else about her.

I soon discovered that while Elizabeth was indeed a Londoner, her parents had actually spent most of their lives on the north side of the river, only a stone's throw from Westminster Abbey and Buckingham Palace, but a world away from the glittering aristocratic world of the West End. Her father John Fenwick was a carriage trimmer, earning a precarious living fitting out the sumptuous carriages on display in nearby Longacre Street. As one of the oldest of his seven children, Elizabeth was sent out to service as soon as she was able. In 1841 she was a maid-of-all-work serving a postmaster in a house just off Belgrave Square.

Eight years later, now in her late twenties and still unmarried, she and younger sister Alice had lost their jobs and were trying to support themselves on the three shillings a week they earned as seamstresses. In 1849 the famous social investigator Henry Mayhew wrote a sensational exposé of the condition of these 'distressed needlewomen', many of whom, he discovered, had had to resort to prostitution in order to survive.[1] I must admit this discovery disconcerted me at first. A convict, such as a clever forger or even a thief, would have added colour to my lineage; but a 'distressed needlewoman', especially one who might be a part-time prostitute, aroused more mixed feelings.

The Needlewoman at Home and Abroad
Punch, 12 January 1850
British Library, P.P.5270.ah

Before long, Mayhew's revelations stirred the Establishment into action. A committee headed by Sidney Herbert,[2] and with financial support from the Queen herself, organized a Female Emigration scheme to send the young women to the colonies where, amidst a population of wife-less young men, they were sure to be welcomed. This was how Elizabeth Fenwick and her younger sister Alice, together with thirty-six other needlewomen, came to be aboard the *Culloden* bound for Port Phillip. Herbert's committee had chartered the vessel, and its owner and commander Henry Ferguson, a Scot said to be a stern disciplinarian, and employed a matron for the voyage, Mrs Hughan. Jane Hewett and her family were among the 'respectable families' recruited, probably through the agency of Caroline Chisholm, to occupy the berths amidships, interposing themselves as moral police between

William Strutt, 1825-1915, artist
[The deck of the Culloden] 1850
Pencil with blue and sepia wash
From the artist's A Collection of Drawings… illustrative of the life, character & scenery of Melbourne 1850-1862, Third series
State Library of New South Wales, DL PXX 7

Beside Captain Ferguson a strong young man (butcher John Hewett?) prepares to cast a heavy millstone into the boat of suspected pirates, while crewmen ready the ship's only cannon, 6 April 1850

the thirty-eight needlewomen in the stern and the randy young farm labourers in the bow. That several of the Hewetts (it was actually three not five) married shipmates suggests that the arrangement may not have worked exactly as the organisers anticipated.

The departure of the *Culloden*, I discovered, was a huge event. Prominent politicians, including Sidney Herbert of course, were there on the wharf to see it off. His friend, the later Prime Minister William Gladstone, had been briefed on arrangements for the voyage. An artist from the *Illustrated London News* sketched the scene. Several men of literary celebrity, including Charles Dickens, Henry Mayhew and William Thackeray were there. I would love to think that my great-great grandmother had shaken hands with the author of *David Copperfield* or *Vanity Fair.*

Thackeray had actually written up the occasion in an article in London *Punch.* Would a colonial gentleman be likely to find a suitable bride from among the needlewomen? Not likely, he reported

> There is no girl here to tempt you by her looks… no pretty modest, red-cheeked, rustic, no neat trim, little grisette, such as… might find favour in the eyes of men about town.' However, 'The sun-burnt settler out of the bush… will take her back to his farm, where she will nurse his children, bake his dough, milk his cows and cook his kangaroo for him.[3]

When I read these words, I felt indignant. Thackeray, who had just published *The Book of Snobs*, was exercising his snobbery at the expense of my great-great-grandmother. Charles Dickens, on the other hand, who was on the point of completing *David Copperfield*, presented a more sympathetic view of the needlewomen in the character of Little Nell, a young woman in danger of falling in to prostitution, who is destined for a better life in the colonies.

One of the Hewetts' fellow passengers was the respectable young painter William Strutt, who looked down on his fellow passengers as drunkards and brawlers. Was he thinking of my great-great-grandfather and his brothers, I wondered. The needlewomen, on the other hand, seem to have enjoyed the four months voyage – after all it was probably the longest holiday that they had had in their lives. This is how it looked from the perspective of seventeen-year-old Lucy Edwards from Islington. We hear her London voice in the breathless lack of punctuation and idiomatic phrasing:

> We had a most beautiful voyage we were calmed a great deal but we never had a storm we had black and white squalls but nothing else and I have seen the waves wash over the mainmast and they have washed over me twice when I have been baking and then I have got

> laughed at for my pains at whatever I have been doing but the ship when it was rocking afforded me great pleasure for to see the things rattling about plates and dishes rattling the Children crying the girls a going into fits the Captain giving orders the Matron ordering the girls to be quiet because of the Captain we were all much happier than i expected to be for we were all like sisters for we waited on one another when we was ill which make things pass very comfortable.[4]

During the voyage, however, relations between captain and crew had deteriorated and as they arrived in port, Ferguson announced that he would not be paying his crew the promised bonus for good behavior on the voyage.

Lucy Edwards described what happened next:

> We came on shore at night on account of there a going to be a Mutiny with the Sailors and the Captain, because he would not give them there [*sic*] discharge when they came and asked him so they all struck and would not do any thing so he sent for the police Constables and he kept them on Bread and water until a great many of them run away and the rest he was very glad to give them 5s. and let them go.[5]

So this was why the Hewetts had to climb down a ladder in the middle of the night! No wonder that panic-stricken landfall stuck in young Jane Hewett's memory for another seventy-eight years.

Word of the *Culloden's* expected arrival had already reached Superintendent Charles Joseph La Trobe. La Trobe was keenly aware of the need for single female emigrants to marry and civilise the predominantly male, single population of Port Phillip. Sidney Herbert's scheme was exactly the kind of project to appeal to the mix of Evangelical religion and humanitarian sentiment that Dianne Reilly sees as his animating vision.[6] Advance reports of the needlewomen were encouraging. A committee in London had subjected the first applicants to an intense vetting process. 'All have been engaged by the most respectable families in London… selected with the greatest discrimination', J.B. Clutterbuck reported.[7] 'Having had nine years experience in the colony, I have no hesitation in stating that a great boon has been conferred upon the inhabitants of the district by the deportation of the above class of individuals.' Soon after they arrived, Bishop Perry, who headed the local committee overseeing the young women's placement as servants with respectable Port Phillip families, declared that they were 'by far the most promising company of females which had been landed here'.[8]

Encouraged by these reports, many leading colonists agreed to take them on at least a probationary basis. That was how my great-great grandmother Elizabeth Fenwick came to serve in the Richmond household of Edward Bell, La Trobe's secretary, her sister Agnes with the squatter Captain W.F. Langdon on the Loddon River, and their future sister-in-law Matilda Walker with Judge Pohlman. At first sight, the scheme seemed to be a resounding success. Only afterwards, when the disgraceful conduct of the captain and the surgeon, Dr Thomson, was revealed in court, did the voyage of the *Culloden* come to be seen in a dimmer light. Not long before the vessel was due to depart for Sydney, Ferguson was arrested for assaulting one of the young women after attempting to seduce her. Others then began to speak more freely about the captain's dubious conduct during the passage itself. The voyage begun so auspiciously had ended in scandal and confusion. The *Culloden* bearer of many hopes, had become a ship of shame. I wonder if that is why the Hewetts retained so little memory of Elizabeth's origins?

I can give you no more than a glimpse of the lives of Jane and her eight children after their arrival in the colony. Lucy Hewett married a Hereford miller James Maxfield who enjoyed a meteoric business career until he made an ill-judged venture into colonial politics, standing against John O'Shannessy in the 1859 Kilmore election. Her elder brother Henry died a lonely death beside a billabong in the Riverina and is buried in a cemetery now lost between the north and southbound carriageways of the Hume Highway. John Hewett the butcher married Matilda Walker, another of the needlewomen, and set up business in Warrnambool, but the marriage soon broke up and Matilda finished life as she began, a poor seamstress in a back street of Collingwood. The youngest son, Richard, after a broken engagement to another needlewoman, headed north to New South Wales, where he married the daughter of a convict and did a two-year stretch in Maitland Gaol for forgery.

The ill-fortune that seemed to have dogged many of the Hewett children in Australia led me to ponder the history of immigration. Their story was probably not unusual. Leaving one's homeland and travelling 12,000 miles across the sea is a very risky project. We who are the descendants of migrants are the lucky winners of a lottery in which there were probably more losers than winners. For us Australia has been a lucky country, but not necessarily for all our ancestors. We too easily forget the bad luck,

ill-health, high child mortality and economic misfortune that cut short or crippled many lives.

My great-great grandparents Robert and Elizabeth were not rich or very successful but theirs would become the most fruitful branch of the family. Soon after their marriage they were caught up in the rush to the goldfields. In 1852 Robert pitched his tent in Sailor's Gully near present-day Castlemaine. Three of his children were born under canvas, for it was only in 1858 that he finally built the curious little house on

Thomas D Ferris fl. 1866-1872, photographer
Robert Hewett, c.1870
Author's collection

nearby Wesley Hill that would be inhabited by four generations of the family until the early 1960s. Elizabeth died in her late fifties, worn out I suspect by the privations of a hard life, but her husband lived on into the 1890s and died a revered pioneer of the district.

I would love to tell you more about Robert's son, my great-grandfather also called Robert, who joined the exodus from the goldfields to Melbourne in the 1880s, and his wife Susan, daughter of a Cornish miner who made us all Methodists through the next three generations. And about my grandfather, the printer, bibliophile and Methodist lay preacher Vic Hewett who inspired my love of Australian history and literature. But to learn more about them you will have to read my book.

Thinking about one's forebears is a natural, perhaps inevitable, part of growing old. As our past lengthens and our future shrinks, we seek to fit our own lives into some larger pattern, and the pattern that matters for most people is defined by their forebears. In his famous essay the psychoanalyst Erik Erikson defined the goal of old age as 'the acceptance of one's one and

Thomas D Ferris fl. 1866-1872, photographer
Elizabeth Hewett (née Fenwick), c.1870
Author's collection

only life cycle as something that had to be'.[9] 'The individual life', he continues, 'is the accidental coincidence of but one life-cycle with but one segment of history.' While my book appeared to be an accidental project, in retrospect I can see it was perhaps an accident waiting to happen to me as I grew older.

The secret of a good family history lies as much in understanding the times as it does in plotting the course of the life. As a historian, I already knew quite a lot about the English and Australian worlds from which my family came, although I had to dig a lot deeper into some parts of it. I sometimes wondered whether I had already been led by some mysterious force to investigate places, like mid-nineteenth century London and late nineteenth century Richmond, where, unknown to me, my forebears had lived. There was also an almost uncanny sense of deja-vu, when I later discovered my great-great-great grandmother living in a cottage in Lennox Street Richmond, on the walking trail where I had guided my students for years.

The question 'Who do you think you are?', once asked critically of others, is now asked by everyone, pensively and of themselves. In writing about my own family I found, very often, that I was sharing with my readers the questions I might have asked my parents or forebears in what emerged as a blend of narrative and reflection. In monitoring my responses to what I discovered, and sharing my feelings of pride, shame, sympathy or indignation with my readers, I hoped that my family story would evoke a sense of recognition. I have been thrilled to discover from the many unsolicited emails I have received from other family historians that it does.

The 'lost relations' I found were not quite the kind of people I had always imagined them to be. My own parents and grandparents were devout Methodists, modest but respectable lower middle-class folk, and I fondly imagined that we Hewetts and Davisons were Methodists all the way back. I was mildly surprised to discover that a good proportion of my forebears and their kin were families a social worker today would describe as 'dysfunctional', 'multi-problem' or 'at risk'. I didn't go looking for skeletons in my family cupboard but when I opened the door they simply fell out.

Graeme Davison, photographer
Robert Hewett's house at Wesley Hill viewed from the side garden, 2014
The low slung central section, constructed with hand-made bricks, was probably the first to be built, but the original gable roof was later replaced with a skillion roof

Family history was once an aristocratic pursuit. Remember Sir Walter Elliott of *Kellynch Hall*, father of the heroine in Jane Austen's *Persuasion,* 'who never took up any book but the Baronetage'. There, Austen relates, 'he could read his own history with an interest that never failed', 'his faculties… roused to admiration and respect'. Sir Walter had his Australian followers in the Port Philip gentlemen, whose fascination with genealogy the historian Paul de Serville has so well described.[10]

But when family history became a search for identity, it became something more (or perhaps less) than an exercise in admiration and respect. When you discover skeletons in your family cupboard you can either bury them again as quickly as possible, or you can put flesh on them, imagine them as living people with their own life cycles and their own encounter with history. Family history can lead, as it did for Sir Walter, towards 'pity and contempt' for inferior twigs and branches, or it can lead towards an enlarged sense of our common humanity. This is how I conclude *Lost Relations:*

> Family history, according to one view, should instill pride, a warm glow of satisfaction with the achievements of one's forebears and an incentive to conserve their heritage. We visualise our ancestors marching bravely into the future, confident of where they were going, plotting a steady course towards a glorious destination… But family history, understood more generously, should also foster a measure of family humility. It should embrace the black sheep as well as the white, the wanderers and stumblers as well as the confident marchers. In reclaiming our lost relations, we may learn compassion for those who were caught in the riptides of history, and for those who struggle against them still.[11]

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1 E. P. Thompson and Ellen Yeo (eds.), *The Unknown Mayhew: selections from the Morning Chronicle, 1849-1850*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971, pp.9, 177-181.

2 *First Report of the Committee, Fund for Promoting Female Emigration*, Chairman: Sidney Herbert, London: Printed by Cox (Brothers) and Wyman 1851, p.28.

3 'Waiting at the Station', *Punch*, 9 March 1850, pp.92-93. Attributed to William Thackeray in the *Times Literary Supplement*, 1 January, 1949, p.4.

4 Lucy Edwards. Letter from LME to her father, 13 July 1850, in *First Report, Fund for Promoting Female Emigration*, p.53.

5 Ibid.

6 Dianne Reilly Drury, *La Trobe: the making of a governor*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2006, pp.237-238.

7 *Port Phillip Gazette*, 6 June 1850, p.2, letter to the Editor. (James Bennett Clutterbuck was one of the twenty-one registered medical practitioners appointed to the newly-established Port Phillip Medical Board by Charles Joseph La Trobe, January 1845. Ed.)

8 *Argus*, 11 July 1850, p.4.

9 Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society*, Harmondsworth: Penguin: 1967 [1950], p.260.

10 Paul de Serville, *Port Phillip Gentlemen: and good society in Melbourne before the gold rushes*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1980.

11 Graeme Davison, *Lost Relations: fortunes of my family in Australia's Golden Age*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 2015, p.241.

Note: The book contains extensive bibliographical notes, pp.247-266. (Ed.)

John 'Howqua' Hunter and the China connection

By Judy Macdonald

Judy Macdonald was a reference and research librarian at the La Trobe Library, State Library Victoria. She also worked as an Argus indexer for some years. Now retired, she is an avid recreational historian and book indexer.

Resident Judge John Walpole Willis wrote explosively to Superintendent Charles Joseph La Trobe, in June 1843, questioning the veracity of Magistrate J.B. Were in the insolvency case of pastoral company Watson and Hunter. He concluded: 'Is such conduct worthy of a magistrate? It is by such men and thro' their influence that I am vilified by the press and complaints are made against me.'[1] This was among the storm of shafts hurled by and at Judge Willis at the height of the year of bankruptcies, 1843. A month later he was removed from office by Governor Gipps.[2]

This removal caused William Craig, an advisor to Watson and Hunter, to write in frustration to Scotland: '[Willis] has done much for this colony by his decided determination to root out and expose the dishonesty and intrigues that exist here... the state of things here is now such that, since the Judge is removed, no honest man will be able to stand his ground.'[3] In 1866 La Trobe recalled Willis's ascerbic style, writing: 'that venerable old gentleman' was living not far from him in Worcester, and was still fond of quarrelling with his neighbours.[4]

John Hunter, of Watson and Hunter, known by family members as Howqua, which we will call him here for clarity, was an overlander and horse fancier. In June 1839, he agreed to a partnership with James Watson, on Watson's arrival in Port Phillip with Howqua's cousin Alexander McLean Hunter (Alex), throwing his lot, with others, into the new company.

The company was initiated by Alexander Hunter of Edinburgh, father of Alexander McLean (Alex) Hunter and solicitor to many wealthy families who provided backing, including the Marquis of Ailsa. The company's subsequent rise and fall and the affairs of James Watson, later of *Flemington*, are closely reported,[5] yet Howqua has remained a shadowy figure, with the reason for his nickname previously unresolved.

By 1846, the much disputed properties of the insolvent Watson and Hunter, which had been assigned to Henry Ward Mason in August 1842, had finally been legally resolved after many years of decisions and overturned decisions in Marquis of Ailsa and Others v. Watson and Others, although echoes of the case continued in the courts until the 1850s. Hence, the *Geelong Advertiser* of 18 November 1846 advertised the sale on 2 December of 25,000 sheep, together with five of Watson and Hunter's vast high-country properties. Buildings and stock numbers were detailed, and on each property one named horse: Blue Skin at *Broken River Creek*, 40,000 acres; Gunner at *Mount Battery Station*, 35,090 acres; Taylor at *Head Station*, 38,000 acres; Rob Roy at *Maindample*, 27,000 acres; and Punch at *Banumum Station*, 30,000 acres. On 12 November 1846, Robert Russell drew a field sketch of the properties prior to the sale.[6] The

inclusion of named horses must surely indicate that not only were the Hunters well known in the Port Phillip District, but the horses, and their value, were also.

Three weeks later, on 23 December at Geelong, Howqua penned his last will and testament before witness W.C. Thomson. He was just thirty one and owned nothing but a watch, two horses at Buninyong, a saddle and a case of books, and possibly enough cash for his funeral. Following his death less than a week later, he was buried at Eastern Cemetery Geelong on New Year's Eve 1846.[7] His executors were John Carre Riddell of Mount Macedon, James Arthur Carr Hunter of Mount Gambier and William Craig of Melbourne. J.C. Riddell and his cousin Thomas Ferrier Hamilton were partners in 25,000 acres at Macedon. J.A.C. Hunter was Howqua's cousin and a brother of Alex Hunter.[8] Craig, a factor[9] at Culzean Castle in Ayr for the Kennedy family and the Marquis of Ailsa, had volunteered to come from Ayr to sort out early financial problems with the company. Known as Ailsa Craig in Melbourne, he had dealings with Andrew McCrae in a legal capacity, while his wife was a friend of Andrew's wife Georgiana McCrae.[10]

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Howqua's is a fascinating story, even though some aspects still refuse to be teased out of available records. Born into the landed gentry on 19 September 1815 at *Frankville* near Ayr in Scotland, he was the eldest son of Andrew Hunter, of *Bonnytoun* and *Doonholm*, and Helen Hunter née Campbell of *Ormiston*. *Doonholm* estate bordered the Doon River as well as Alloway, the birthplace of poet Robert Burns.

Before marriage, Howqua's father Andrew Hunter had led an adventurous life, going to sea at twelve, joining the navy eighteen months later, surviving shipwreck, pirates and many adventures against the French. At eighteen he had been persuaded to take up a position in Calcutta, but shortly after returned to the sea. Two of his sons, Howqua's brothers, Andrew jun. and William Francis, joined the Honourable East India Company military service in their teens, serving in Bengal and Bombay. Another brother, Campbell, came to Port Phillip with the agricultural company, taking up a run at Upper Plenty. He also died in 1846.[11]

Howqua appears to have served in the Civil Department of the East India Company at Fort William, Calcutta, possibly as a clerk in the Customs Department. East India Company clerks, or writers, began at a very early age, spending five years before they could become

George Chinnery, 1774-1852, artist
How Qua, Senior Hong Merchant at Canton, China, c.1830
Oil on canvas
Tate Gallery, London, N05369

factors and another three years before they became junior merchants. In late 1833 Howqua was granted eight months furlough from a position as first deputy collector of Customs to go to China.[12]

A single line from *History of Peeblesshire* claims John Hunter became secretary to William John Napier, 9th Lord Napier,[13] during his 1834 posting to China as a trade superintendent. That venture ended in confrontation with the Chinese and Napier's untimely death at Macao in October that year. In fact, Alexander Robert Johnstone was Napier's secretary, but since Johnstone, Napier and Hunter were related,[14] Howqua may have been an under-secretary or clerk. As his furlough was only for eight months, his services were possibly only needed on the voyage.

The *Andromache* under Captain Chad had sailed from Plymouth on 6 February 1834, carrying Napier, his wife and two of his daughters, for what was to be a five-year appointment. Four more daughters and two sons remained in Britain. Priscilla Napier, describing the events which Napier encountered in China, using quotes from his papers, mentions John Hunter only once. After the *Andromache* arrived at Simons Bay near Cape Town in May 1834, they visited Admiral Warren and family and were made most welcome. The following day the party started in 'a light coach and four' for Cape Town, detouring to the gardens and vineyards of *Constantia,* enjoying the beautiful countryside:

Then followed a most happy interlude. [They] hired a spring waggon with canvas roof and sides, fitted with cross benches and drawn by six horses. In front sat two Malays, one driving and the other directing, rather like a helmsman and quarter-master... the director flourishing with both hands a whip of remarkable length... to reach the foremost horses. Mr Johnstone and young Hunter rode with them, and Dr Anderson and William John [Napier] alternated on a third horse... Full of holiday spirit they made for Stellenbach along a rough track.[15]

contracts for the next season, being by much the largest of any individual, are distributed in portions among the other Hongs. The old gentleman's causes of offence are numerous, but his chief one is non- payment of the balance due to him by the Hon. Company – above 350,000 dollars [*sic*].[17]

Tea was the gold of the times, and Howqua Hunter arrived back from China at Leith, Edinburgh, on 19 May 1835, on the tea clipper *Isabella,* which also brought 'the first teas to be sold [in Edinburgh] direct from China'.[18] Elizabeth, the Right Hon. Lady Napier, and her daughters, also returned to Leith that May. Hunter may have been astute enough to have imported some highly valuable tea himself. Howqua-style tea blends are advertised in British newspapers from 1835 onwards. During that period newspaper reports about Thomas Mitchell's explorations through Australia Felix were also eagerly read back in Scotland.

Lieut. Martin, artist
British and foreign factories at Canton, troops landed there on 3rd April, 1847
Lithograph, hand coloured
J M Braga Collection, National Library of Australia, BRA121

Following the arrival of *Andromache* in the Bay of Macao on 15 July 1834, the Napiers chose a 'modest house nearer the sea, somewhere halfway up the hill and facing the harbour.'[16] The next day Napier enrolled a commission, including Mr Astell as the mission's secretary.

The harrowing tale of the subsequent fraught months in Canton: Viceroy Loo calling Napier the 'Barbarian Eye' and 'laboriously vile', disputes with the influential Hong merchants - especially Howqua [How Qua], cessation of Chinese trade with England on 2 September 1834 and the unfortunate death of Napier from fever on 11 October, has filled several books. We can surely assume that it was this visit and witnessing face-to-face dealings at the British Factory in Canton with the leading and most powerful Hong – the fabulously wealthy Howqua – that led to Hunter's nickname.

Merchant Howqua had withdrawn from business with the East India Company two years earlier, in 1832. Reported as the 'great Chinese capitalist', he:

> waited on the Committee and declined any future transactions. Howqua's tea

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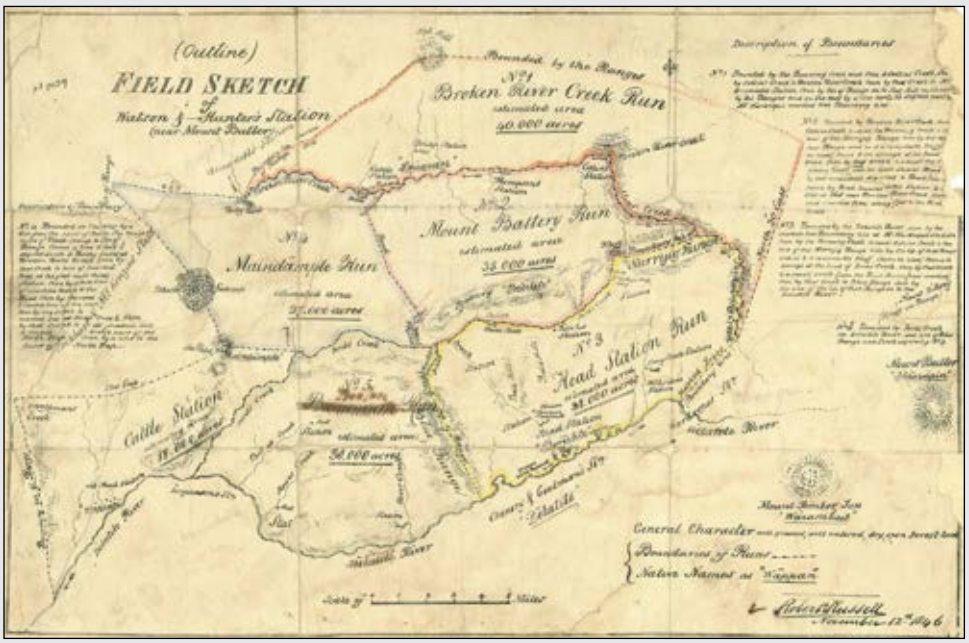
In 1838 Howqua Hunter, with his own finance as well as investments from others, set sail as a cabin passenger for Sydney on 13 May in the *William Roger*, under Captain John Ritchie Hall. His journal records that he baptised a child Hunter Clark, 'some of the Captain's infernal nonsense' and 'performed divine service'.[19] In August the ship arrived at Cape Town where he records changes since his last visit:

> Standing off… the Lion's Paw... Went ashore with Captain, Dr, and Mrs Gaub? and took up quarters at Madame Jan Schoors... Went to dinner at The George with Captain... I went and took tea at Madame's – very stiff. Wrote a letter [to go] on *HMS Zebra*



Robert Russell, 1808–1900, cartographer
Field sketch of Watson & Hunter's Station (near Mount Buller) November 12th 1846
Maps Collection, State Library Victoria, H8039
Available online State Library Victoria
Shows (to right): 1.Broken River Creek Run, 2.Mount Battery Run, 3.Head Station Run; (to left) 4.Maindample Run, 5.Bunumum Run (later amended to Boolon); and Description of boundaries

> tomorrow. Breakfast with Captain and party. Rode out to *Constantia* and called on Mr Van Renen... The colony is in a dreadful state. Everything is three or four times dearer than when I was last here. Up the country settlers are in a dreadful state. A ship is now laying in Table Bay to carry them provision. Dreadful massacre in country.[20]

The flyleaf of this journal bears the address for a W. J. Hunter at Bombay. He was a former maritime customs collector at Guzarat, and by 1838 an assistant judge and session judge of Poona.[21] It could be speculated that as this journal only details the voyage to Australia and later overlanding journeys, it may once have carried details of Howqua's life in India on pages since removed.

Howqua describes Port Jackson on 26 September 1838:

> I was quite disappointed with the entrance to Port Jackson, the Heads and indeed the whole coast... It might indeed look well as the coast of an inland lake... It is however dark and [drear?] enough. The only thing that… [breaks the] uniformity of the scenery is large patches of white freestone and some dead trees whose white trunks and leafless branches contrast most strongly with the dark green foliage of the woods…[22]

Perhaps he was disenchanted because the *William Roger* had become a fever ship. Six adults and ten children had died on the voyage, and she was placed in quarantine. Things however became very much worse. The *Sydney Gazette* reported:

> From letters received in town lately... we learn that the disease among the emigrants by the *William Roger* has assumed a more virulent form, and been more general in its attacks than on any previous occasion. At the present moment, it is said that there are upwards of eighty patients in the Hospital (more than double the number over there at one time before), the half of whom are said to be dangerously ill. Nor is the disease confined to the passengers, the captain of the ship and several of the crew are amongst the number of the invalids – the former being so seriously ill that he is scarcely expected to survive. Altogether, the emigrants are in a deplorable state, notwithstanding

> that every possible attention to their comfort is paid by the Government, the illness and death of so many of their companions reducing them to that state of despondency which physicians say is the strongest possible predisposing cause to the imbibing of the contagion.[23]

The son of Captain Hall had drowned at the Quarantine Station while bathing; Captain Hall himself succumbed to the disease on 8 November.

Howqua was delayed until December at the Quarantine Station. As well as the sixty-five deaths from typhus, Sydney was experiencing an influenza epidemic which affected up to 10,000, killing ninety in one week.[24] The Sydney press also reported continuing drought and the high cost of buckets of water.[25] On release from Quarantine, Howqua began a new section of his journal, dated 2 December 1838. He wrote: 'Bought two horses, paying for the wheeler, a large powerful brown horse, £55 and for the leader, a chestnut cob, £45.' He appears to have used a tandem cart in all of his journeys, where the wheeler does the work and the leader runs tethered in front to be ridden when needed. Images of such carts call them gigs or dog carts. They are rather spindly looking and a box hangs underneath in which hunting dogs could travel.[26]

He drove to Liverpool with his man through 'dreary' bush, on to Campbelltown and 'crossed Cowpastures and Razorback Mts to Crisp's Inn'. He was obviously on a pre-planned mission. More journal excerpts plot his tracks through Berrima, Sutton Forest and the 'most magnificent and at the same time extraordinary' Goulburn Plains, to Yass then Green's Inn where 'Mr Rutledge here found me'. They continued to the 'crossing place' on the Murrumbidgee River which seems to have been near today's Jugiong. The river put him in mind of 'our Scottish rivers', being 'fine, deep and rocky'.[27]

William Rutledge had purchased land on the Molonglo River, Queanbeyan, in 1837. In 1838 he overlanded sheep to Port Phillip and started a Sydney to Yass mail run, a year later taking over the Sydney to Port Phillip mail run. It is likely Howqua purchased his first stock from Rutledge at this time. Frustratingly, Howqua's journal, though barely used, finishes at this point, at the river bank. Mail contractor Rutledge may have persuaded him to write smaller more frequent reports home, rather than wait until the very large journal was finished. The Hunter brothers, his cousins, wrote small reports – or long letters – from a similar date.

Howqua then ran some stock on land they would name *Rose Bank* at Gilmore Creek near Tumut, later managed by Edward Bell for the company. It was to be six months before the arrival of Watson and young Alex Hunter, and during this period Howqua was acting on his own behalf and that of his investors.

In September 1840 J.A.C. Hunter arrived at Sydney and wrote to his mother: 'I saw Howqua climbing over the side. There was no mistaking his stoop and the look of him altogether. He is just the same as when I saw him last'.[28] At this stage Howqua was twenty-five. Curiously J.A.C. Hunter writes of first meeting up with his own brother, Alex, at the Murrumbidgee crossing place: 'He stoops as much as ever'. Maybe a genetic trait.

We can pick up the life of Howqua through the writings of Edward Bell, who fell in with the Company in 1839, overlanding and working on their stations. Bell later became secretary to La Trobe and for a time acting aide-de-camp. In a recollection written for La Trobe, Bell records that Mr Hunter took up a run *Baroowa* on Seven Creeks above Templeton's, before finding better pastures in the high-country:

> This country, lying to the north of the Upper Goulburn River district, and extending to the head of the Broken River, was first occupied in September 1839 by Messrs Watson and Hunter... The original discoverers of this country were Mr John Hunter, of the above firm, and Mr Campbell of Otter... They could see from the top of the Big Hill range the open country of Mount Battery, backed by Mount Buller and the Australian Alps.[29]

On 28 June 1840, Alex Hunter wrote from Devils River, 'John & Mr Bell, a very good fellow, arrived late last night. John is very ill.'

The company, apart from James Watson, comprised many cousins, not only the Hunters, but also the Arundells and the Campbells. *Barjarg*, to the East of Seven Creeks was named after *Barjarg Towers*, the Dumfriesshire property of the Arundells' grandfather, John Hunter DD, and still exists on our maps. In 1839 Howqua held *Cheviot Hills* on the Goulburn River and the company soon took over much of the countryside between there and Mount Buller. The Howqua River ran into the Goulburn at a spot now covered by Lake Eildon, hence Howqua Inlet. The nearby Bonnie Doon of today may well have begun with a nod to Ayrshire and *Bonnytoun* on the Doon.

Charles Joseph La Trobe, 1801-1875, artist
The Cheviot Hills, 1844
Pencil and sepia wash on paper
Collection: National Trust of Australia (Victoria)
Deposited on long-term loan in the Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria
Drawing dated Nov 11, 1844

The Victorian exploits of Watson and Hunter from 1839 to the court cases of the later 1840s are well documented. Howqua appears for a brief carefree, if not reckless, spell in the journals of Alex Hunter and J.A.C. Hunter, his cousins. They tell of him driving his tandem cart at a frantic pace in the most unlikely circumstances, such as a dark night at full gallop on 'sideling' roads, or a shaft broken in two places and a 'good deal of skin off John's fingers':

> He was laughing all the time as if he was very much amused. It is a funny way he has got when he is panicking. I have seen it several times... One day he took a round turn on a tree with his tandem and then sat and laughed while the leader very coolly stood beside him and sent his heels two or three times running within a few inches of his face.[30]

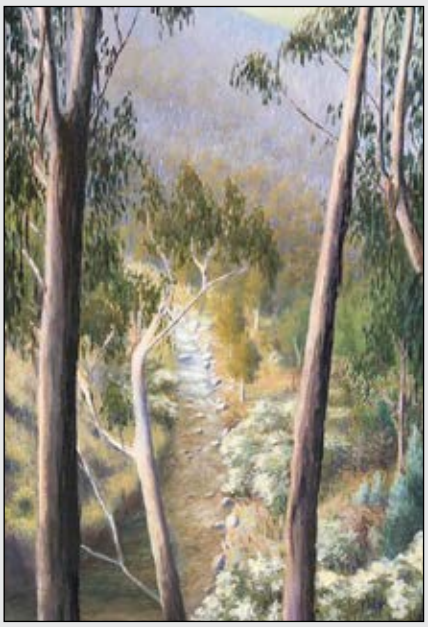
J.A.C. Hunter comments when Howqua was about to drive his tandem cart down to Melbourne: 'He used to put such brutes in it that he smashed it every day'. Families at home had already been disturbed by his letter in September 1840: 'All the people are quite well except for Gilbert [Kennedy] who is very bad, two or three hundred miles up in the bush. They are thinking of taking off his leg'. He continued, 'John and Arundell were run away with in Sydney yesterday in a gig and knocked down two men and a woman and broke both the shafts'.

In 1842 J.A.C. Hunter wrote to his brother Evan, from *Mimamaluke,* another of their high-country runs:

> the Goulburn racecourse was about nine miles from *Cheviot Hills* and Powlett and Bell each drove a tandem cart full of lubras[31] to the course and there were hundreds of Miss Cottons, Miss Murchisons and Miss Thomas's, so we can take the shine out of the Westerners[32] for the thing at any rate they had not a single lady on the course... The next day I got Howqua's pony, a cranky little brute that amused the people on the course by kicking and rearing the whole day.

Later he wrote that he went down 'with Howqua to Powlett's Station. He was driving Mrs Bunbury's tandem'. Then, 'Howqua complains of his knee. He is afraid it is going to be like Kennedy's. It originated in a kick from a bullock'. Gilbert Kennedy, grandson of the Marquis of Ailsa, was invalided for a long time while managing one of their runs, but by January 1842 Alex Hunter reported, 'Kennedy is up and

in good health and spirits. I expect Rumbolt up with Howqua, also Bell who has gone to settle at Portland Bay'. Before long, however, Howqua was advising Alex Hunter to leave the Company as he [Howqua] had lost everything.



Winifred Waddell, 1884-1972, artist
The Howqua River, 1920
Oil on canvas
Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria, H34330/1

The personal estate of John Hunter was placed into sequestration by order of Judge John Walpole Willis on 21 February 1843. In August of that year Howqua notifies his creditors of his intention to apply for an insolvency certificate.[33] *Government Gazettes* carry notices on his insolvency, his application for an insolvent's certificate in September 1843 and October 1844, and a plan of distribution of his assets to be viewed by creditors in December 1843. However, in 1844 he twice failed to appear in court to obtain his insolvent's certificate.

By May 1843 Alex Hunter wrote to brother Evan. 'Howqua has been very ill indeed and is not well yet. He is out at Riddell and Hamilton's station at Mount Macedon. The smash has nearly killed him but Watson stands it well. P.S. We are all well except Howqua'.

The last two pages of Howqua's large, mostly empty, 'Cattle Journal, Cheviot Hills, 1843' are concerned with stock: 'Oct 30 killed a heifer calf. Nov 7 received from I. Campbell 230 heifers, 1 bullock, 1 cow, in all 232. Lost in scrub 6, drowned crossing 1'. The *Cheviot Hills* reference brings up the likelihood of La Trobe's awareness of the crumbling company in 1843-4.

La Trobe wrote in December 1844 of an earlier fortnight's excursion, 'visiting the upper part of the Goulburn River and the Aborigines Station', before going on to the Grampians.[34] An 1841 plan prepared by W. Le Souef is titled *Plan of La Trobe on the Goulburn, the Central Station of the Aboriginal establishment in that District.*[35] A chronology by Blake and Gill makes it likely that La Trobe was accompanied on this excursion by George Airey,[36] who later was not only the licensee for *Cheviot Hills* but was married there in November 1844 to Charlotte Stevens. That same month John Whitehall Stevens Esq. of *Cheviot Hills* was appointed a magistrate. Airey renamed part of the run *Killingworth.*

There is another newspaper mention of interest during the years of dissolution. On 22 June 1844 a ship *Isabella* was wrecked on Flinders Island: a terrifying experience with the passengers having to remain on the island for three days. Among the cabin passengers were John Hunter and Alexander Campbell. All were returned by the *Flying Fish* to Melbourne on 2 July. It would be satisfying to embellish Howqua's story with a ship-wreck. However, J.A.C. Hunter wrote that John had wanted to go home, but Arundell had stopped him as he would be needed as a witness in continuing litigation. The *Isabella* survivors left almost immediately on the *Sea Queen* for Liverpool, so it is most likely that this John Hunter was the young brother of Alex Hunter, heading home with Howqua's cousins.

All was over by the end of that year. In January 1845 the *Sydney Morning Chronicle* was scathing about the 'swell mob' who used to be known by the title of 'gentlemanly insolvents!', adding that Watson had his application for an insolvent's certificate refused by the commissioner who gave him a lecture which 'will not soon be forgotten'.[37]

A largely unrelated fact, but of interest here, is that La Trobe arrived in Hobart with his family on 13 October 1846 to take up a position as Administrator (Acting Lieutenant-Governor). He left again on the 25 January 1847. He would have missed the dying moments of the company.

Howqua's death notice appeared in the *Port Phillip Herald* of 31 December 1846: 'At Geelong yesterday, John Hunter Esq., late of the firm of Watson and Hunter. Regretted by a numerous circle of friends'. In the same paper, on page 1, is an advertisement: 'James Watson on Salt Water River offers a pound for return of a runaway horse to him, or the Kirk's Bazaar'.[38]

It seems ironic that a man who took his nickname from the venerable Howqua,

reputedly one of the world's richest men, should die so young and in virtual penury. His legacy to Victoria perhaps is to leave an echo of the Oriental Howqua in the Victorian high-country.

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1 Public Record Office Victoria, VPRS 19/P1, 43/967, Inward correspondence, Superintendent of Port Phillip, 1839-1851, 'Transmitting a copy of His Honor's notes in the insolvency of Watson and Hunter'.

2 For a balanced coverage of the Willis furore and Port Phillip's economic depression, see A.G.L. Shaw, *A History of the Port Phillip District: Victoria before Separation*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1996, pp.180-187.

3 Michael Moss, *'Magnificent Castle' of Culzean and the Kennedy family*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002, p.162.

4 La Trobe to James Graham, 19 February 1866, in L.J. Blake (ed.) *Letters of Charles Joseph La Trobe*, Melbourne: Government Printer, 1975, p.70.

5 See Judy Macdonald, 'James Watson and *Flemington*: a gentleman's estate, *La Trobeana*, vol.8, no.3, November 2009, pp.21-25.

6 Robert Russell, *Field sketch of Watson & Hunter's Station, near Mount Buller, November 12th 1846*, Maps Collection, State Library Victoria, H8039.

7 Presbyterian section, Row: Old, Grave: 66.

8 Alexander McLean Hunter acquired freehold title to land in the Parish of Moorooduc, County of Mornington, in 1855 and built a dwelling at the location now known as *Beleura*.

9 Factor: agent – buyer and seller.

10 Georgiana McCrae, *Georgiana's Journal, Melbourne 1841-1865*, Ed. Hugh McCrae, Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1992, pp 156, 188.

11 *Clan Hunter Canada*, (details taken from James Walter Buchan and Henry M Paton, *History of Peeblesshire*, Glasgow: Jackson, Wylie, 1925-1927), 'Hunter of Bonnytoun and Doonholm: II. Andrew Hunter', http://clanhunter canada.weebly.com/doonholm.html (accessed 11 May 2016)

12 *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British and Foreign India, China and Australasia*, new series, vol.14, May-August 1834, p.269. Applicable from 3 March 1834,

13 *Clan Hunter Canada*.

14 Hester Napier (1754-1819), daughter of Francis Scott, 6th Lord Napier, married Samuel Johnston, Dumfriesshire. Hester's sister, Mary Shaw Scott (1756-1806) married Andrew Hunter DD (1743-1809) of *Barjarg*, Dumfriesshire.

15 Priscilla Napier, *Barbarian eye: Lord Napier in China, 1834, the prelude to Hong Kong*, London: Brassey's, 2003, p.96.

16 Ibid, p.113.

17 'Canton, 28 February 1832', *Hull Packet*, 14 August 1832, p.1.

18 Christina Baird, *Liverpool China traders*, Peter Lang, 2007, p.38.

19 Hunter papers, MSS 7790, 7795, 7813, 7814, 7815, 7816, 8937, Australian Manuscripts Collection, State Library Victoria. Journal 1838.

20 Ibid.

21 *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British and Foreign India, China and Australasia*, new series, vol.19, January-April 1836, p.143, 'Bombay civil appointments'.

22 Hunter Papers, Journal 1838, MSS 7816.

23 *Sydney Gazette*, 30 October 1838, p.2.

24 *Sydney Herald*, 22 November 1838, p,2; *Sydney Monitor*, 5 December 1838, p.2.

25 *Sydney Herald*, 3 November 1838, p.2.

26 *Horse-drawn vehicle*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horse-drawn_vehicle.

27 Hunter Papers, Journal 1838.

28 Hunter Papers, 1840, MS 7813.

29 Edward Bell, 12 August 1853, in *Letters from Victorian pioneers: being a series of papers on the early occupation of the colony, the Aborigines, etc.*, edited by Thomas Francis Bride, Melbourne: Trustees of the Public Library, 1898, p.180 (accessible as an ebook).

30 Hunter papers, November 1840, MS 7795.

31 Aboriginal women (dated, now derogatory, racist) *Macquarie Dictionary*, 6th ed, Sydney: Macquarie Dictionary Publishers, 2013.

32 'Westerners' refers to run holders he had recently raced against, beyond Macedon.

33 *New South Wales Government Gazette*, 7 March 1843, no. 21, p. 349; 15 August 1843, no. 68, p.1057, Online archive 1836-1997, http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au.

34 Blake, p.16.

35 *Walata Tyamateetj: a guide to Government records about Aboriginal people in Victoria*, North Melbourne: Public Record Office Victoria and National Archives of Australia, 2014, p.42 (e-book).

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Willys Keeble, photographer, 2016
Castlemaine Orderly Room
Built 1888 as the headquarters of the Mt Alexandra Battalion, Victorian Military Force

Colonial Orderly Rooms in Victoria

By Willys Keeble

Willys Keeble is an architect, conservation consultant and member of the La Trobe Society, together with her husband Peter Corlett, sculptor. Her first heritage project was a conservation report on the Castlemaine Orderly Room.[1] **This article is based on that report. She has since documented and supervised restoration works on many historic buildings, and is a heritage advisor to local council planning departments. Willys has a special interest in early timber buildings and prefabricated cottages.**

Historical context: Volunteer Corps

Victoria's colonial defences[2] originated in the gold-rush era when local Volunteer Rifle Corps were raised to augment Imperial troops for defence against external attack at a time when many British soldiers were deployed to the remote goldfields.[3] In La Trobe's time, he was worried that so many troops had to be used as gold-escorts and as supplementary police, that there was no force in reserve for emergencies'.[4]

Gold was discovered in June 1851 near Clunes, then at Ballarat, Bendigo and Mt Alexander (Castlemaine). Social disruption ensued as most of Melbourne's male population including police and civil servants deserted for the goldfields. Thousands arrived monthly from Tasmania and neighbouring colonies. Lieut.-Governor Charles La Trobe was concerned by the influx of ex-convicts and undesirable elements, but his worst fears came the following year after the news broke overseas and 'a mighty host owing no allegiance to Great Britain' was certain to flood into Victoria.[5] The colony had less than fifty British soldiers and a small civilian police force in Melbourne to maintain internal security. La Trobe sent urgent requests to the Colonial Office for military assistance. In 1852 he was sent 400 British 40th Regiment troops, and was promised another fifty picked men from the Irish Constabulary. He also recruited retired British soldiers ('Pensioners') from Tasmania with promises of high pay.[6] From late 1851 Goldfields Commissioners, with some back-up from these military and some mounted police, were sent to the main goldfields to maintain

order, enforce the gold licence system and collect fees. Those initial Government Camps were set up under canvas.

Charles La Trobe spent many weeks in 1852 travelling around the goldfields before deciding at the end of the year to resign his position.[7] In what was a tough and confusing year, a peculiar incident presaged future anxieties. The barque *Nelson*, lying off Williamstown in 1852 en route to London with a cargo of over 8,000 ounces of gold, was boarded by pirates in the early hours of 5 April. Its skeleton crew was overpowered and the pirates escaped by rowboat to St Kilda beach, where they loaded the gold onto a dray and disappeared.[8]

of gold awaiting shipment to Britain.[12] In 1853 Britain's war with France and the impending Crimean War made Melbourne's bankers and merchants nervous, alarmed for their personal safety and the potential threat to overseas trade. They feared that while British soldiers were stationed at the goldfields, Russia might suddenly attack Melbourne from its Pacific naval base in Vladivostok.

The *Argus* newspaper put the more alarmist case, arguing that gold was not safe in banks, '… indeed not safe anywhere in Melbourne, so should be moved inland. While the gold remains in the town they just have to land pretty early in the morning and carry it off

Stringer, Mason & Co, engraver
The Treasury, Melbourne, arrival of the monster gold escort, 1854
Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria, H2913
Building in William Street, demolished 1922

During 1853 and 1854 Victoria's propertied classes felt a loosening grip on economic and political power. The population influx and wealth redistribution caused by gold threatened the colony's social stability. Melbourne was overcrowded with new arrivals and foreigners. Prices soared as rich diggers arrived in town, drinking and celebrating in the streets. Moneylenders operated at exorbitant rates, increasing economic disruption. Alarming confrontations occurred on the goldfields as diggers mobilised against gold-licence taxes. Manning Clark's assessment was that: 'It appeared the population was polarising into loyalist and republican groups.'[9] The situation, fanned by the press, escalated to the point where La Trobe feared 'at any time he might have an armed force of 20,000 diggers marching on Melbourne'.[10] Crime and highway robbery, as well as the need to maintain order, led to La Trobe appointing officials on the goldfields, instituting a government gold-escort in October 1851 (which had competitors in 1852 from a South Australian government escort and a private company) and a Victorian police force, operational from January 1853.[11]

Until completion of the 'Old' Treasury in Spring Street in 1862, the Government Treasury was in William Street and together with Melbourne banks, it held vast repositories

before we even get out of our beds!'.[13] In October 1853 a Parliamentary Committee for Colonial Defences recommended extensive measures: an English block ship to guard Melbourne's harbour, a new contingent of 400 British Navy seamen, plus an entire Imperial regiment to provide shore defences.[14] The *Argus* dismissed this as extravagantly ambitious and published letters advocating a volunteer citizen militia for the defence of Port Phillip's shores and the gold reserves. By February 1854, nothing had come of the Committee's recommendations. The *Argus* editorialised with sarcasm:

> Since we have nothing to fear from an enemy, it may perhaps be asked why we trouble ourselves about colonial defences. The enemy will land at St Kilda – that point is settled – in boats, unless repelled by the warlike inhabitants of that region, and the tribes from Sandridge. Brighton will supply a contingent, and the combined forces will then rush down on the invaders and engage them whilst up to their waists in water – just as the ancient Britons did the Romans at Dover. It is a happy thing for Geelong that the intention of the enemy is known.

> Should the enemy succeed in landing, the St Kilda Invincibles, Sandridge horse marines, and Brighton flying bobs, will fall back on the main line to Melbourne, its left wing resting on the Swamp and its right protected by the tea tree scrub... to give time for the bringing up of the Prahran light horse and Richmond irregulars, who will charge the enemy whilst the Invincibles, Horse marines and light bobs retire on Princes Bridge… and protect Capt. Cole's wharf; on this point the gallant captain warrants the expectation of a gallant defence which is the Hougomont of the position… between the Hougomont and the bridge will be the *Herald* sub-marine battery and galvanic wire detachment. The reserve will consist of the Colonial Secretary's battering rams, the Pascoevale volunteers, and Celestial Rifle Corps…[15]

10pm, the 40th Regiment was mustered in front of Sir Robert Nickle. Colonial Secretary Vesey, attending a ball with 'many other notables' at the Hawthorn residence of the Collector of Customs, was alerted and rode into town.[17] As further reported in the *Melbourne Morning Herald*:

> ...a number of irregular cavalry began to gallop along the Sandridge road towards the Bay, and a large number of infantry - many of whom were armed with sticks, umbrellas, pickhandles, etc. followed in the line of march. The alarm having spread to high quarters, the Colonial Secretary was called out, and he and other distinguished public characters rushed hither and thither in a state bordering on panic.[18]

This was all the result of a *feu-de-joie* fired by the *SS Great Britain* out on the Bay, celebrating the end of its quarantine period, caused by a minor shipboard outbreak of smallpox. Its cannon fire was greeted by other ships in traditional practice: 'every shipmaster who had a piece of ordnance from a 32 pounder to a pocket pistol fired it in honour of this event and thence the alarm to the thousands who were not in a position to compare the cause and effect'.[19] On that night, Governor and Lady Hotham were staying in Heathcote (the McIvor diggings) at the end of their two week tour of the goldfields.[20]

Batchelder & O'Neill, photographer
Royal Victorian Volunteer Artillery South Yarra and Prahran Company, Captain A. West, 1861
Photoprint, salted paper and watercolour
Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria, H26045

What did Charles La Trobe think about a Volunteer Corps defending the colony against a threat to Melbourne's gold reserves? By this time he was preparing to depart Melbourne. Besides, it was illegal to raise an armed force in the British Empire except with Crown approval and requiring a special parliamentary act, with little time to organise. The new Governor, Sir Charles Hotham, arrived in late June 1854. Six weeks later military headquarters in the Australian colonies and their commander Sir Robert Nickle were relocated from Sydney to Melbourne.[16]

Matters came to a head at 9pm on 7 September 1854, when rocket and gunfire blasted over Port Phillip Bay. There was immediate panic with rumours the Russians had come at last. The alarm spread and by

After the 'Russian invasion', the Victorian Volunteer Corps Act was passed in November 1854. Focussed on Melbourne's defences, it allowed for raising a corps of 2,000 local men to supplement British forces. They were sectioned according to their areas of recruitment hence the Metropolitan, Carlton, Pentridge, East Collingwood, Richmond and Southern

Unknown photographer
Castlemaine Volunteer Rifle Corps, c.1865
Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria, H1959
Captain Bull at left

(Prahran and South Yarra) Rifle (Artillery) Corps. The volunteers were provided with uniforms, smooth bore carbines and paid drill instructors (often retired Imperial soldiers). In 1855 a new cavalry unit and the Geelong Rifle Corps was raised. Victoria's volunteer strength was nearly 250 officers and men, with one major, eight captains and two drummers.[21]

Peace with Russia was declared in 1856, restoring a sense of security. Victoria was then obliged to pay the cost of keeping Imperial troops in the colony, and the British garrison was gradually reduced until full withdrawal in 1870.[22] In 1858 a Royal Commission was held to consider how Victoria would provide for its own defence. It was mainly concerned with strengthening shore defences around the Bay with new fortifications and batteries, but also led to the Volunteer Act 1858, allowing for civilian volunteer numbers of up to 20,000 men, a very high level compared to Victoria's population. Nobody thought this number would be reached. The Act allowed for ten new companies in Melbourne, and coastal units at Portland, Port Fairy and Warrnambool.[23]

Victoria Barracks in St Kilda Road was commenced in 1858 to house the remaining British detachments stationed in Melbourne. Its earliest structures were the bluestone walls, 'G Block' (for both single men and married families) and the 'Keep', an ablution and privy block with separate compartments for each sex, which could also act as a defensive position facing over the marshes to Sandridge (Port Melbourne).

Recruitment of new Volunteer companies in Melbourne was not very successful but interest was increasing in the goldfields, notably among Ballarat and Bendigo residents, who sought government support for Volunteer Rifle Corps. The 'Ballarat Rangers' Rifle Corps (who met in Craig's Hotel) began swearing in recruits in 1858. In October 1859 the Bendigo Rifle Corps recruited 300 volunteers and established a pipe and drum band with the volunteers subscribing a shilling a week for its expenses.[24]

In 1860 Victoria again faced defence concerns, with new fears of Russian aggression and the worsening Maori Wars. Virtually all remaining Imperial forces were deployed to New Zealand, leaving only a tiny nucleus to man the shore defences. On 18 July, nearly 8,000 people assembled at the Sandridge pier to farewell 170 men of the 40th Regiment.[25]

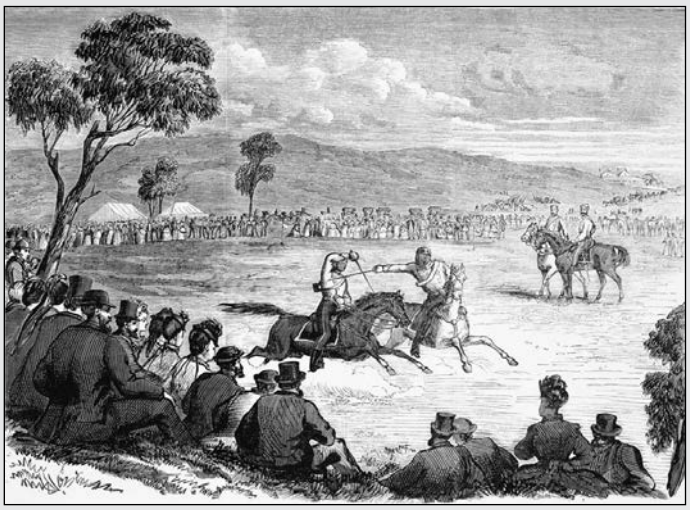
Left undefended, Melbourne's Treasury, Government House (offices in William Street), powder magazine and other vulnerable points had to be guarded by the Volunteer Metropolitan Corps. The Volunteer concept now gripped the imagination of Melburnians.[26] Recruitment increased and by December 1861, the Metropolitan Corps numbered nearly 800, with about 200 of these employed in the Williamstown and Sandridge companies of the Naval Brigade. A new detachment was formed: West Melbourne and Hotham, based in A'Beckett Street. The South Melbourne Rifle Corps had 100 men, and a new corps of 78 men was established at Queenscliff.

The Metropolitan Volunteers, in military uniform and accompanied by military bands, undertook parade and guard duties, basking in the glory normally accorded to the Imperial troops. The Richmond Rifle Corps (70 men captained by David S. Campbell, the local parliamentary representative) took their duties so seriously they were on permanent alert for six months in case of an attack on Melbourne. Called out at all hours of the night for impromptu drills and route marches, they proudly responded. In 1861 the ladies of Richmond honoured their Corps with military colours:

> …you will on all occasions preserve the colours with care, and (the donors) fervently hope you may never be called upon to carry them to the battlefield; but should it be your duty to do so, they feel certain that they could not be entrusted to better hands; and that the Richmond company will be amongst the first and foremost to meet the rash invaders.[27]

Despite their inland location, far from foreign aggression, the Volunteer movement blossomed in the goldfields. Special occasions for military displays and parades, socials and fundraising events quickly became an important part of life in the towns. Upon establishment of the Castlemaine Rifle Corps in 1860, three hundred men were sworn in immediately under the command of Captain John Edward Bull, Castlemaine Goldfields Warden.

J.E.N. Bull had served in the Peninsula and Waterloo campaigns before arriving in New South Wales with the 99th Regiment. He was a New South Wales Crown Lands Commissioner before being appointed as Bendigo's Gold Commissioner in 1852. In March 1853 his responsibilities were greatly extended to include Castlemaine, Maryborough, Avoca and Fryer's Creek. His new appointment was possibly influenced by Charles La Trobe, who may have recognised Bull as a capable and moderate public servant. Bull's administration was relatively successful during the difficult gold rush years when miners were easily aroused to threaten violence against official handling of the gold tax and mining licences, issues of democratic voting rights and anti-Chinese sentiments. As one resident recalled:



Unknown engraver
Tournament of the Victorian Volunteer Light Horse, Castlemaine, 1870
Wood engraving
Published in The Illustrated Australian News for Home Readers
Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria, IAN 07/11/70/192

> There were mining disputes of a hot and warlike character… I remember the Castlemaine Camp being rushed by 1,000 miners… The leading Camp officials, Colonel Bull and Captain A.J. Smith were fair men who were respected by the community and they exercised a pacific influence on the miners. Had such officers been in power in Ballarat in 1854, the unfortunate business of the Eureka Stockade would never have happened.[29]

The social aspects of militarism played a large part in Victoria's Volunteer movement. It had always been a part of civic life in British towns where territorial units were raised and based. Many of Victoria's prominent citizens had Imperial military connections and responded enthusiastically to volunteerism. Sir Redmond Barry, Senior Puisne Judge, and Sir Francis Murphy, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, held captaincies in the early Volunteer days. Opportunities for social elevation by serving with the Volunteers and possibly gaining officer status, may have influenced some prospective recruits. For instance, the prominent merchant, Frederick Sargood, was captain and then major in charge of the No.2 St Kilda Rifles, which he had established in 1859.[28]

Albert Charles Cooke, artist, W. H. Harrison, engraver
Bendigo Volunteer Rifles' Orderly Room, 1868
Wood engraving
Published in The Illustrated Australian News for Home Readers
Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria, IAN 23/05/68/4

Captain Bull moved the Commissioner's Camp to Castlemaine in 1853. He served there as Gold Warden and Police Magistrate until 1869 and was undoubtedly a protagonist in establishing Castlemaine's Volunteer Rifle Corps. He played a major role in local affairs as a founding member of the Castlemaine Hospital, Benevolent Home, Mechanics' Institute and National School, and belonged to local cultural and business organisations. He remained a Castlemaine resident until his death in 1897.

The 1860 Amending Act allowed formation of Volunteer cavalry corps. The glamorous Kyneton Light Horse was the first unit raised with fifty members, followed in 1861 by the Sandhurst Royal Volunteer Cavalry and the Castlemaine Light Dragoons.[30]

At the first Volunteer Review held at Castlemaine to honour the Queen's birthday in 1861, the Sandhurst, Maryborough, Castlemaine and Kyneton mounted troops took part. The Castlemaine Volunteers greeted the visitors with a guard of honour watched by a large crowd of cheering spectators. The Review included a mock battle and a challenge rifle match for a silver bugle valued at twenty-five guineas:[31]

> …nearly 400 Volunteers met in honour of their Sovereign… Arriving on the review ground after refreshments they fell into line preparatory to firing the *feu-de-joie*, and a Castlemaine soldier accidentally let off his piece and wounded his front rank man – fortunately the rifle was loaded with a blank charge… Later a sham fight took place, the Kyneton men being on the defensive… The continuous fusillade got the Kyneton blood up… It was very well that Captain Bull did not allow bayonets to be fixed, for so wound up was the enthusiasm… in all probability serious consequences would have ensued.[32]

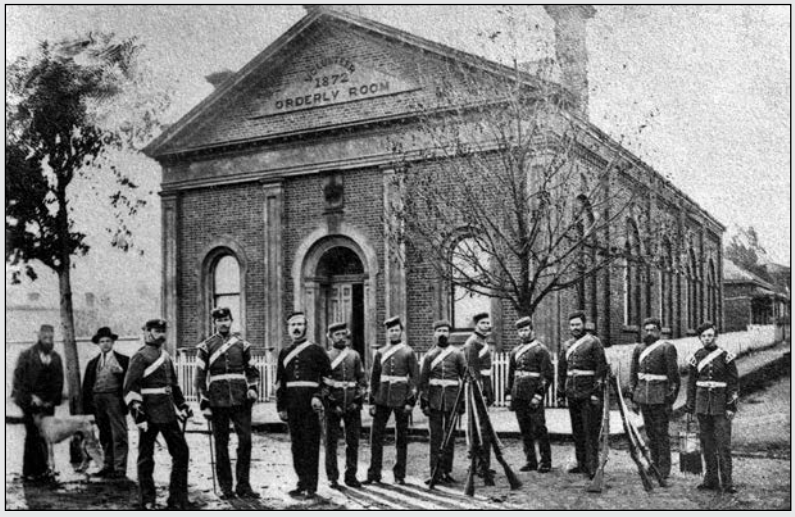
In 1862 the Volunteer forces in Bendigo and Castlemaine were grouped into four districts under the command of J.E.N. Bull as Lieutenant-Colonel and nicknamed the 'Grey Battalion' on account of the new uniform adopted: 'tunic of French grey cloth with scarlet collar and scarlet welt. Chaco with a worsted ball tuft, two third white over one third blue'.[33] References to an existing building on the Government Camp Reserve being used as an orderly room appear in the 1863 Corps regulations; in the same year the 'Grey Battalion' sent sixteen members off to the Maori Wars with Colonel Pitt.[34] For two decades the Mt Alexander Battalion attended annual Easter encampments and November cavalry reviews.

Orderly rooms, Drill halls[35]

Volunteer Rifle Corps began raising funds and erecting their own orderly rooms as early as 1863, the first being a wooden drill hall built by the Creswick Corps. From 1866 the small weatherboard West Melbourne Orderly Room and adjoining Drill Hall in a'Beckett Street served the West Melbourne and Hotham company.[36] Generally in country areas the Rifle Corps were granted land within their township's Public Purposes Reserve. This enhanced the importance of military functions in a town's social and administrative order. In keeping with their central locations, the Volunteer Orderly Rooms often had imposing facades equalling the appearance of other important public buildings such as law courts and post offices. They were the venues for civic and social occasions and were especially favoured for balls, having timber floors. Victoria's earliest surviving orderly room is in Bendigo, completed in 1867. A brick hall

in ornate Classical style, it is now the southern section of the Bendigo Art Gallery. Early orderly rooms at Warrnambool (1868) and Port Fairy (1870) also survive.

The Castlemaine Corps Orderly Room, built in Greek revival style and funded by public subscription, was among the best public buildings in town. It was opened in 1872 with a grand bazaar and a glittering military ball. 'The Volunteer Ball… was decidedly the most brilliant and fashionable event ever held in the town… The elite of the district attended… over two hundred visitors were in the room.'[37]



Unknown photographer
First Castlemaine Volunteer Rifles, outside the Volunteer Orderly Room, Castlemaine, c.1878
Collection: Royal Historical Society of Victoria, PH990060

The early orderly rooms suited the Volunteers and town social life but were rendered obsolete in 1884 when Victoria's defences were reorganised with a new militia system under central Melbourne command. It became less common for townspeople to have use of orderly rooms for social events, even though they had initially funded the buildings. The Public Works Department was responsible for bringing facilities up to modern military requirements. These were: a wide indoor drill hall with a solid asphalt floor and large entrance for companies marching in formation, secure arms and storage areas, separate entries for commissioned officers, and a range of other rooms for non-commissioned officers. Other requirements were on-site ablution facilities, gun rooms for indoor target practice, reading rooms for the men 'fitted with all the usual appliances for the comfort of occupants who will have every inducement to spend their leisure therein instead of less creditable haunts', and residential quarters for a permanent sergeant and his family 'to see that everything is maintained in an efficient and soldier-like style'.[38] The Public Works Department built twenty new weatherboard orderly rooms between 1884 and 1900. Their utilitarian character was relieved by a standard form of 'Tudor revival/Queen Anne' decoration.

The 1872 Castlemaine Orderly Room was too small for the new requirements. It was demolished in 1888 to erect a wider and larger wooden building. This was to be a standard Public Works Department design by S.E. Bindley, an accomplished Departmental architect who designed many militia orderly rooms. The replacement was supported by Castlemaine's militia officials but locals were outraged. The Council protested: 'The Orderly Room… erected by public subscription, was an ornament to the town and should not be replaced by a paltry wooden barn'.[39] The Government smoothed these concerns with Bindley adding fancy finials and extra carved decoration to the wooden gable ends, and fashionable features such as the 'Swiss Chalet' style gable end brackets. It was thus the prettiest of all the Public Works Department orderly rooms.

The new orderly rooms were well used by Volunteer Corps during the 1880s, when renewed fear of Russian aggression was aggravated by the breaking of the undersea telegraph cable in 1888, many believing it had been deliberately cut by the Russians. The *Mount Alexander Mail* reported that Castlemaine's militia would be called out at night ready to leave for Melbourne at a moment's notice.[40]

An estimated forty-four purpose built orderly rooms and drill halls were erected in Victoria between 1854 and 1900. Most are now demolished. The Victorian Heritage Register includes six extant ones built between 1863 and 1900. These are at Castlemaine, Portland, Warrnambool, Ballarat, Richmond and East Melbourne.

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3 Nicholls, p.13.

4 Geoffrey Serle, *The Golden Age: a history of the colony of Victoria 1851-1861*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1963, pp.125-126.

5 Alexander Sutherland, *Victoria and its Metropolis: past and present*, Melbourne: McCarron, Bird, 1888, vol.1, p.318.

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7 L.B. Blake and R. Gill. 'Charles Joseph La Trobe: a chronology', *The Genealogist*, vol.1, 1975, p.183.

8 *Argus*, 3 April 1852, p.5.

9 Manning Clark, *A History of Australia*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1978, Vol.4, p.84.

10 Sutherland, p.353.

11 *Argus*, 6 October 1851, p.2; 20 March 1852, p.3; 29 May 1852, p.4; Robert Haldane, *The People's Force: a history of the Victoria Police*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1986, pp.26-30.

12 *eGold – A Nation's Heritage*, Sally Ruljancich, 'Old Treasury', http://www.egold.net.au/biogs/ EG00068b.htm (accessed 1 July 2016).

13 *Argus*, 28 December 1853.

14 Victoria. Parliament. Legislative Council. Select Committee on the Defences of the Colony. *Report from the Select Committee on the Defences of the Colony*, Melbourne: Government Printer, 1854.

15 *Argus*, 3 February 1854. (Cole was one of Melbourne's most influential businessmen and controlled much of the import-export trade from his Melbourne wharf.)

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17 *Melbourne Morning Herald*, 8 September 1854.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

20 *Mount Alexander Mail*, 9 September 1854.

21 George Vazenry, *Military Forces of Victoria 1854-1967*, [Melbourne: G.R. Vazenry, 1970?], chapter 3.

22 Nicholls, pp.55-56.

23 Vazenry, chapter 1.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid, chapter 19.

26 Wilson Percy Evans, *Deeds not Words: [a history of Victorian naval forces]*, Melbourne: Hawthorn Press, 1971, p.31.

27 Address by Mrs. P. Johnson, wife of the Mayor of Richmond, in Varenzry, chapter 19.

28 Celestina Sagazio, 'A Social History of Rippon Lea', National Trust of Australia (Victoria), 1994, unpublished manuscript, pp.31-32.

29 *Records of the Castlemaine Pioneers*, Adelaide: Rigby, 1972, p.68. Papers presented at meetintgs of the Castlemaine District Association of Pioneers and Old Residents, extract from contribution by H.Britten, 17 June 1887.

30 *Victorian Government Gazette* 20/1861, 14 February, and Vazenry, chapter 4.

31 25 guineas equalled 26 pounds and 5 shillings (£26.25).

32 *Mount Alexander Mail*, 27 May 1861, p.2, The Volunteer Review.

33 Vazenry, chapter 3.

34 Names marked 'gone to N.Z.', Castlemaine Volunteer Rifle Corps roll book 1861-1875, Castlemaine District Association of Pioneers and Old Residents collection.

35 Orderly room: a room in a barracks used for regimental or company business. Drill hall: a spacious hall used for military drill practice; a building containing such a hall. Over time Drill hall tended to replace Orderly room in everyday terminology.

36 www.historyvictoria.org.au/about-us/our-headquarters (citing Allom Lovell and Associates Pty Ltd, *Former Army Medical Corps Drill Hall: an assessment of the architectural and historical significance*, prepared for Oak Pty Ltd., May 1990).

37 *Mount Alexander Mail*, 24 April 1872.

38 *Warrnambool Standard*, 29 September 1886. The New Belfast Orderly Room.

39 *Mount Alexander Mail*, 6 July 1888.

40 Ibid, 7 July 1888.

Elizabeth Douglass Scrapbook, c.1855–c.1890
Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, PXD 60 (A)

Elizabeth Douglass's Scrapbook

By Dr Margaret Bowman OAM

Dr Margaret Bowman, a Creative Fellow at State Library Victoria in 2011, is the author of Cultured Colonists (2014) and of several articles on early colonial history. Formerly she taught Politics at Monash University. She has a PhD in politics from Monash University and a PhD in Art History from the Australian National University. She was the first Urban Affairs Fellow, Commonwealth Department of Urban and Regional Development in 1974.

It was probably in 1857, soon after moving into her new home on Eastern Beach when Elizabeth Douglass fixed her calling card to the inside cover of her new scrapbook. The inscription was simple, 'Mrs. Alfred Douglass, Corio Villa', but it said all that was needed to indicate her prominence in Geelong society. At that time, the town, like the rest of Victoria was enjoying prosperity and consequence following the 1851 discovery of gold and the colony's independence from New South Wales. Elizabeth was in a comfortable and socially prominent position since her husband, Alfred, was a very successful local businessman who had recently bought the *Geelong Advertiser,* while her splendid Italianate home was already a landmark.[1]

Before her marriage to Alfred Douglass in Launceston on 3 March 1853, Elizabeth's life remains undocumented. However, her unusual maiden name strongly suggests that she arrived as a child in Hobart as one of the de Little family, four of whom are recorded without forenames as passengers on the *Cleopatra* in 1830, and another in 1831. William de Little appears in the Tasmanian Names Index as having arrived in 1832.[2]

John de Little, a native of Loughborough in the English midlands, reached Hobart as a settler in 1830 where he initially became superintendent of a government farm in New Town and then Superintendent of Works at orphan schools until his death in 1834 at the age of fifty-five. His widow then joined her sons, Robert and Joseph, who had already moved to Launceston where Robert was to become one of the town's leading citizens, active as architect, builder, merchant and philanthropist. As a resident in Launceston at the time of her marriage, Elizabeth would have been a part of Robert's extended family.[3]

It was in the increasingly important town of Launceston that the de Little and Douglass families came to know each other. Alfred Douglass was of Scottish descent but is thought

to have been born in 1820 in Yarm, a small town in North Yorkshire, not far from Stockton on Tees. He reached Van Diemen's Land as a settler on the barque *Wave* in 1835. He is said to have prospered there and became known as a 'sketcher' before crossing to the Port Phillip District in 1850 and established a scouring mill near the Breakwater on the Barwon River just outside the rapidly growing town of Geelong.

Having successfully established himself in business, Alfred returned to Tasmania to marry Elizabeth de Little in Launceston on 3 March 1853, but it was not until 1856/7 that the couple came to occupy the house that was to remain in the Douglass family for almost a century.[4]

Unknown photograher
Corio Villa, Geelong, c.1861
Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria, H2177

Corio Villa

The story of how Alfred Douglass acquired the house where his wife spent the rest of her life and compiled her scrapbook, is a tribute to his ability as a businessman. In 1855, crates containing the parts of a prefabricated cast iron house were unloaded onto the Geelong waterfront. With no accompanying paperwork, and no rightful owner coming to claim them, they lay on the wharf for six months. It was later discovered that the consignee had been the Colonial Land Commissioner, William Nairn Gray, who had died while the goods were in transit.[5] As the crates were cluttering up the wharf, and in the absence of building instructions for the prefabricated house (the factory in Edinburgh having burned down), the consignment was sold very cheaply. Alfred Douglass not only had a nose for a bargain, he also secured the necessary skilled labour to have the house built the following year (1856) on a splendid site on the cliff above the Eastern Beach. The cast iron panels were bolted together and lined with lath and plaster to create a spacious and elegant house, elaborately decorated. In a happy coincidence both Alfred Douglass and William Nairn Gray were of Scottish descent, so the dominant decorative motifs of rose and thistle remained relevant: Alfred proudly added the crest of the Douglas clan.

The Scrapbook

We can think of a scrapbook, fashionable at that time, as a way of presenting images to display the owner's tastes, enthusiasms and successes, with anything likely to be controversial or distressful strenuously avoided: the collection – like the owner's taste – was there to be admired. Elizabeth's grand volume probably had pride of place on an occasional table in the parlour of *Corio Villa,* further embellishing its elaborate decoration and reinforcing its air of European refinement. The volume measures 56.5cm x 38.5cm and has 62 leaves. The heavy covers are made of wood covered in leather (probably kangaroo) and also has a heavy metal clasp.

While the Douglass family might have been living at the furthest end of the world from Britain that was still their cultural home. The Mitchell Library's catalogue of the scrapbook's contents lists sixty-two items, each comprising a number of images.[6] It includes a substantial collection of late nineteenth-century European and English lithographs, prints and engravings of mainly European landscapes, portraits and sculptures. In addition there are photographs, drawings, water-colours, newspaper cuttings (mainly relating to the Royal Family), printed sentiment cards (including some early Christmas cards) and ephemera, together with eleven items found loose in the album. One of them was a water-colour painted on ivory, a copy of a portrait of Amy Robsart,[7] which has been attributed to Elizabeth herself.[8] Most of the album items are images of European portraits and landscapes from the second half of the nineteenth century. In developing her collection, Elizabeth did not date the items or provide titles, but she appears to have added to it over many years, during which local colonial culture was making great strides. It was in the 1880s that Victoria's capital came to be known as 'Marvellous Melbourne'. And yet, no more than half a dozen of her many chosen images were Australian, and all of these appear to have been put in the collection because of some personal relevance. In Elizabeth's drawing room there was to be no bush, no Aboriginal people, no fire or flooding rain, very little advancing Victoria, but a bland simulacrum of an imagined, unseen Europe.

Nevertheless, the few Australian items in the collection are of most interest to local history. There are two photographs of public events, two drawings of the tomb of Miss Anne Drysdale (one of the 'Lady Squatters') and just three images that open a small window into Elizabeth's

George Baxter, 1804-1867, artist
Interior of the Great Exhibition, 1851 (detail)
Chromolithograph
Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, PXD 60 (A)/5

private life. Together they mark developments in the colony, memorialise remarkable pioneers and reveal some of Elizabeth's personal talents and trials.

The Public Domain

One of the endpapers of the scrapbook is an image of a raised model of the state of Victoria produced by the Surveyor General's Department for the International Exhibition held in Melbourne during the summer of 1866/67. The 'very beautiful' photograph was taken of a plaster cast of the model and was widely distributed, celebrating Victoria's development.[9] It is probable that the 'Model of Victoria' (no.383) shown in the 1869 Exhibition held in the Geelong Mechanics' Institute refers to this modelled map.

The other photograph, an image of the moon, was taken in 1874 at the Melbourne Observatory through the 'Great Melbourne Telescope', then the largest in the world. The photograph was one of a series included in an album held by the Observatory in the later years of the nineteenth century. The Observatory had been constructed by the Victorian government on a rise at the edge of the Botanic Gardens during 1861-1863, with the telescope, built in Ireland, installed in 1868. As the only scientific item in Elizabeth's collection, the inclusion of the image seems more likely to reflect a personal than a scientific interest. It is worth noting that Joseph Turner, who took the original photographs, lived and was active in Geelong between 1856 and 1869, before being appointed to the staff of the Melbourne Observatory.[10]

'The Lady Squatters'[11]

The most historically interesting local item in Elizabeth's scrapbook, as much for its subject matter as for its artist, is the pair of engravings of the tomb of Miss Anne Drysdale drawn by George Alexander Gilbert.[12] Miss Drysdale and her partner Miss Caroline Newcomb were known and well respected as the 'lady squatters', successful pastoralists and farmers, first at *Boronggoop* on the Barwon River, then at *Coriyule* on the Bellarine Peninsula.[13] The two women had met and formed a deep and lasting relationship while staying in the home of Dr Alexander Thomson, physician, pastoralist and the first Mayor of Geelong.[14] Anne Drysdale at the age of forty-seven, 'for health reasons' had left her own farm in Ayrshire to emigrate to the Port Phillip District. Caroline Newcomb's background remains largely unknown, albeit undoubtedly genteel. She had landed in Van Diemen's Land about 1834 at the age of twenty-one and arrived in Geelong as acting governess to John Batman's daughters.[15] As soon as the *Boronggoop* cottage was habitable, Anne Drysdale and Caroline Newcomb set up house and ran their business as a partnership.[16] Charles La Trobe called on them when he was travelling through the area in the 1840s, as did Sir John and Lady Franklin, and the ladies visited Mrs La Trobe when she was staying at the Heads.[17]

After a happy successful decade at *Boronggoop*, the partners fulfilled their ambition to own their own land by purchasing in 1849 a property which they named *Coriyule* where they built a substantial and well-appointed stone house.[18] Their business interests began to shift

from sheep to another highly respected area, the production of fruit and vegetables.[19]

Miss Drysdale was not able to enjoy her new home for long, for she died of a stroke on 11 May 1853. The decision to bury her on the property was not only customary, but what Caroline strongly desired, as she made plain in a letter to John Drysdale in 1855: 'Nothing but a clear Providential directive will induce me to quit the spot where the remains of my Miss Drysdale lie, as I look at her tomb from our parlour window I seem not to have lost her'.[20]

Anne Drysdale's burial plot, chosen if not actually designed by the grieving Caroline, stood in sharp contrast to the plain funeral.[21] The drawing shows a vault set in a formally planted enclosure.[22] And yet, Miss Newcomb's diary gives few clues about its development, simply noting that 'we measured off the cemetery', and the following week 'the three stones for the tomb came'.[23] There is no reference to the Gilbert drawing.

Caroline continued to live at *Coriyule*, running the business and actively engaged with the Drysdale Methodist church.[24] When the Reverend James Dodgson, a young immigrant minister who had been in poor health, was appointed acting pastor there, he was given hospitality at *Coriyule*. In Melbourne on 17 November 1861, Miss Newcomb married James Dodgson, and took on the full role of minister's wife, leasing *Coriyule* and accompanying her husband on the Methodist circuit. She died in Brunswick, a suburb of Melbourne, and was buried beside her friend at *Coriyule.* It is thought that in 1869, when Dodgson sold the *Coriyule* property, that Caroline and Anne were reburied in the Eastern Cemetery in Geelong, where, on his death in 1892 he joined them in the tomb.

'To the Memory of Miss Anne Drysdale'

Two lithographs dated 1857 depict views of Anne Drysdale's tomb: one showing the house between trees in the background, the other looking across to open country. The only provenance is the title, which identifies George Alexander Gilbert as having made the original drawings, and a note that the lithographs were made in London.[25] Gilbert (1815-1877) was an English artist who had arrived in Melbourne in 1841 with his wife and other family members to make a new life – and fortune – in the Port Phillip District. While trying his luck at a variety of occupations, Gilbert established himself as a landscapist, drawing master and respected social citizen.

George Alexander Gilbert, 1815-1877, artist
To the memory of Miss Anne Drysdale, 1856
Lithograph
Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, PXD 60 (A)/61

After resigning in 1853 as Assistant Gold Commissioner, Gilbert was increasingly active as an artist in the Geelong area where both his brother, Frank Gilbert, and stepson Fred Byerley were working in the government Survey Department.[26] Judging by the large number (eleven) of Gilbert's works put on display by their owners at the 1857 Geelong Mechanics' Institute Exhibition, he had considerable success as an artist in the district, and would have been well known. However, Miss Newcomb's choice of artist to memorialise Miss Drysdale's tomb may well have been guided by her friendship with Fred Byerley, Gilbert's stepson.[27] Alfred and Elizabeth Douglass were collectors of Gilbert's work, which is sufficient to account for the presence of these images in the scrapbook.[28]

Mrs Elizabeth Douglass: artist and mother

In 1869, Elizabeth Douglass received an award for her entry in the Geelong Mechanics' Institute Exhibition of that year, proudly adding the impressive certificate to her scrapbook. The work was listed at no.335 in the catalogue as 'Group of skeleton leaves from plants grown in the vicinity of Geelong'.[29] There is also an undated, unidentified newspaper cutting elsewhere in the scrapbook which suggests that she had an established reputation in Geelong for 'delicate artistic work'.[30] Taken in conjunction with the miniature of Amy Robsart noted earlier, there is enough evidence from the scrapbook to suggest that Elizabeth was a talented and active artist. The catalogues of exhibitions mounted by

the Geelong Mechanics' Institute reveal the wide range of her work.[31] In 1857, she exhibited work in a variety of genres: painting (no.175 *Sunrise scene in Wales*, no.176 *Sunset scene in Devonshire*); portraits (no.177 *The Queen,* no.178 *The Prince Albert*, no.179 *A Girl's Head*); flower painting (no.191 *Tulips*); miniatures on ivory (no.192 *Byron,* no.193 *Lever,* no.194 *Countess of Blessington*) and crayon drawing (no.199 *Madonna*).[32] Clearly Elizabeth was a skilled artist whose talents would have remained hidden in the domestic sphere but for the opportunities for public recognition presented by the local exhibitions.

in 1885.[35] A further reminder of the uncertainties of family life is an undated newspaper cutting describing how one of the Douglass boys who had survived beyond infancy was injured in the feet by a careless man shooting rabbits.

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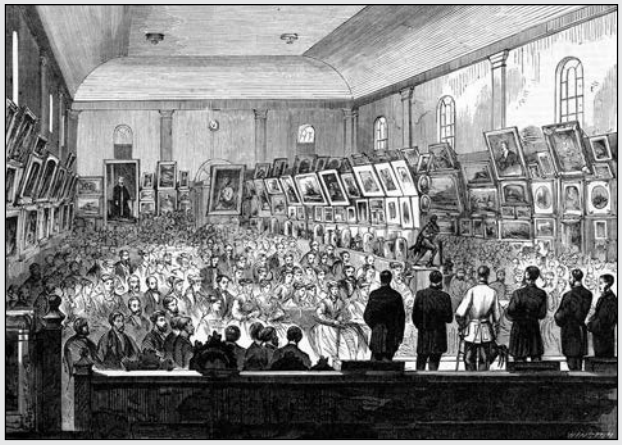
Elizabeth Douglass's scrapbook must have been a treasury for herself and her husband in an age when any visual art beyond amateur sketching was scarce. Looking back, the collection reveals how colonial culture was dominated by the taste



Winston, engraver
Fine Arts Exhibition, Geelong, 1869
Wood engraving
Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria, IAN29/03/61
Published in The Illustrated Australian News for Home Readers

Neither the scrapbook nor these catalogues indicate that Albert Douglass had maintained his earlier activity as a 'sketcher', but his various contributions to the exhibitions point to his continued interest in art as a collector. For the 1857 Exhibition, Douglass had submitted nine works including some by his wife Elizabeth; in 1862 he served as a member of the Exhibition committee and in 1869 he submitted six works. Exhibitions like those mounted by the Geelong Mechanics' Institute served the public appetite for artworks as a kind of 'pop-up' display before the establishment of regional public art galleries. They exhibited works submitted by artists themselves as well as works in private possession which were felt to be of interest to the general public.[33]

The final image in the scrapbook is particularly poignant, a water-colour drawing, perhaps by Elizabeth herself, depicting the tomb of Alfred Byerley Douglass. It shows a small isolated tomb beside a weeping tree, with what appears to be an open book lying on top of the vault.[34] Alfred Byerley was the Douglass' first child, born 3 May 1854, who died 13 April 1855. Six younger children died in infancy during the next decade until the birth in 1859 of Henry Perceval who lived to inherit the *Geelong Advertiser* and *Corio Villa* on the death of his father

and interests of the Motherland, with its images of the Royal Family and the Great Exhibition. At the same time, Elizabeth's inclusion of her award in the Mechanics' Institute exhibition points to the importance of such local organisations. They helped to satisfy local demand for visual art as well as providing a showcase for local artists, thereby helping to develop the colony's own culture.[36]

Elizabeth Douglass, 1825-1902, artist (attributed)
Alfred Byerley Douglass's tomb [c.1857-c.1869]
Pencil, watercolour and gouache
Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, PXD 60 (A)/62

1 Prominent on the cliff above the Eastern Beach, *Corio Villa* is now a national architectural treasure.

2 https://linctas.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en_AU/names/? (accessed 12 August 2016)

3 Roy S. Smith, 'De Little, Robert (1808-1876)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1966, vol 1, pp.304-305.

4 Elizabeth Douglass died 25 December 1902 at *Corio Villa* which remained in family ownership until 1938.

5 Alan Willingham, *Geelong Region Historic Buildings and Objects Study*, Geelong: Geelong Regional Commission, 1986, vol.2, sheet 164. Victorian Heritage database report, Corio Villa, http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/523/download-report (accessed 23 August 2016)

6 Elizabeth Douglass scrapbook, c.1855-c.1890, PXD 610, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.

7 Amy Robsart was the first wife of Lord Robert Dudley, favourite of Queen Elizabeth I. She died, in possibly suspicious circumstances, after falling down a flight of stairs.

8 For conservation reasons the Library has classified it separately.

9 *Age*, 26 August 1868, p.2.

10 Both Elizabeth and Turner exhibited works in the Geelong Mechanics' Institute Industry and Art Exhibition 1857.

11 Anne Drysdale, *Miss D and Miss N: an extraordinary partnership; the diary of Anne Drysdale [and Caroline Newcomb]*, edited by Bev Roberts, Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, in association with State Library of Victoria, 2009.

12 For details of the life and work of George Alexander Gilbert, *see* Margaret Bowman *Cultured Colonists: George Alexander Gilbert and his family, settlers in Port Phillip*. Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2014.

13 It appears to be the only known copy of the images.

14 Bev Roberts, 'Miss Newcomb's Teapot', *The La Trobe Journal*, no.87, May 2011, pp.74-85. (See also Roberts 'A Black Apron View of History: Anne Drysdale & Caroline Newcomb, Victoria's 'lady squatters', *La Trobeana*, vol.9, no.3, November 2010, pp.2-16.)

15 Caroline Elizabeth Newcomb was born 5 October 1812 in Kensington, London.

16 Roberts, p.74.

17 Drysdale, pp.116, 175, 177, 181, 208.

18 Apparently, Miss Drysdale coined the name as a reminder that the Corio property has been bought at Christmas.

19 Miss Newcomb won a prize silver teapot at the Geelong Agricultural Show 1857 for 'potatoes, cauliflowers, asparagus and for turkeys, etc.'. (Item H8115, Museum Victoria)

20 Drysdale, p.24.

21 There were few mourners and no minister, the burial service being read by the ubiquitous Dr Thomson.

22 This was in line with *Coriyule's* garden which was surprisingly formal and largely the work of Miss Newcomb.

23 Drysdale, pp.299, 301.

24 It was during her stay with the Thomson family that Caroline, formerly an Anglican, and a deeply religious woman, had joined the Methodists. The church was in the neighbouring township named after Miss Drysdale.

25 Inscription lithographed below drawings 'Drawing taken on the spot by G.A. Gilbert. Printed by G. Rowney and Co., London 1856.

26 His wife, Anne Gilbert, was also living in the Geelong area, although it is doubtful whether they were still living together.

27 Fred Byerley is noted in Miss Newcomb's diary as making several visits to *Coriyule* while the tomb was being made. Drysdale, pp.287, 293, 301.

28 Alfred Douglass contributed seven works by Gilbert to the Geelong Mechanics' Institute Exhibition 1857.

29 She also exhibited an arrangement of leaves in the 1862 Exhibition.

30 'In the jewel case exhibited by Mr Pearson is a beautiful brooch a miniature copy of the Holy Family painted by Mrs Alfred Douglass and, like all the contributions of this lady, commanding warm praise for delicate artistic work'.

31 *Catalogue*, *Geelong Mechanics' Institute Exhibition…1862*, Geelong: Heath and Cordell Printers, 1862.

32 Ibid, 1857, pp.9-10.

33 The Geelong Art Gallery was not established until 1896.

34 According to the records of the Geelong Cemetery Trust, Albert Byerley was buried in the Eastern Cemetery. The original tomb no longer exists, Alfred Byerley being re-interred in the family vault.

35 Also buried in the family vault at Eastern Cemetery are: Arthur Reginald d.15 Feb.1861; Emily Constance d.31 Dec. 1860; Alfred William, d.16 Oct.1865; Alfred Clipston, d. 1865; Edmund 6 Jan 1865-15 Jan. 1865; Charles Leslie, d.1864.

36 In addition to the eight works by G.A. Gilbert in the 1869 Exhibition of the Geelong Mechanics' Institute, there was also one by Eugene de [sic] Guérard.

Whitbourne Court cross-links: a research report

By Susan Priestley

Susan Priestley MA (Melb), RHSV Fellow and committee member of the La Trobe Society, is a practising historian with an interest in recovering lives and solving enigmas about people.
She acknowledges the assistance of Dr Kate Lack, Chairman of the Bromyard and District Local History Society, in providing extra information for this report.

In the March 2015 issue of *La Trobeana*, Kate Lack and Loreen Chambers wrote of *Whitbourne Court*, the house close to the Worcestershire/Herefordshire border that was leased by Charles Joseph La Trobe as the family home between 1858 and 1866.[1] In the following issue was Tim Gatehouse's research report on a dinner plate bearing the Harington family crest and its Whitbourne connections. The 11th baronet Sir Richard Harington (1835-1911), who succeeded to the baronetcy in 1877, had married in 1860 Frances Agnata Biscoe, second daughter of Rev. Robert Biscoe, the rector of Whitbourne from 1833 until his death in 1870.[2] The rectory, the church and *Whitbourne Court* remain in a secluded cluster at a slight remove from the rest of the village. In 1878 Sir Richard Harington bought *Whitbourne Court* and successive generations of the family lived there for almost another century after his death in 1911. His widow died in 1915 in the neighbouring house to the rectory where she had been born,[3] and the present baronet still has a house in the parish.[4]

While researching another La Trobe topic, I chanced upon a report in *Berrow's Worcester Journal* of the re-opening of Whitbourne church in November 1865 after months of a 'thorough restoration'.[5] The restoration was instigated by the rector who 'received great encouragement from the landed proprietors, resident gentry, and other friends, and the parishioners generally, by whom very handsome sums were contributed... The London Church Extension Society and the Herefordshire Diocesan Church Building Society were among the contributors.'[6] The newspaper recorded that all except £230 from a total cost of £1,350 had been raised before the opening ceremony, and another £92 was realised by the collection on the day. However, as is often the way, the final total as recorded in the parish accounts (including architects fees and incidental extras) came to £1,457.[7] The church was closed for most of 1865.[8]

The church boasted Norman origins with 'a good four-light Perpendicular window' in the chancel, and still includes a few carved stones which suggest an even earlier, Saxon, origin. However,

> during the latter part of the Georgian period all the fine proportions of the edifice were, as usual, spoiled by the barbarous 'improvements' effected. The roof was shut up by a miserable ceiling, high pens, or pews of deal, were erected, and a deep and unsightly gallery of the same material constructed. The gallery was brought so far forward into the body of the church, that those of the congregation who sat below it were precluded from properly joining in worship, inasmuch as they could neither see the officiating clergyman, nor read the Scriptures in their hands for want of light.[9]

Paul Lack, photographer (2016)
St John the Baptist Church, Whitbourne Interior, north aisle, 1865

The restoration was undertaken by A.E. Perkins of Worcester, described as 'architect to the Dean and Chapter', with 'Mr Hurn' as building contractor. Those with an interest in evolving church architecture may find the following details pertinent. They are evidence of a mid-nineteenth response by the established church to the challenge from dissenting churches, which encouraged personal Scripture reading and congregational prayer, and abhorred the class distinction of 'high pens', the semi-enclosed pews rented but not always occupied by moneyed people aspiring to be gentry. The architect

> had all the whitewash and cement removed, exposing to view the solid masonry walls, which, where requisite, were made good. The gallery was pulled down, and to provide for the decrease in the number of seats… an aisle was placed on the north, by which means a clear gain of 50 sittings was obtained. The aisle has an open timbered and boarded roof, and stone piers and arches. The pews have been banished, and low open seats provided in their stead. In the chancel [are] new stalls, benches, and reading-desk... The pulpit is of stone, handsomely carved. The floor is laid with Godwin's tiles. New doors with ornamental ironwork, and a vestry have been provided. A hot air vault has been constructed, and the church is warmed by means of Haden's heating apparatus. The tower is open [from the floor], and in it a new window has been inserted [adding extra light].[10]

More than a dozen clergymen, headed by the Archdeacon of Hereford who gave the sermon and performed the communion service, took part in the re-opening ceremony on Wednesday 8 November. Named among the 'numerous' congregation were J. Freeman (of *Gaines*)[11] and party, Lady Saye and Sele (the Archdeacon's wife), Mrs and Miss Sidebottom, Mr and Mrs Barneby Luttley, Mrs Cartwright, Mrs Childe, Mrs Fox, Mrs Shepherd (all wives of clergymen), Captain and Mrs Onslow (family of Rev. Pepys Onslow), Captain and Mrs Sutherland, Captain Hopton, Mrs E.B. Evans and party (recently arrived in the parish and establishing themselves among the landed classes, as the owners of *Whitbourne Hall* which they had built five years previously), J. Twinberrow (of *Huntlands*), Mr La Trobe and party, Mrs Biscoe and party, Mrs Harington (Frances, the Biscoe's married daughter who had moved from the rectory to the Court when she married the squire), Mr B. Davis, Mr Masters and party, Mr R. Rimell and party, Mr Rimell jun., Mr Clarke and party, Mr James (*The Warren*) and Mrs and Miss Walker (*Knightwick*). After the service 'the poor of the parish, to the number of about 300, were treated to a dinner chiefly provided' by the rector, together with Messrs Freeman, La Trobe, Evans, Davis and Twinberrow. The last-named also had a reredos (altar piece or screen) made for the church.

From that listing and the description of the occasion we gain some insight into the La Trobe family's participation in Whitbourne life and society, however circumscribed by their own taste and circumstances. There is a certain poignancy to this report when we realise that the re-opening took place barely a month after La Trobe's eyesight had failed entirely while accompanying his daughter Agnes on a trip to France.[12] While not able to gain a visual appreciation of the restoration, he would have had his wife Rose's description and enjoyed other sensory feelings, hearing the service and conversations afterwards, and not least, the warmth of the new heating system.

Nevertheless, as early as the spring of 1865 Charles Joseph La Trobe had been considering looking for another family home.[13] He finally gave up the lease on *Whitbourne Court* at the end of 1866,[14] and in due course took the smaller *Clapham House* at Litlington in Sussex. The advantages of a warmer climate, and being closer to specialist medical and legal advice in the metropolis as well as travel to the Continent, must have outweighed the disadvantage of leaving a home and a rural community he had got to know over eight years.

Paul Lack, photographer (2016)
St John the Baptist Church, Whitbourne East Window, 1872
Dedicated to the memory of John Gaines and the Reverend Robert Biscoe, both of whom died in 1870

1 Kate Lack and Loreen Chambers, 'Whitbourne and Whitbourne Court, 1858-1866, *La Trobeana*, vol.14, no.1, March 2015, pp.15-27.

2 Phyllis Williams, *Whitbourne: a bishop's manor*, Whitbourne: The Author, 1979, p.164, records that Rev. Robert Biscoe was also prebendary (honorary canon) of Hereford. This publication was produced in conjunction with the Bromyard and District Local History Society, the Department of Extramural Studies, University of Birmingham and the Workers' Educational Association.

3 Lack and Chambers; Gatehouse, 'The Harington Family Crested Dinner Plate', *La Trobeana*, vol.14, no.2, July 2015, pp.43-45.

4 Lack, email 16 May 2016.

5 *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, 11 November 1865, p.3, (19th century British Newspaper collection. Gale document no: R3214887116, accessed 28 March 2016.)

6 Ibid.

7 Williams, p.168.

8 Ibid.

9 *Berrow's Worcester Journal*.

10 Ibid.

11 The glass in the east window depicts the burial, resurrection and ascension of our Lord and was dedicated to the memory of John Gaines and also the Reverend Robert Biscoe, both of whom died at the end of 1870. They had been at the forefront of the 1865 restoration, when plain glass was seemingly installed. The memorial glass was installed in 1872 and cost £33: Williams, p.164.

12 La Trobe to James Graham, 24 October 1865, in L.J. Blake (ed), *Letters of Charles Joseph La Trobe*, Melbourne: Government Printer, 1975, p.65. Agnes spent several months in Pau to escape from her usual 'disagreeable' winter cough.

13 La Trobe to Frederick Powlett, 25 May 1865, in L.J. Blake, pp.61-62: 'I have told you that I am minded to give up my pretty retreat here at Whitsuntide… I must find a warm & cosy retreat however humble somewhere on the south coast'.

14 Agnes La Trobe, Journal, 26 May 1866 to 5 September 1867, MS 13354/7, La Trobe Neuchâtel Archive, Australian Manuscripts Collection, State Library Victoria.

COMMEMORATION SERVICE.

LITLINGTON, POLEGATE, SUSSEX.

Sunday, July 1st, 1951.
12 Noon.

The Agent-General for Victoria and Mrs. Lienhop request the pleasure of your company to join with them in paying tribute to the memory of Victoria's first Governor, Charles Joseph La Trobe, C.B., on the occasion of the centenary of his Governorship and to join in the celebration of Victoria's 100 years of independence and Sovereignty.

The Rt. Hon. the Lord Mayor of London and the Lady Mayoress Mr. Alderman and the Hon. Mrs. Denys Lowson have graciously consented to be present.

R.S.V.P.
THE SECRETARY,
VICTORIA HOUSE,
MELBOURNE PLACE,
STRAND, W.C.2.

KINDLY PRESENT THIS CARD.

Invitation to Commemoration Service, Litlington, Polegate, Sussex, Sunday, July 1st, 1951

Remembering the Litlington Commemoration 1951

By Helen Botham

Helen Botham is foundation chair of the Friends of La Trobe's Cottage and coordinator for the Sunday summer season openings at the Cottage. She is author of 'La Trobe's Jolimont: A Walk Round My Garden', published in 2006, and since then she has maintained a deep interest in the life of C J La Trobe, which has included visits to La Trobe sites in England.

The visit by ninety-six schoolboys to the village of Litlington, near Polegate, Sussex, in 1951 has been described in two previous *La Trobeana* articles by Susan Priestley, in 2002[1] and 2013.[2] The visit was part of a four-month Sun Youth Travel tour, sponsored by Melbourne's *Sun News-Pictorial* newspaper and organised through the Overseas League. The 1951 tour was the first of several arranged during the 1950s. With the involvement of the *Adelaide Advertiser* from 1952, the Sun Advertiser Youth Travel Association was formed.

The Victorian Agent General, John Lienhop, had organised a ceremonial visit to St Michael the Archangel, Litlington, the site of the grave of Charles Joseph La Trobe, to mark the Centenary of Victoria on 1 July 1951. Amongst many dignitaries attending the ceremony were the Lord Mayor of London, Sir Denys Lowson; and La Trobe's grandson, Captain Charles La Trobe, and granddaughter, Mrs Victoria Shea-Simonds.

The schoolboys formed a guard of honour between the rectory and the church for the official procession.[3] Three from the 1951 tour were among eight members of the Sun Advertiser Youth Travel Association who visited La Trobe's Cottage on 19 September this year. They included the Patron of the Association, Mrs Greg Moloney whose husband, Frank, was tour director for 1951 and founder of the Association. She was matron on the 1951 tour: a young woman in her twenties with responsibility for nearly one hundred energetic schoolboys, some as young as thirteen.

The day was seen by the party as a group reunion, one of their party travelling from Tasmania for the visit. During the morning many stories were recounted about the tours, not least the long sea voyage.

Lorraine Finlay, Property Manager at La Trobe's Cottage, and Vice-President of the La Trobe Society, Loreen Chambers, were

Photographer unknown
The Lord Mayor of London (Sir Denys Lowson) and his wife leading the memorial procession to the churchyard at Litlington, Sussex, 1 July 1951
Members of the Sun Youth Travel tour provide a guard of honour.

Helen Botham, photographer
Presentation of photograph, invitation and book to Loreen Chambers, 19 September 2016
From left: Max Robinson, Ian Boyd, Loreen Chambers, Barrie Dunn, Mrs Moloney, Ian Douglas, John Brownbill, Marshal Schaeche, John Brodribb

present to meet the group at the Cottage. Loreen has visited Litlington many times and has written several articles and reports about Litlington and the surrounding area, so it was fitting that she should be present at the gathering. Ian Douglas provided a brief history of the 1951 visit for the assembled group, and Mrs Moloney then presented an original photograph of the ceremonial procession showing the schoolboys' guard of honour, and the original invitation to the event. She also presented a copy of the book, *Australia's Schoolboy Ambassadors*,[4] describing the four tours of 1951, 1952, 1953 and 1955.

In thanking the group for their presentation, Loreen said that such archival material provides a valuable link with that early visit to Litlington. The committee of the La Trobe Society will ensure the safe keeping of the photograph and invitation by offering them to the Pictures Collection of the State Library Victoria, with copies to be placed in the Cottage. The La Trobe Society and the Friends of La Trobe's Cottage are delighted to receive this important reminder of an event in 1951 that commemorated the centenary of the creation of the colony of Victoria.

1 Susan Priestley, 'Seeking 96 Victorian School Boys of 1951', *La Trobeana*, vol.1, no.2, August 2002, pp.2-3.

2 Susan Priestley, 'Boys and History', *La Trobeana*, vol.12, no.1, March 2013, pp.25-27.

3 Ibid.

4 Errol Chinner and Don David, *Australia's Schoolboy Ambassadors: a record of the Sun-Advertiser-Daily News sponsored youth travel tours to Great Britain in the 1950's*, edited by Richard Telfer. Melbourne: Sun Advertiser Youth Travel Association, 2002.

Forthcoming events

NOVEMBER

Friday 25

Christmas Cocktails at the Gothic Bank
Time: 5.30 for 6.00 pm
Venue: Verdon Chambers, ANZ Bank, 380 Collins Street, Melbourne
Speaker: Darren Bastian, National Client Services Manager, ANZ Bank
Topic: The Gothic Bank and its history
Refreshments
Admission: $80.00 per person
Invitations have been sent for this event

DECEMBER

Sunday 4

Service to mark the Anniversary of the Death of C J La Trobe
Time: 11.00 am – 1pm
Venue: St Peter's Eastern Hill, 15 Gisborne Street, Melbourne
Refreshments
No bookings required. All welcome.

2017

MARCH

Sunday 19 tbc

La Trobe's Birthday Celebration and Book Launch
Time: 4.30 – 6.00 pm
Venue: Mueller Hall, Royal Botanic Gardens, afterwards the La Trobe's Cottage Garden
Guest Speaker: Professor John Barnes
Topic: Launch of John Barnes' book on La Trobe
Refreshments
Admission: $15 per person; children $5.00 each.

APRIL

Wild Colonial Boys: Bushrangers in Victoria, exhibition
Venue: Old Treasury Building Museum, 20 Spring Street, Melbourne
Date & Cost: tba

MAY

Friends of La Trobe's Cottage Annual Lecture
Time: 6.00 – 8.00pm
Venue: Tasma Terrace or Mueller Hall
Guest Speaker: tba
Date & Cost: tba

JUNE

Sunday 11

Members Talk to Members and Friends*
Time: 2.30 – 4.00 pm
Venue: Mueller Hall, Royal Botanic Gardens

Tuesday 20

Joint La Trobe Society/ RHSV AGL Shaw Lecture
Time: 6.30 – 8.00 pm
Venue: Royal Historical Society of Victoria, Cnr William and A'Beckett Streets, Melbourne
Guest Speaker: tba
Cost: tba

Friday 30

Melbourne Rare Book Week Lecture
Time: 6.30 – 8.30 pm
Venue: 401 Collins Street, Melbourne.
Guest Speaker: Dr Sylvia Whitmore
Topic: Charles La Trobe, Lord Kingsborough and the nine magnificent volumes of *The Antiquities of Mexico*
No charge. Bookings required to secretary@latrobesociety.org.au

cont. >>

Forthcoming events (cont.)

JULY

Sunday 9

Members Talk to Members and Friends*
Time: 2.30 – 4.00 pm
Venue: Mueller Hall, Royal Botanic Gardens

AUGUST

Wednesday 2

La Trobe Society Annual General Meeting and Dinner
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Lyceum Club, Ridgway Place, Melbourne
Invitations will be sent in July

Sunday 13

Members Talk to Members and Friends*
Time: 2.30 – 4.00 pm
Venue: Mueller Hall, Royal Botanic Gardens

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 10

Members Talk to Members and Friends*
Time: 2.30 – 4.00 pm
Venue: Mueller Hall, Royal Botanic Gardens

***MEMBERS TALK TO MEMBERS AND FRIENDS – CALL FOR PAPERS**
See next page

Members Talk to Members and friends – call for papers

Following the success of the Members Talk to Members program during the winter of 2016 at Domain House, it has been agreed that the program will continue in 2017. Four talks have been scheduled for the months of June to September. Members who would like to deliver a paper at one of the monthly meetings are invited to submit a synopsis of their paper for consideration to Daryl Ross, at daryl@latrobesociety.org.au, by 30 November 2016.

Topics of proposed papers should focus on the life and times of Charles Joseph La Trobe in Port Phillip/Victoria.

For more information, and a submission form, go to http://www.latrobesociety.org.au/documents/CallForPapers.doc

Back Issues

Back issues of La Trobeana are available on the Society's website, except for those published in the last twelve months.
The back issues may be accessed at www.latrobesociety.org.au/LaTrobeana.html
They may be searched by keyword.

Contributions welcome

The Editorial Committee welcomes contributions to La Trobeana which is published three times a year.

Further information about the Journal may be found on the inside front cover and at www.latrobesociety.org.au/LaTrobeana.html.

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BACK COVER
La Trobe Family coat of arms
INSIDE FRONT COVER
Charles Joseph La Trobe's coat of arms, taken from his bookplate


"Qui la cèrca, la trova"