

**GIPPSLAND HISTORIC MINING PLOTS**

**1850-1980**

**Historic Notes**

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## ***BUCHAN–SNOWY RIVER HISTORICAL NOTES***

- 1857:** Lead ore found at Boggy Creek on the Bruthen-Buchan road--galena ore with hint of silver--part of the emphasis on opening the Lakes entrance came from the fact that there were known mineral deposits in this area.<sup>1</sup>
- 1866:** T.E. Stapley prospecting up Buchan River--discovered iron ore containing copper oxide, galena, and high silver content--applied for lease but mining did not go ahead.<sup>2</sup>
- 1869-71:** Lease taken up along Back Creek, east of Buchan, to mine galena--24 bags of lead ore shipped from mine in 1871--Buchan Proprietary Co.--4 men working.<sup>3</sup>
- 1870:** About 12 miles from Bonang, en route to Snowy River, good indications of a copper lode found--also lead and silver ore on the Snowy River.<sup>4</sup>
- March 1872:** Galena lodes on Buchan River--two companies formed to prospect--Murrindal Silver and Lead Co. opening up their mine (lease of 154 acres) and plan to erect smelting furnaces on sites showing good ore.<sup>5</sup>
- June 1872:** Ore to be carted to Bairnsdale, about 50 miles.<sup>6</sup>
- September 1872:** Buchan Lead & Silver MC have a lease of 450 acres on Back Creek, tributary of Buchan River--200 tons of ore raised and 50 tons conveyed to Lakes Entrance on packhorses and thence by steamer to Melbourne for testing--8 men employed--2 shafts--much ore too poor for conveyance to Melbourne, so smelting works on site is necessary. Murrindal Mining & Smelting Co. carrying on operations on Murrindal River--4 men employed sinking shaft. Potosi Co. suspended operations pending granting of lease for 443 acres.<sup>7</sup>
- 1872-3:** Mining operations gave rise to possibility of a township at Buchan - suggestion that it be named after Stapley, the prospector, but named Buchan in 1873, after nearby pastoral run and river.<sup>8</sup>
- December 1872:** Party sinking for copper at 'Deduc' near the Snowy River.<sup>9</sup>
- May 1873:** Buchan Co. had 15-year lease - 12 men working.<sup>10</sup>
- June 1873:** Buchan Lead & Silver MC - satisfactory result from ore treated - tunnel being driven - shaft also being sunk on northern side of lease on a copper lode. Murrindal Co. have erected smelting house, blacksmith's shop, powder magazine, &c. - quarry opened above high-water level, about 30 yards long, 5 yards wide, and 8 yards deep, out of which a considerable quantity has been taken which is expected to yield 50-60% lead and a little silver - also drive put in at SW corner of quarry for about 15 ft.<sup>11</sup>
- September 1873:** Galena mines seem to be attracting the attention of Melbourne capitalists.<sup>12</sup>

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1 Adams, p. 122

2 Adams, p. 122

3 Adams, p. 122

4 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), June 1870

5 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1872

6 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1872

7 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1872

8 Adams, p. 123

9 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), December 1872

10 Adams, p. 123

11 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1873

12 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1873

- December 1873:** Five mineral leases, four of which are presently being mined. Principal mine is the Murrindal, then Buchan Lead & Silver Co. Buchan Co. ground is extremely hard, and progress slow - no preparation for furnaces will be made until the quality of the lode in the cross-cut is fully proved.<sup>13</sup>
- March 1874:** Murrindal Co. furnaces 'have not been found to answer' - blamed on improper construction and lack of skilled smelters - two experienced smelters are on way from England - meanwhile only 4 men working. Buchan Co. - great improvement in ore. Other leases are the Potosi, Spring Creek, and Neal's Creek - none of them working.<sup>14</sup>
- 1870s:** At the Murrindal mine, an American ore hearth and a Spanish reverberating furnace proved unsatisfactory smelting appliances.<sup>15</sup>
- December 1874:** Only Murrindal mine working.<sup>16</sup>
- 1874:** From Murrindal mine, 5 tons yielded 16 cwt of lead.<sup>17</sup>
- June 1875:** Galena mines at Buchan remain unworked.<sup>18</sup>
- March 1876:** Buchan Co. mine abandoned.<sup>19</sup>
- 1876:** Near the junction of Murrindal and the Buchan Rivers, and also at the Back Creek, irregular deposits of argentiferous galena have been and in one case are yet being worked. Associated with the galena are other lead and copper ores, and occasionally a little zinc blende.<sup>20</sup>
- 1876:** The selectors who were beginning to move into the area could maintain to the Mines Department that mining objections to their licences 'do not apply in this district, as the mineral leases are all abandoned, except one which is dragging out a miserable existence.'<sup>21</sup>
- 1876-7:** Murrindal mine - total yield from May 1876 to January 1877 was 482 pigs and 112 lbs of lead from 74 tons of ore.<sup>22</sup>
- June 1877:** The galena mines at Buchan are almost abandoned.<sup>23</sup>
- 1877:** Murrindal Co. 'now in a moribund or defunct condition, and the works have been discontinued for some time' - most of the company's capital and energy expended on erecting smelter and other works - development of mine neglected - total of 74 tons of ore smelted on the ground, yielded 482 pigs (112 lb each) of lead.<sup>24</sup>
- September 1878:** No work being performed on mineral leases at Buchan.<sup>25</sup>
- June 1880:** A mineral (galena) claim applied for at Buchan of 155 acres, to include the works of the late Murrindal Silver and Lead MC.<sup>26</sup>

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13 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1873

14 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1874

15 Rosales (2), p. 103

16 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1874

17 Rosales (2), p. 103

18 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1875

19 Adams, p. 123

20 Howitt (1876)

21 Adams, p. 124

22 Rosales (2), p. 103

23 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1877

24 Adams, p. 124 - quoting A.W. Howitt in Secretary for Mines Report, 1877

25 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1878

- June 1881:** Galena lease has been granted at Buchan - being worked by 10 men.<sup>27</sup>
- September 1881:** Smelting operations actively carried on - two blocks of 640 acres each applied for.<sup>28</sup>
- December 1881:** Nevada Co. making 'certain alterations' to furnaces, which were found to be defective - 6 men employed - intend to commence operations on a large scale shortly.<sup>29</sup>
- September 1882:** Nevada Co. suspended work, pending reorganisation of company.<sup>30</sup>
- December 1883:** No work being done on any of the mineral leases at Buchan.<sup>31</sup>
- 1883:** Pyramids Lead Mining Co. mine opened up at Murrindal, on the selection of James Stewart - attracted a great deal of interest.<sup>32</sup>
- December 1884:** A Melbourne syndicate formed to visit the mines with a view to 'further action'.<sup>33</sup>
- March 1885:** No work being done on the areas held under Search License and Mineral Leasing Regulations in this locality.<sup>34</sup>
- September 1885:** Several of the galena mines have been taken up by a Melbourne syndicate, with a view of ascertaining whether the ore is of any commercial value. New machinery being introduced.<sup>35</sup>
- December 1885:** Melbourne syndicate holding Mineral lease No. 722 making roads and approaches from the works on the Murrindal River towards the mines opened on the Back (or Delbet) Creek - involves clearing and cutting the steep hill at Devil's Glen to allow teams to get down - also erection of strong 50-ton bridge across Rocky Glen, and an approach from the Buchan River to the mine - also one from the flat onto the hill, and a long sideling cutting from Rocky Glen Bridge down to Buchan River - after 4 years' drought Murrindal River not running, Buchan River not much better - a Vortex turbine, imported from England, is lying on the ground useless, with all the crushing and separating machinery, worth about £1,500 - during drought it has been almost a physical impossibility to work these mines at all, and it is now practically impossible, until rain comes in volume to fill the rivers, to work the turbine wheel on the Buchan, or to fill the well that supplies the steam-engine on the Murrindal River - 300 tons of ore at grass, ready to be sent to Melbourne for smelting, but it is useless to forward it without concentration, in the face of high transit costs.
- Old furnace on Murrindal claim has been pulled down, and a large excavation made in solid hillside to receive new furnace on the latest improved principles in connection with the former flues, stack, &c. - machinery has all been overhauled and renewed - everything ready for a full start as soon as the river begins to flow.<sup>36</sup>
- December 1885:** Mines have been opened at three different localities - 1st, at the Delbet mine, at junction of Delbet Creek with Buchan River; 2nd, Hume Park mine, on east side of

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26 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1880  
 27 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1881  
 28 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1881  
 29 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1881  
 30 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1882  
 31 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1883  
 32 Adams, p. 174  
 33 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1884  
 34 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1885  
 35 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1885  
 36 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1885

Murrindal, about a mile up from junction with Buchan River; and 3rd, on west bank of the Murrindal, about six miles further up that river.<sup>37</sup>

**1886-1898:** Galena mines practically 'knocked' - ie. abandoned.<sup>38</sup>

**1887:** 'Tambo' mentioned the mining of opals near Gelantipy in 1887.<sup>39</sup>

**June 1887:** Search for galena and other minerals is at a standstill.<sup>40</sup>

**September 1887:** At Buchan, the Pyramid mine is the only one which has done anything - about 21\_cwt of lead has been obtained, and about 14 tons of stone are lying at the mine ready for treatment.<sup>41</sup>

**September 1887:** Rush took place to foot of Mt Nowa Nowa - about 18 claims pegged out - 'as the specimens exhibited, some of which show gold, are very heavily charged with iron, I should... doubt the probability of the gold being found in payable quantities.'<sup>42</sup>

**1887:** Niels Jorgenson, leading a prospecting party, announced a good gold reef find on Mt Nowa Nowa - rush ensued - James Stirling ended the rush, declaring reef not payable - however, Stirling's reference to the valuable ironstone led to some opening up of the iron deposits in 1888.<sup>43</sup>

**December 1887:** Immediately on receiving instructions to report on the alleged discovery of auriferous quartz at Nowa Nowa, I proceeded over the Australian Alps to the locality indicated, having been compelled to swim the Mitta Mitta at Hinnomunjie crossing *en route*. During my visit, I had seven samples of the alleged auriferous rock crushed in a mortar ... In only one was there any evidence of probably auriferous material, a mere speck of yellowish-red metallic substance which, in the absence of any positive test, may have been cuprite or metallic copper, or may have been gold. Should further prospecting reveal the presence of payable gold in the locality—about which I am extremely doubtful—it is certainly to the south of the existing outcrop of jasperous quartz ... that such would probably be found.<sup>44</sup>

**December 1887:** As a result of the Nowa Nowa rush, part of the country has been taken up for iron.<sup>45</sup>

**1888:** Dodds & Wyatt's lead mine at Back Creek (worked since 1883) working four shifts - plan to construct a local smelting plant - mine eventually forced to close down because of heavy transport costs of ore to Mossiface jetty.<sup>46</sup>

**December 1888:** Six men working at the silver-lead mines, Buchan.<sup>47</sup>

**December 1889:** Some good results obtained in the Back Creek Lead mine at Buchan, and a quantity of lead smelted.<sup>48</sup> (According to Rosales (1898/2), works at Back Creek were confined to tunnelling.)

**1890s:** Back Creek mines continued with good results into the 1890s.<sup>49</sup>

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37 Murray

38 Rosales (2), p. 103

39 Adams, p. 174

40 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Division), June 1887

41 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Division), September 1887

42 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Division), September 1887

43 Adams, p. 174

44 Stirling (1887)

45 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Division), December 1887

46 Adams, p. 173

47 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Division), December 1888

48 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1889

49 Adams, p. 174

- 1890:** Tarra Creek Silver Mining Co. formed.<sup>50</sup>
- 1892:** Talla Toorook Silver Mining Co. on Mackieson's property at Yellow Waterholes Creek – traces of silver, lead, copper and gold, but proved a poor find.<sup>51</sup>
- 1892-3:** Silver and gold found at Butcher's Ridge, south of Gelantipy, by McRae and O'Rourke – worked for a couple of years.<sup>52</sup>
- 1892-6:** Gold found on Ironstone Creek at Nowa Nowa - leases taken up - encouraging sample crushings at Ballarat, but mines deserted late in 1893 - brief revival in 1896.<sup>53</sup>
- 1893:** Dominion silver mine opened up on a branch of Hospital Creek, near Canni Creek, south of Buchan.<sup>54</sup>
- 1894:** Good Hope Silver Mining Co. worked ex-Talla Toorook silver-lead mine.<sup>55</sup>
- 1894-6:** Back Creek mine revived by Carbonate Gold & Silver Mining Co. as Buchan Proprietary mine, with Colonel Cecil Morgan from Broken Hill as managing director and William Slee as mine manager - mine attracted great deal of attention. Morgan made false boasts of great returns and Slee and employees were threatened with dismissal if they revealed mine's true yields - mine 'salted' to deceive directors. £100,000 was then spent on mine works and a concentrating plant. Morgan's deception was revealed in September 1896. The company wound up and the mine never worked again.<sup>56</sup>

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50 Adams, p. 174  
 51 Adams, p. 175  
 52 Adams, p. 175  
 53 Adams, p. 175  
 54 Adams, p. 176  
 55 Adams, p. 175  
 56 Adams, pp. 175-6

- 1896:** Late Back Creek Co. now owned by Buchan Proprietary Mining Co. - about 6 or 7 miles below Buchan township, at junction of Back Creek with Buchan River. Although at one time smelting works (reverberatory furnaces &c.) were erected in conjunction with the Murrindal mine, the undertaking failed, as the reduction of the ore could not in that manner be locally worked at a profit ... Buchan Proprietary Co. are putting underground workings in order and erecting ore-concentrating plant. May Brothers of Gawler will erect a dressing plant on their patented system, capable of treating from 100-110 tons of crude ore in 24 hours – appliances will consist of stone-breaker, rollers, sizing trommel, coarse and fine jiggers, and perhaps a convex buddle - plant will be steam-powered - 7-ton boiler already on ground, others to be added - 30 men employed at mine. Murrindal mine, at junction of Buchan and Murrindal Rivers, lately taken up under lease by another company, but under same management as Buchan Proprietary mine - no work done on this mine for a long time, although it was once a busy place, for it was here that the smelting establishment was situated. Other (inoperative) silver-lead mines of the Buchan district were the Dominion (high in the ranges, shaft full of water, 45-ft deep) and the Good Hope (on Tallatoorook Creek, Cornish-type pit-head on the main shaft, 6 x 3 ft, two-compartments, shaft 183 ft deep, full of water).<sup>57</sup>
- 1896:** Plant at Murrindal mine comprises a Flintshire furnace capable of smelting three charges of 21 cwt in 24 hours; but the dirt in the ore only allowed 17 cwt per charge to be treated - also an 8-hp engine, an ore-breaking machine, sluice-box for cleaning ore from clay, and two jiggling sieves. General manager of Buchan Proprietary Co. is Colonel Morgan, assisted by Mr Slee, the underground manager - 'The sensational paragraph in Saturday's *Age* has exposed the relations existing between the managing director and his assistant, which have, for a time, disturbed the management, and created a panic among the shareholders. But [as] the company is, after eliminating all the questionable transactions referred to in the *Age*[,] a mining venture, it is in a parallel position with a great number of other progressive mines in the colony.' Apparently Slee had suggested that the mine had been 'salted' and that there was virtually no ore in sight in the mine, and Rosales had been sent by the Mines Department to check that none of its officers had 'mised' the department about the mine's prospects.<sup>58</sup>
- 1896:** Reefs opened up at Mt Tara, following upon the discovery of the Dominion Reef some years before by John Gilmore - two reefs discovered in 1896 were Fry's Iron Mask and Lawrence's Monarch of Tara.<sup>59</sup>
- 1896-8:** Fry started a rush to Canni Creek when he opened up the Iron Mask gold mine near the Buchan racecourse - led to a number of discoveries at Mt Tara and Canni Creek: Tara Chief, Leviathan, and Tara Crown mines - mining track cut and 3-head government battery erected - mines little developed - not much activity by 1898.<sup>60</sup>
- 1896-1903:** Gold and silver lodes opened at Campbell's Nob and near the Turnback crossing on the Snowy River, east of Gelantipy. Jingalalla Prospecting Association took out a lease and galena ore gave good assays of silver and lead. Mt Deddick Co. was formed and a mining track cut, but mines failed to develop because of high cartage costs. A railway via Nowa Nowa and Buchan to Deddick was mooted in 1899 by a British syndicate, but it failed to agree with government about funding and rail gauge. The project fell through by 1903.<sup>61</sup>
- 1898:** Mt Tara, which promised great things some time ago, according to local accounts, was able to produce two small crushings for the Government test battery which was

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57 Rosales (1)

58 Rosales (2), pp. 103-4

59 Flett, p. 179

60 Adams

61 Adams, pp. 176-7



erected there. No more has been heard of the Buchan lead and silver mines since Colonel Morgan's time.<sup>62</sup>

- 1898:** Minister for Mines visited Mt Deddick - 'Nearly every shaft and tunnel on Mount Deddick, Central United, Black Hills, Snowy River Minerals, North Mount Deddick, and other localities was subjected to inspection. A railway looms out in the perspective should the mineral possibilities be definitely deemed to warrant it ... The roads were shown to a very good disadvantage to the Minister in consequence of recent heavy rains, and the fellow feeling promoted in his breast by his own experiences prompted a promise that the means of communication should be improved. At present this is far from what is desired, and it is unprofitable to cart anything but the richest ore.'<sup>63</sup>
- 1899:** McCrae's (Glen Shiel) silver mine, Gelantipy - about 3 miles east of Buchan-Gelantipy road, on ridge dividing Butcher Creek and Snowy River valley - numerous shafts (deepest 45 ft), large open cut (20 ft long), and trenches - 4 tons of ore gave 70-80 oz of silver per ton.<sup>64</sup>
- 1899:** Large quartz reefs lying idle on both sides of Snowy River at Campbell's Nob - one had, in the past, yielded gold at the rate of 14 dwt/ton from sample crushed at Footscray - 'surely there is enough enterprise in the district to raise 3 or 4 tons ... and have the stone crushed at the Government battery at Tara, save the blanketings, and forward them for treatment to some pyrites works' - large reef contains lead, copper, and iron pyrites.<sup>65</sup>
- 1900:** Mines briefly worked iron ore deposits on and near Mt Nowa Nowa.<sup>66</sup>
- 1904:** Improvement at Mt Tara - eleven men prospecting- at government battery, three parties crushed 35 tons for 61 oz - shallow finds.<sup>67</sup>
- 1905:** Several small payable reefs discovered - 89 tons crushed at govt battery and Bairnsdale for 170 oz.<sup>68</sup>
- 1905:** Monarch Co. mine, on a spur trending in a northerly direction from the Tara Range. The workings extend for about 4 chains along reef - shaft sunk 30 ft at southern end, and shallow shaft at northern end - very rich stone obtained from these workings by Johnson and Hughes - 12 tons 14 cwt yielded 112 oz. Taedato Creek gold workings - creek flows north from Tara Range, about    mile east of Monarch mine - about 1\_ miles up the creek, a small gully joins from the NW - Keeley's Micawber mine on Cashbox Reef & Micawber, about 300 yards up the spur in westerly direction - crushing by dolly - total of 25 tons crushed and dollied gave 60 oz - shaft and stoping. Surprise mine, 200 ft further south on Micawber reef - 12-ft shaft. On opposite side of creek, shaft sunk 70 ft - native copper found in reef and in alluvial gold. Queen Reef, a little further up Taedato Creek - about 30 tons of quartz stacked at southern shaft (20 ft deep) - northern shaft 25 ft deep - stone is said to vary from 4 dwt to 4 oz/ton.<sup>69</sup>
- 1907:** Most of the Mt Deddick silver-lead lodes occur right on the east bank of the Snowy River and about 2 miles below where Deddick Creek joins Snowy River. Great deal of indiscriminate work done on the field - lodes not opened up to any extent - deepest shaft 60 ft. If the prospecting operations prove that a mining industry could be established here cheaper transport would probably be provided in time. Former workings: James' Lode worked by shaft,    mile east of river. Central Lode outcrops

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62 *Australian Mining Standard*, 5 May 1898

63 *Australian Mining Standard*, 12 May 1898

64 Stirling (1899/1)

65 Ferguson (1899/2), p. 22

66 Adams, p. 175

67 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1904

68 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1905

69 Dunn (1905)

on SW side of hill, above James' Lode - 3 tunnels driven, but none cut lode. United Lode - workings about 1\_ miles east of rivers - worked by tunnel and open cut – most southern lode on field. Princess Lode, about \_ mile NW from United workings and \_ mile east of Snowy River - worked by shafts - many tons of galena obtained. North Mt Deddick Lode, on west side of Snowy River, right opposite the camp - worked by two tunnels. Mt Deddick Lode - main shaft on east side of river, close to bank. Copper lode at Accommodation Creek lies eastward from Mt Deddick and about 8 miles from junction of Deddick or Jingallala Creek with Snowy River.<sup>70</sup>

- 1909:** Two parties prospecting around Mt Tara - nothing permanent opened up. When the projected railway to Orbost becomes an actuality, attention will probably be given to the deposits of iron ore lying between Buchan and Nowa Nowa.<sup>71</sup>
- 1910-11:** Victorian Manganese & Iron Mines Co., sinking shaft on large deposit of Manganese ore at the Iron Mask. No mining at Mt Tara.<sup>72</sup>
- 1913:** Mt Bowen Syndicate prospecting in old Mt Bowen copper mine, near Mt Deddick – Transport from this locality would be very costly at present; when this difficulty is overcome, the district is likely to become one of importance as a copper and silver-lead producer.<sup>73</sup>
- 1915:** Two parties prospecting near Buchan, one for gold & silver, one for iron ore.<sup>74</sup>
- 1916:** Buchan Prospecting Syndicate - driving tunnel - good quantity of ore at grass – serviceable milling plant of ten head nearing completion. Three parties were prospecting at Back Creek on southerly extension of Morgan's old silver-lead workings - ground now abandoned.<sup>75</sup>
- 1917:** Buchan Prospecting Syndicate to install Wilfley table and save concentrates. Two parties prospecting at Mt Tara.<sup>76</sup>
- 1917:** 400 tons of ore had been extracted from Tara Crown mine by 1917.<sup>77</sup>
- 1917:** Mining in operation again at Mt Deddick - transport difficulties still hampered development.<sup>78</sup>
- 1918:** Crown Tara mine (Buchan Prospecting Syndicate) took bulk crushings from over the tunnel level - proved unprofitable - now sinking and driving. Elsewhere on field, several old mines were further prospecting with disappointing results.<sup>79</sup>
- 1930s+:** Copper mined intermittently at Accommodation Creek from 1930s.<sup>80</sup>
- 1970:** Copper being mined at Mt Deddick.<sup>81</sup>

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71     Department of Mines Annual Report, 1909  
72     Department of Mines Annual Report, 1910  
73     Department of Mines Annual Report, 1913  
74     Department of Mines Annual Report, 1915  
75     Department of Mines Annual Report, 1916  
76     Department of Mines Annual Report, 1917  
77     Brady, p. 53  
78     Brady, p. 53  
79     Department of Mines Annual Report, 1918  
80     Brady, p. 53  
81     Brady, p. 53

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## ***BULUMWAAL–BOGGY CREEK GOLDFIELD NOTES***

- 1857-8:** Gold discovered at Prospect Creek, at the back of Mt Taylor - soon became known as Boggy Creek diggings - rush in January 1858. Boggy Creek is a tributary of the Mitchell River, running south towards Lindenow.<sup>1</sup>
- 1859-60:** Gold discovered in Merrijig Creek, which rises near the source of the Boggy Creek and runs south-west - Merrijig village had a few stores and a hotel.<sup>2</sup>
- 1859-60:** Merrijig was the early centre of the Boggy Creek goldfield - township was shortlived significant Chinese population at Merrijig.<sup>3</sup>
- August 1860:** Six miles of Prospect Creek were being worked towards the Mitchell - various branches were also opened: eg. Chipp's Gully, Splitters Gully.<sup>4</sup>
- c.1860:** Original site of Bulumwaal township was at lower Boggy Creek.<sup>5</sup>
- 1860:** Gold found in Poverty Creek - soon renamed Sandy's Creek after its prospector, Henry Sandy's.<sup>6</sup>
- 1860+:** Bed and terraces of Sandy's Creek worked for length of 20 miles - high terraces were quarried and wash wheeled down to sluice boxes at creek level.<sup>7</sup>
- 1860:** Upper branches of Boggy Creek opened - Whitbourne Gully junction was richest, also Muddy Gully, Kingsmill Gully (noted for its pure gold), Buffalo Creek and Burnett's Creek - also Morris's Creek, an east branch of the Wentworth - population of Boggy Creek goldfield about 600.<sup>8</sup>
- 1860+:** After the opening of the Mitchell River areas in 1860 most of the banks and flats on the river were worked (sometimes under lease) between Lindenow and the Dargo.<sup>9</sup>
- 1860s:** Near the sources of the Merrijig and Boggy creeks, a large number of reefs were opened in the 1860s.<sup>10</sup>
- 1864:** Allenvale, on a spur of Mt Taylor, was the centre for Boggy Creek diggings in 1864, with various hotels and a population of 400 people.<sup>11</sup>
- 1864:** First reef mine worked at Bulumwaal was the Bairnsdale Quartz, said to be giving 50 dwt to the ton in November 1864 - stone sent to Castlemaine for crushing.<sup>12</sup>
- March 1866:** Mining population: Boggy Creek, 20; Two-mile Creek, 8; Merrijig Creek, 30; Sandy's Creek, 110; Morris's Creek, 12; Burnett's Creek, 14.<sup>13</sup>
- December 1866:** Alluvial prospecting claim taken up on Boggy Creek, three or four miles west of Mt Taylor - 4 oz washed out in two days - gold of a scaly, waterworn character, obtained near the surface.<sup>14</sup>

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1 Flett, p. 146  
2 Flett, p. 147  
3 Fairweather, pp. 2, 52  
4 Fairweather, p. 2  
5 Fairweather, p. 2  
6 Flett, p. 147  
7 Fairweather, p. 50  
8 Flett, p. 147; Fairweather, pp. 4, 6  
9 Flett, p. 148  
10 Flett, p. 148  
11 Flett, p. 148  
12 Fairweather, p. 29  
13 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1866

- March 1867:** Several creek claims taken up on upper and middle Boggy Creek - shallow sinking (2-6 ft), good wages.<sup>15</sup>
- June 1867:** Nearly 300 miners now at Boggy Creek - most doing well - gold mainly found in bed of creek - as much as 13 oz from one paddock - average earnings per man is £3 per week.<sup>16</sup>
- September 1867:** Population of Boggy Creek is daily increasing.<sup>17</sup>
- March 1868:** Several auriferous reefs discovered in Boggy Creek neighbourhood - no funds to develop them. Boggy Creek alluvial miners still earning fair wages.<sup>18</sup>
- 1868:** Gold discovered in Clifton Creek.<sup>19</sup>
- June 1868:** Miners leaving for Alexandra, Bendoc and Queensland. Creek claims taken out on Clifton Creek, on eastern side of Mt Taylor - prospectors earning 50-60s each per week.<sup>20</sup>
- December 1868:** Quartz reefs still undeveloped. Alluvial miners on Boggy Creek using cradles instead of the usual sluice-boxes, due to insufficient water.<sup>21</sup>
- 1868+:** Further quartz mines opened from 1868, when it became possible to pack stone to Store Creek for crushing - Bulumwaal mines of this period include Postlewaite, Galway, Sons of Freedom, Rheinlander, Champion, Lindenow, Happy-go-lucky, Walhalla, Excelsior, and Glasgow. Gold came from dykes which were traceable for miles without a break, outcropping strongly on the ridges and crowns of spurs - dykes extend from Clifton Creek, across the heads of Five Mile, Two Mile, Boggy, Burnett, Merrijig, and Sandy's creeks, continuing beyond the Wentworth River.<sup>22</sup>
- September 1869:** New reefs opened at Boggy Creek - machinery now being erected.<sup>23</sup>
- December 1869:** Several new and evidently rich quartz reefs at Boggy Creek - Sons of Freedom, Champion, Lindenow, and other reefs. Sons of Freedom Co. erected steam crushing battery - ex-Tambo mine, Deptford - Pope's patent, nine stampers in one box - set on concrete slab - crushings averaging about 1 oz/ton. Other reefs sending down trial crushings.<sup>24</sup>
- 1869:** Sons of Freedom quartz mine opened 3 miles from original Bulumwaal township – erected first battery on Bulumwaal reefs - ex-Tambo mine, Deptford, driven by 14-hp steam engine.<sup>25</sup>
- 1870s-80s:** Bulumwaal quartz mines did not attract much attention during the 1870s-80s<sup>26</sup>
- March 1870:** Disastrous floods caused much damage. Boggy Creek Subdivision created.<sup>27</sup>

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14 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1866  
 15 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1867  
 16 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1867  
 17 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1867  
 18 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1868  
 19 Flett, p. 148  
 20 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1868  
 21 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1868  
 22 Fairweather, p. 29  
 23 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1869  
 24 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1869  
 25 Fairweather, p. 51  
 26 Fairweather, p. 51  
 27 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1870

- December 1870:** Quartz mining still depressed, owing to want of sufficient machinery - experienced quartz miners have great faith in this as a payable quartz-mining district.<sup>28</sup>
- March 1871:** Sons of Freedom mine on tribute - crushing from the St Hellier's Reef. Galway Reef – shaft down 100 ft - stone crushed at Sons of Freedom battery. Trial crushing from Wilson's Bulumwaal Reef yielded 14 dwt/ton. Prospectors have great difficulties to contend with: principally men of limited means, high cost of conveyance and crushing quartz at Sons of Freedom battery - only battery in subdivision.<sup>29</sup>
- 1871+:** Black Prince GMC formed to work Black Prince Reef - 200 tons of ore at grass - ore carted to battery - crushed 400 tons - occasional mention thereafter of Black Prince as a public battery, but little heard of mine until 1894.<sup>30</sup> (No mining surveyors' reports submitted during most of 1871-2)
- June 1873:** Alluvial mining confined to creeks and gullies - miners making small wages.<sup>31</sup>
- 1873:** Redenbach brothers working Champion mine - raised stone that yielded 2 oz/ton.<sup>32</sup>
- June 1874:** Sons of Freedom mine down 156 ft - crushing of 180 tons yielded 181 oz. Galway Co. reorganised as Cassandra Co. - mine let on tribute. Other reefs idle for want of machinery.<sup>33</sup>
- September 1874:** Old Champion Reef taken up under Vulcan prospecting claim.<sup>34</sup>
- September 1875:** Sons of Freedom Co. shaft down 200 ft.<sup>35</sup>
- 1876:** Sons of Freedom mine sold to new company, which intended resuming work at once – however, though pumping of the mine continued throughout the year, mining did not recommence.<sup>36</sup>
- 1876:** Cassandra mine - shaft 150 ft deep - 200 tons of stone ready for crushing - owner intended to erect battery, but plans were thwarted when his ownership of the mine was disputed.<sup>37</sup>
- September 1877:** Mr Mitchell, late manager of the Good Hope Co., Crooked River, intends to erect a valuable crushing machine on Boggy Creek.<sup>38</sup>
- December 1877:** Reefs at a standstill for want of capital to erect machinery - about 12 reefs have been discovered and proved payable for some depths, but are now idle. Large rush to alluvial flat near Boggy Creek.<sup>39</sup>
- September 1878:** Water has been scarce all winter for gully and spur workings. One man in an out gully made £40 for one week and good wages all winter. Several nuggets of 6-7 oz found at Boggy Creek.<sup>40</sup>
- 1879:** Battery erected on Galloway (Cassandra) Reef - ex-Sons of Freedom battery, or 'valuable crushing machine' planned by Mitchell in 1887?<sup>41</sup>

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28 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), December 1870  
 29 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), March 1871  
 30 Fairweather, p. 37, citing *Bairnsdale Advertiser*, 3 February 1894  
 31 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), June 1873  
 32 Fairweather, p. 41  
 33 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), June 1873  
 34 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), September 1873  
 35 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), September 1875  
 36 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), March-December 1876  
 37 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), September & December 1876  
 38 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), September 1877  
 39 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), December 1877  
 40 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), September 1878

- December 1879:** Vagabond Reef discovered in vicinity of Broadribb's store, Sandy's Creek.<sup>42</sup>
- 1880-81:** New creek claims opened at Boggy Creek - men averaging good wages for a long time past, working over old ground at Sandy's Creek - some averaging as much as £12 per week - coarse alluvial and some nuggets being found.<sup>43</sup>
- 1881:** Reefs being developed - most that were abandoned have been again taken up - plan to reconstruct Sons of Freedom Co. and recommence crushing (nothing came of this).<sup>44</sup>
- 1882:** Vagabond mine - company formed in 1882 - only one reported crushing - ore packed to Normanby battery, Wentworth River.<sup>45</sup>
- 1882:** Alluvial miners making good wages on the Mitchell River.<sup>46</sup>
- 1884:** Sons of Freedom Reef taken up by a local company.<sup>47</sup>
- 1884-6:** Sons of Freedom - mine had been abandoned because capital of old company was exhausted in sinking expensive shaft, and could not proceed with cross-cut and drives - after being abandoned a number of years, some original shareholders who still had faith in claim formed a company - whom erected (two whims formerly on claim had been destroyed by bushfire), water baled out of mine, everything put in working order - north drive extended and payable quartz met with.<sup>48</sup>
- December 1884:** Rush to Merrijig Creek, which has been turned over this summer with very good prospects. Miners also up the Mitchell River - this is the season they will be able to turn it over. Alluvial mining soon retarded by lack of water.<sup>49</sup>
- March 1886:** Miners digging in Boggy Creek, the dry weather having been favourable to their mining in the very bed of the stream, whereas previously they could only work the banks. Sons of Freedom Co. plans to erect machinery.<sup>50</sup>
- 1886:** Golden Crown mine discovered at Sandy's Creek by Brodribb - ore packed 12 miles to Yahoo battery - largest mine on Sandy's Creek - worked intermittently until 1900s.<sup>51</sup>
- December 1886:** Sons of Freedom have machinery ready for work. 'A few miners from other parts of the colony have located themselves in the neighbourhood of Boggy Creek (Bullumwaal), on the Merigig Creek, and they have been fairly successful in shallow alluvial ground.'<sup>52</sup>
- 1886-7:** Sons of Freedom Co. removed battery from Galway Reef - re-erected closer to mine workings than original S of F battery, to avoid expense of trucking ore - renamed it the Phoenix battery - crushing commenced January 1887 - further 4 stampers added in April 1887 - 12-head.<sup>53</sup>

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41 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), March & June 1879  
 42 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), December 1879, June 1880  
 43 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), September & December 1880, June & September 1881  
 44 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), September & December 1881  
 45 Fairweather, p. 51  
 46 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), March & June 1882  
 47 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), December 1884  
 48 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Division), March 1887  
 49 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), December 1884  
 50 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Subdivision), March 1886  
 51 Fairweather, p. 50  
 52 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1886  
 53 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Division), March & June 1887

- 1887+:** Sons of Freedom battery became key to development of field - often the mine's only revenue came from public crushings.<sup>54</sup>
- March 1887:** Beds of creeks have been worked over and over again - gold is now got further back in the spurs ... Golden Crown lease, Ryan's Peak, Sandy's Creek - prospecting by two shafts and a tunnel. Vagabond Reef taken up again.<sup>55</sup>
- June 1887:** Nugget weighing over 36 oz found at Merrijig Creek.
- 1887-8:** New shallow alluvial ground discovered on Schoolhouse spur, near Prince of Denmark Reef and about 80 ft above creek level - some made 1 oz/man/day - claims in gully near the reef also paid well - other nearby spurs prospected without success.<sup>56</sup>
- September 1887:** An Alves' patent concentrating and amalgamating machine attached to Son of Freedom battery, to save fine gold. Rattler Reef discovered by Brodrigg & party about a mile SE of Sons of Freedom.<sup>57</sup>
- December 1887:** Sons of Freedom erecting more powerful pump.<sup>58</sup>
- March 1888:** Golden Crown tunnel in about 370 ft - hope to strike reef in further 60 ft. Rattler Reef trial crushing disappointing, averaging 11\_ dwt/ton - driving tunnel to test lode at greater depth. Mopoke Reef, Merrijig Creek - prospecting by shaft.<sup>59</sup>
- June 1888:** Very little crushing done from Sons of Freedom mine since battery and other plant erected - management in some disarray - crushing now suspended, pending reorganisation of company. Mopoke party, Merrijig Creek, will pack quartz to Sons of Freedom battery for trial crushing.<sup>60</sup>
- September 1888:** Trial crushing of 9 tons from Mopoke Reef yielded 25\_ oz - however, leader is small, ground hard, and water considerable.<sup>61</sup>
- December 1888:** Exhibition Reef discovered by Messrs Jorgensen.<sup>62</sup>
- February 1889:** Sons of Freedom battery was *principal* custom (public) battery at Bulumwaal (implies that there were others - eg. Black Prince).<sup>63</sup>
- March 1889:** Trial crushing from Golden Crown Reef, Sandy's Creek, gave 8\_ dwt/ton - far below expectation. Very dry seasons limited alluvial mining and quartz crushing.<sup>64</sup>
- June 1889:** Crushing of 50 tons from Exhibition Reef yielded 82 oz - only crushing carried out at Sons of Freedom battery.<sup>65</sup>
- September 1889:** Four men, assisted by the Prospecting Vote, to commence prospecting in October - two for alluvial and two for quartz. Nugget of over 16 oz found at Upper Boggy Creek.<sup>66</sup>

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54 Fairweather, p. 32  
55 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Division), March 1887  
56 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Division), June 1887, March & June 1888  
57 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Division), September 1887  
58 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Division), December 1887  
59 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Division), March 1888  
60 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Division), June 1888  
61 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Division), September 1888  
62 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Division), December 1888  
63 Fairweather, p. 32 (citing *Bairnsdale Advertiser*)  
64 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Division), March 1889  
65 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Division), June 1889  
66 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Division), September 1889



- December 1889:** Crushing taken from Sons of Freedom line of reef, about 100 yards north of old workings. It yielded an average 16 dwt/ton - adjoining claim taken up by another party and other leaders discovered - but dry weather prevents crushing - Boggy Creek reduced to a mere string of waterholes.<sup>67</sup>
- 1890:** *Bairnsdale Advertiser* reported a new find on Mt Taylor - possibly the beginning of the Aurora Australis, the biggest mine on the mountain.<sup>68</sup>
- 1890:** Mitchell River Sluicing Co. formed - their lease known as the Tumbledown lease - large water race cut, for sluicing terraces of Mitchell River. Other sluicing companies had been formed to work the river pre-1890 - good deal of work down along the river and in Melwood Creek, some of it by Chinese.<sup>69</sup>
- 1892:** Mitchell Valley Hydraulic Sluicing Co. planned to erect battery on Boggy Creek, to replace existing custom battery (Black Prince?) there, which had long given dissatisfaction because of the amount of gold it lost.<sup>70</sup>
- 1893:** Economic squeeze of 1893 - hundreds of farmers were forced off their farms as banks foreclosed - many men returned to mining, finding and opening many of the rich mines which brought Bulumwaal to prominence during the 1890s.<sup>71</sup>
- early 1890s:** Wood's Defiance mine opened - had its own battery by 1896.<sup>72</sup>
- 1894:** Monte Christo Reef situated 1\_ miles above the road, 2\_ chains from the Baldhead Road - a report stated that the mine had produced the highest return of any mine in Bulumwaal up to that time - 103 tons gave 353 oz of smelted gold.<sup>73</sup>
- June 1894:** Keystone battery christened - located near head of Whitbourne's Gully, about six miles from Bulumwaal PO - 2-head and 5-hp engine - Keystone tunnel in about 80 ft.<sup>74</sup>
- June 1894:** Messrs Alexander and Cochrane have an engine employed on their alluvial claims near the old bridge, pumping water from the creek, which is then conveyed by a race and piping through a good length of boxes through their workings. This is the first attempt that has been made to work alluvial on a large scale. Two puddling machines are also at work on alluvial.<sup>75</sup>
- June 1894:** A 5-head battery for the Black Prince Company is expected shortly; there are about 100 tons of quartz at grass on this claim and prospects are improving.<sup>76</sup>
- 1894:** Black Prince Co. erecting shed over battery - crushing resumed.<sup>77</sup>
- c.1894:** Bulldog mine opened at head of Whitbourne's Gully, one of the richest gullies on the field - company formed in 1895 - erected 6-head battery, driven by 9-hp engine - mine worked by underlay shaft and tunnel.<sup>78</sup>
- 1895:** Only four well-defined lodes have been discovered at Bulumwaal: Sons of Freedom, Monte Christo, Champion, and Posselwaite. At about 30 ft from surface (average

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<sup>67</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Boggy Creek Division), December 1889

<sup>68</sup> Fairweather, p. 59

<sup>69</sup> Fairweather, p. 21

<sup>70</sup> Fairweather, p. 21

<sup>71</sup> Fairweather, p. 51

<sup>72</sup> Fairweather, p. 39

<sup>73</sup> Fairweather, p. 38

<sup>74</sup> *Australian Mining Standard*, 16 June 1894, p. 354

<sup>75</sup> *Australian Mining Standard*, 16 June 1894, p. 354

<sup>76</sup> *Australian Mining Standard*, 16 June 1894, p. 354

<sup>77</sup> Fairweather, p. 38

<sup>78</sup> Fairweather, p. 38

depth of workings), reefs diminish in size and richness and increase in hardness - then abandoned. Only reef on which a shaft has been sunk below water-level (100 ft) is Sons of Freedom - should still be working, but collapsed due to mismanagement. The future prospects of quartz mining on this field depend solely on the exploration of reefs at depths below 100 feet; but I fear that little will be done in this direction until someone erects machinery capable of saving a fair percentage of gold in the stone. The batteries now doing the crushing are miserable and inadequate, and the prices charged exorbitant. At the mouths of shafts, all over the field, tons of quartz are lying, that would, I am sure, average nearly  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz to the ton; but, after expense of carting has been paid, there would remain just about sufficient to pay the cost of crushing. Alluvial gold workings - Boggy Creek and tributaries afford employment to about 200 men earning an average 15s a week. Sinking is shallow and dry. Further east, in gullies and creeks running into the Nicholson River, very good gold has been got in the past, but little or none is being got now. Clifton's Creek was worked many years ago, but was never very rich and is now abandoned.<sup>79</sup>

**1895:** Perseverance mine changed hands - one mile west of Bulumwaal - ore initially crushed at Black Prince battery - developed as one of the better mines.<sup>80</sup>

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79 Whitelaw

80 Fairweather, p. 46

- pre-1896:** 'But the glory of the old [alluvial mining] days has gone, leaving behind landmarks in the shape of turned-up creek beds, flats, and terraces, now overgrown with thick scrub. A number of the old pioneers still remain, living in cosy huts, with small gardens attached, and rooting in all sorts of places after the few pennyweights that remain, with the occasional windfall of an ounce speck. A new order of things, however, now prevails. The alluvial failing, attention has been turned towards the reefs that were known to exist. Some very rich patches were got from time to time on the surface, which were followed down a few feet, and then abandoned when the shoots got poor or the reef pinched out. In this way a number of now proved lines were opened. This sort of quartz mining was carried on for many years, until it got to be a settled conviction that the reefs were simply squibs, and the gold did not go down. One mine, however, proved the continuance of the reef and gold at a depth, viz., the Sons of Freedom, which was worked down to a depth of 200 feet below the level of the main creek, but this mine was held to be an exception.'<sup>81</sup>
- 1896+:** Two prospectors for a Melbourne syndicate worked on a shaft about two miles from Bulumwaal township, on a spur leading down to Burnett's Creek, near the Government track from Bulumwaal to Dargo - followed a small leader down until it opened to a wide reef - 14 tons crushed at Bairnsdale School of Mines gave 14 oz/ton - beginning of famous Beehive mine. Activity steadily increased and nearly all old mines taken up again - in almost every case new shoots of stone and gold discovered.<sup>82</sup>
- c.1896:** Beehive initially installed a 5-head battery in German Gully, which was dammed to conserve water.<sup>83</sup>
- 1896:** 10-head battery erected at Mt Taylor (by Aurora Co.?) - manufactured by Anderson and Son of Richmond and driven by 10-hp Hornsby engine - was situated on site of present-day (1986) Forestry depot.<sup>84</sup>
- 1897:** 3-head government battery erected on Clifton Creek.<sup>85</sup>
- 1897:** For a number of years past reefs have been opened for good results; the majority were abandoned after the surface shoots were worked out. Only on Sons of Freedom claim did sinking exceed 100 ft. Best yields: Mountaineer claim crushed 87 tons for over 235 oz; Exhibition claim, on same line and about half a mile from Defiance battery, got over 1 oz/ton from 190 tons; Dodger, short distance north, crushed 54 tons for over 61 oz; Monte Christo, two miles up the creek, crushed 240 tons for 449 oz - all from less than 100 ft depth. All are now idle, awaiting enterprise and capital. Surprise Reef, on Sons of Freedom line, near the Post Office, crushed 69 tons for over 97 oz - mine has been worked for some time, but is now in hands of Messrs Vaughan and party who are working the property as the Early Bird. Briton mine, also on Sons line, crushed 115 tons for 74 oz - now owned by Bairnsdale syndicate. One of the best private mines in the district is the Perseverance, owned by Harvey and sons - up to end of 1897, 334 tons yielded 354 oz. Jackie's Dream recently floated as no-liability co. - original owners crushed 57 tons for over 200 oz. Yields of district averaged close to 2 oz during 1897.<sup>86</sup>
- 1897:** Black Prince mine (ex-Clements?) bought by White brothers - battery working day and night - mine sold soon after to Harvey & sons?<sup>87</sup>

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81 *Australian Mining Standard*, 17 March 1898  
 82 *Australian Mining Standard*, 17 March 1898  
 83 Fairweather, p. 34  
 84 Fairweather, p. 59  
 85 Fairweather, p. 58  
 86 *Australian Mining Standard*, 7 April 1898, p. 2821  
 87 Fairweather, p. 38

- 1897:** *Bairnsdale Advertiser* reported fifty mines at Mt Taylor, most of which were small and untried. The same year, the Aurora QGMC was formed - the Aurora was the only Mt Taylor mine to be developed.<sup>88</sup>
- 1897:** Christmas GMC formed - 5-head battery in Hughie Gully - driven by horizontal steam engine with Jackass boiler - all housed in galvanised iron building - dam and large tank built in Hughie Gully.<sup>89</sup>
- 1898:** Mt Taylor battery, 10 miles south of Bulumwaal, sold for removal to Jan Mayen mine at Brookville.<sup>90</sup>
- 1898:** Merrijig Puddling Co. - largest venture on Merrijig Creek - company stripped an area of 4-5 acres to a depth of 3-5 feet, conveying the soil removed to the creek by means of a 10-chain tramline - water was supplied by a 1\_-mile-long water race - said to have won £10,000 worth of gold.<sup>91</sup>
- 1898:** Main claims at Clifton Creek - Aurum, Octopus, Octopus No. 1, and Shamrock. Government battery on Clifton Creek.<sup>92</sup>
- 1898:** Clifton Creek mines. Prince Ranjitsinghi (Heywood) lease, about a mile off the Deptford road, on bank of Clifton Creek - alluvial gold has been worked and shaft sunk on reef close to creek - shaft 40 ft deep. Half a mile northward is the Aurum, discovered by means of very careful loaming - hole 4 ft deep. Golden Octopus (Bellingham) is 1\_ miles further north - so far only exposed in a shallow hole. Doyle's claim adjacent and north-west - shallow hole.<sup>93</sup>
- 1898:** Sons of Freedom equipped with cyanide plant, erected by Australian Gold Extraction Co. - included self-emptying vats (two had capacity of 10 tons, two of 15 tons) - vats serviced by elevated tramways.<sup>94</sup>
- 1898:** Beehive main shaft down 324 ft - 3 lines of reef, other shafts sunk - winding gear – double steam winch, large Jackass boiler.<sup>95</sup>
- 1898:** Several large dyke formations opened up in Merrijig Creek, but none are at work at present. Reefs being opened on Sandy's Creek. Government battery (3-head) on Monkey Point at Sandy's Creek nearly completed - right in centre of a number of very promising shows, including Rogers', King & party, and McNamara and Grimshaw. Golden Crown mine is on western fall of Ryan's Peak, about \_ mile from govt battery – mine was opened many years ago (1886) and stone packed to Yahoo battery, about 12 miles across very rough country - yielded several oz to the ton, but due to cost of cartage did not pay - mine now re-opened by a small syndicate.<sup>96</sup>
- 1898:** Defiance Extended Co. reorganised as Anglo Saxon GMC.<sup>97</sup>
- 1898:** Company floated to work Champion mine - although only a short distance from Sons of Freedom battery, company erected its own.<sup>98</sup>

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88 Fairweather, p. 59  
 89 Fairweather, p. 47  
 90 *Australian Mining Standard*, 17 March 1898  
 91 Fairweather, p. 52  
 92 *Australian Mining Standard*, 28 April 1898, p. 2883  
 93 Murray  
 94 Fairweather, p. 32  
 95 Fairweather, p. 35  
 96 *Australian Mining Standard*, 28 April 1898, p. 2883; Fairweather, p. 51  
 97 Fairweather, p. 39  
 98 Fairweather, p. 42

- 1898:** Gooseberry Pie mine was 1\_ miles from Bulumwaal township, on a high ridge above the Monte Christo - originally crushed at Defiance battery, but erected own battery late in 1898 - probably steam-powered.<sup>99</sup>
- 1898:** Minor Bulumwaal quartz mines included: Prince of Denmark, Pride of Gippsland, Daisy Belle, Hopeful, Dodger, British Queen, Maritana, Triumph, Joker, Commonwealth, Woollybutt, Pass-by, and Darwin.<sup>100</sup>
- May 1898:** In the whole of the Mitchell River area there is only one mine which is able to keep a 10-head battery going. It is essentially a field for the miner and co-operative parties, and though occasional companies have paid dividends, yet one mine in the Walhalla belt would pay more in a month than the best of these in a year.<sup>101</sup>

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99 Fairweather, p. 42

100 Fairweather, pp. 42-6

101 *Australian Mining Standard*, 5 May 1898

1899:

Bulumwaal, on Boggy Creek - 'This creek itself has produced more gold than any other in Gippsland, and though a few reefs were discovered and worked perfunctorily some years back, no systematic or vigorous prospecting was carried on till the last two years. Many promising reefs have been opened up, nearly all held by working miners, and some thousands of pounds worth of gold got out of several.' Some of the best reefs in Gippsland - Aurora, held by a party of 5 men, has given returns of from 1 oz to 2\_ oz to the ton - new reefs being discovered weekly. 'Curious that such a discovery should be made near a large town [Bairnsdale], and prospectors continually going over the ground for the last 30 years.' Several main lines of reef and when they get the attention they deserve, 'the field will be one of the busiest and most prosperous in Victoria. 'The discovery of the Beehive mine gave impetus to Bulumwaal reefing in 'late years' – mine practically abandoned by two parties before the present company secured it - renewed prospecting led to a well-defined, almost continuous line of reef, fully five miles in length, being taken up - highly profitable returns obtained from one end to the other - 'instead of the occasional jingle of the old 8-head battery, which had served the district for a generation, 40-head of stampers have been kept in motion.' Beehive Co. has recently cut one of their lines of reef at a depth of 400 ft. The length of the reefs that are now worked is about 5 miles long by 4 miles wide, and there are innumerable miner's right claims. Three public batteries: Sons of Freedom, 12-head; Gooseberry Pie, 5-head; Bulldog, 8-head (or 10-head, according to *AMS*, 17 March 1898). The other crushing plants are Beehive, 10-head; Christmas, 5-head; Defiance, 5-head; Bulumwaal Quartz (Monte Christo), 5-head. Sons of Freedom mine - shaft sunk to 200 ft and a lot of driving - mining has been suspended for two or three years. Adjoining, to the south, is the Early Bird - working very wet ground - Tangye pump and steam winch. Beehive Extended, north of Sons of Freedom, has splendid engine shaft sunk 150 ft - steam winding gear. Beehive lease - Queen shaft down 220 ft and some rich stone was taken from the surface down to this depth, some of it averaging nearly 20 oz/ton - tunnel driven north from German Gully to connect with shaft - new shaft commenced some months ago, now 400 ft deep - crosscut to the west revealed fine body of stone - double drum winch and winding gear erected on new shaft, but previously all hauling done by whim from Queen shaft – 10-head battery on Burnett's Creek, connected with Queen shaft by automatic tramway – two large reservoirs in Burnett's Creek, capable of holding 1,000,000 gallons - Beehive Co. holds five adjoining leases, but work has been concentrated on the centre one – dividends paid, as well as plant and development work paid for. Christmas line of reef - most work carried on by tunnels - Christmas Co. have a battery of their own - stone has yielded from 6 dwt to 4 oz to the ton. Christmas Jubilee lease owned by Christmas Co. - 5-head battery of the Homestake pattern, with 950-lb stamps, recently completed, but water supply deficient. Perseverance mine adjoins the Christmas to the south - owned by Harvey and sons - has given an average of 3 oz/ton - last year four men took out £1,700 worth of gold, and did not exert themselves very much. Defiance line - Defiance mine is known to have been very rich, but the returns have never been made public - shaft down 230 ft - the ground has been rooted out to the surface for about 200 ft in length - claim has been suspended for about 12 months. Defiance Extended mine to north of Defiance - shaft 140 ft deep - has yielded from 5 dwt to 3 oz 4 dwt per ton. To south of Defiance mine are Defiance No. 1 and South Defiance (on Schoolhouse Spur - tunnel driven from Muddy Gully). Many leases taken up on north side of Boggy Creek - principal ones are Champion, Brittany, AAC and Bulldog - also Bulumwaal Quartz claim. Jackie's Dream is most westerly line being worked. 'A lot of alluvial mining is carried on for fair returns ... and the place is not quite worked out yet.' Dredging and sluicing attracting attention - Mitchell River pegged out for miles. 'There is a lot of gold in this stream that cannot be recovered by the ordinary methods employed by the 'fossicker,' and it will be a great injustice should the Minister for Mines withhold his consent to granting the leases, on the upper portion at least.'<sup>102</sup>

1899:

Defiance Co. reorganised as Defiance GMC - by late 1899, the mine had yielded 2,000 oz.<sup>103</sup>

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102 *Australian Mining Standard*, 1 June 1899, pp. 66, 74-5; Fairweather, p. 40

103 Fairweather, p. 40

- March 1899:** Beehive shaft 400 ft deep - battery moved to new site on Burnett's Creek - now 10-head, self-acting tramway and two large reservoirs.<sup>104</sup>
- 1899-1900:** Several dredging leases applied for on the Mitchell River - in July 1900, the Secretary for Mines announced that applications for dredging leases on the upper Mitchell River would not be granted without concurrence of landowners whose properties might be affected, but that lease applications for the Upper Mitchell and tributaries would be considered on their merits - not more than 12 leases for dredging and sluicing would be granted during next three years.<sup>105</sup>
- 1900:** Black Prince/Defiance No. 1 battery still crushing.<sup>106</sup>
- 1900:** Defiance and Defiance No. 1 companies amalgamated.<sup>107</sup>
- 1901:** New Beehive Co. boiler bricked in - yield for 1901 was 748 oz from 1241 tons.<sup>108</sup>
- 1903:** According to the *Bairnsdale Advertiser*, the Perseverance crushing plant was the oldest in the district.<sup>109</sup>
- 1903:** Walters' public battery (Sons of Freedom battery?) crushed 789\_ tons for 1,114 oz from several parties. Beehive Co. shaft down 435 ft - average 14 men employed - now prospecting at shallow levels - mine unpayable this year. Good number of alluvial miners at work, but most doing poorly.<sup>110</sup>
- 1904:** 'Another' (new?) battery erected by Mr Harvey, owner of Perseverance mine. Beehive mine let on tribute.<sup>111</sup>
- 1905:** Beehive mine gave tributers up to 6 oz/ton - company took mine over again. Perseverance mine had a good year. Anglo-Saxon mine shaft unwatered, old workings repaired, and crushings put through - unpayable. Clements and party prospecting for reefs at Clifton Creek - nothing found.<sup>112</sup>
- 1905:** Black Prince/Defiance No. 1 battery moved to Fulton's Creek.<sup>113</sup>
- 1905-6:** J.W. Clements erected a battery at Clifton Creek in February 1905 - by late 1906 the engine was sold to a sawmiller.<sup>114</sup>
- 1906:** New dredge being built on Boggy Creek.<sup>115</sup>
- 1907:** Perseverance mine still working.<sup>116</sup>
- 1907:** Bulumwaal Dredging Co., Boggy Creek, formed - hydraulic dredge built by Australian Forge Co. - plant capable of handling 10,000 cubic yards of soil a week - troubles beset the company from the start, when fluming bring water supply collapsed - ground yielded 300 oz per acre - shortlived.<sup>117</sup>

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104 Fairweather, p. 35  
 105 *Australian Mining Standard*, 19 July 1900, p. 58  
 106 Fairweather, p. 37  
 107 Fairweather, p. 39  
 108 Fairweather, p. 35  
 109 Fairweather, p. 46  
 110 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1903  
 111 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1904  
 112 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1905  
 113 Fairweather, p. 35  
 114 Fairweather, p. 58  
 115 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1906  
 116 Fairweather, p. 46  
 117 Fairweather, p. 57

- 1909:** Wilson and party getting good prospects on reef at Two-mile Creek - 5-head steam-driven battery erected - should this mine prove profitable, there are several other reefs in locality worth attention. Harding and party prospecting old Christmas Reef.<sup>118</sup>
- 1909:** Walters registered a machine site at Sons of Freedom Reef - for treating tailings.<sup>119</sup>
- 1910:** Beehive Co. installed electric plant.<sup>120</sup>
- 1911:** Beehive Co. operating between 600-ft and 800-ft levels.<sup>121</sup>
- 1912:** Beehive Co. closed down early in year. This old goldfield now in hands of co-operative parties and prospectors. Beehive (Bulumwaal?) Consolidated Syndicate has driven tunnel about 600 ft and erected battery of 8-head - crushings proving poor. No party making more than a living.<sup>122</sup>
- 1913:** Bulumwaal Consolidated Co. met with only moderate success. Several parties getting payable results from small reefs in vicinity of Beehive mine.<sup>123</sup>
- 1915:** Only one mine, the Pioneer Syndicate, at work on field.<sup>124</sup>
- 1916:** Pioneer mine closed down - goldfield now in hands of a few prospectors and fossickers.<sup>125</sup>
- 1917:** Prospecting shafts sunk adjacent to old Sons of Freedom mine, where specimens were found when working alluvial ground in early days. Steele and party making a living working small veins of stone on Beehive line.<sup>126</sup>
- 1932:** Tice brothers operated Sons of Freedom mine.<sup>127</sup>
- 1937:** Unemployment Relief Funds for prospecting in Bulumwaal district - profitable work carried out on new finds on faulted portions of old reefs.<sup>128</sup>
- 1980s?:** Sons of Freedom battery removed to Bairnsdale Historical Museum.<sup>129</sup>

## SOURCES

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 119 Fairweather  
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 121 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1911  
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 124 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1915  
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 127 Fairweather, p. 32  
 128 *Mining and Geological Journal*, July 1937 & January 1938  
 129 Fairweather, p. 37



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## ***EAST GIPPSLAND (CROAJINGOLONG) HISTORICAL NOTES***

- 1851:** Gold discovered in far east Gippsland by Rev. W.C. Clarke.<sup>1</sup>
- 1855:** First claim opened on site of Bendoc township.<sup>2</sup>
- 1858:** Miners on the Delegate River.<sup>3</sup>
- 1859:** Gold known to exist in Bemm River and Genoa River.<sup>4</sup>
- 1859:** Alluvial deposits worked at Back Creek.<sup>5</sup>
- 1862:** Alluvial gold worked at Queensberry River.<sup>6</sup>
- 1864:** About 200 Chinese working Hayden's Bog on Victoria-NSW border near Bendoc, making £15 each per week.<sup>7</sup>
- 1866-7:** Reefs discovered on upper Bendoc River - by early 1867, Morning Star and Come Love reefs were worked, and there were 240 diggers on Delegate and Bendoc rivers.<sup>8</sup>
- December 1866:** Three distinct quartz reefs have been registered on the Upper Bendoc, just within the Victorian boundary - 20 miners at work.<sup>9</sup>
- March 1867:** The visit of Mr Warden Howitt to the Upper Bendoc has made known the existence of a considerable mining population, chiefly Chinese, on both sides of the boundary line of the colony in that locality. Popn: Upper Bendoc, 100; Nicholson's Bog, Little Plains River, 125; Upper Delegate River, 15.<sup>10</sup>
- June 1867:** New quartz reef registered on Spring Creek, near Delegate.<sup>11</sup>
- September 1867:** Good accounts from reefs on Upper Bendoc and Bonang Rivers - 'From stone crushed in the rudest manner satisfactory results are being obtained.'<sup>12</sup>
- December 1867:** The various new diggings around Delegate, and along the eastern boundary of the colony, are attracting considerable mining population.<sup>13</sup>
- 1868:** Rising Sun Reef opened, the first at Bonang - rush at Goungrah Creek, SW of Bonang.<sup>14</sup>
- March 1868:** Two new reefs registered in Bendoc district.<sup>15</sup>
- June 1868:** New reefs continue to be discovered on banks of Upper Bendoc, near Delegate Mountain.<sup>16</sup>

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1 Flett, p. 177

2 Flett, p. 177

3 Flett, p. 177

4 Flett, p. 177

5 Flett, p. 177

6 Flett, p. 177

7 Flett, p. 177

8 Flett, p. 177

9 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Omeo Central Subdivision), December 1866

10 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kobana Subdivision East), March 1867

11 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Omeo Subdivision), June 1867

12 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Omeo Subdivision), September 1867

13 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Omeo Subdivision), December 1867

14 Flett, p. 178

15 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Omeo Subdivision), March 1868

- 1868:** Bonang (or Liprail) River - alluvial workings have been carried on by Chinese, but now abandoned due to depth of sinking and excessive water. Two reefs at Upper Bonang - one, the Rising Sun, 'is surrounded by a dense jungle of musk, fern-trees and other scrub, interlaced by vines' - shaft sunk to 20 ft, also small open cut - home-made crushing machine ('very imperfect machinery'). Party of Chinese on Upper Delegete 'had constructed a flood-race of considerable length, calculated to carry all the Delegete River'. Chinatown - 'colony' of about 200 Chinese working alluvial on north bank of Bendoc River at junction with Queenborough River (according to map at back of Smyth's book – copy on file). Alluvial gold 'worked over a large extent on the Bendoc by the Chinese'. Chinese miners far outnumber Europeans in the region...Number of miners working at Nicholson's Bog (Buldah?), about 30 miles SE of Bendoc (see map on file). New creek working discovered about 30m south of Bendoc – Goungrah [Goongerah] Creek - about 30 European miners. Small township forming at Bendoc, around Phoenix quartz crushing machine, erected by Mr Eisenstaedter of Melbourne - 5 heads driven by 16-ft overshot iron waterwheel, supplied by race from Bendoc River (pressure sufficient to drive only 3 heads). Formerly 'the original wooden machine' crushed - on same site? Morning Star Reef situated about 400 yards W of battery - 3 claims working. Come Love Reef - W of Morning Star – machine soon to be erected. Other reefs at 'Upper Bendoc' - Imperial, Homeward Bound, Primrose, Britannia, & United. 'At present the great want at Bendoc is not only capital, but I believe actually, with many, the means of living. The miners are deeply in debt, and are depending on the reefs... and yet, poor as the miners seem to be, there are extensive tracts of country on the Bendoc, Delegete, Queenborough, and Back Rivers which promise well for alluvial workings, and yet are untried.'<sup>17</sup>
- March 1869:** Bendoc Subdivision created. Alluvial workings (chiefly creek & river claims) nearly all occupied by Chinese. Quartz reefs becoming richer at depth. Come-love Co. working at 100-ft level - 8 tons yielded 21\_ oz. Morning Star Co. working a deep shaft. Evening Star Co. and Morning Star Nos. 1, 2 & 3 companies (all on Morning Star Reef) also working by shaft. United Tunnel Co. prospecting by tunnel. 'I observed that several companies here are becoming alive to the necessity of erecting more efficient machinery for crushing purposes.' Rising Sun Co. purchased 6-hp iron waterwheel and plant – Union Co. constructing similar machine (dolly).<sup>18</sup>
- June 1869:** More reefs discovered at Bonang, including Good Hope and Luck & Leisure. 'But what retards the progress of this district is the want of enterprise and capital, as most of these reefs are in the hands of poor men that have no means of working them to advantage.' United tunnel about 200 ft long. Homeward-bound Reef on east side of Bendoc River.<sup>19</sup>
- 1869:** Bendoc township (formerly called Wagra) surveyed.<sup>20</sup>

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16 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Omeo Subdivision), June 1868

17 Howitt

18 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), March 1869

19 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), June 1869

20 Flett, p. 178

**June 1869:** The surveyed township of Bendoc (Wagra) ... is distant from Twofold Bay (which is within eighteen hours' steam of Sydney) eighty or ninety miles; and both places are connected by a good bush-road. Alluvial mining in the Bendoc district receives very little attention, the deposits being very precarious in their character and yield - workings entirely confined to bed and banks of Bendoc River - only payable portions are those in immediate vicinity of quartz reefs - wet sinking of about 8 ft. Principal reefs are Morning Star, Come-love, Homeward-bound, Imperial, and United - average yield about 1 oz/ton. Phoenix crushing machine at Bendoc township - owned by Leopold Rawack, lessee of Morning Star claims - 10-head battery, steam-powered, cost £3,000 - five more stampers to be added. Imperial and Homeward-bound reefs are the same. Solomon's public battery (water-powered) erected close to the town. Rising Sun Reef, upper Bonang River, was the first discovered in Bendoc district - water-powered battery - large amount of work done on mine.'... the present workings will, under ordinarily favourable circumstances, prove themselves of a stable and permanent character, and capable of supporting a large population, although I do not anticipate any very brilliant discoveries.' Abundance of water for crushing purposes and for the working of machinery, and plenty of good timber. Sinking is through soft sandstone. Carriage of quartz from mine to mill (which in other parts of Gippsland forms so exorbitant an item of expense) can be done at the rate of 2s per ton. Chief drawback is scarcity of skilled miners and impracticability of tunnelling, the ground not being sufficiently steep. Total population estimated at 300 - 160 miners, of whom 80 are Chinese - does not include Chinatown. Bendoc consists of hotel, three or four boarding houses, schoolhouse, post office, and miners' huts. 'Though Bendoc is no doubt geographically within the boundaries of this colony, yet, owing to its peculiar position, it has become commercially bound to New South Wales, and most of the advantages which may arise from its future progress will benefit only that colony. While goods and machinery can be procured from Sydney, via Twofold Bay, at a comparatively small cost, their transit from Bairnsdale - over 126 miles of very difficult country - would cost such a sum as to preclude the possibility of successful competition with the route by water. "The great want of the district seems to be an efficient crossing over the Snowy River. This want debars many Victorian miners from migrating to Bendoc' - suggested that a punt be stationed at the river. Absence of police protection - nearest bank is at Bombala, 33 miles away.<sup>21</sup>

**September 1869:** Royal Standard steam-machine removed from Bendoc to Bonang.<sup>22</sup>

**March 1870:** United Tunnel Co. tunnel in 350 ft, but reef not struck. Homeward-bound Co. has 40 ft of water in their main shaft - inadequate pumping appliances. Morning Star claims amalgamated as Bendoc Parks GMC. Two more reefs at Bonang: Prima Donna and Monarch. Union Co. suspended operations entirely, due to dolly losing so much gold.<sup>23</sup>

**June 1870:** Nearly all alluvial claims destroyed by floods - boxes, waterwheels have been found miles below their claims - miners now directing attention to the heads of streams. Two new reefs at Bonang: Rose of the Valley and Argyre.<sup>24</sup>

**December 1870:** Many quartz claims completely suspended, owing to want of funds to carry on working - Rising Sun mine and plant advertised for sale. Alluvial diggings almost abandoned - most of the Chinese having removed to Chinatown (thought to be on NSW side of border).<sup>25</sup>

**March 1871:** Quartz mining at Bonang at a complete standstill. Bendoc Parks QMC steam plant seems to be in dispute - unable to crush stone at present. United Co. still driving their tunnel - now 625 ft - have not yet cut reef - tunnel now beginning to drain some of

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21 Peers (1869)

22 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), September 1869

23 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), March 1870

24 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), June 1870

25 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), December 1870

the old shafts. European alluvial miners on the upper end of the Bog Stream - Chinese on lower part.<sup>26</sup>

**June 1871:** Mines finding horse whims inadequate. Rising Sun mine, now being worked by a NSW company, erecting small steam pump. Park Quartz Co. trying to purchase an extensive pump - steam crushing plant in litigation, so are to erect a water-power machine of their own. Luck & Leisure claim now called Victoria.<sup>27</sup>

**September 1871:** Rising Sun Co. erected strong and substantial steam machinery to bale water from shaft. Park Quartz Co. erected battery. All other reefs in district are abandoned, except the United Tunnel claim, still tunnelling.<sup>28</sup>

**December 1871:** Most of alluvial population has left district for Delegate River in NSW. Rising Sun Co. intend either erecting a battery at the mine or making a tramway to the water-powered battery (only 5-heads) about 2 miles from the reef - steam baling plant now dealing with water. Park's Quartz Co. shaft down 175 ft, but 100 ft of water - still using whim. (Following mines taken up 'under the bye-law'.) Morning Star and Phoenix Steam Crushing Plant Co. have applied for water race and lease of 36 acres of ground. United Tunnel Co. - tunnel in about 700 ft - abandoned lease - now taken up by the Hit-or-Miss Co. Homeward-bound Co., formerly abandoned; now taken up again. Monarch Co. now Lone Star Co.<sup>29</sup>

**March 1872:** Rising Sun Co. battery inadequate - the wheel being a breast one, with a scarce supply of water, cannot crush more than 15 tons per week - are now erecting a machine-house close to their claims, for a steam plant. Park's QMC have three shifts of men working and three shifts of horses for their whim, which is constantly at work winding up the stone, and occasionally water.<sup>30</sup>

**June 1872:** Rising Sun Co. erecting steam-crushing plant - 10-head, 9-hp. Monarch mine now taken up by Streaky QMC. All alluvial claims are sluicing claims, mostly held by uncertificated Chinese.<sup>31</sup>

**September 1872:** Lucky Hit (ex Homeward-bound) erecting machine house and making preparations for their engine, 'which appears to be close at hand, but the border duty seems to be a detriment.' Morning Star and Phoenix Co. commenced a tunnel to cut the reef in their main shaft.<sup>32</sup>

**December 1872:** Mines at work: Rising Sun, Morning Star, Hit-or-Miss, Lucky Hit, and Albert (new claim) - all others have 'taken advantage of the bye-laws' or have been abandoned. Come-love (or Bendoc Parks Co.) have had poor crushings and are in litigation. Prospecting party found several patches of coarse gold on 'Combinabar' River and tributaries. Another party got coarse gold on the Wingen (next river to Genoa on the road to Cann) and on the Tarra River.<sup>33</sup>

**March 1873:** Only claims in operation are Rising Sun, Lucky Hit, and Albert. Albert Reef surpasses any reef yet discovered in the district - 6 tons gave over 8 oz per ton. Most miners have left the reefs for the 'Cobyngbar' Creek - most parties cutting tail-races, erecting huts, etc.<sup>34</sup>

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26 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), March 1871

27 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), June 1871

28 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), September 1871

29 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), December 1871

30 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), March 1872

31 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), June 1872

32 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), September 1872

33 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), December 1872

34 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), March 1873

- June 1873:** Homeward-bound Co. (Lucky Hit) sinking shaft - great trouble with water, as pump is a jack lift instead of a drawing lift - now making alteration. Rising Sun Co. let on tribute for ten years. Morning Star Co. abandoned tunnel after driving 360 ft and intends sinking shaft - ground is remarkably hard and requires all blasting. Many have left Cobyngbar greatly disappointed - incessant rains - provisions expensive as all goods are packed a distance of about 25 miles over very difficult and boggy country.<sup>35</sup>
- c.1873:** Rising Sun mine - The difficulties of obtaining proper machinery were great, and the country surrounding them in an almost impenetrable jungle, so that further work with primitive appliances seemed impossible, as the loss of gold in the tailings was too great.<sup>36</sup>
- September 1873:** Cobyngbar Creek alluvial is patchy - mostly coarse gold. Albert mine crushing by dolly. Some stone sent to Sydney assayed equivalent to 120 oz/ton - this quarter crushed 10 tons for 85 oz.<sup>37</sup>
- December 1873:** New reef discovered - Aurora Borealis Reef, on opposite side of Bonang Creek to the Albert. Morning Star has put their plant up for sale. Chinese miners have all left for NSW side of border.<sup>38</sup>
- March 1874:** Lady Elizabeth crushing plant purchased from Bendoc for erection midway between Aurora Borealis and Albert claims on the Bonang River, for public crushing. Claims still patchy at Cobyngbar. No mines operating at Bendoc.<sup>39</sup>
- June 1874:** Cerberus (ex Lady Elizabeth) battery unable to crush, not having sufficient water-power due to a defect in the construction of the race - delivers water for breast-power not overshot, as required - new race being cut higher up.<sup>40</sup>
- September 1874:** Cerberus machine now operational - proprietors 'having spared no expense in obtaining the desired power for their machine (viz., overshot for their water-wheel)' - crushing for Albert and Venus claims. Aurora Borealis Co. purchased Phoenix steam plant - 16-hp with tubular boiler of some 5\_ tons (ex Morning Star, Bendoc) - awaiting its removal. Union Jack Co. erecting dolly for crushing, 'consisting of wooden stampers, iron shod'. Morning Star, Come Love, Homeward-bound, and Rising Sun mines all abandoned.<sup>41</sup>

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35 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), June 1873

36 Stirling (1889/2)

37 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), September 1873

38 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), December 1873

39 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), March 1874

40 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), June 1874

41 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), September 1874

- December 1874:** Aurora Borealis GMC formed - 4,000 shares - sinking shaft and driving adit into hill on east of claim - cutting a race 1\_ miles long, together with 340 ft of fluming, preparatory to the arrival of their machinery from Bendoc. Union Jack Co. losing a great deal of gold with their dolly (water-powered). 'I may remark this portion of my subdivision is a continuous line of quartz veins, but reefs in this district require at present to be rich and yield well under the present mode of working and state of machine appliances.'<sup>42</sup>
- March 1875:** Aurora Borealis has completed excavations for ex-Phoenix plant and have other machinery on way from Melbourne. Victoria (ex Luck & Leisure) reef again being worked.<sup>43</sup>
- June 1875:** Aurora Borealis erected 12-head battery, battery shed, and appliances, sparing no expense.<sup>44</sup>
- September 1875:** Aurora Borealis the only company actually engaged - tunnel now driven 480 ft.<sup>45</sup>
- March 1876:** New alluvial ground discovered near Bonang - many claims taken up there by quartz miners and others.<sup>46</sup>
- June 1876:** About 20 men employed on alluvial claims at Blackfellow's and Dick Turpin gullies near Bonang - ground appears patchy. Aurora Borealis quartz proved unremunerative – operations suspended, seeking tributers.<sup>47</sup>
- September 1876:** Only quartz claim at work is the Venus at Bonang - 3 men employed - have just completed alterations to the tables of their battery - shaft down 43 ft. Alluvial rush to Blackfellow's and Dick Turpin gullies a failure - only the lower parts deemed worth working - now only eight men at work there.<sup>48</sup>
- March 1877:** Rising Sun Co. machinery removed into NSW.<sup>49</sup>
- December 1877:** Aurora Borealis Co. plant for sale. Many alluvial miners leave the gold at this season of the year and obtain employment harvesting and sheep-shearing over the border. Most Chinese miners have left, finding employment amongst the NSW settlers and selectors as hutkeepers, cooks, and shepherds, and many taken to gardening.<sup>50</sup>
- June 1878:** Quartz mining completely at a standstill.<sup>51</sup>
- December 1879:** All the miners who have claims in this subdivision appear satisfied with what they make, particularly as work for station hands and fencers is not in demand, so that most of the miners in this locality are dividing their time in mining and at their selections.<sup>52</sup>
- March 1881:** Puddling machine operating at Back Creek, about 4 miles from Bendoc, where the clay bottom cannot be sufficient puddled to extract the gold and much gold is lost in the tailings - generally the ground in the subdivision is good for sluicing.<sup>53</sup>

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42 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), December 1874  
 43 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), March 1875  
 44 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), June 1875  
 45 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), September 1875  
 46 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), March 1876  
 47 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), June 1876  
 48 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), September 1876  
 49 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), March 1877  
 50 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), December 1877  
 51 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), June 1878  
 52 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), December 1879  
 53 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), March 1881

- June 1881:** Puddlers at Back Creek sold out, owing to the severity of the climate.<sup>54</sup>
- September-December 1881:** Alluvial claims worked at Back Creek and Delegate River - 'Several good patches have been discovered, and most of the miners are on gold, but, owing to the uncertain nature of the ground, a continuance of gold for any length of time is very problematical.'<sup>55</sup>
- March 1882:** Puddlers at Back Creek making £4 to £5 per man per week - 'At the present time they have little or no forage to find for their horses, which in the winter months becomes an item. As the ground is remarkably patchy, no permanent returns for any time can be looked forward to.' No. 2 puddling machine being erected on Bendoc River.<sup>56</sup>
- September 1882:** Three puddling machines at work - one at Back Creek and two at Bendoc.<sup>57</sup>
- 1884:** Parties prospecting for new alluvial ground. Puddlers still at work. New quartz reef, the Hit or Miss, opened on Richardson's selection at Bendoc.<sup>58</sup>
- June 1885:** Rising Sun quartz shaft being baled out by horse whim.<sup>59</sup>
- June 1885:** Rush of 100 men to Black Watch Creek, about 10 miles SE of Mt Ellery - only 35 men remained by July - none had made wages. The mining surveyor who inspected the 'rush' met many diggers heading thence, who had heard grand reports of finds there. 'It is difficult to discover the origin of these misleading reports. In this case no blame appears to attach to the prospectors; their modest reports of 'colours' travelled a long distance, and at each succeeding store or hotel grew into grains, pennyweights, and ounces. Newspaper paragraphs did the rest, and very great losses were thereby inflicted on men who were ill able to bear them.'<sup>60</sup>
- September 1886:** New Rising Sun Co. erected winding and pumping engine (16-hp) on their shaft - 'The intention of this company was to have erected their battery upon the former old site (but it has been taken up by a selector, who demands a very high rate for this site), and to have crushed by water-power; but, under all circumstances, they think it will be better and more expeditious to have the battery near their claim, which they have commenced to erect, having completed their well-shaft, and also the reservoir'. 'We have several new hands upon the [alluvial] mines, who appear glad to avail themselves of any occupation, the country generally being in a most deplorable state through the continual bad seasons, and only for a little gold to be obtained here, with opossum shooting, this part of my subdivision would be much depressed, particularly as all at present are commercially connected with New South Wales; but the selectors and miners are agitating for a new track to be opened up to Orbost, to enable them to get their supplies from their own colony, to avoid duty and the exorbitant prices they are subject to through the new tariff in New South Wales.'<sup>61</sup>
- December 1886:** 'The alluvial miners are continually shifting about, operating for about a week or so in one place, then leaving it and trying other places; and, although they procure a little gold, this continual running about lessens the number of hours' work per week.' Track being cut from Black Watch to Bendoc. Rising Sun QMC battery erected.<sup>62</sup>

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54 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), June 1881  
 55 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), September & December 1881  
 56 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), March 1882  
 57 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), September 1882  
 58 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), March-December 1884  
 59 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), June 1885  
 60 Peers (1885)  
 61 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), September 1886  
 62 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), December 1886



- March 1887:** New Rising Sun QMC got \_ oz/ton from first crushing and over 1 oz/ton from second crushing.<sup>63</sup>
- June 1887:** Cræsus Reef discovered - adjoining claims taken up. Two puddling machines at work.<sup>64</sup>
- September 1887:** Cræsus Co. erecting a primitive machine, in the shape of a dolly, for crushing a few tons of stone to thoroughly test the ground before erecting an expensive battery and plant. New Rising Sun QMC crushed 250 tons for nearly 1 oz/ton - erecting additional 5 head of stamps, as well as machinery for treating pyrites.<sup>65</sup>
- December 1887:** Several new reefs discovered. Cræsus Co. erected wooden crushing machine of three heads - crushed 35 tons for 40 oz.<sup>66</sup>
- March 1888:** Quartz mining attracting 'foreign' enterprise to district - many mines changing hands for the purpose of forming them into large companies. Cræsus erecting buildings and other preliminary works. Eclipse Co. erecting crushing plant consisting of dolly of 4 heads. New Chum (a new reef) sold to a Sydney company. Victoria Co., British Lion (ex Come Love), Morning Star, and several other quartz claims prospecting their mines.<sup>67</sup>
- June 1888:** New Rising Sun Co. mine sold to a Sydney company for £7,000 - 'jungle' being cleared around mine workings in preparation for arrival of 20 tons of machinery. Mines at Bendoc include Unicorn (late Come Love), British Lion (late Morning Star), Golden Eagle (ex Hit or Miss), and Eclipse (30 tons yielded 90 oz). In alluvial, old and abandoned ground being worked by Chinese.<sup>68</sup>
- September 1888:** Extensive plant being erected at New Rising Sun mine - crushing is under the roller principle - plant will be driven by water-power from the Bonang River - tramway about 1\_ miles from mine to plant, laid with steel rails. Unicorn Co. erecting a second-hand battery of 5-head and iron water-wheel. No puddling being carried on.<sup>69</sup>
- December 1888:** Unicorn Co. waterwheel procured from Fulton's foundry, Melbourne. Sluicing company on Delegate River has completed cutting of their race and will commence operations immediately.<sup>70</sup>

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63 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), March 1887  
 64 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), June 1887  
 65 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), September 1887  
 66 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), December 1887  
 67 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), March 1888  
 68 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), June 1888  
 69 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), September 1888  
 70 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), December 1888

**March 1889:** New Rising Sun GMC have all plant and machinery erected - stone crusher, two 5-ft Huntingdon mills with five Frue concentrators, driven by 22-ft diam. waterwheel - water from race measuring 5 ft wide, average depth 3 ft - machine house is 92 ft long x 50 ft wide - intend to add chlorination works. Unicorn Co. erected battery - water-powered - insufficient water for crushing with more than two heads.<sup>71</sup>

**March 1889:** On Bendoc Creek there are no extensive deposits of heavy washes, as elsewhere in Gippsland - Bendoc deposits mainly shallow and light bouldery washes - auriferous wash is widely distributed and does not appear to have been concentrated into the drainage channels - alluvial wash principally of a clayey character - in many places surface clays are 10 to 12 ft deep - one locality, known as Puddlers' Claim (a minor terrace formation), was worked 30 years ago - Back Creek was also fully worked 30 years ago - in some places, the flats are fairly riddled with the shallow holes sunk in prospecting. Delegate River - company has been formed to construct a race to sluice the terrace wash above the alluvial flats, just below the point where the Bendoc to Bonang road crosses the Delegate River - race in course of construction. Chinamen's Creek - tributary of Delegate River - creek deposits worked very profitably by Chinese miners - attention now being directed to terrace deposits. Queensborough River - almost the entire length of the lower portion of this stream and its tributary, Back Creek, has been worked for alluvial - first workings carried on during 1862 - no payable quartz reefs found in vicinity. Eclipse mine - on east side of Bendoc River, about 2 miles above Bendoc township, close to some old alluvial workings, known as the Puddlers' Claim - one of the class of mines which would pay a party of co-operative working miners better than a company - hand-stopping and fossicking now being done - dolly erected close to Bendoc Creek - 4 heads of wooden stamps, shod with iron footings - worked by waterwheel, 1-mile water-race - total cost of battery and race not more than £150 - 'As the machinery is a typical specimen of bush carpentry and construction, I have photographed it, as a relic, in striking contrast with the machinery employed at the Rising Sun mine, Bendoc. Golden Eagle mine - some 30 chains east of Eclipse - not being worked at present. Bismark - on western bank of Bendoc River - only prospected up to present. Come Love claim - on western side of Bendoc River, near Bendoc - a number of shafts sunk, the main one to a depth of 170 ft - from 1869-71, 606 oz of gold were obtained. Morning Star mine - discovered in 1867 - on western side of Bendoc River, near Bendoc very rich at first, but abandoned for about 16 years because of difficulty in following payable shoots of gold - now taken up again. 'The works already carried on in most of the mines have not been in accordance with the principles of modern scientific mining, while the methods of extracting the ore, and the machinery employed, is of the rudest description.'<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), March 1889

<sup>72</sup> Stirling (1889/3)

**March 1889:** Bonang mining district. Richest alluvial deposits were obtained on eastern tributaries of Blackfellow's and Dick Turpin creeks - rich alluvial patches also worked on Bonang Creek at Chinaman's Flat and Long Point, and at Battery Creek and Deep Creek. Claims worked/being worked in Bonang valley: Rising Sun, Duke of Westminster, Sunflower, Rose of the Valley, Day Dawn, Monarch, Venus, Aurora Boralis, Aurora Australis, Haydon's, Crawford's Prospect, Old Union Claim (all on western watershed), and Cræsus, United Miners' (Defiance), Albert, Who'd a' Thought It, New Chum, Victoria, Young Australian, Exhibition (all on eastern watershed). Rising Sun claim (Bonang GMC) - The Hon. Mr Copeland, M.P., ex-Minister of Mines of NSW, having visited the district and examined the property, arranged for the purchase of the mine, and, as a practical expert in mining matters, determined to obtain the most modern appliances for crushing the quartz and for the treatment of the refractory ore - preparatory works almost complete - cost £10,000 - tramway cut through the dense jungle for distance of 90 chains from mine to reducing mills on Bonang River - vertical length from former to latter is 460 ft - race being cut 2 ft 6 in wide for 130 chains for carrying water to waterwheel, 20 x 6 ft, which will drive machinery for roller mills and concentrators - a previous party got 2,700 oz of gold from the mine, and a large quantity of concentrates was stored which tests show give an average of 11 oz/ton - very refractory ore - main shaft sunk to 290 ft, with drives north and south - several small shafts sunk by original prospectors are seen to the south, the deepest 80 ft. Cræsus mine - situated on western side of Mt Goolinbalyon - tunnel driven about 70 ft and shaft sunk 80 ft - quartz crushed at Aspen's wooden dolly of 4 stamp heads, driven by 9ft-diameter waterwheel fed by  $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile race, all situated on opposite side of the range from Cræsus mine.<sup>73</sup>

**June 1889:** New quartz discoveries mainly due to assistance from Prospecting Board. Companies raising and crushing stone are Bonang GMC, Come Love, and Welcome Stranger - others are prospecting and testing. Come Love Co. erecting 10-head battery and pumping & winding gear, to be driven by steam. Welcome Stranger crushed at 'the Old Dolley, at Aspdens; but owing to the machine having stood so long idle, and being so much out of repair, the yield was very disappointing, the stone yielding only 2 oz of gold per ton.' Eclipse Co. suspended operations; shareholders' refusing to pay further calls - shafts full of water. Alluvial mining chiefly confined to old ground around Back Creek. Delegate River Gold Sluicing Co. have cut a race about 1 mile 55 chains long - 2 ft deep, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  ft op, and 2 ft clear at bottom - tunnel being driven through some very hard country to act as tail race - 95 ft cut, 105 ft to go.<sup>74</sup>

**June 1889:** Orbost Subdivision created. Rush to Mackenzie River, about 28 miles from Orbost, on what is called Twelve Mile Creek - estimated 80 men rushed the ground, but yields were patchy and large numbers left - about 30 now at work.<sup>75</sup>

**September 1889:** About 40-50 men at Twelve-Mile Creek - on average, not making anything like wages. 'Men are coming and going almost daily from Orbost; but these, as a rule, are not practical miners, but parties in search of land in the McCulloch country' - Bemm River. Jungle around Twelve-Mile Creek is being burned to open up country for prospecting.<sup>76</sup>

**1889:** Waratah and Welcome Friend reefs discovered on the divide at the head of the Bendoc River - beginning of Clarkeville goldfield - other reefs soon followed: Jungle King, Snowstorm, New Discovery, Belle of Bendoc, Daydream, and Sunbeam.<sup>77</sup>

**September 1889:** New finds - Jungle King, Welcome Find, and others on same line of reef, situated at head of Bendoc River, about 10 miles from Bendoc PO on the Dividing Range - reef traced for 1,000 yards - four leases applied for. Bonang GMC - 1,300 tons crushed

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73 Stirling (1889/4)

74 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), June 1889

75 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Orbost Subdivision), June 1889

76 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Orbost Subdivision), September 1889

77 Flett, p. 178

for 2,024 oz – Huntingdon mills for reducing, 6 Frue vanners for concentrating - also erecting 10-head stamp battery (water-powered) - concentrates being sent to Sydney for chlorination. Bendoc GMC (Come Love) - erecting boiler and engine for winding and pumping - all shafts baled dry and raising stone - also erected whip on British Lion (ex-Morning Star) 140-ft shaft - crushing plant (10-head battery & 20-hp engine) being erected on Bendoc River, a little above the waterwheel plant erected by former holders of Come Love. Welcome Stranger Co. completed erection of dolly - 4 wooden stampers shod with iron. Royal Albert GMC - erecting battery of 10-head driven by portable engine of 8 hp, for crushing stone from their mines - Albert & Australian Reefs, and Victoria and Who's Have Thought It companies (on same line) awaiting Royal Albert crushing plant for trial crushings. Delegate River Gold Sluicing Co. proceeding with tunnel - nearly complete. Two other companies about to commence sluicing at Back Creek - one by ground sluicing, the other by hydraulic power.<sup>78</sup>

**December 1889:** More fresh discoveries made through assistance of Prospecting Vote and track-cutting. Morning Star Co. erecting plant, including 10-head battery and 20-hp engine with Tangye boiler. Welcome Friend Co. amalgamated with Victoria Co. - erecting machinery for working mine and crushing stone. Jungle King, Waratah, Belle of Bendoc, Snowstorm, No Name, & Welcome Find about to form into syndicate to work these mines on an extensive scale - reefs on two distinct lines, about 400 yards apart. Croesus mine has been carried on with a very persevering manager and under great difficulties – two tunnels driven through very hard and difficult country.<sup>79</sup>

**December 1889:** Only 15-20 diggers at Mackenzie diggings (12-Mile Creek).<sup>80</sup>

**1890:** Township of Clarkeville named after original prospector (1851) - shortlived.<sup>81</sup>

**1894:** Gold discovered at Mallacoota - Holly and Spotted Dog reefs opened.<sup>82</sup>

**1894-8:** Spotted Dog Reef worked at Mallacoota, for a total yield of 899 oz - mine closed down in 1898 due to rising water levels and poor values.<sup>83</sup>

**1895:** Gold discovered near Bemm River, at what was soon named Club Terrace - first reef was Ace of Clubs - by early 1896, known reefs extended over three miles.<sup>84</sup>

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78 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), September 1889

79 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Bendoc Subdivision), December 1889

80 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Orbost Subdivision), December 1889

81 Flett, p. 178

82 Flett, p. 178

83 Butler & Associates, p. 151; Spotted Dog Gold Mine brochure

84 Flett, p. 178

- 1898:** Prospecting tracks being cut throughout east Gippsland. "There is, perhaps, no other district in the colony, except the higher regions of the Australian Alps, where such difficulties exist owing to dense undergrowth, absence of food for horses, &c., as meet the prospector in the wilds of Croajingolong. Bendoc - reefs have been worked north 2 miles and south 7 miles as far as Clarkesville. Delegate River - most work done about 3 miles from source. Bonang River - reefs have been worked in one or two instances to depths, but in most cases water-level has been the death-blow - greatest depth obtained about 300 ft - one line of reef traces 14 miles, upon which are the Bonang Co., Rising Sun, Pioneer, Percy, and other leases. Broadribb River - Alluvial gold obtained near junction of BA Creek, but not yet proven payable. BA Creek - Alluvial gold can be obtained, but can only be called 'tucker-ground' - best gold obtained about 2 miles above Broadribb River - reef lately discovered, traced 2 miles. Cabbage Tree Creek - small quantities of alluvial obtained. Mackenzie River - Worked profitably for alluvial near Combienbar mining track crossing, also at Watch Workers' and Ten-Mile creeks - coarse gold. Bemm River - payable alluvial obtained at Club Terrace, in creek alluviums, and Dead Horse Creek, and in terraces (Farquhar's sluicing claim) - numerous auriferous reefs discovered at Club Terrace and poorer stone at South Bemm - crushings from Club Terrace yield up to 5 oz/ton. Combienbar - worked profitably for alluvial near head - slugs of up to 1 oz obtained - 9-ft sinking. Errinundra River - alluvial worked. Boulder Creek - branch of Errinundra River - reef recently discovered. Cobon Creek - tributary of Combienbar - traces of alluvial. Buldah River - poor alluvial along course - payable alluvial in one head branch known as Quadra Creek. Cann River - poor alluvial. Thurra River - patches of alluvial near heads. Wingan River - patches of alluvial near heads. Genoa River - reef gold sample obtained at extreme head. Mallacoota - lodes worked to depth of 100 ft - crushings up to 5 oz/ton.<sup>85</sup>
- 1898:** Reefs at Lower Bemm River, below junction of Dinah's Creek: Alford's, Ace of Hearts, Ace of Diamonds - no payable stone so far discovered - prospecting of a 'timid' character. Reefs at Poddy's Creek (southerly continuation of Club Terrace belt): Henderson's, and Wadsworth's Nos. 1 & 2.<sup>86</sup>
- 1898:** Reef discovered about 1\_ miles NE of Buldah, at head of main branch of Cann River.<sup>87</sup>
- 1898:** Gippsland Boulder Co., Boulder Creek - 13 miles north of Club Terrace and within 2 miles of Errinundra River - company registered in January 1898 and commenced crushing in September with a 10-head battery - first nine months' yields totalled 1,418 oz from 972 tons - working from tunnel halfway down slope - self-acting tramway between mine workings and battery.<sup>88</sup>

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85 Stirling (1898/1)

86 Whitelaw (1898/1 & 2)

87 Whitelaw (1898/3)

88 *Australian Mining Standard*, 1 June 1899

- 1898:** Clarkville township consists of a few wooden cottages and paling huts of a very primitive character, close to the principal mines - situated about 8 miles south of Bendoc. Clarkeville GMC working mine originally known as New North Discovery - main shaft sunk 120 ft - new two-compartment shaft started - not worked at present. Clarkeville Extended Co. - four shafts sunk, deepest 65 ft - stone went as high as 3 oz/ton - stone presently being carted to Sunbeam battery. Waggra claim - two shafts sunk, deepest 80 ft - best yield was 1\_ oz/ton from surface. Empire claim - shaft sunk, three men working. Band of Hope claim - two shafts, two small open cuts - poor yields. Sunbeam claim - main shaft sunk 80 ft, cross cut 100 ft, winze sunk 80 ft - deepest work on Clarkeville field - best-defined reef on field - two men now working the mine on tribute. Sunbeam mine on the fall to Back Creek and Little River; others on the Bendoc fall. Two batteries at Clarkeville: Sunbeam, 10-head, 20-hp engine; Lewis's 6-head, run by 25-ft waterwheel - also a 20-head battery originally erected by New North Discovery, but never used. Another useless piece of work is two tram roadways, one of which was never used, although wooden rails have been laid. Alluvial ground patchy and of no great value.<sup>89</sup>
- May 1898:** The colony was losing trade to the extent of £20,000 to £30,000 per annum, owing to the miners of East Gippsland being forced to cross the border into New South Wales for supplies for mining purposes, and the necessaries of life. There were no vehicular roads leading to the nearest Victorian centres. Up to 10,000 oz was annually carried across the border and sold in New South Wales. One prospector argued that if Victoria did not open up roads, the best thing that could be done was to alter the border line a little farther to the west, and let New South Wales have a show in the opening up of East Gippsland.<sup>90</sup>
- 1898:** Mining at Bendoc at very low ebb. Two or three parties ground sluicing. Welcome Stranger quartz mine - about 3 miles south of Bendoc - not presently worked, but worked intermittently for years - main shaft with poppet heads, first-class small winding plant, consisting of two-cylinder double drum winch with a horizontal boiler (30 tubes set in iron frame. Star of Bendoc mine - SW of Welcome Stranger - worked to 60 ft - stone averaged 1 oz/ton. Eclipse mine - worked to depth of 50 ft - £3,000 worth of gold reportedly taken from mine. Come Love mine, about a mile west of Bendoc - worked intermittently - yielded from 13 dwt to 7\_ oz/ton. Western Tunnel, Delegate Hill - utterly useless.<sup>91</sup>
- 1898:** Locality of recently discovered auriferous quartz reefs near the Bemm River now known as Club Terrace - situated east of Bemm River, about 5 miles south of junction of Combienbar and Errinundra Rivers - quartz reefs have so far been opened at intervals for a length of about 3 miles - nothing so far to justify a 'rush' or to warrant moneyless and inexperienced men to proceed to the field. 'The character of the country is such that the work of prospecting demands special qualities of aptitude and patience on the part of those engaged, as in the case of the reefs above mentioned there were no conspicuous outcrops whatever, and they were only found by means of most diligent search.'<sup>92</sup>
- 1898:** Reefs at Club Terrace.—Mustard & party (Ace of Clubs claim) - pioneer discovery on the field - local battery erected by the proprietors - two lines of reef in claim - shaft on No. 2 reef down 75 ft. Other claims include Royal Mint, Valentine, Olive Branch, Waterfall, Brilliant, New Chum United, Last Chance, and Never Can Tell.<sup>93</sup>
- 1898:** Between Mt Bendoc and Bendoc River a small mullocky reef is being worked by local men, yielding wages - prospectors have erected a small wooden 4-head battery and waterwheel for crushing.<sup>94</sup>

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89 Hunter (1898/1)

90 *Australian Mining Standard*, 15 September 1898

91 Hunter (1898/2)

92 Murray

93 Stirling (1898/2)

94 Hunter (1898/4)

- 1899:** Twenty years hence, Eastern Gippsland will be one of the most active districts in Victoria.<sup>95</sup>
- 1904:** Principal mines at Bonang are the Bonanza and South Bonanza. Bonanza mine held by an English company - worked by tributers this year - 387 tons gave 259 oz - also 8 tons of concentrates worth 4\_ oz/ton - good treatment mill on mine and winding plant on main shaft, which is 100 ft below adit level - adit driven along reef for about 400 ft. South Bonanza also worked by tributers - crushing of 8 tons gave 25\_ oz - main shaft 100 ft below main adit. Several other small parties working in locality. Rising Sun mine held and worked by Pearce and party. Mining almost at a standstill at Club Terrace. No work done on Mallina mine, held by an English company, which has a good plant on it. Bright-light mine at Paddy's Creek (James Brothers) working on tribute. Gippsland Boulder mine, at Boulder Creek, taken up by a party of four miners, getting good wages. Bowers erected cyanide plant - put through 84 tons of sand for 27 oz.<sup>96</sup>
- 1905:** Bonang and Club Terrace the same.<sup>97</sup>
- 1906:** Old Rising Sun mine being prospected (with aid of govt grant) at shallow depths. Number of dredging leases applied for - one new dredge being built near NSW border.<sup>98</sup>
- 1907:** Homeward Bound Reef, Bendoc - half a mile south of Bendoc - shaft about 90 ft deep. Bendoc United mine - about \_ mile north of Bendoc, tunnel driven, but not far enough to cut reef. Morning Star Reef - about \_ mile west of Bendoc - shaft 210 ft deep - reef was worked for about 350 ft in length. Clarkeville - old quartz mining camp on the divide between waters flowing into Bendoc River and Back Creek - quite deserted. New North Discovery mine - shaft about 300 ft deep - about 5 years ago a Ballarat syndicate attempted to reopen this mine - abundance of quartz, but poor gold content. Welcome Stranger Reef - 4 miles from Bendoc on the Clarkeville road - poppet heads still standing - shaft 105 ft deep. Star of Bendoc mine - about 300 ft south of Welcome Stranger shaft - whip over 90-ft shaft. Although this is geologically a favourable district for quartz mining the disabilities are so great in prospecting and actually working the reefs that the present condition of mining is not to be wondered at, and though as a mining field the conditions are favourable, it is difficult to see how the mines are to be re-opened until there is better access to the field and consequently cheaper means of living and of working the various reefs known to exist. Rising Sun Reef, Bonang - about 1\_ miles SW of hotel at Bonang - extensively worked for many years and large yields of gold obtained - shaft sunk to cut reef at 500 ft.<sup>99</sup>
- 1907:** Booth's Fancy copper mine, on Copper Creek, a branch of Sardine Creek - 14 miles from Orbost on the road to Bonang is the Calico Flat settlement, from which the mine is two miles NW - lode worked by shaft and tunnel. McDougall's copper lode, Wallaby Creek, 1\_ miles south of Granite Creek in a creek about \_ mile east of the Orbost-Bonang road and about 400 ft below the level of the road.<sup>100</sup>
- 1908:** Dredge mining, so far, has not been a success in the Bendoc locality.<sup>101</sup>
- 1910:** Prospecting at Bonang. Bendoc.—Wolfram and bismuth discovered at Round Hill - several claims pegged out. Dunlop Co. opened up new main shaft and sank to water-level - erected small treatment mill to test value of lode. Hopkins and party acquired mine formerly opened by Kelly & Jackson, about 4 miles south of township - got 4

<sup>95</sup> *Australian Mining Standard*, Special Edition—Victoria: its mines and minerals, 1 June 1899, p. 78

<sup>96</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1904

<sup>97</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1905

<sup>98</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1906

<sup>99</sup> Dunn (1909/1)

<sup>100</sup> Dunn (1909/2)

<sup>101</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1908

oz/ton from 100 tons, then sold their interest to Bendoc Victoria Reefs Co., which has sunk a new shaft to 75 ft - water proving too heavy for horse-power, now erecting suitable winding plant.<sup>102</sup>

- 1911:** Bendoc Victorian Gold Reefs Co. made additions and alterations to plant, then enlarged shaft to 3 compartments. Dunlop Co. also increased plant - keeping battery fully employed. Very little done at Round Hill wolfram deposits.<sup>103</sup>
- 1911-24:** Victoria Reef yielded 1503 oz from 584 tons.<sup>104</sup>
- 1912:** Rozzinski Brothers now erecting battery on lode discovered at Combienbar a few years ago - so far only low-grade ore opened up, but Rozzinskis (only prospectors remaining on the field) believe that selected portions of the lode will pay at least a living wage.<sup>105</sup>
- 1913:** Bendoc Victoria Reefs Co. installing a large high-pressure Cornish boiler, to replace three small and unsuitable boilers - struggling to cope with mine water. Welcome Stranger Co. commenced work on south end of shoot of stone being worked by Bendoc Victoria Co., but had to suspend operations when Bendoc Co. allowed water to rise during installation of new machinery. Helleman and party, at Round Hill, prospecting wolfram and bismuth lodes by adit.<sup>106</sup>
- 1913-:** Bridie & Allen's molybdenite mine, Wangrabelle - values improved below water level - ore concentrated on site and sent to Sydney for treatment.<sup>107</sup>
- 1913-15:** Helleman & Robinson prospecting wolfram and bismuth lodes at Round Hill, by adit.<sup>108</sup>
- 1914:** Hard-to-Seek - new reefing area located about 3 miles south of the 73-mile peg on the Orbost-Genoa road, and about 10 miles west of Genoa - reefs located at various points on Hard-to-Seek range, and isolated range of hills rising to about 700 ft above surrounding marshy swamps which form head of Wingan River - field opened by Messrs Brown - several shafts sunk by prospectors and others.<sup>109</sup>
- 1914:** Welcome Stranger Co., Bendoc, installed winding plant and sunk main shaft to 130 ft - will probably take over lease of Bendoc Victoria Reefs Co., which failed to resume operations (stone was of good quality, but tonnage was insufficient).<sup>110</sup>
- 1888-1915:** Welcome Stranger line of reef yielded 814 oz from 368 tons, to a depth of 100 ft.<sup>111</sup>
- 1915:** Government battery installed at Hard-to-Seek.<sup>112</sup>
- 1916:** Only notable mining operation at Bendoc was Bismuth Tunnel Syndicate (Helleman & Robinson) - picked concentrates sent elsewhere for treatment, and the 'seconds', which comprise the bulk of the lode, are being stacked at the mine for milling and concentrating at their own battery, recently purchased. Very little work done at Hard-to-Seek - crushings from the two best shows on the field proved disappointing.<sup>113</sup>

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102 Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1909-10

103 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1911

104 Easton

105 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1912

106 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1913

107 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1913-16

108 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1913-15

109 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1914

110 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1914-15

111 Easton

112 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1915

113 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1916



- 1917:** Bismuth Tunnel Syndicate, Round Hill, is only party at work on the 'old' Bendoc gold-field - cutting water race and erecting water-power battery. Bridie's molybdenite mine at Wangrabelle taken over by Sydney syndicate - poor prospects.<sup>114</sup>
- 1918:** Bismuth Tunnel Syndicate still at work, on good prospects.<sup>115</sup>
- 1928:** Victoria Reef GMC yielded 437 oz from 276 tons.<sup>116</sup>
- 1935-6:** Victoria Star Co., Bendoc - main shaft now 190 ft deep - crosscut at 140-ft level driven 200 ft to intersect Welcome Stranger Reef - yield for 1935-6 - 804 oz from 507 tons.<sup>117</sup>
- 1937:** Government battery installed at Club Terrace - kept fairly busy by prospectors in vicinity.<sup>118</sup>
- 1938:** Prospecting is being carried on in the more distant and difficult country, but there is need for reconditioning old tracks and establishing new ones. Unfortunately, for the most part, there is no other industry in these areas, and in many cases the prospector is the only inhabitant. In some regions, without him, districts would become unknown and almost inaccessible.<sup>119</sup>
- 1938:** Mayfair mine (formerly Victoria Star), Bendoc, promises well - small crushings give good averages.<sup>120</sup>
- 1939:** Mayfair mine (although temporarily closed down) partly responsible for renewed interest (after nearly 30 years) in Clarkville area - some small payable crushings made at a battery newly erected by Mr W. Mustard (a prospector of the 1890s). Interest still being shown at Combienbar in an effort to establish proposition between Rozinski's and Golden Gully.<sup>121</sup>
- 1940:** Some prospecting in progress at Club Terrace.<sup>122</sup>
- 1941:** Number of small sluicing claims situated on Queensborough River and in Craigie's Bog - satisfactory results.<sup>123</sup>
- 1942:** In Bendoc area, several small-scale mines showing good returns and sluicing profitable.<sup>124</sup>
- 1946:** Sluicing operations recommenced (after wartime closure) by Back Creek Sluicing Syndicate (Miller & sons), Lower Bendoc - getting satisfactory returns - road constructed by bulldozer and second penstock dam completed.<sup>125</sup>
- 1947-8:** Additional plant installed by Back Creek Sluicing Co. - new settling and storage dams completed. Two prospecting parties at work at Club Terrace and Combienbar.<sup>126</sup>

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114 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1917

115 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1918

116 Easton

117 Easton

118 *Mining & Geological Journal*, July 1937

119 *Mining & Geological Journal*, January 1938

120 *Mining & Geological Journal*, July 1938

121 *Mining & Geological Journal*, July 1939

122 *Mining & Geological Journal*, September 1940

123 *Mining & Geological Journal*, March & September 1941

124 *Mining & Geological Journal*, March 1942

125 *Mining & Geological Journal*, March 1947

126 *Mining & Geological Journal*, September 1947, March & September 1948

- 1948:** IXL mine (Jamieson's), Lower Bendoc - recent crushing of 12 tons gave 1 oz 10 dwt/ton - shaft sunk to 48 ft.<sup>127</sup>
- 1949:** Another reef discovered at IXL mine. Miller & sons installed new hydraulic sluicing plant - good yields continue.<sup>128</sup>
- 1949:** Rich ore won from Sisters mine (Heenan's), Club Terrace - treatment plant obtained.<sup>129</sup>
- March 1950:** Good results continue at IXL mine and Miller's sluicing works, Back Creek. Work progressing at Sisters mine.<sup>130</sup>
- September 1950:** IXL mine - operations on a very limited scale. Sisters mine, Club Terrace - pumping plant to be installed.<sup>131</sup>
- 1951:** Boulder mine, Errinundra - small amount of work. IXL mine - limited work. Lower Bendoc Sluicing (Miller) - good results continue - 150 oz during 1950.<sup>132</sup>
- 1952:** Operations recommenced at Sisters mine, Club Terrace. Lower Bendoc sluicing continuing after flooding.<sup>133</sup>
- 1954:** IXL mine showing payable results.<sup>134</sup>

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127 *Mining & Geological Journal*, September 1948  
 128 *Mining & Geological Journal*, March 1949  
 129 *Mining & Geological Journal*, September 1949  
 130 *Mining & Geological Journal*, March 1950  
 131 *Mining & Geological Journal*, September 1950  
 132 *Mining & Geological Journal*, March 1951  
 133 *Mining & Geological Journal*, March 1952  
 134 *Mining & Geological Journal*, March 1954

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## **DANDENONG RANGES GOLDFIELDS**

- 1851:** Gold discovered by secretive party of Germans at 'Moondie Yallock' around junction of Menzies Creek and Woori Yallock Creek, about two miles north of Emerald, on the road to Monbulk. Thousands of pounds worth of gold reputedly won.<sup>1</sup>
- 1851:** Gold reputedly discovered in Cardinia Creek.<sup>2</sup>
- 1852-9:** Some digging occurred at Emerald, or Ti-tree Creek as it was then called. In 1858, it was reported that, 'Mining operations have extended to Dandenong, near Fern Tree'.<sup>3</sup>
- 1859:** Gold discovery at Macclesfield or Cockatoo Creek (about same locality as Germans in 1851) caused rush to Emerald goldfield. In February there were 250 diggers, and the 'Little Yarra' or Woori Yallock Creek was worked for 10 miles. In March, diggers were working at 'three separate places, each of considerable extent' and at a dry diggings (possibly McCrea's Creek), six miles from the other place'. Emerald township was surveyed on site of main diggings in April. Gold at McCrea's and Shepherd's creeks (called the Nicholson goldfield) turned out to be poor, suitable only for sluicing.<sup>4</sup>
- February 1859:** Near the junction of the auriferous creek with another larger creek, four temporary stores have been constructed of calico, and the main encampment of the miners formed. The stream of the auriferous creek above the junction ... has been diverted from its bed for a considerable distance, and used for sluicing the quartzose gravel and soft blue shale dug out from the claims in the bed of the creek. These claims, for a short distance up the creek, appear to be highly remunerative.<sup>5</sup>
- December 1859:** Dandenong goldfields are in decline.<sup>6</sup>
- 1860:** Gold discovered on Cardinia and Tarneit creeks—referred to as the 'Eything Goldfield'.<sup>7</sup>
- January 1860:** On Cockatoo Creek, Emerald men are at work on some small flats and gullies.<sup>8</sup>
- April 1860:** Emerald goldfield deserted.<sup>9</sup>
- September 1860:** On Emerald goldfield, about 30 miners at work at Sassafra Creek.<sup>10</sup>
- October 1863:** Several parties on old Emerald diggings, long deserted, and also at Macclesfield.<sup>11</sup>
- 1869:** The district is wholly neglected by the miner. Though the timber is heavy and the scrub dense, there are now many cleared tracks in various directions, and persons could prospect the alluviums without encountering serious difficulties. Much was done under Mr Hodgkinson's direction, and by the Prospecting Board, to open up the country; but its rich soils, perennial streams, and delicious climate are not sufficient to attract to the spot those who vainly seek employment in the streets of Melbourne.<sup>12</sup>

- June 1871:** Ground at Sassafras Creek has been registered (ie. suspended).<sup>13</sup>
- June 1872:** Prospecting claim registered at Berwick.<sup>14</sup>
- December 1872:** Auriferous ground discovered in Haunted Gully, 4 miles south-east of Berwick.<sup>15</sup>
- March 1873:** At Haunted Gully, Berwick, several claims paying well.<sup>16</sup>
- June 1873:** Discovery of payable auriferous ground called Sailor's Gully, west of Haunted Gully.<sup>17</sup>
- September 1873:** At Pakenham (Cardinia Creek), near Berwick, two new gullies auriferous gullies found—Welcome and Burke's. Walkers, Mayfields, and Barnes gullies opened soon after.<sup>18</sup>
- December 1873:** Alluvial tunnelling claim at Haunted Gully, Berwick.<sup>19</sup>
- March 1881:** Small rush to Turner's Creek, a small branch of Sassafras Creek near Emerald.<sup>20</sup>
- September 1883:** At Gembrook, a company erected pumping and winding engine and sank 200-ft shaft.<sup>21</sup>
- June 1884:** Deep Lead Co., Gembrook, has driven 800ft under the basalt.<sup>22</sup>
- September 1884:** Sons of Freedom Co., Gembrook, commenced tunnel to strike new reef.<sup>23</sup>
- December 1884:** Creighton's Freehold claim, Gembrook, suspended operations.<sup>24</sup>
- March 1885:** Machinery removed from Gembrook Deep Lead. Sons of Freedom Co. tunnel, Gembrook, driven 565 ft.<sup>25</sup>
- June 1886:** Sons of Freedom Co., Gembrook, have erected a horse puddling machine.<sup>26</sup>
- September 1886:** Sons of Freedom Co., Gembrook, suspended operations.<sup>27</sup>
- June 1891:** Number of claims taken up at Gembrook, following discovery of gold.<sup>28</sup>
- 1899:** Report of new gold discovery on Cockatoo Creek, based on assays at Ballarat School of Mines. James Stirling investigated and concluded that the assay results were faulty.<sup>29</sup>
- 1911:** Nangana Co., Cockatoo, prospecting by shafts and tunnels the auriferous dyke exposures which to date have yielded only patchy gold.<sup>30</sup>
- 1912:** Nangana Co. Cockatoo, erected gas suction milling plant.<sup>31</sup>
- 1913:** Nangana Co., Cockatoo, closed down.<sup>32</sup>

- 1931:** Reef discovery at Cockatoo. Numerous claims pegged out, and about 40 men on the field, working from shafts. Trial crushing sent to Maldon government battery.<sup>33</sup>
- 1931:** Haunted Gully (except for a few chains of the upper portion) is now included in a water reserve, and is closed to mining. Head of the alluvial gold in Haunted Gully is just north of the water reserve fence—area was recently prospected, by cuts and trenches, but nothing payable found. Several old shafts to SW, including one 90 ft deep. Old alluvial three-compartment shaft at junction of Welcome and Sailor's gullies—about 50 ft deep with NE drive of about 200 ft.<sup>34</sup>
- 1932:** Kirk's Dyke, Cockatoo Creek, worked by Sherlock & party. Dyke had previously been worked by open cut, measuring about 40 ft in diameter and 23 ft deep. Present owners working by tunnel and rise to bottom of open cut. Mine equipped with petrol engine and 3-head battery—suggestion that puddler might be installed. Values not high (2 to 6 dwt/ton), but ore is easily mined.<sup>35</sup>

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#### FOOTNOTES

- 1 Flett, p. 46
- 2 Flett, p. 40
- 3 Flett, p. 47
- 4 Flett, pp. 46-58
- 5 Clement Hodgkinson, from a report, dated February 1859, to the Legislative Assembly— quoted by Brough Smyth, p. 109
- 6 Mining Surveyors' Reports, December 1859
- 7 Flett, p. 40
- 8 Mining Surveyors' Reports, January 1860
- 9 Mining Surveyors' Reports, April 1860
- 10 Mining Surveyors' Reports, September 1860
- 11 Mining Surveyors' Reports, October 1863
- 12 Brough Smyth, pp. 109-10
- 13 Mining Surveyors' Reports, June 1871
- 14 Mining Surveyors' Reports, June 1872
- 15 Mining Surveyors' Reports, December 1872
- 16 Mining Surveyors' Reports, March 1873
- 17 Mining Surveyors' Reports, June 1873
- 18 Mining Surveyors' Reports, September 1873; Flett, p. 40

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19	Mining Surveyors' Reports, December 1873
20	Mining Surveyors' Reports, March 1881
21	Mining Surveyors' Reports, September 1883
22	Mining Surveyors' Reports, June 1884
23	Mining Surveyors' Reports, September 1884
24	Mining Surveyors' Reports, December 1884
25	Mining Surveyors' Reports, March 1885
26	Mining Surveyors' Reports, June 1886
27	Mining Surveyors' Reports, September 1886
28	Mining Surveyors' Reports, June 1891
29	Stirling
30	Department of Mines Annual Report, 1911
31	Department of Mines Annual Report, 1912
32	Department of Mines Annual Report, 1913
33	Kenny, 1937/1
34	Kenny, 1937/2
35	Kenny, 1937/3

***Compiled by Matthew Leavesley & Robyn Annear, CNR, Historic Mining Sites Assessment Project,  
June 1995***

## **DARGO-CROOKED RIVER GOLDFIELD HISTORICAL NOTES**

*The goldfield was very inaccessible, being exceedingly hilly & scrubby.*

- 1850s:** Gold digging at Dargo River in 1854, 1858 and 1859.
- 1860:** Howitt's government prospecting party in 1860 prospected Ground at the head of the Mitchell River. As the party progressed up the Dargo (Upper Dargo), they found evidence of mining: tracks, abandoned bark huts and tents, picks and shovels, old boots and clothing, sawn timbers and sluice boxes. Workings had been abandoned because of approaching winter, at a time of violent floods. Howitt's party then shifted operations from Dargo to other tributaries of the Mitchell. They prospected where the Mitchell divides into two rivers, the Wongungarra and the Wonnangatta. Halfway up the eastern branch (the Wongungarra), it also divided. Howitt named the upper part of the two branches Crooked River. Good gold was found on what he named Good Luck Creek. Crooked River proved a good gold producer, but the Wongungarra proved a duffer.<sup>1</sup>
- 1860:** The artist Eugene von Guerard was with Howitt at Crooked River and waxed lyrical over the scenery at Crooked River, but the streams were walled in high, steep cliffs and tangled fern and undergrowth, which made digging difficult from the start.<sup>2</sup>
- 1861-3:** The three years of alluvial creek digging at Crooked River coincide in time with the discoveries of Wood's Point, the Jordan goldfield and Stringer's Creek (Walhalla), and it is this fact that no doubt accounts for the absence of any reports of Crooked River during that time.
- April 1861:** Creeks running into Crooked River were being worked and the results from sluicing were astonishing to Omeo diggers and others used to mere wages. But provision was dear and scarce and there was no mail or escort - also first snow. Much of the digging at Crooked River was on the spurs of gravel high above the creek bed, where the original river bed had been - tunnels into these deposits were popularly worked during the snow and floods of winter.<sup>3</sup>
- 1861:** First public house built at McIntyre's Flat in April 1861. Most populous settlement at Crooked River was Bull Town. Hog Town was one mile below Bull Town. Thiel Town was about 3 miles up-river from Bull Town.<sup>4</sup>
- 1861-2:** Further reports of digging on the Dargo River shortly after the opening of Crooked River, but generally on the lower Dargo. A poor rush to Lightwood Creek, a west tributary of the Dargo, about 7 miles east of Grant in April 1861. Auriferous creek opened near Connelly's hotel at Dargo town early in 1862.<sup>5</sup>
- 1862:** Population of Crooked River dwindled - miners left for rushes at Dargo and Wentworth. Dargo Flat rushed in 1861, but the rush peaked in 1862 with about 150 miners on field. It too was in decline by late 1862.<sup>6</sup>

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1 Christie & Gray, pp. 13-19

2 Flett (1965), p. 39

3 Flett (1965), p. 40

4 Christie & Gray, p. 21

5 Flett, pp. 153-4

6 Christie & Gray, pp. 29-32



- December 1862:** Lower portion of Crooked River being re-worked - pays about £4/week per man. Wongongarri (Wongungarra) River prospected for 40 miles - payable nearly all the way. Lightwood Creek, on the Dargo - good prospects obtained - party has gone to open it.<sup>7</sup>
- January 1863:** Crooked River sinkings continue to support small popn, earning about £4-6/week per man.<sup>8</sup>
- May 1863:** 200-300 miners making wages from Crooked River country.<sup>9</sup>
- 1863:** In February the Dargo diggings were said to be equal to anything in Gippsland. Later that year a series of rushes began to the upper branches of the Dargo and Crooked rivers prospected by parties from Bright in winter of 1863 - Bloomfield's Rush, between Mounts Tabletop and Smythe - Bloomfield (prospector) lost in snow - also Rusch's Rush. By October, 8 miles of the Dargo was occupied by 400 men, 'in view of Tabletop'.<sup>10</sup>
- 1863:** Gold discovered in September at head of Dargo River (Upper Dargo Diggings - Bloomfield's Rush), 15 miles above the crossing to Crooked River and about 7 or 8 miles above old workings (Pikes Creek) visited by Howitt in 1860. By December, 350-400 miners were spread along some 8 miles of the river, working with pumps, wheels and sluice boxes and averaging about 100 oz/week.<sup>11</sup>
- October 1863:** It is probable that a considerable rush will set in to the Dargo in the course of a few weeks; all those parties who have lately come in [to Bright] agree in stating the prospects are exceedingly good, and that there are several miles of ground on that river equally likely to prove payable.<sup>12</sup>
- 1863-4:** Chief rush to the Dargo River was in summer 1863-4, when Mayford started as centre for the alluvial diggings, and Pikes Creek was worked. Other rushes to 18-Mile Creek and to Twenty-five Mile or Joy's Creek, coming down from Dargo High Plains, which was rushed by 'Italians, Austrians, and Selavonians'.<sup>13</sup>
- 1863-4:** The main gold rushes on the Dargo were in April 1863 and again in April 1864.<sup>14</sup>
- March 1864:** Mining population: Dargo River, 60; Crooked River, 220. Dargo River now being abandoned for the season, most of the ground not offering sufficient inducement to miners to undergo the great expense and hardship of wintering there. Several have left for the Crooked River - workings now hold out greater inducements than those on the Dargo - greater extent of more open country, which has also the important advantage of being accessible from the Gipps Land settlements.<sup>15</sup>
- 1864:** Miners getting poor returns from the river on Upper Dargo Diggings - main deposit of gold not in bed of river, but on spur - working it will require water races from tributaries of Dargo River.<sup>16</sup>
- 1864:** In the spring of 1864, the upper tributaries of the Crooked River, the 30 Mile Creek that touched on the new road to the Dargo and Morses at Little Woman's, had been

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<sup>7</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Gipps land Division), December 1862

<sup>8</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Gipps land Division), January 1863

<sup>9</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Gipps land Division), May 1863

<sup>10</sup> Flett, pp. 154-5

<sup>11</sup> Christie & Gray, pp. 33-7

<sup>12</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Buckland Division), October 1863

<sup>13</sup> Flett, p. 155

<sup>14</sup> Flett (1965), p. 44

<sup>15</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Buckland Division), March 1864

<sup>16</sup> Christie & Gray, p. 37

rushed in its upper reaches, to the west of the Dargo High Plains, and the east tributary of the Crooked, Joy's or 25 Mile Creek also.<sup>17</sup>

**1864:** Prospecting tracks cut by government Alpine Expedition, led by Angus McMillan - track to Crooked River from Connelly's Inn (Quackmunjie), dray track over ranges dividing Dargo and Crooked rivers, and track between Omeo and Crooked River. While cutting the dray track over the ranges between the two rivers, road cutters discovered a quartz reef on the north side of the Wongungarra River opposite the later surveyed township of Howittville - the reef was named Pioneer, after the finder's favourite horse. Most of the track-cutting party deserted and commenced prospecting, and 15 claims were quickly marked out in the vicinity. (One of the reef's discoverers was an N. Jorgensen - according to Flett, 'a Stratford prospector' - would have been one of the Jorgensen brothers who worked the Freestone-Gladstone Creek area from the 1870s.) Soon (1865) the Union Reef was discovered, and other claims with rich shows of surface gold included Matheson's, the Jolly Sailor, Italian, and Aberdeen.<sup>18</sup>

**June 1864:** During the last quarter several highly auriferous reefs have been discovered on the Crooked River, which bid fair to equal anything every discovered in the division. The 'Pioneer', the 'Jeff Davis' and the 'Goodluck' reefs on Goodluck Creek and the 'Oriental' and 'Golden Bar' reefs, situated nearly opposite the junction of the Goodluck Creek and the Crooked River. About 150 diggers on reefs.<sup>19</sup>

**1864:** First reefs discovered after the Pioneer were the Jeff Davis, the Good Luck, and the Glengarry at the head of Jungle Creek.<sup>20</sup>

**1864:** Population of Crooked River increased and Bull Town became a central gathering place. Bull Town was six miles from the Pioneer Reef, so a settlement was formed across the Crooked River, to the south of the reef - originally called Ram Town, its name was soon changed to Talbotville. Three miles downriver, on the Wongungarra, was the small village of Rathmines (also known as Little London & Winchester). The settlement at Good Luck Creek was called Stonewall (after Confederate hero, General Stonewall Jackson) - at the foot of Jeff Davis Spur, about one mile from Jeff Davis Reef, on junction of Good Luck Creek and Crooked River. Away from the river, at Isaac's Shanty on Mt Pleasant, another town was growing - after only 3 months, it was clear that this town would outstrip the rest - known variously as Isaac's Town, Skye, and Mt Pleasant - later became Grant.<sup>21</sup>

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17 Flett (1965), p. 44

18 Christie & Gray, pp. 36-8; Flett (1965), p. 40

19 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), June 1864

20 Flett, p. 152

21 Christie & Gray, pp. 43-7, 51; Flett (1965), p. 40

**1864:** Crooked River reef discovery ushered in such a period of reef discovery as to be without parallel in Victoria, and by the end of 1864, 457 diggers were working on 180 claims on 92 separate reefs. 21 of these were on Mt Pleasant, 28 were in Jungle Creek basin to the south, 15 were north-west in vicinity of Goodluck Creek, 9 on Crooked River, 5 on Spring Hill (about 3 miles SE on Stratford Road), 5 on Wonnangatta River, and 4 on Good Hope spur, about halfway to Talbotville. With the warmer weather in the late spring of 1864 the real influx into Crooked River occurred - over 500 alluvial diggers - gullies worked nearby newly discovered reefs. Tracks to Dargo and Stratford opened - horse and bullock teams arriving with supplies by October 1864. By December, Pioneer and Jeff Davis mining plants on ground, and plants for main Mt Pleasant reefs (Little Dorritt, Union and Moonlight Cos) on way.<sup>22</sup>

**1864:** By December 1864, 91 distinct quartz reefs had been proved auriferous, 180 quartz prospecting claims were registered, a mining registrar/surveyor was appointed, and there were an estimated 370 quartz miners on the Wongungarra, Wunnangatta, Jungle Creek, Crooked River, Dargo, Mt Pleasant, Good Hope, Good Luck, and Spring Hill. The Pioneer Co. was employing 50 men, and Jeff Davis Co. 35 men, but most mines were small operations, employing less than 5 men.<sup>23</sup>

**December 1864:** Continued reports of discoveries of rich reefs have caused a large influx of population - 'perhaps greater than is warranted until such time as quartz crushing machines have been erected on the reefs'. Mining population on Upper Dargo River, 250 - principally Chinese. Kitchingham & Co. will shortly have their Balfour's patent crusher working for the Jolly Sailors QMC. Pioneer and Jeff Davis reefs already have crushing plant on ground - Union, Moonlight and Little Dorritt reefs awaiting plant - also Victoria Co. and Hartley and Co., awaiting batteries to crush for all reefs in Upper and Lower Jungle Creek - Good Hope Co. will erect battery on creek, to crush for Collingwood and Uncle Tom reefs as well as their own - Hibernia party to erect machine at bottom of Hibernia Spur, to crush their own stone and that from Brother Jonathan, Malvern Hill, and Rose and Shamrock claims. Alluvial diggings in all the workings appear to be of a very patchy character - bank and spur claims along Crooked River pay the best. Chinese confined to Upper Dargo diggings, except a few who are gardeners or domestic servants on Crooked River or Mt Pleasant. Youngson and Co. plan to divert the Warrangarra River into the flat opposite the Pioneer Reef - intend to work river bed and afterwards the entire flat - first attempt by capitalists to thoroughly prospect Warrangarra River. The country actually worked extended from lower end of Jungle Creek to Upper Dargo River, distance of 30 miles, and from Bulltown, on Crooked River, to the Wentworth, a distance of 60 miles.<sup>24</sup>

**December 1864:** Many Chinese who had left Harrierville for the Dargo are beginning to return - old workings more profitable than the Dargo.<sup>25</sup>

**mid-1860s:** Key production period. The first crushings of the Pioneer Co. produced 15,000 oz/30 tons. Jeff Davis and Pioneer companies were originally seen as the major operators, but both ceased operations within a year. Their machines were then leased out.<sup>26</sup>

**1864-77:** Only reef at Grant that showed any permanence was the Good Hope Mine, that began in 1864 and was worked from four tunnels on the east side of the spur. In 1868, it produced 6,912 oz of gold and to 1877 nearly 20,000 oz.<sup>27</sup>

**March 1865:** Companies (except Union claim) refuse to give results of crushings. Pioneer battery spur wheel broke before more than a few tons could be crushed, and even this

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<sup>22</sup> Flett (1965) p. 40

<sup>23</sup> Christie & Gray, pp. 70-71

<sup>24</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1864

<sup>25</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Buckland Division), December 1864

<sup>26</sup> Christie & Gray, p. 77

<sup>27</sup> Flett (1865), p. 42

quantity has not been retorted. 22\_ miles of water races in subdivision - large amount of fluming necessary, due to irregularities of ground. Crooked River in Beechworth Mining District.<sup>28</sup>

**June 1865:** Mining population: 374 alluvial (120 Chinese), 868 quartz miners. Batteries for Jolly Sailors, Good Hope, Globe, and Hartley's on ground. Three new reefs discovered at Upper Dargo River - specimens equal in richness to anything yet produced in district. Assistance of capitalists required in district - want of capital prevents proper development of reefs - large number of suspensions of claims due to lack of funds.<sup>29</sup>

**September 1865:** Mining population: 395 alluvial (112 Chinese), 450 quartz miners. 257 distinct quartz reefs proved auriferous. Pioneer and Jeff Davis companies refuse to divulge crushing results - no escort (returns) and bank will not give details of gold deposits. 'These reefs are the principal support of the place and yield the largest quantities of gold, so that unless their correct returns be made public the real value of the reefs may be underrated.' Pioneer and Jeff Davis companies' batteries cost £2,637 and £3,500 respectively. Yields from Victoria Reef remarkably poor - alterations made to machinery. Mornington battery situated immediately beside Jolly Sailor's claim (mining operations now suspended). Teutonia Co. erecting portable battery immediately below their claim. Eureka to erect battery on claim at Upper Dargo - battery ex Morse's Creek. Water races - 25 constructed, all less than a mile in length. 'The Crooked River has lost its attraction for speculators, and numbers of miners who tried their utmost and hold on to reefs, with the hope of selling out at high prices, have been necessitated to abandon them and leave the district.' Out of more than 125 gold mining leases taken up and surveyed there are not 20 worked. Tunnelling claims of 66 acres pegged off in every direction - very little bona fide work carried on. One third of population has left for NZ and elsewhere - more would have deserted field, but that a tributary of Good Luck Creek is giving good yields to a considerable number of alluvial diggers. Of 257 reefs, only 50 now actually worked - remainder either suspended for want of funds or totally abandoned.<sup>30</sup>

**September 1865:** Good Hope Co. erected 12-head battery.<sup>31</sup>

**December 1865:** 27 new reefs discovered during quarter, more than half of them on Upper Dargo - now 280 reefs in all. Eureka Co., Upper Dargo erecting 8-head battery - 12-hp waterwheel. Britannia and Eldorado Co. erecting 8-head, 12-hp battery. New America claim erecting 8-head battery, powered by turbine wheel of 32 hp. Jungle and Globe batteries completed.<sup>32</sup>

**1865+:** Union Co. was one of the longest-lived of the Crooked River mines. Located half a mile from Grant. Tunnel driven 250 ft before reef was struck. Mine still operating at turn of century. Name changed to Sons of Freedom in 1877, then reverted to Union.<sup>33</sup>

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28 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1865

29 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), June 1865

30 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), September 1865

31 Christie, p. 23

32 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1865

33 Christie & Gray, p. 77

- 1865+:** Expectations have hardly ever been less realised than they were in the Grant reefs. In first 3 months of 1865, digging population of Crooked River rose to 1,270 - of those 786 were on the reefs and prospecting for others - population of Grant about 500 - Mt Pleasant was transformed from the savage, heavily timbered mountain top to the habitation of man. Early rich yields from a great number of reefs justified optimism: Pioneer got 5 oz/ton, Jeff Davis nearly 5 oz/ton, and many others over 1 oz/ton. Early in 1865, 203 reefs were declared. Grant township surveyed in April 1865, sold in August - 18 hotels, and 16 on road to Stratford - also great number of restaurants and Australia's first beer garden, frequented by Italian diggers. The first rich yields from reefs were generally injudiciously spent or else on the first discovery a company was formed and the reef sold to speculators. The main 'rush' to Crooked River produced only about 5,000 oz of gold and by the following year only about 15 reefs were working. Of 125 leases taken out by September 1865 only 20 had been worked and the rest were forfeited in 1866.<sup>34</sup>
- 1865-1915:** Good Hope mine was longest-worked mine at Crooked River. Worked from 5 tunnels. Best years were 1865-70. Original Good Hope Co. closed down after 12 yrs - paid dividends of £27,000. Became New Good Hope Co. in 1879. Total yield 20,360 oz from 12,769 tons. Located on west side of leading spur on top of which runs the main road from Crooked River to Stratford.<sup>35</sup>
- 1865-6:** First crushing machine (Union Reef - steam-powered) commenced work - soon after came Pioneer and Jeff Davis batteries (both water-powered). Also public crushing works, operated by Victoria Co. and Hartley & Co. (both steam-powered), crushing for all reefs in upper and lower Jungle Creek. Good Hope Co. - 12-head battery (steam-powered - portable steam engine soon replaced by 15 hp horizontal engine) erected to crush from Good Hope, Uncle Tom, and Collingwood reefs - also Chilean mill and furnace for treating pyrites. Hibernia Co. battery erected at bottom of Hibernia Spur, to crush from Brother Jonathan, Great Western, Malvern Hill, and Rose and Shamrock reefs - also tramway. Jolly Sailor battery was steam-powered. By end of 1865, 8 batteries on field. By end of 1865, many quartz claims were abandoned due to the cost/distance of carting to batteries, as well as lack of funds, and speculation by city capitalists, which led to extensive shepherding, discouraging bona fide miners.<sup>36</sup>
- March 1866:** Mining population: 230 alluvial (84 Chinese), 518 quartz miners. 5 steam batteries, 3 water-powered. General depression throughout the district, due to the improvident speculation begun six or eight months ago - most claims worked by bona fide miners have proved as good or better than expected - but many claims shepherded by speculators. 'Unfortunately, the reckless and unprofitable manner in which capital was invested and wasted in the subdivision in its earlier days must, undoubtedly, for a long time, militate against its development'. Fifteen new reefs discovered during quarter - 10 in vicinity of Grant, five on Upper Dargo. Good-looking Upper Dargo reefs include the California (sample crushing by hand), Morning Star (erecting battery), Evening Star, John Conness, and Dargo Hope - last-named two are richest - also Eureka Reef and Ophir Reef (continuation of Eureka). Good Hope Co. - shaft down 240 ft - quartz getting richer the deeper they sink - machinery and furnace being erected to separate gold from pyrites. Union Co. engaged driving very long tunnel. Hibernia Co. about to erect battery and tramway at cost of £4,000. Jeff Davis and Pioneer reefs still suppressing details of crushings.<sup>37</sup>
- 1866:** New reefs discovered on Upper Dargo field. First battery erected on Eureka claim - 8-head, water-powered - initial crushings gave 400 oz from 100 tons. Morning Star Co. and Cornish claim also erected batteries. Some batteries brought from Crooked River field, eg. Evening Star, Upper Dargo (ex Union battery).<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Flett (1965), pp. 40-2

<sup>35</sup> Christie & Gray, pp. 80-85

<sup>36</sup> Christie & Gray, pp. 72-6, 80

<sup>37</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1866

<sup>38</sup> Christie & Gray, pp. 86-7

- June 1866:** Mining population: 160 alluvial (60 Chinese), 565 quartz miners - most working on reefs at Upper Dargo (200) and Mt Pleasant (175). Nearly £10,000 worth of gold taken out of Good Hope Co. claim in last six months, one-half of which has paid all working expenses. Work suspended on Union and Jeff Davis claims. New reefs include the Frank Walsh and St Leger.<sup>39</sup>
- September 1866:** Mining population: 277 alluvial (113 Chinese), 389 quartz miners. Small rush (100 men, mainly Chinese) to Wentworth River. Decrease in quartz miners - some working instead on alluvial at Good Luck Creek. Work suspended on several reefs at Grant - high cost of cartage (35s per ton) and crushing (25s per ton) - reefs not rich or extensive enough to pay for working - very few exceed 8 inches in width.<sup>40</sup>
- December 1866:** Mining population: 511 alluvial (257 Chinese), 297 quartz miners. 270 miners (mainly Chinese) at Wentworth River, 211 at Upper Dargo - only 80 at Mt Pleasant. Wentworth River and branches - 25-Mile, 30-Mile, and 35-Mile creeks. Good Hope Co. tunnelling - in about 580 ft. John Conness Co., Upper Dargo, erected 8-head battery. Evening Star Co., Upper Dargo, purchased Union Co.'s battery - removing and re-erecting it. Jeff Davis mine on tribute.<sup>41</sup>
- 1866-8:** In 1866, sixteen reefs at Crooked River produced 7232 oz of gold - similar returns continued in 1867-8, but diminished thereafter. Grant township slowly disintegrated.<sup>42</sup>
- March 1867:** Small rush of alluvial miners (about 45) to old workings on Upper Crooked River.<sup>43</sup>
- June 1867:** Several abandoned reefs taken up again - renamed, eg. ex Bird-in-Hand now Rubble Reef, ex Kennedy's now Vulcan Reef, ex Belfast now Advance Reef - new workings yielding well and spurring on others. Kong Meng Co. started work on ex Black Snake and Gipsy Queen claims at Black Snake Creek. Most Chinese miners left Wentworth River for Boggy Creek diggings. Good Hope Co. treating quartz tailings and pyrites.<sup>44</sup>
- September 1867:** Kong Meng Co. erected 4-head battery.<sup>45</sup>
- 1867+:** Kong Meng Co. formed to work Black Snake Reef on Black Snake Creek, about three miles from junction with Worrangatta River and eight miles from township of Dargo. Worked mine for about three years, reputedly crushing 600 tons of quartz for an average of over 1 oz/ton. Mine then lay idle for a number of years until it was taken up by a syndicate and a lower tunnel driven along line for about 150 ft, without success.<sup>46</sup>
- December 1867:** Homeward-bound Co., Upper Dargo, purchased Eureka battery - erecting it near their reef.<sup>47</sup>
- March 1868:** Pyrites from Good Hope mine exceedingly rich - 1 ton yielded over 95 oz gold. Pioneer Co. again working their claim. Jeff Davis, Britannia and Morning Star batteries all idle.<sup>48</sup>

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39 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), June 1866  
 40 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), September 1866  
 41 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1866  
 42 Flett, p. 153  
 43 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1867  
 44 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), June 1867  
 45 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), September 1867  
 46 Kenny (1925)  
 47 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1867  
 48 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1868

- June 1868:** Hibernia Co. abandoned claim - insufficient water for crushing - intends to remove battery to another part of the field. Good Hope Co. - 12 tons of pyrites yielded 485 oz - saved by means of percussion tables. John Conness Co., Upper Dargo, abandoning reef – propose moving battery to Grant vicinity.<sup>49</sup>
- September 1868:** Mining population reduced by one-fifth - Gibbo and Freestone rushes. Good Hope mine nearly worked out at present level. Alluvial mining almost entirely confined to 25- and 30-Mile creeks.<sup>50</sup>
- December 1868:** Drought - only Jeff Davis and Pioneer (steam) batteries operating - Kong Meng, Crinoline, Hibernia, Jungle, Mornington, Britannia, and Globe mills (water-powered) idle. Good Hope Co. driving lower tunnel through hard rock - in 400 ft - acquiring boring machine from Sandhurst.<sup>51</sup>
- March 1869:** Warsaw Co. erected new battery at Upper Dargo. Alluvial mining population and yield increasing. Payable alluvial gold discovered on Dargo Flat, some 15 miles from Grant.<sup>52</sup>
- June 1869:** Bengal Reef Co. purchased Britannia battery and mine. Only batteries operating on Upper Dargo are Evening Star and Warsaw. Morning Star mine and mill sold and now operating as Rossbrin Mining Co.<sup>53</sup>
- September 1869:** Good Hope lower tunnel abandoned - rock too hard - chamber being cut in No. 3 level for pumping and winding engine. Quantity of quartz crushed lower than during any quarter since 1865 - MS hopeful of a 'turn for the better'. Batteries formerly situated so as to be 'totally unavailable for any of the mines of a permanent character' - now four formerly idle batteries have changed hands and will again be operational to 'systematically work several of the most promising lodes'. Alluvial miners shifting attention to Crooked and Lower Dargo rivers - workings on Crooked River formerly confined almost entirely to bed of river - several parties now working large flats extending along banks - good results - Lower Dargo miners principally Chinese.<sup>54</sup>
- 1869:** Crooked River reefs produced 4,000-5,000 oz gold yearly, but always by new companies starting up - the yield then fell alarmingly.<sup>55</sup>
- 1870s-80s:** Only good performer during this period was Good Hope mine.<sup>56</sup>

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49 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), June 1868  
50 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), September 1868  
51 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1868  
52 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1869  
53 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), June 1869  
54 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), September 1869  
55 Flett (1965), p. 42  
56 Christie & Gray, p. 92

- March 1870:** Eagle Vale Co. working New America and Champion reefs on Wonangatta River – erected new battery. Anchor of Hope Co. erecting ex Victoria battery on New Bendigo Reef. Golden Fleece Co., Upper Dargo, erecting ex John Conness battery (8-head) immediately opposite their mine. Very rich alluvial ground discovered in neighbourhood of Mt Tabletop - difficult to work due to snow in winter and scarcity of water in summer.<sup>57</sup>
- June 1870:** Anchor of Hope Co. also erecting machinery for treating pyrites - will be 'best finished' mill in division. 'Tolerably rich ground' discovered on Johnny-cake Creek, Dargo High Plain.<sup>58</sup>
- March 1871:** Beautiful Star and Triumph reefs discovered on Tea-cup Creek, tributary of Wentworth River - first quartz mining in that portion of division - reefs situated about 1 mile apart, 5 or 6 miles from Dargo Flat PO. Evening Star Co., Upper Dargo, doing very poorly - sold battery, to be used for crushing from Pole Star and Bombay mines.<sup>59</sup>
- June 1871:** Rubble mine abandoned after 5 years' work. Alluvial rush to Policeman's Creek, Lower Dargo - claims marked out for about 3 miles at upper end of creek.<sup>60</sup>
- September 1871:** Out of some 300 reefs proved auriferous in division, Good Hope is only one tested to depth of 300 ft - 2 oz stone now being found in that mine at depth of 620 ft - at surface and shallow depth it was far less rich than many others. Palmerston Reef, twice abandoned, now being worked at depth of 200 ft and yielding well.<sup>61</sup>
- December 1871:** Garry Castle Co. erecting ex-Golden Fleece battery at head of Wentworth River - first battery in vicinity.<sup>62</sup>
- 1871:** Payable stone discovered in old Mammoth Reef, Upper Dargo - mine first taken up in 1866, but little work done before abandonment - taken up under lease in 1871 - 90 tons gave average yield of over 2 oz/ton - 'most important discovery yet made in the division'.<sup>63</sup>
- June 1872:** Hopeful (ex Rubble) Reef taken up and yielding well. Palmerston mine abandoned. Alluvial mining confined to parties of two or four men sluicing beds of creeks and rivers and washing adjacent banks - no puddling machines or mills for crushing cement, nor alluvial mine worked by a company.<sup>64</sup>
- September 1872:** Brother Jonathan mine taken up and named Kossuth. Pioneer and Crinoline batteries crushing again. Garry Castle (Wentworth) first crushing.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1870  
<sup>58</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), June 1870  
<sup>59</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1871  
<sup>60</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), June 1871  
<sup>61</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), September 1871  
<sup>62</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1871  
<sup>63</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1872  
<sup>64</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), June 1872  
<sup>65</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), September 1872



- March 1873:** Mining matters look gloomier and more unpromising than at any other time during past 8 years. Good Hope mine doing poorly. Garry Castle and Great Republic (both Garry Castle Co.) mines, Wentworth, are doing fairly well. Cumberland Reef, 30-Mile Creek - 12 tons yielded average 2 oz/ton, but barely covered expenses of packing and crushing (£4 ton). Except for a few parties on the 12-Mile, alluvial parties not making more than 15s-£1 per week.<sup>66</sup>
- March 1873:** Mammoth Reef, on the head of the Dargo, owned by J.A. Wallace and Luis Hanniker (or Auker) - trying to float company in England, France and Belgium. P.O. and store at the reef - settlement called Luisville.<sup>67</sup>
- June 1873:** Time-will-Tell Co. erecting water-power battery on Jungle Creek, to work Bismarck Reef Speedwell Reef, in same vicinity, also being re-worked. Comet Reef discovered on Lower Dargo - first reef in division found in granite. Mornington battery crushing for Hopeful mine.<sup>68</sup>
- September 1873:** Jolly Sailor's Reef now being worked as Ballarat Reef. Only mine at work on Upper Dargo is the Mammoth.<sup>69</sup>
- December 1873:** Garry Castle and Great Republic reefs, Wentworth, doing very poorly.<sup>70</sup>
- March 1874:** Ballarat, Faithful, Jeweller's Shop, Newcastle, and Pioneer mines suspended work.<sup>71</sup>
- September 1874:** Quartz mining almost at a standstill - emphasis shifted to prospecting of alluvial ground - several good claims opened up on rivers and creeks.<sup>72</sup>
- December 1874:** Mornington battery seriously damaged by fire.<sup>73</sup>
- March 1875:** Mornington mill being repaired. Rush to Swamp Creek - very rich ground discovered - shallow diggings (not more than 3 ft - about 100 diggers).<sup>74</sup>
- June 1875:** Results of quartz mining variously described as 'by no means encouraging', 'anything but satisfactory', and 'miserably poor'. Quartz mining declining - change for the better in alluvial workings.<sup>75</sup>
- September 1875:** Good Hope mine struggling on, trying all their workings for a run of gold.<sup>76</sup>
- December 1875:** Good Hope Reef crushed richest stone ever found in this part of division - 28 tons from below 500 ft level gave 9 oz/ton.<sup>77</sup>
- March 1876:** Quartz and alluvial mining dull again.<sup>78</sup>
- 1876:** 'Grant is now a deserted village. A great number of houses are empty. The windows of most of them are boarded and where not boarded they are broken; the once busy streets are now silent and the pathways are thickly covered with broken bottles,

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<sup>66</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1873

<sup>67</sup> Morgan

<sup>68</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), June 1873

<sup>69</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), September 1873

<sup>70</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1873

<sup>71</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1874

<sup>72</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), September 1874

<sup>73</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1874

<sup>74</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1875

<sup>75</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), June 1875

<sup>76</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), September 1875

<sup>77</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1875

<sup>78</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1876

rusted sardine tins, iron hoops, staves of casks and fragments of bush furniture.' 18 diggers at Grant and 30 on the Crooked River.<sup>79</sup>

**March 1877:** Good Hope mine let on tribute to party of working miners with long connection with mine as employees.<sup>80</sup>

**June 1877** Sons of Freedom (ex Union) Co. erecting new battery and tramway. Republic Reef, Wentworth River, doing well - packing stone to (Garry Castle Co?) battery.<sup>81</sup>

**December 1877:** Quartz mining duller than ever before.<sup>82</sup>

**June 1878:** Yields from Good Hope tribute miserably poor - lower level, commenced some years ago through hard rock, to be retried. Work suspended at Republic mine. Mining population decreasing owing to miners finding other occupations.<sup>83</sup>

**September 1878:** A large reef, discovered nearly thirteen years ago, but in connection with which no work of importance has ever been done, was taken up by a Melbourne company, and negotiations have been entered into to purchase and remove the Pioneer and Jeff Davis batteries for the purpose of working it.<sup>84</sup>

**December 1878:** White Top/Perseverance Reef (discovered on 25-Mile Creek some years ago) taken up and giving good yields - owned by 4 working miners.<sup>85</sup>

**March 1879:** Good Hope Co. crushing tailings - forming new company to put in tunnel to cut reef at depth of 1,100 ft from surface. Alluvial miners shifting from place to place.<sup>86</sup>

**June 1879:** Discovery of Budgee Reef, Granite Creek.<sup>87</sup>

**September 1879:** Discovery of Triumph Reef, on spur at Teacup Creek, near Wentworth.<sup>88</sup>

**December 1879:** Leases taken up on Normanby Reef, near Triumph Reef on Teacup Creek, Wentworth. On Crooked River, most alluvial gold is got from bank claims; little or no river or creek claims being worked.<sup>89</sup>

**March 1880:** Normanby Co., Tea-cup Creek, erecting battery. Also Little Venture Co., Dargo High Plains. Lone Hand claim (ex Mountaineer) taken up. Many alluvial miners on Middle Dargo.<sup>90</sup>

**1880:** New Good Hope Co. driving No. 4 level with Ford's rock-boring machine - awaiting National rock-boring machine - costing £2 per foot.<sup>91</sup>

**September 1880:** Mt Budgee QGMC erected battery.<sup>92</sup>

**December 1880:** Many alluvial miners leaving for Thowgla Creek - population increasing on Middle Dargo.<sup>93</sup>

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79 quoted in Flett (1865), p. 43

80 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1877

81 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), June 1877

82 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1877

83 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), June 1878

84 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), September 1878

85 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1878

86 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1879

87 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), June 1879

88 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), September & December 1879

89 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1879

90 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1880

91 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), June & September 1880

92 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), September 1880

**September 1881:** Two well-known reefs being tried on Good Luck Creek - Mountaineer and Luck's All.<sup>94</sup>

**December 1881:** New Good Hope Co. struck quartz reef in No. 4 tunnel, but no gold.<sup>95</sup>

**March 1882:** Considerable extent of ground on King's Spur, Dargo High Plains, taken up under Miner's Right - prospecting for deep leads under basalt.<sup>96</sup>

**December 1882:** Preparations being made for erection of a battery for Lone Hand Co. at Good Luck Creek—many known reefs in locality, a battery may lead to some being taken up and profitably worked.

**1883:** Still three hotels at Grant.<sup>97</sup>

**1883:** Alpine Deep Leads Co., Dargo High Plains, cut water-races, &c for sluicing - results not encouraging.<sup>98</sup>

**March 1884:** Newly discovered reef at Upper Dargo (near former Eureka claim) yielded 71 oz gold from 30 tons of quartz. Alluvial mining population decreasing.<sup>99</sup>

**December 1884:** Drought - New Good Hope Co. constructed dam to enable crushing in dry weather.<sup>100</sup>

**March 1885:** Happy Home Co. (Upper Dargo?) erected water-powered battery.<sup>101</sup>

**1885:** New Good Hope Co. reorganised - now in private hands - installed winding plant and air compressor - sporadic returns.<sup>102</sup>

**February- May 1887:** Mammoth mine, Upper Dargo - battery site one mile from reef - Henry Morgan and son constructing battery - built themselves 'snug log cabin' (6\_ x 9\_ ft) near battery site - multitubular boiler of 34 tubes, 12 ft x 4\_ ft diam, completed 21 April 1887 - J. Byrne, one of Mammoth directors, managing construction of battery.<sup>103</sup>

**March 1887:** Considerable increase of quartz miners at Upper Dargo - Mammoth Co. erecting battery. Several parties of Chinese miners taking up abandoned ground on Crooked River.<sup>104</sup>

**May 1887:** Lady Loch mine, Evening Star Creek, Upper Dargo - Mr Powell erecting 5-head battery, driven by portable engine.<sup>105</sup>

**June 1887:** Mammoth Co. constructed machinery houses and tramway - driving tunnel.<sup>106</sup>

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93 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1880

94 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), September 1881

95 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1881

96 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1882

97 Flett, p. 153

98 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March & December 1883

99 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1884

100 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1884

101 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1885

102 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), September 1885; Christie & Gray, pp. 80-85

103 Morgan

104 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1887

105 Morgan

106 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), June 1887

- June 1887:** Henry Morgan splitting rails for Mammoth mine incline tramway.<sup>107</sup>
- July 1887:** Mammoth mine - blanket tables laid - 3 tables @ 12 ft long - weatherboarding battery shed - working in heavy snow.<sup>108</sup>
- 1887:** Mammoth mines, Upper Dargo - new battery erected, but mine a failure - total yields 1050 tons for 280 oz.<sup>109</sup>
- 1887-8:** Union Reef taken up by National GMC applied for - tunnelling.<sup>110</sup>
- 1888-9:** New Good Hope Co. - gold found at depth of 780 ft - repaired battery and installed two Watson and Denny's pans for treatment of pyrites, of which their stone contains a large quantity - company has 500 tons of tailings and considerable quantity of pyrites stacked.<sup>111</sup>
- 1888-93:** Mining revival, following announcement of government grant for prospecting - 41 claims registered, but only three were still being worked in 1893.<sup>112</sup>
- March 1889:** Alluvial mining at Upper Dargo - extensive work being carried on - one party spent 10 months tunnelling through a spur to enable them to sluice deep ground.<sup>113</sup>
- March 1889:** Normanby machine burnt down by bushfires.<sup>114</sup>
- 1889:** Numerous prospecting parties aided by Prospecting vote - numerous reefs found, but not payable.<sup>115</sup>

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107 Morgan

108 Morgan

109 Christie & Gray, p. 87

110 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1887, March & June

111 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), September & December 1888

112 Christie & Gray, p. 92

113 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), March 1889

114 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Dargo Subdivision), March 1889

115 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Crooked River Subdivision), December 1889

- 1895:** Dargo High Plains - alleged discovery of valuable auriferous deposits - 'There is absolutely no justification for the exaggerated and somewhat misleading reports which have gained currency through the local press' - discovery of several ounces of gold in auriferous gutter by Ryan and Co., on western edge of Dargo High Plains, led to pegging out of several miles along edge of plateau, in the Twenty-five-mile Creek watershed area - few recent workings can be considered new discoveries, as they are all in proximity to old workings - on northern watershed of Dargo, Mayford Spur, Long Spur, German Terrace, on southern and western watershed, and also various points on 25-Mile Creek. Quartz reefs. - Several reefs on ridge dividing heads of Wongungarra and Dargo Rivers - outcrop along southern slopes of the long spur between Little Dargo and Dargo Rivers being opened out by Saul Morris at site discovered by him 23 years ago race being cut from Little Dargo River, to NW, about 3\_ miles to work lower deposit, 240 ft below upper wash.<sup>116</sup>
- 1895:** On King Spur, on eastern slopes of Dargo High Plains - abandoned 700-ft tunnel on lead - good water race on both sides of spur. A great amount of desultory prospecting has been done all around the basaltic plateau, but with very poor results. The creeks having their source from the Dargo Plains are not as rich as they should be had any of the Miocene leads been of a payable nature.<sup>117</sup>
- 1896:** Try Again Reef, on W side of Dargo River, 4 miles from the Hospice on the main divide - two tunnels, high above river - about 100 S is Last Rose of Summer Reef, worked by open cut for several hundred feet.<sup>118</sup>
- 1898:** During 1895 there were signs of a 'boom' in the way of mining gravels underlying the basalt of Dargo High Plains (exposed at various points in natural section on slopes towards creeks and rivers on either side) - survey made by GSV - tended to deprecate undue speculation, based on then available evidence. Prospecting in Murray now believes that large amount of wash under the plains would well repay cost of mining - recommends prospecting, but care 'to avert the danger attendant on the unwarranted "rush" or "boom"'.<sup>119</sup>
- 1898:** Normanby mine, Wentworth River - opened years ago - very good battery was erected and some rich yields obtained, but through mismanagement work was stopped whole of plant, including tramway, was destroyed by fire and mine has lain idle ever since - lease has been locked up for some time, but it is understood that a large German company has the property in hand.<sup>120</sup>
- 1898:** Messrs Traill Bros have a very fine show at the head of Donnelly's Creek, a tributary to the Wentworth River - reef is 8 ft wide and prospects run many ounces to the ton - want of battery facilities, 'and a fortune awaits any capitalist or company erecting batteries in the various creeks for public crushing'.<sup>121</sup>

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116 Stirling

117 Hunter, p. 54

118 Murray (1896)

119 Murray (1898)

120 *Australian Mining Standard*, 28 April 1898, p. 2883

121 *Australian Mining Standard*, 28 April 1898, p. 2883

- 1899:** Present workings at Dargo: Bar One, on NW side of plains, have tunnelled 700 ft; Royal Dargo, SE end of plain, open face of wash 45 ft deep, claim worked by hydraulic nozzles, 4 miles of races, another 4 miles under construction, water drawn from creeks on either side of spur; Patti, on SE side of plain, tunnels and crosscuts; No. 1 Dargo Proprietary, tunnel 1023 feet long, prospecting; No. 3 Dargo Proprietary, wash tunnel in 671 ft, rock tunnel at lower level in 352 ft. Unlike leads at Ballarat, etc., Dargo plains leads can be worked by tunnelling from sides of plateau, thus obviating the use of pumping and winding machinery - not a single shaft required - wash wide and gold coarse and payable. No reference to the Dargo High Plains would be complete without mention of Mr A.H. Ryan, through whose ability as a prospector and untiring energy and perseverance a large tract of virgin country has been brought within measurable distance of becoming one of our leading mining fields in Victoria.<sup>122</sup>
- 1900:** Of the five river towns - Hog Town, Howittville, Winchester, Bull Town & Talbotville - only Talbotville survived into the 20thC.<sup>123</sup>
- 1900:** Government battery removed from Smoko (Upper Ovens) to Livingstone Creek, Dargo High Plains - of great service to prospectors in locality - led to opening up of several excellent reefs - prospectors from Harrietville.<sup>124</sup>
- 1900s:** Number of quartz mines around Dargo worked with some success. Dargo government battery then moved to Grant - finally returned to Shortcut Road, some 3 miles south of Dargo.<sup>125</sup>
- 1903:** North Gippsland Proprietary Co. (on Good Hope?) driving long tunnel and working an electrical plant at Grant. No progress and little mining at Crooked River, Upper Dargo River, Dargo High Plains, Wentworth River, Dargo, and Budgee Budgee.<sup>126</sup>
- 1904:** Andrews' new find, Grant - battery erected. Hydraulic sluicing of lead at Ryan's Royal mine, Dargo High Plains.<sup>127</sup>
- 1905:** About 5 reefs working at Crooked River, including Good Hope Consolidated and Andrews' mine. Government battery erected at Dargo and new line of reef opened up near township - but disappointing results.<sup>128</sup>
- 1906:** Union and Dorritt Mine, \_ mile N of Grant - working Union, Italian, Dorritt, Rubbly, and Vulcan reefs by tunnel.<sup>129</sup>
- 1906:** Crooked River Dredging Co. erecting large barge on which powerful dredging machinery will be installed, to work lease near junction of Good Hope and Jungle creeks.<sup>130</sup>
- 1906-12:** Dredging on Dargo and Crooked rivers. Crooked River was dredged for 3 miles from Winchester (Little London) to Good Hope Creek. Crooked River dredge came from Omeo - then dismantled and carted to Tongio West. Crooked River was dredged for 3 miles from Winchester (Little London) to Good Hope Creek.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> *Australian Mining Standard*, 1 June 1899, p. 78

<sup>123</sup> Christie & Gray, pp. 90, 93

<sup>124</sup> *Australian Mining Standard*, 3 January 1901, p. 15

<sup>125</sup> Christie & Gray, pp. 87-9

<sup>126</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1903

<sup>127</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1903

<sup>128</sup> Flett (1965), p. 43; Department of Mines Annual Report, 1905

<sup>129</sup> Dunn (1907/1)

<sup>130</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1906

<sup>131</sup> Christie & Gray, pp. 87-9

- 1906:** Good Hope Reef, about 4 miles W of Grant - formerly worked by 4 adits - 14,461 tons taken from old workings, for yield of 23,357 oz - No. 4 adit is 1,112 ft long, its mouth 650 ft above Crooked River - plant at mouth of adit consists of 4-hp Otto oil engine and dynamo, working an electric drill and lighting. On opposite side of valley is Uncle Tom Reef - small quantity of quartz crushed. Between the Good Hope mine and Grant is the Magenta Reef - has been worked from several shafts.<sup>132</sup>
- 1906-15:** Good Hope mine - fifth adit commenced on opposite side of hill from four existing adits - the continuation of the reef from the No. 4 adit was never found - three companies worked the mine between 1906-15, spending more than £20,000 for little return.<sup>133</sup>
- 1906-7:** Lone Hand Reef - crosses Mornington Gully about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile E of Grant - eastward continuation of Jolly Sailor's Reef - not long opened up - worked by co-operative party - 5-head battery and 8-hp engine in Mornington Gully near reef. Royal Flush Reef worked in conjunction with the Lone Hand - situated between Lone Hand and Grant - poor. Lone Hand tributers ceased work in 1907.<sup>134</sup>
- 1906:** Government battery still at Dargo. Reefs near Dargo township include: Two C's Reef,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile NE; Jorgenson's Reef, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  miles E, in Hurley's paddock, worked by shaft; Trail of the Serpent Reef,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile SW from Jorgenson's, in Riggall's paddock, worked by shaft; Little Exhibition Reef, 3 miles from Dargo on road to Waterford, in a paddock on S side of road, worked by adits; Big Exhibition Reef, about 100 ft south of Little, worked by adit; Great Eastern Reef-Blue Leader, north of Exhibition adits in gully on eastern slope of hill; Pini's & Joy's leaders, north of Exhibition reefs; Perseverance Reef, 1 mile NW of Exhibition reefs. Small-scale workings (present and past) and prospecting.<sup>135</sup>
- 1907:** Exhibition Co. raising payable stone at Dargo - otherwise dull. Evening Star Co. and Golden Ridge Co. working on Dargo High Plains. Murray & party tunnelling for alluvial gutter at Twenty-five Mile Creek.<sup>136</sup>
- 1907:** Bamford and Francis got govt grant to extend Kong Meng tunnel - got nothing payable.<sup>137</sup>
- 1908:** Dredge started work on Dargo River, near township. Exhibition Co. stopped work - on tribute.<sup>138</sup>
- 1908:** Union and Dorrit Co. only one working at Grant - tunnelling through hard ground.<sup>139</sup>
- 1909:** New Good Hope Consolidated Co. formed - erected 5-head battery at mouth of tunnel.<sup>140</sup>

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132 Dunn (1907/2)

133 Christie, p. 23

134 Dunn (1907/3); Department of Mines Annual Report, 1907

135 Dunn (4/1907)

136 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1907

137 Kenny (1925)

138 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1908

139 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1908

140 Christie & Gray, p. 85

- 1910:** Ryan & party, Dargo High Plains, still hydraulic sluicing. Union & Dorrit Co. still tunnelling for lode. New Good Hope Co. further extending tunnel - steam-powered battery erected. Crooked River Dredging Co. still working. Exhibition Co., Dargo, in hands of tributers.<sup>141</sup>
- 1912:** New Good Hope Co. completed tunnel to 3,350 ft length - oil engine, powerful blower and 'capacious air pipes' ventilate mine. Crooked River dredge again at work, in neighbourhood of Talbotville - hardly payable.<sup>142</sup>
- 1913:** Britannia Co., Union and Dorrit Co., Lone Hand Syndicate and New Good Hope Consolidated Co. prospecting - nothing payable found.<sup>143</sup>
- 1914:** By 1914, Grant township had ceased to exist.<sup>144</sup>
- 1915:** New Hope Consolidated and Union & Dorrit mines closed down - only a few prospectors remain in district of Grant.<sup>145</sup>
- 1916:** 'Grant is now practically a deserted gold-field.'<sup>146</sup>
- 1916-18+:** Chambers & Martin working payable quartz shoot in very mountainous country, above the snow line at Dargo - steam-powered battery - winding machinery installed 1918.<sup>147</sup>
- 1930s:** Depression - government encouraged mining on Black Snake Creek, where a small settlement was established - only 15 diggers remained.<sup>148</sup>
- 1932:** Streets of Grant were red tracks in the grassy sward - some inverted bottles and a gooseberry bush were once was a flower bed, and some hardy fruit trees. Also Government battery there, which was sometimes used. But water races and mullock heaps even had disappeared under bracken and scrub.<sup>149</sup>
- 1933-8:** Normanby mine, Dargo - in watershed of Teapot Creek, tributary of Wentworth River from the west - reef formerly worked by adits driven northerly - 10-head battery near creek, connected to mine by two incline haulages and level road. In 1933, area prospected by Don Treasure - payable gold on flat reef north of workings - lease taken up - considerable transport difficulties (packhorses), as high range separated mine from Dargo - old Normanby battery was still on site - five heads of battery were transported up creek nearer mine, a dam built, and tractor (suction gas generated by charcoal) driven over range and installed to drive battery - mine and battery connected by self-acting aerial ropeway about 300 yards long - fence wire twisted together to form 10-strand cable - reef carried gold on surface for length of 100 ft - worked to depth of 30 ft from two tunnels driven south - reef on surface carried rich stone - one parcel of \_ ton yielded 30 oz and 14 lb gave 2 oz - in all, 68\_ tons crushed for 121 oz gold.<sup>150</sup>
- 1935-7:** Treasury Reef, Dargo - another reef discovered by Treasure about 300 yards north of Normanby mine - shaft sunk to 60 ft - reef lost - 72 tons yielded 103 oz.<sup>151</sup>

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141 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1910  
 142 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1912  
 143 Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1913-14  
 144 Flett, p. 153  
 145 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1915  
 146 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1916  
 147 Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1916-18  
 148 Christie & Gray, p. 88  
 149 Flett (1965), p. 44  
 150 Kenny (1940/1)  
 151 Kenny (1940/2)



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## **DEPTFORD GOLDFIELD NOTES**

*Nicholson River rises high in the mountains forming the southern flank of Mt Baldhead. Here begin such streams as Yahoo Creek, Barmouth River, and McDonalds Creek.*<sup>1</sup>

**1850s-:** C.C. Tyers wrote that he had found gold in the bed of the Nicholson River in January. For some years the only gold reports from Gippsland were about the Nicholson. By the end of 1854, the river was proved auriferous. Several parties working there in 1855. By 1856 the Nicholson goldfield was well known.<sup>2</sup>

**1850s-60s:** Store Creek was very rich in alluvial gold, as was German Gully, which runs into Store Creek. At one time, there were 1,000 men on the two creeks. German Gully is reputed to have the coarsest alluvial gold in Gippsland. There was a small settlement at Store Creek to service miners on the two creeks.<sup>3</sup> Also rich and extensively worked were Pound Creek, Calgoolie Flat, and Chinaman's Flat.<sup>4</sup>

**1861:** Payable gold found in Barmouth Creek, the main eastern tributary of upper Nicholson River - some digging went on until by 1866 there were 80 diggers on the Barmouth and McDonald's creeks - Barmouth and branches still being worked in 1888.<sup>5</sup>

**1860s:** Nicholson River was worked in places between Deptford and the Barmouth junction. The upper Nicholson and minor creeks in the vicinity of the Yahoo Creek were extensively worked with good results.<sup>6</sup>

**1860s:** There were said to be about 100 Chinese miners on the Nicholson River. Chinese miners are credited with driving the diversion tunnel which drained the river from the horseshoe bend which formed Houghton's Flat (also known as McCoy's Flat) to enable them to work that section of the river bed.<sup>7</sup>

**1864:** The township of Deptford, named in 1864, was built on the banks of the Nicholson River, almost opposite where Navigation Creek flows into the River.<sup>8</sup>

**March 1866:** Great attention now given to quartz mining in Store Creek vicinity, where extensive alluvial workings were carried on in previous years, but which are now abandoned. Tambo Prospecting Co., on Richmond Reef, erecting steam quartz-crushing machine which is likely to create immense impulse for quartz-mining operations - dam and reservoir being constructed. Very rich reef recently discovered at junction of Nicholson River and Navigation Creek - battery will probably be erected. Several leases applied for. Mining population: Store Creek, 7; McDonald's Creek, 11; Barmouth Creek, 40; Nicholson River, 28 - only eighteen quartz miners in division.<sup>9</sup>

**September 1866:** Tambo Co. battery commenced crushing - 9-head, 12-hp engine - trial crushing gave 11 dwt/ton. 43 quartz miners on field.<sup>10</sup>

**1866:** Trio quartz mine began work at Deptford - erected battery in 1867 and crushed stone for other mines as well as its own.<sup>11</sup>

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1 Fairweather, p. 75

2 Flett, pp. 146-8

3 Fairweather, p. 75

4 Fairweather, p. 88

5 Flett, p. 148

6 Flett, p. 148

7 Fairweather, p. 77

8 Fairweather, p. 76

9 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1866

10 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1866

11 Fairweather, p. 99

- September 1867:** Trio Co. battery commenced crushing - initial crushing gave average 1 oz 4 dwt/ton. Other companies crushing at the Trio battery were Tubal Cain and Nicholson, averaging 12 dwt/ton.<sup>12</sup>
- December 1867:** The 30 quartz miners in the subdivision were employed by the Tambo and Trio companies, earning between 50-70 shillings each per week. Tambo Co. average yield was down to 3 oz 15 dwt/ton.<sup>13</sup>
- c.1867:** Tubal Cain, Nicholson, Duke of Edinburgh, Standard of Freedom, Elizabeth, and Louisa mines commenced work at Deptford. Most had either closed down or been amalgamated by 1870.<sup>14</sup>
- 1868:** Mine which later became the Hidden Treasure was initially worked as the Nova Scotia, then as the Why Not - lease was on south side of the river, a mile or two above McKinnon's.<sup>15</sup>
- March 1869:** Only quartz mine worked is Tubal Cain at Deptford - last crushing yielded 2 oz 6 dwt/ton, causing several claims to be taken up adjoining. Tambo Co. ground abandoned.<sup>16</sup>
- 1869:** Tambo Co. battery sold to Sons of Freedom mine, Bulumwaal.<sup>17</sup>
- 1869:** Trio battery considerably damaged by bushfires.<sup>18</sup>
- June 1869:** Improvement in quartz mining led to increased confidence - active works recommenced and additional machinery erected. Improved state of affairs mainly due to favourable yields from Tubal Cain mine at Deptford.<sup>19</sup>
- September 1869:** About 60 quartz miners at Deptford. Premier mine is Tubal Cain - underlie shaft sunk to 120 ft (20 ft below water level) - stone richly impregnated with galena, iron pyrites, &c. - yields average of 3oz/ton - same reef is being worked by Elizabeth Co. and Louisa Co. (on opposite side of Nicholson River). Duke of Edinburgh Co. suspended operations pending erection of battery in neighbourhood. Why-not Co. putting in adit level. All above are co-operative companies, worked by local shareholders. Standard of Freedom Co. (public company?) have expended considerable labor and money in working their claim and in erecting battery for public crushing purposes (Oliver & Co.'s?) - large dam built, water-race cut for about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile, for purpose of driving overshot waterwheel to power battery.<sup>20</sup>

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12 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1867  
 13 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1867  
 14 Fairweather, p. 99  
 15 Fairweather, p. 105  
 16 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1869  
 17 Fairweather  
 18 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1870  
 19 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1869  
 20 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1869

- March 1870:** Disastrous floods. Two new alluvial gullies discovered on Nicholson River - one about 7 miles below Deptford, 7 men on ground - other is Southern Creek, about 10 miles above Deptford. Public crushing machine erected at Deptford by Oliver and Co. - water-powered - crushed 82 tons for 200 oz. Tubal Cain Co. - 52 tons gave 170 oz - stone seems to improve at depth - whim being erected to pump water (mine flooded). Standard of Freedom Co. laying a tramway from their shaft to Oliver and Co.'s battery. Ex-Trio Co. battery (damaged by bushfire) purchased - new owners propose to repair it and crush for public.<sup>21</sup>
- June 1870:** Oliver & Co.'s dam and water-race destroyed by floods - 8-hp portable steam engine replaced waterwheel. Standard of Freedom yet to have a crushing - 200 tons raised. Why-not Co. suspended operations, due to lack of funds.<sup>22</sup>
- September 1870:** Three new reefs discovered: Happy-go-lucky, Walhalla, & Excelsior. Alluvial mining chiefly confined to banks and beds of rivers.<sup>23</sup>
- December 1870:** Tubal Cain & Elizabeth companies amalgamated and applied for lease. Duke of Edinburgh and Standard of Freedom companies suspended operations, due to want of sufficient funds. Excelsior Co. cut road to Salter's battery at Deptford, a distance of 2 miles. Mines worked by co-operative companies worked by local shareholders.<sup>24</sup>
- March 1871:** Quartz miners turning attention to alluvial workings to earn money to settle their store accounts. Cost of carting and crushing stone - about 23 shillings per ton.<sup>25</sup>
- 1871-1880:** Quartz mining at a standstill - 'foreign' capital needed.<sup>26</sup>
- September 1871:** Alluvial miners make fair wages - from 30s to 50s per week per man.<sup>27</sup>
- June 1872:** Ground sluicing is the method adopted in alluvial mining here. Washdirt is obtained at a depth of from 6 to 10 feet in the banks of the rivers and creeks.<sup>28</sup>
- June 1873:** Quartz mining still depressed, though several abandoned claims at Deptford have been taken up - 'I am afraid the holders will not be able to work them in a systematic manner, owing to want of capital.' Nicholson River Sluicing Co. formed to cut a race on a large scale for the purpose of working ground hitherto inaccessible to the individual miner, and also for letting out for ground-sluicing purposes - when finished, race will be about 30 miles in length - seven men now employed.<sup>29</sup>
- December 1873:** Nicholson River Sluicing Co. in full work.<sup>30</sup>
- June 1877:** Alluvial miners seem satisfied with their earnings - a number have selected under the 19th section of the existing Land Act, and are making homes in close proximity to the scene of their mining work.<sup>31</sup>
- December 1878:** The alluvial miners on the Nicholson River divide their attention between their creek and river claims and their 19th section selections.<sup>32</sup>

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21 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1870  
 22 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1870  
 23 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1870  
 24 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1870  
 25 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1871  
 26 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1871-December 1880  
 27 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1871  
 28 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1872  
 29 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1873  
 30 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1873  
 31 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1877  
 32 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1878

**December 1879:** Prospecting party formed by Bairnsdale business people, to test country between Mt Taylor and Nicholson River.<sup>33</sup>

**March-June 1880:** Prospecting party sank shaft 150 ft deep near Waterhole Creek - failed to reach bottom - several claims taken out on either side of prospecting claim.<sup>34</sup>

**December 1880:** Two Deptford reefs taken up, one under the byelaws and one under the gold mining leases regulations.<sup>35</sup>

**September 1881:** Steam crushing machine erected on Victoria Co.'s leased ground - about 12 years ago, stone from this reef averaged 15 oz/ton - not then considered payable. Majority of Deptford quartz reefs, abandoned about 12 years ago, have been taken up and applied for under Gold Mining Leases Regulation. Three companies floated and others are being formed.<sup>36</sup>

**December 1881:** Companies at work include Victoria, No. 1 North Victoria, Great Success, Solway Firth, and Mountaineer. Mountaineer Co. erected huts, smithy, &c., cleaned out old shaft sunk 12 years ago and abandoned owing to cost of carting quartz to nearest battery - have decided to drive tunnel to cut reef. Bairnsdale & Tambo Co. driving a tunnel, hoping to save expense of erecting pumping machinery.<sup>37</sup>

**1881-3:** Mountaineer mine, on reef originally called Brown's Reef - company formed in 1881 trial crushing at Victoria battery. In 1883, ore was packed to the Great Success battery, and then mining was suspended pending the erection of the Hidden Treasure battery.<sup>38</sup>

**March 1882:** Bairnsdale & Tambo Co. abandoned tunnel at 44 ft - very hard country - now intend sinking shaft.<sup>39</sup>

**September 1882:** Victoria Co. suspended operations following disappointing crushing. Hidden Treasure Co. driving tunnel. Great Success Co. putting in drive from bottom of shaft. Tambo & Bairnsdale Co. still driving tunnel through very hard country - 2 men engaged.<sup>40</sup>

**December 1882:** Great Success Co. got average of 2 oz/ton from parcel of unpicked stone.<sup>41</sup>

**March 1883:** Four companies at work at Deptford: Great Success, Mountaineer, Hidden Treasure, and Tambo & Bairnsdale. Great Success Co. started new main shaft on western side of Nicholson River - 'proper' pumping gear to be erected on completion of shaft. Mountaineer Co. will have trial crushing when rain fills dam at Victoria battery.<sup>42</sup>

**September 1883:** Great Success Co. - 8-hp engine placed at shaft - 17 men employed. Hidden Treasure QGMC - tunnel in 250 ft - extensive crushing plant has been purchased. Tambo & Bairnsdale GMC - tunnel now in 275 ft through excessively hard ground.<sup>43</sup>

**December 1883:** Mountaineer mine 'for some (to me) unaccountable reason' suspended operations. Hidden Treasure Co. - awaiting new 10-head battery, tables, and all modern appliances for saving gold, together with a 20-ft iron waterwheel, capable of driving 20 stampers - whole plant made to order by Atlas Co. of Engineers and now on

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33 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1879

34 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March & June 1880

35 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1880

36 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1881

37 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1881

38 Fairweather, p. 101

39 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1882

40 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1882

41 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1882

42 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1883

43 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1883

Bairnsdale wharf - contract for erection let to J.E. Cottew of Spencer Street, Melbourne - fluming of boards, 1,000 ft in length by 4 ft wide, will be built to convey water from Nicholson River to waterwheel - men engaged in building huts for construction crew - good dray road cleared from Deptford-Bairnsdale road to battery site - quartz from mine is heavily charged with pyrites and other minerals.<sup>44</sup>

**1883-6:** Hidden Treasure GMC - water race was found to run uphill, so corrections were made timber for race was supplied by Stedman's mill near Bairnsdale - mine worked by tunnel, cut to 200 ft - by February 1886, the mine was idle and the battery was removed.<sup>45</sup>

**March 1884:** Our Enterprise QMC - resumed operations - mining by means of tunnel. Tambo & Bairnsdale Co. - tunnel cut to 350 ft. Hidden Treasure QGMC - 400 tons of quartz stacked, awaiting crushing - battery under construction, also 1,030 ft of fluming - 'a wing dam of crates, 10 ft high and 165 ft long, has been built in order to protect the water-wheel and battery from all floods' - dam being constructed across the Nicholson River, 170 ft long x 12 ft 7in high.<sup>46</sup>

**June 1884:** Great Success Co. - £3,450 spent in opening up mine - operations carried on 'on the most approved principles'.<sup>47</sup>

**September 1884:** Great Success Co. purchased Victoria battery (about 3 miles distant) - intend removing it to their mine.<sup>48</sup>

**1884-6:** Great Success Co. bought Victoria battery (12-head, driven by 12-hp engine) - also smithy and shed built - 8-hp pumping engine placed at shaft in 1883 - larger boiler (ex steamer *Nell*) added in 1884 - additional 25-hp pumping engine, lifts, and winding gear installed in 1885 - in 1885, a yield of 74 oz from 35 tons brought the mine's total production to 1,000 oz. Operations were wound down after a dismal crushing in 1886 (plant at this time included a 25-hp engine for winding and pumping) - work continued only intermittently thereafter, and with no great results.<sup>49</sup>

**December 1884:** Victoria battery re-erected at Great Success mine, Deptford. Hidden Treasure machinery proved defective - had to be pulled down and re-erected. <sup>50</sup>

**March 1885:** Great Success Co. - first crushing at own battery gave 239 oz from 300 tons. Alluvial miners still dividing time between their selections and their claims - all seem to be comfortable.<sup>51</sup>

**June 1885:** Hidden Treasure Co. at a standstill, pending reorganisation.<sup>52</sup>

**September 1885:** Great Success Co. erected 'additional machinery' - crushed 182 tons for 182 oz.<sup>53</sup>

**December 1885:** Great Success Co. working Success and Tubal Cain lodes - 200 tons gave 291 oz.<sup>54</sup>

**March 1886:** 'The melancholy death of the late mining registrar (Mr J.G. Peers) has left the records incomplete...'<sup>55</sup>

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44 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1883

45 Fairweather, pp. 105-6

46 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1884

47 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1884

48 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1884

49 Fairweather, pp. 102-3

50 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1884

51 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1885

52 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1885

53 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1885

54 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Division), December 1885

55 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Division), March 1886

- January 1888:** Nicholson River government prospecting party 'succeeded in finding a payable reef on the left-hand side of Yahoo Creek, about three miles up the Nicholson from Barmouth Creek' - reef now being tested. 'Some years since the alluvial deposits near junction of Barmouth Creek and the Nicholson River were worked with payable results, a prospector named McKay have obtained as much as £120 worth of gold from one dishful of stuff. This was found under a floater, ie. a large boulder, in some bouldery wash on Barmouth Creek, about 1\_ miles from the junction.'<sup>56</sup>
- March 1888:** (W.H. Gregson, Mining Registrar) Prospects of alluvial mines in division have been very low - flood damage - 15 men retired from field 'by dismissal and abandonment of claims'. New line of reef struck at German Gully, about 2 miles from junction with Store Creek. Mining at Deptford almost exclusively alluvial - quartz mining merely prospecting – 'no reefs appear to have been found which offer sufficient inducement for systematic work'. Some talk of Great Success mine resuming operations by tributers. Working at Deptford is principally in bed of river - races and dams being repaired after flood damage - 19 European (14 alluvial, 5 quartz prospectors) and 8 Chinese miners engaged around Deptford. Only quartz mining machinery is on Great Success lease – two engines, batteries, table, pumps, &c. - valued at £3,500. Machinery for alluvial working - two wheels, pumps, and sluice boxes - valued at £50. Water Holes Creek enters Nicholson River about six miles below Deptford - failed rush? - proved not payable - only two miners remain. Store Creek and German Gully - 8 alluvial miners at work, making poor wages. Two reefs have just been discovered further up the gully - Brown's and Tucker's.<sup>57</sup>
- June 1888:** Gift Reef found at Yahoo Creek, about 12 miles from Deptford - 10 tons crushed, yielding average of 4 oz 13 dwt/ton - ground applied for under lease.<sup>58</sup>
- 1888:** Gift Reef stone packed by mule to Rob Roy battery at Haunted Stream. Two or three reefs worked near the Barmouth.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Division), March 1888 - Appendix E

<sup>57</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Division), March 1888

<sup>58</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Division), June & September 1888

<sup>59</sup> Flett, p. 148

**December 1888:** Great depression in alluvial mining - several miners have left and several old gullies abandoned - but some of the old residents still have faith in the district, and, in spite of drawbacks, keep at work with varying success. There are more quartz miners at work now than there have been for some time; but several of these occasionally try the alluvial in order to obtain funds with which to carry on the quartz prospecting. Deptford: A party has begun operations adjoining the old Great Success workings - 14 alluvial miners in neighbourhood of Deptford - workings principally in bed of Nicholson. Barmouth: Bed of Barmouth and gullies leading to it have been worked for last 10 or 12 years by men who are still there, and who seem likely to remain so long as they obtain equally good prospects. Some, however, are new arrivals to this locality. There are six Europeans and three Chinamen at work on this branch and its tributaries. Yahoo Creek: Two or three parties working on Gift Reef - Gift Co. has followed reef to depth of 80 ft - great difficulties of transit for crushing - about 6 miners on Yahoo Creek.<sup>60</sup>

**1888:** Our Enterprise mine pegged out by Horne and Turnbull adjacent to the Great Success.<sup>61</sup>

**March 1889:** Waterholes now being tried on a more extensive scale, by a new co-operative party.<sup>62</sup>

**September 1889:** Gift Co. crushing gave 31 oz from 20 tons - 'The difficulties of transit prevent this field from making rapid strides, as the stone has to be packed 16 miles to the nearest battery, at the Haunted Stream.'<sup>63</sup>

**1890:** Machinery erected at Yahoo GMC mine - battery site was 300 yards above the junction of Yahoo Creek and Nicholson River - tail race cut - main tunnel said to be 900 ft long.<sup>64</sup>

**1890s:** Government battery on Navigation Creek, managed by Jim Stirling (James Stirling?).<sup>65</sup>

**c.1890-96:** Deptford Proprietary GMC formed with 24,000 ten-shilling shares - 8-ton boiler delivered in 1892 - number of stampers increased to eight in 1896 - company worked two mines, their own and the Success mine on the other side of the river - a fine bridge was built between the two (2 x 60-ft spars, 32 ft above summer creek level), but floods carried it away - replaced by cable tramline - mine workings flooded c.1896.<sup>66</sup>

**c.1893-4:** Increased prospecting during depression years led to small community at Waterholes quite a population by 1900 - shared school with Deptford proposed, but never went ahead.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Division), December 1888

<sup>61</sup> Fairweather, p. 107

<sup>62</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Division), March 1889

<sup>63</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Division), September 1889

<sup>64</sup> Fairweather, p. 113

<sup>65</sup> Fairweather, p. 109

<sup>66</sup> Fairweather, pp. 104-5

<sup>67</sup> Adams, p. 174



- 1895:** In the gullies and creeks running into the Nicholson River, very good gold has been got at different times, but little or none is being got now. Coarsest gold in Gippsland said to have been got in Store Creek. Six men still work the creek - perfectly satisfied if they make tucker. A lot of gold being obtained from Nicholson River itself - river has not been so low for many years and men are working everywhere in the bed.<sup>68</sup>
- 1896:** Our Enterprise mine installed machinery.<sup>69</sup>
- 1896:** Mount Welcome mine founded by Donnelly Brothers - little money to finance opening out of mine.<sup>70</sup>
- 1896-8:** Mount Welcome mine had 3-head battery driven by 3-cylinder Northern Siddley engine - worked by shaft - ore conveyed halfway around the mountain by trolley, then sleighed down the hill to the battery - mine abandoned at water-level, although it was yielding an average 1\_ oz/ton at the time.<sup>71</sup>
- 1896:** Deptford - 'though known as a gold-field, is perhaps at present one of the least noticed mining localities in Victoria' - various alluvial workings, more or less exhausted, in bed of Nicholson, in Store Creek, Tambo Gully, but a great area still remains little prospected. Deptford Proprietary, Horne & Clarke's New Enterprise mine, and Donnelly and party - all working same belt of lodes proved at intervals for a length of more than a mile. Three miles westward, near Tambo Gully (a branch of Store Creek) are Tambo Reef, Ralston Bourke & party's Celtic mine, and Bunting and party's Euchre Reef. Deptford Proprietary mine - three lines of lode, approximately parallel, 50-100 ft apart, all striking about WNW and ESE - southernmost is Tubal Cain, middle one the Success, and northern the Duke lode. Stopes of Tubal Cain surface workings are on range west of river - tunnel driven from above river level follows lode in for about 200 ft, and a shoot 50 ft in length has been stoped up to the surface - yields reportedly varied from 1 to 7\_ oz/ton. Main shoot of rich surface stone on the Success lode is just under the river bed - tunnel on east side of river along this lode. In main workings, Success lode has been worked to depth of 495 ft from the bed of the river - main shaft only 300 ft deep, but from the 215-ft level, an underlay shaft goes to a further depth of 280 ft. Recorded yields from Success lode vary from 1 to 4 oz/ton. Duke line is about 100 ft NE from Success - old surface stopes on western range extend for over 50 ft in length. New Enterprise mine - adjoins Deptford Pty on ESE and contains continuation of the three lodes, also a fourth, named the Franklin. From near the river, close to Horne and Clarke's battery, a tunnel has been driven, which cuts the Tubal Cain and Success lines - past crushings have averaged 8 dwt 3 gr per ton, and the concentrates are valuable. Donnelly & party's (Mt Welcome?) mine - \_ mile WNW from Deptford Pty - yields from the few crushings are stated as from 1 to 4 oz/ton. Tambo Reef - only recently reopened after 27 years' neglect - deepest workings are 100 ft from surface - reef has been worked for about 400 ft in length along the surface - past yields stated as from 17 dwt to 30 dwt/ton, the lesser yield being unpayable in those times - stone is fairly mineralised - another large parallel reef about 100 yards distant, from which no crushings have been taken. Celt mine - reef has been proved by a number of shallow excavations from side to side of the range east of Tambo Gully for a length of over 200 yards, and traced for about \_ mile - mine looks promising but requires deeper exploration. Euchre Reef - on a range west from Tambo Gully - not much opened up yet - shaft sunk - trial crushing said to have yielded over 11 dwt/ton.<sup>72</sup>
- May 1898:** Deptford almost quiescent. Some small but rich shoots of stone discovered at Yahoo Creek.<sup>73</sup>

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68 Whitelaw  
 69 Fairweather, p. 107  
 70 Fairweather, p. 108  
 71 Fairweather, p. 108  
 72 Murray  
 73 *Australian Mining Standard*, 5 May 1898

- 1898-9:** Government battery at Store Creek.<sup>74</sup>
- 1898-9:** New Yahoo battery erected near where Yahoo Creek runs into the Nicholson, by Messrs Hagen & Pickering - battery made by Horwood - 18-ft undershot waterwheel - water delivered by 200-yard-long water race - served four mines: Yahoo, Great Scott, Fizzle, and Squib - Yahoo settlement was centred around the battery, there being 40 quartz miners there and as many again scattered up and down the creeks on alluvial gold.<sup>75</sup>
- 1898:** Ore from Tambo lease being crushed at government battery.<sup>76</sup>
- 1898-1901:** ANA mine floated in 1898 - erected 20-head battery - unremunerative crushing forced closure in early 1899 - mine reported working and crushing at their battery.<sup>77</sup>
- 1898-1903:** Lady Saville mine - situated on Navigation Creek - 10-head, Pelton-wheel powered battery erected where Brown's Gully joins Navigation Creek - mine was short-lived - battery removed to Glen Wills.<sup>78</sup>
- 1899:** Main lines of reef at Deptford are confined to a small area - reefs are among best-defined in Gippsland - one short shoot has been followed down to a depth of nearly 500 ft by Deptford Proprietary Co. - stone averaged nearly 1 oz/ton, but calls outweighed dividends - reefs are parallel to each other, from 60 to 80 ft apart, and have been traced for over a mile - very little prospecting carried on, except at isolated intervals.<sup>79</sup>
- 1903:** Very few men at work. A few prospectors have crushed 8 separate crushings at the only battery working (Lady Saville?) - all work done near the surface.<sup>80</sup>
- 1904:** Several miners engaged in prospecting and sluicing with poor results.<sup>81</sup>
- 1905:** Lady Saville mine, after putting up a 5-heads battery, could not find anything payable stopped work and sold off plant - 'another case of spending money on the surface before opening up the mine and locating the reef.'<sup>82</sup>
- 1906:** Attention is being given to the Nicholson River for dredging purposes - it is hoped this will lead to development of quartz reefs known in the locality.<sup>83</sup>
- 190?:** Permit granted for hydraulic dredge on Waterholes Creek - a white elephant.<sup>84</sup>
- 1908:** Mining at Deptford is a dead letter.<sup>85</sup>
- 1909:** Some twenty men, in parties of twos and threes, have been getting fair returns from sluicing along Nicholson River from Deptford up to Yahoo Creek junction, where Mount and party, with aid of govt loan, are driving a tunnel to cut the old Fizzle Reef at a deeper level - reef formerly worked with profitable results down to 250 ft from surface.<sup>86</sup>

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74 Fairweather, pp. 110 & 112  
 75 Fairweather, p. 113  
 76 Fairweather, p. 111  
 77 Fairweather, pp. 111-12  
 78 Fairweather, p. 109  
 79 *Australian Mining Standard*, 1 June 1899, p. 66  
 80 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1903  
 81 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1904  
 82 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1905  
 83 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1906  
 84 Fairweather, p. 57  
 85 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1908  
 86 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1909

- 1912:** Mount & Co. still tunnelling at Yahoo Creek.<sup>87</sup>
- 1913:** Dreadnought Syndicate, Yahoo Creek, continued its lower level - no success yet.<sup>88</sup>
- 1932:** Dreadnought Reef, Nicholson River - formerly known as Fizzle Reef - located on south side of small gully 1 mile north from mouth of Yahoo Creek, about ½ mile west of Nicholson River. Originally worked by stoping along a line from a series of underlay shafts - these have been out of use for many years and are inaccessible - last crushing from south end of surface workings allegedly yielded 7 oz/ton. Later work by Mr Mount consists of adit driven from gully to the north, with intention of cutting surface shoots at depth - never accomplished. (Plan of workings on file.)<sup>89</sup>
- 1933:** Jimmy McCarrick has also told me that during the depression years of around 1933, he helped to put a battery on the Yahoo Mine. I would assume that it was what had once been the one erected on Yahoo Creek by partners in the Gift Mine, which had been in disuse for a long time, with a move to work the Yahoo Mine, at that time, it warranted moving the battery to the mine.<sup>90</sup>
- 1933:** Mullock heap of Pinnacle mine, German Gully, (worked in late 1890s) put through sluice box.<sup>91</sup>

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87 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1912  
 88 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1913  
 89 Easton  
 90 Fairweather, p. 109  
 91 Fairweather, p. 112

## **FOSTER & TURTON'S CREEK GOLDFIELD NOTES**

- 1856:** Gold found on Stockyard Creek - a ship, the *Oberon* out of Port Albert, took a load of diggers there, giving them 24 hours to try their luck - little gold found.<sup>1</sup>
- 1860:** New gold discovery at Stockyard Creek area - Poor Fellow Me Creek – sluicing - put down shafts to 30 ft, but found ground unpayable - also huge tides in creek.<sup>2</sup>
- late 1860:** Corner Inlet Reef discovered 13 miles from Stockyard Creek - same as Franklyn Reef, later said to have been 'discovered in 1861 and worked for two years, but found too poor'.<sup>3</sup>
- 1864:** Gold discovered in Tarra River.<sup>4</sup>
- April 1870:** Discovery of the 'real and long-predicted' goldfield on Stockyard Creek, at what became Foster - alluvial lead discovered in dense scrub by fugitive (illegal) woodcutters - 3 tons of gold taken from 3\_ chains of lead in prospectors' claims near the bridge - rush of 2000 people - route to diggings was across Corner Inlet - original claims at Stockyard Creek were the Great Uncertainty (prospectors'), Big Log, Mechanics, Scotchmen's and Adventure, on the west side of the creek, and the Pioneer Prussian, No. 1 South, Old Mans and Kaffirs on the east side - the holders of the Kaffir were the discoverers of the great reef.<sup>5</sup>
- 1870:** Gippsland mining by-laws of the time allowed an extra area for every five miles the new find was distant from the nearest gold-field - the discoverers were enabled to take up a large prospecting claim stretching 800 yards along the creek and 100 yards in width. The discoverers were subsidised by John Amey, who had been prospecting the district himself for years previously.<sup>6</sup>
- 1870+:** Although the workings were for alluvial in most instances, nine-tenths of the gold found at Stockyard Creek was of a quartz character, and most of it had to be crushed or pounded with pestle and mortar.<sup>7</sup>
- 1870:** Main route to the goldfield was by steamer to Port Albert, and thence by boat across Corner Inlet. Diggings were at height of prosperity from end of 1870 to beginning of 1872 - seventeen hotels or public houses, several stores, butchers' shops, &c., and estimated population of 1,500 to 1,800.<sup>8</sup>

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1 Flett, p. 142  
2 Flett, p. 142  
3 Flett, pp. 142-3 (quoting *Argus*, 27 August 1867)  
4 Flett, p. 143  
5 Flett, pp. 143-4  
6 Scanlon, p. 24  
7 Scanlon, p. 24  
8 Scanlon, p. 24

- 1870:** The alluvial deposits immediately surrounding a small hillock known as Kaffir's Hill seem to have yielded the richest deposits. The lead (if lead it may be called) seems to have been traced from the flanks of a ridge running northerly from Kaffir's Hill, about 6 (six) chains distant, attaining in one place a depth of 60 feet, the wash-dirt occurring in irregular deposits; the richest portions being worked in narrow gutters, flat shelves, or patches. It is stated that 500 oz of gold was obtained in one of the drives, and in another, of 160 feet, an average of 120 oz to the set of timber was obtained.<sup>9</sup>
- June 1870:** First quartz claim registered at Stockyard Creek - on large granitic dyke that traversed town from north to south through Kaffir Hill - around it were scattered beds of rich auriferous gravel, at Cement Hill, Whipstick Gully and New Zealand Hill, and on the east side of the reef.<sup>10</sup>
- June 1870:** First two quartz claims were the Ancient Ophir and the Africans - the latter was really the same ground and same party as the Kaffir claim.<sup>11</sup>
- June 1870:** Gold in payable quantities has been discovered at Stockyard Creek, Corner Inlet, South Gippsland, but owing to the extreme wet season and the ground being very little above the level of the sea, it is almost impossible to work it without appliances'. Claims had to be registered by post at Tanjil, 125 miles from Stockyard Creek.<sup>12</sup>
- December 1870:** Tarwin Subdivision mining register commenced reporting - gold coarse and very little water-worn - nuggets up to 12 oz - miners getting good prospects very wet ground.<sup>13</sup>
- 1870+:** Ophir Reef, north of Kaffir's Hill - shaft sunk to 150 ft - yield from \_ to 1\_ oz per ton - claim also known as Jubilee GMC.<sup>14</sup>
- 1870s:** No. 1 South (Union) claim - sunk shaft to 185 ft - yielded 1 to 7 oz/ton - 'The mine appears to have suffered by the defective machinery and management.'<sup>15</sup>
- 1870+:** No. 1 South claim produced the second-largest amount of gold, after Prospectors' - after working the ground for alluvial gold, the party sank and drove for quartz and found veins of very rich stone at 40-80 ft depth. In three or four months a party of six men obtained about 600 tons of stone, which yielded an average of 5\_ oz to the ton (one crushing of 60 tons gave at the rate of 9\_ oz).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Stirling

<sup>10</sup> Flett, pp. 143-4

<sup>11</sup> Scanlon, p. 124

<sup>12</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Russell Creek Division), June 1870

<sup>13</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), December 1870

<sup>14</sup> Stirling

<sup>15</sup> Stirling

<sup>16</sup> Scanlon, p. 24

- March 1871:** Water in vicinity of Cement and New Zealand hills as scarce as it is abundant on Stockyard Creek. On NZ Hill, Williams and party constructing tramway, half a mile in length - another party cutting a race for sluicing purposes and erecting expensive tramway for a short distance to convey washdirt to race - another party has built a puddling machine. On Stockyard Creek, an African party has built tramway, to enable them to wash the surface from a different part of their claim on the hill [Kaffir Hill]. Whole of hill contains gold to a depth of at least 5 or 6 ft. Tunnel driven into the hill, about 80 ft from the top, for distance of 80 ft - cut through soft granite.<sup>17</sup>
- June 1871:** Population estimated at 700, 340 of them miners. Mining registrar complained that population, prospects, yields, nuggets, etc. had been greatly exaggerated in 'the general accounts' - 'Nuggets, or rather specimens, since all the large quantities of gold are found in the matrix of quartz, seldom contain more than 20 zos - very few so much as that - and yet we hear of 20 lb nuggets discovered here. 'Great difficulties to be contended with in the shape of water, the depth of sinking (from 40 to 50 feet), slabbing, timbering, &c. 'However, I would wish to be understood, that when a patch is struck it is generally good enough to make up for the interim of poverty.' Rush to flat between NZ Hill and Bennison's Creek - 50 miners on the ground. Prospecting between Stockyard Creek and Cape Liptrap - 'As to quartz reefs, notwithstanding a legend concerning one, said to be discovered by a sailor lost on the coast some 25 years ago, and reported as fabulously rich, nothing has been found. This rumour has misled a good many, and some years ago a crushing-machine was built, which is now rotting.' Rich stone being raised on 'Caffre' Hill from the Ophir Reef - enormously rich specimens obtained from Golden Age (ex-Langridge's) and No. 1 South claims. Prospecting and geological survey along Stockyard Creek rendered excessively difficult because of thick scrub and timber, which cover the country and large amount of vegetable debris - also the rock is covered by some feet of alluvial deposits.<sup>18</sup>
- September 1871:** 'There is very little *bonâ fide* prospecting carried on, many leaving without having sunk a shaft more than three feet deep, or having seen more of the country than can be viewed by the walk to and from the landing.'<sup>19</sup>
- 1871:** Gold discovered at Golden Creek - party cut water-race, two miles long, but abandoned locality after several months.<sup>20</sup>
- December 1871:** Rennard & party constructed tramway from NZ Hill to Bennison's Creek (quarter of a mile) - cost about £150 - to truck their washdirt for washing. Cement Hill would pay for sluicing, but to bring water to the top, a flume of about a quarter mile long and 80 ft high (or an inverted siphon) would be required.<sup>21</sup>

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17 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), March 1871

18 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June 1871

19 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), Sept 1871

20 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), Sept 1871, June 1873

21 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), December 1871

- 1871-2:** Pearl Co. constructed water race to bring water to top of NZ Hill - over 7 miles long - brings water from Bennison's Creek at a point about 2 miles NW of NZ Hill - cost £350 - selling water to sluicers - race immediately began eroding, due to spongy soil and leakage caused by land crabs 'which are very abundant and destructive in this part of the country' - considerable amount of fluming required - Bennison's Creek gave insufficient supply of water, so race extended to Deep Creek (7\_ miles) in 1873.<sup>22</sup>
- 1871-2:** Buln Buln Co. worked 'in a most scientific and energetic manner', prospecting the lead on Stockyard Creek flat by bores - sank shaft on one of two gutters discovered - installed substantial pumping machinery, 1873.<sup>23</sup>
- March 1872:** Quartz crushing commenced at Stockyard Creek - favourable trial crushings from various claims.<sup>24</sup>
- June 1872:** Prospectors at Franklin River.<sup>25</sup>
- June 1872:** A good deal of horse-puddling is carried on, this mode of working becoming generally adopted as a cheap and tolerably expeditious way of working.<sup>26</sup>
- 1872:** Considerable falling off in yields from hitherto successful claims - several formed into companies. African's and Ophir quartz claims erected batteries with reasonable success, but no substantial dividends obtained - just paid expenses for a time. Prussian's claim worked by company, with similar result.<sup>27</sup>
- September 1872:** Mining companies formed and leases applied for. Wet frontage (deep lead) claims extending to SE and SSW. Quartz prospecting claims taken up at Milkman's Hill, SSW of Foster. Alluvial - Great Uncertainty (Prospectors') claim still as rich as ever - 1440 tons of washdirt puddled for a yield of over 1542 oz. Others producing good yields included Scotchman's, Adventure, Big Log, Mechanic's, Golden Age, No. 1 South, Pioneer, and Young Republic. Several steam engines ordered.
- 1872:** Intensive prospecting in south Gippsland led to discovery of Turton's Creek diggings - tributary of Tarwin River, in dense scrub, ferns, sassafras and dogwood - first discovery was on Turton's Creek, followed by six main tributaries: Livingstone Creek, Yankee Tom's, Ikey's, Doran's, No. 1, Mackay's, and Township Gully - very rich field - during first year, each digger averaged over £11 per week - nuggets up to 35 oz found - main lead traced down over the Jurassic strata, then lost.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), December 1871, March-December 1872, September 1873

<sup>23</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), September & December 1871, September 1872

<sup>24</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), March 1872

<sup>25</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June 1872

<sup>26</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June 1872

<sup>27</sup> Scanlon, p. 24

<sup>28</sup> Flett, p. 145

- December 1872:** New Zealand Hill, Cement Hill, and Whipstick Gully entirely deserted for Turton's Creek rush. Small engine erected for winding on Prospectors' GMC (alluvial) claim at Foster. Turton's Creek ground easily worked by paddocking and sluicing in boxes.<sup>29</sup>
- 1872-8:** Prospectors' formed into a company of 32,000 shares of £1 each - original prospectors retained half of the shares and the other half were put on the market - only 6,000 taken up - mine had moderate success and declared small dividends for 18 months - let on tribute in four separate blocks in 1874 eventually merged into one tribute company who worked under great difficulties until 1878.<sup>30</sup>
- 1872+:** The three holders of the Prosperity claim made £4,000 to £5,000 each for nine months' work at Turton Creek. No. 1 North claim is said to have yielded gold worth £20,000. Claims in the vicinity of these two also gave good yields, but from No. 2 claim downwards, the gold got lighter, though nuggets of  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 oz were often found. In claims 4, 5 & 6 (junction of Livingstone and Turton's Creeks), gold was about the size of wheat grains, then gradually got finer until, in the 20th and 21st claims, only a little 'flour' gold was obtained. Gold was obtained in a few tributaries of Turton's Creek, but nothing extensive, and only occasionally payable.<sup>31</sup>
- March 1873:** Turton's Creek yield for quarter was 7,536 oz - 160 miners on ground. 'One strange feature of the country at Turton's Creek is the absence of quartz. Scarcely any is found, and it is a common saying that there is more gold than quartz' - nuggetty, water-worn gold - sinking 10 to 12 feet, worked by sluicing. 'The richness of these gold workings, and the easy mode of obtaining the gold, have given rise to a great many disputes among the miners, and the consequence is that there is a continual contention for the land, and the Warden's Court is swarmed with cases of trespass, encroachment, &c.' Road from Foster to Turton's Creek very bad.<sup>32</sup>
- 1873:** 'Feeble' rush to Golden Creek.<sup>33</sup>
- September 1873:** Most alluvial claims at Stockyard returning but small wages to miners. Turton's Creek also falling off, though claims now being systematically worked - best recent yields from puddled washdirt already discarded - quarterly yield down to 950 oz.<sup>34</sup>
- November 1873:** Small rush to Bennison Flat, about 2 miles from Foster - several shafts bottomed - heavy water and drift - rush turned out a complete failure - Bennison Flat Co. erected pumping machinery.<sup>35</sup>
- December 1873:** Turton's Creek rapidly being depopulated now that many creek claims worked out - unless fresh discoveries are made shortly, complete desertion will result.<sup>36</sup>
- 1873+:** Prospectors worked the hills and gullies for some time after Turton's Creek was 'worked out', searching for the source of the alluvial gold - but without

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<sup>29</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), December 1872

<sup>30</sup> Scanlon, p. 24

<sup>31</sup> Hunter (1899), p. 36; Ferguson (1936), p. 251

<sup>32</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), March & June 1873

<sup>33</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June 1873

<sup>34</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), September 1873

<sup>35</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), December 1873, March 1874

<sup>36</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), December 1873



success - at least seven tunnels driven - geologist Hunter later wrote 'prospecting by means of tunnels is simply waste of money'.<sup>37</sup>

- March 1874:** Mining operations 'anything but good'.<sup>38</sup>
- June 1874:** Nothing worthy of mention in alluvial mining at Stockyard - most gold obtained from shallow ground on Caffre, Growler, or NZ hills. In quartz mining, the Golden Bar Co. and No. 1 South Co. getting good yields - African Co. tributers sinking shaft on their southern boundary - 'The narrowness of the leader hitherto discovered, and the heavy expenses for crushing, seriously retard this branch of mining'.<sup>39</sup>
- December 1874:** With the exception of one or two mines, the prosperity of this subdivision is pretty well a thing of the past.' Several alluvial claims on tribute. No. 1 South QMC getting 2\_ oz/ton.<sup>40</sup>
- March 1875:** Tributers on Prospectors' Co. (alluvial) ground got 1,612 oz in four weeks, puddling three machines of washdirt a week - steam-powered pump.<sup>41</sup>
- 1875-6:** No. 1 South QMC - shaft down 80 ft - still lifting by whim - getting average 7 oz/ton and got nearly 400 oz in nuggets alone one week. Golden Bar claim - shaft down 100 ft. Ophir claim - work resumed - trial crushing gave 3 oz/ton - water-powered battery erected early 1876.<sup>42</sup>
- 1876:** Several large companies formed by small claimholders who have abandoned their claims.<sup>43</sup>
- 1876:** No. 1 South Co. erected machinery (pumping &c), ex Bennison Co. - sank new shaft.<sup>44</sup>
- September 1876:** Prospectors Extended erected 'very complete plant'. Prospectors' Tribute Co. moved engine &c. further up Stockyard Creek, to save trucking from new shaft.<sup>45</sup>
- 1876:** Great depression in mining exists throughout the district. No. 1 South left their new quartz shaft and took to the alluvial, which is known to be rich, to obtain funds to re-commence.<sup>46</sup>
- 1876:** Turton's Creek yielding a livelihood to eight men.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Hunter (1899), p. 36

<sup>38</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), March 1874

<sup>39</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June 1874

<sup>40</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), December 1874

<sup>41</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), March 1875

<sup>42</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June & December 1875, March 1876

<sup>43</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June 1876

<sup>44</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), March & June 1876

<sup>45</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), September 1876

<sup>46</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), December 1876

<sup>47</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), December 1876, June 1877

- 1877:** Mining depressed throughout district - 'we are still losing miners, who turn their attention to free selecting; but the loss is more than made up by arrivals of men who have been here formerly'. Claims at work: Prospectors' Tribute Co., Prussians' Tribute Co. (suspended work), No. 1 South (back on quartz), Native Youth (suspended work), Caffers (Kaffirs - tunnelling), Golden Bar, Prospectors' Extended, Pioneer/Northern Extended. Government prospecting party unsuccessful - 'From the dense scrub and timber on the first expedition, and the undefined nature of the country on the second, success was more a matter of chance than certainty.' Two men are boring at Poor-Fellow-Me Creek.<sup>48</sup>
- 1877-8:** Lime kilns, 500-ft jetty, and 'many other improvements' constructed by Waratah Lime Co.<sup>49</sup>
- 1878:** Mining operations in every branch continue depressed. No. 1 South, Prospectors' tributers, and Bennison Flat Co. at work - also fossickers.<sup>50</sup>
- 1878-9:** Prospecting and fossicking at Turton's Creek - 'Eight men and two Chinamen making a living at fossicking'.<sup>51</sup>
- 1879:** Forty Thieves Co. engine moved to opposite side of creek (to Shakespeare claim?). Shakespeare Co. erected engine and plant.<sup>52</sup>
- 1879:** Two kilns burning lime at Waratah Bay - regular shipments to Melbourne.<sup>53</sup>
- 1879-82:** Dan O'Connell Co., Foster - pumping and crushing? machinery - only mine paying more than wages in June 1881 - struck rich quartz leader at 160-ft level in March 1882 - new pumping gear and machinery, June 1882 - on promising quartz, but ceased operations in 1882.<sup>54</sup>
- June 1880:** Small rush (about 12 men) to Larra Creek, to try some old workings - soon abandoned.<sup>55</sup>
- 1880-1:** Company formed to prospect Ophir Hill for reef - shaft sunk through hard granite - using a whim - got only a little gold.<sup>56</sup>
- 1881:** Golden Fleece and African's United Co. sinking slowly through the rock - struck promising-looking reef, but no more heard of it.<sup>57</sup>
- 1881:** Waratah Bay lime works - 20 men employed on average - two kilns burning and steam and schooner carrying lime.<sup>58</sup>

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48 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June 1877  
 49 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June 1877  
 50 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June 1878  
 51 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June 1878, September 1879  
 52 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), March, June & September 1879  
 53 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June 1879  
 54 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), September 1879 to December 1883  
 55 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June & September 1880  
 56 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June 1880, December 1880, December 1881  
 57 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), March & June 1881  
 58 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), September 1881

- 1881:** Gold found at Waratah Bay - workings are on the beach, where the gold seems to have been deposited by land-slips from the cliffs above - nothing doing at Waratah Bay diggings by end of 1882.<sup>59</sup>
- 1881-2:** Prospectors'/Stockyard Creek QMC repaired and shifted machinery and tried to organise company to sink down to rich quartz lode - work ceased due to lack of capital.<sup>60</sup>
- 1883:** No mining at Foster.<sup>61</sup>
- 1884:** Foster GMC sank new shaft on old Dan O'Connell lease - too much water for pumping by windlass.<sup>62</sup>
- 1884-6:** Jones & Sharp/Ophir GMC prospecting and working Ophir claim, extending old shaft (164 ft) and workings - only claim worked at Foster in 1886 - no favourable result.<sup>63</sup>
- 1885-6:** Yanakie QMC worked mine on old Hoddle Range Reef, 8 (or 12) miles SW of Foster - only gold-mining operation in subdivision - erected steam-powered battery, but first crushing unsatisfactory - ceased work early 1886.<sup>64</sup>
- 1887:** Prospecting party formed to seek lost lead at Foster - bored in flat south of Foster and found deep alluvial ground - Great Southern Railway GMC formed to develop ground, Foster, with government assistance - excessive water made driving from shaft difficult - first party of contractors gave up, second party erected whip but were also defeated, third party worked with whim.<sup>65</sup>
- 1887-8:** No. 1 South claim taken up by Mr Irwin (with government assistance) - sank old shaft from 80 to 200 ft - cut leader carrying good gold at 130 ft - working by whim.<sup>66</sup>
- 1887-8:** McPherson's party prospecting by tunnel at Turton's Creek - 'seeking for the matrix of the great find of gold formerly obtained at this creek'.<sup>67</sup>
- 1888-9:** Gladstone (ex Pioneer) Gold Mining Lease Co. commenced shaft on a large scale - erected poppet heads and machinery in early 1889, then suspended work - machinery unable to cope with water.<sup>68</sup>
- 1888:** New Zealand Hill taken up for sluicing purposes and company formed to convey water 5 or 6 miles to ground.<sup>69</sup>
- 1888-9:** Old alluvial workings at Turton's Creek mostly taken up under lease as a sluicing company by a 'Melbourne gentleman' - also other large sluicing leases and prospecting at Turton's Creek.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), September 1881, December 1882

<sup>60</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), March 1881, June & December 1882

<sup>61</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), 1883

<sup>62</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), December 1883, September 1884

<sup>63</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), September 1884, March & December 1886

<sup>64</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), September 1882, September 1884, March 1885-March 1886

<sup>65</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), March, June & September 1887

<sup>66</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), March 1887, March 1888

<sup>67</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), September & December 1887, March & June 1888

<sup>68</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June 1888, March & September 1889

<sup>69</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June 1888

- 1889:** Mining industry revival 'after a lapse of dullness for some years'. Victory GMC (old No. 1 South/Irwin's claim) erected steam pumping and winding plant - rich leader, good prospects - claim about to be floated into a large company - adjoining Adventure lease taken up for amalgamation. Great Southern Railway GMC (alluvial) erected steam machinery, pumps, etc. - seeking lost lead - soon stopped work due to lack of funds. 'The prospects of this [Foster] locality as a coal-producing district are daily increasing.'<sup>71</sup>
- December 1889:** Bennison's Creek GMC (alluvial) preparing to install machinery on old Bennison claim.<sup>72</sup>
- 1890-91:** Mining revival - about 30 applications for leases. Prospectors and No. 1 South claims amalgamated as the Victory, leased by Edward Dillon of Melbourne. Adjoining claim, formerly the Old Ophir, now the Jubilee - battery being erected on claim. Old Man and Ophir claims amalgamated as Gladstone GMC - shaft down 210 feet. Also in operation are Great Victory and Prosperity claims.<sup>73</sup>
- 1894:** Gladstone Co. working ground embracing Old Man's Reef and the original Prussian's Nos. 1 & 2 claims - shaft sunk at base of Kaffir's Hill, to depth of 10 ft, running at angle of 45° - cross cut put in at 170 ft found no gold - quartz charged with pyrites.<sup>74</sup>
- 1894:** Jubilee claim being worked by shaft from summit of Kaffir's Hill to 200 ft depth - last crushing of 70 tons yielded 3 oz/ton - claim of former Victory Co. adjoins.<sup>75</sup>
- 1899:** One or two men ground sluicing at Turton's Creek - making tucker - 'but owing to the dense scrub, deep loam, and rough character of the country, it is impossible for these men to attempt any prospecting away from the bed of the creek'. 'The depth of gully from the hills on either side is 500 feet, and it is quite possible that the alluvial gold has been shed from a small lode, extremely rich, which originally existed in the intervening space between the two hills now forming the gully, and which by the ordinary process of denudation has gone away with the lighter material, leaving the gold 'stranded' in the bed of the creek. I find that a large area of ground has been reserved for gold mining purposes on the west side of the creek. I would point out that it is more necessary that the ground containing the heads of Turton's Creek should be reserved, as it is evident that the original source of the gold must be above the claims and workings.'<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), June, September & December 1888, September 1889

<sup>71</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), March & September 1889

<sup>72</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Tarwin Subdivision), December 1889

<sup>73</sup> Scanlon, p. 25

<sup>74</sup> Stirling

<sup>75</sup> Stirling

<sup>76</sup> Hunter (1899)

- 1905:** Gravels on Dalton's (Cement), New Zealand and Kaffir hills have been extensively worked, especially on New Zealand Hill, but richest yields obtained on Kaffir Hill, close to the Victory mine. Here, in deep alluvial, stretching from the mine to the creek, auriferous quartz boulders were found, some of which contained as much as 20 oz gold. Almost all the gold had quartz attached to it. The prospectors' claim is said to have yielded gold to the value of £60,000.<sup>77</sup>
- 1905:** Victory Co. erected new winding machinery and boiler - 33 men employed. East Victory Co. repaired shaft and erecting machinery.<sup>78</sup>
- 1906:** The Victory Co. deepened its shaft to 503 feet. Victory East Co. erected machinery and poppet-heads, and bailed out and re-timbered shaft to 130 ft., nothing payable found yet. Prospecting party continued tunnelling on New Zealand Hill - nothing of importance found.<sup>79</sup>
- 1911:** Landy and party quartz prospecting by tunnel on section of Kaffir's Hill hitherto regarded as barren.<sup>80</sup>
- 1912:** New Zealand Hill Dredging Co. built capacious dam and erected centrifugal pumping plant - modifications made following trial run. Shallow ground at Kaffir and Ophir hills being prospecting by tunnel - disappointing results.<sup>81</sup>
- 1914:** Close to Foster township, Baker and party did 'a lot of serviceable prospecting, disclosing the extension of the lead system to be hardly payable'.<sup>82</sup>
- 1917:** Only a few small parties at work at Foster.<sup>83</sup>
- 1923-5:** Mackey and party prospecting for reefs at Mackey's Gully, Turton's Creek – traced alluvial gold upstream to point near head of gully, where gold cut out prospected by deep trenches to the top of the spur from which the gully heads - found only trace of gold, higher above main creek level than at any other place on the field. Also prospected in Livingstone Creek and No. 1 Gully, but got no gold.<sup>84</sup>
- 1925:** Turton's Creek goldfield said to have yielded 60,000 oz of gold. No auriferous reefs discovered. Most of the ground has been worked three or four times. Livingstone Creek worked from junction with Turton's Creek almost to head - Yankee Tom's Gully worked for practically whole length.<sup>85</sup>
- 1939-42:** Prospectors active at Turton's Creek and Foster - syndicates formed to put in tunnels and sink shafts - no discovery of note.<sup>86</sup>
- 1948:** Winchester & Bellardini quartz claim, on western slope of Kaffir Hill – prospecting by tunnel and shaft.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Ferguson (1908)

<sup>78</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1905

<sup>79</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1906

<sup>80</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1911

<sup>81</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1912

<sup>82</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1914

<sup>83</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1917

<sup>84</sup> Ferguson (1936), p. 250

<sup>85</sup> Ferguson (1936), p. 249

<sup>86</sup> *Mining and Geological Journal*, July 1939, September 1940

<sup>87</sup> Thomas

## SOURCES:

- Ferguson, W.H., 'Notes on the Foster Gold-field', in *Records of Geological Survey of Victoria*, vol. 2, part 4, Department of Mines, Melbourne, 1908 (report dated 1905), pp. 180-1
- Ferguson, W.H., 'Turton's Creek Goldfield', in *Records of Geological Survey of Victoria*, vol. 5, part 2, Department of Mines, Melbourne, 1936 (report dated 1925), pp. 249-52
- GSV Progress Report No. 3, 1876, p. 165 - maps of Stockyard Creek and Turton's Creek goldfields
- Hunter, S.B., 'Report on Turton's Creek', in *Progress Report No. 10*, Geological Survey of Victoria, 1899, pp. 36-7
- Stirling, J., 'Notes on the Foster Gold-Field and District', in *Progress Report No. 8*, Geological Survey of Victoria, 1894, p. 66 + map
- Thomas, D.E., 'Winchester and Bellardini Claim, Foster', in *Mining and Geological Journal*, September 1948, pp. 50-1

## *Freestone, Gladstone and Lees Creek Historical Notes*

- 1865:** Small rush to Granite Creek, one of the heads of the Cobbannah Creek and about three miles north-east of Lees Creek.<sup>1</sup>
- 1866:** Gold discovered by prospecting party about 15 miles NE of Stratford, on Freestone Creek - claims taken up in vicinity.<sup>2</sup>
- 1868:** Gold discovered in Gladstone or Maximilian Creek, an eastern tributary of Freestone Creek. Gladstone Creek was rich in nuggets. A number of small branch gullies were worked, also part of Freestone Creek itself and Lees Creek, a small head branch of Freestone Creek, about eight miles above the Gladstone diggings.<sup>3</sup>
- June 1869:** From Freestone, Gladstone and Lee's Creeks, 132 oz obtained during the quarter from about 15 claims.
- September 1870:** Advantage has been taken of the plentiful supply of water to introduce head-races and sluice-boxes in lieu of length.
- December 1870:** Stratford Prospecting Association prospecting up Freestone Creek, Lee's, Castleburn, George's and Valencia creeks - finding gold, but not in payable quantities.
- March 1871:** Upper Gladstone (alluvial) prospecting claim - constructed water race - claimholders tunnelling into hill - nuggets and coarse gold occur frequently on the Gladstone – largest 27 oz, found in Blink Bonnie Gully.
- June 1871:** Good alluvial yields from Gladstone, Upper Gladstone and Lee's (Freestone) Creek. Deep lead prospecting claim at Briagolong - very wet, but prospecting party experienced in deep sinking on 'the western mines' - shaft in gully running nearly west into Freestone Creek, from which shaft is about three-quarters of a mile distant.
- September 1871:** Briagolong Deep Lead Prospecting Claim suspended - drift unmanageable.
- December 1871:** Gladstone alluvial diggings continue 'very regular'. Upper Gladstone Union claim is the most productive - four men shared 65 oz for five weeks' work.
- September 1872:** At Freestone Creek 'gold-producing claims are still confined to the same limited portions that have been occupied for the last three years, and... all efforts to increase the area of the workings have failed.' Small patches of nuggetty gold continue to be found in old claims. Several specimens of rough gold mixed with quartz found near Blinkbonnie Gully - prospecting party testing ground. Prospecting area with 85ft-deep shaft, abandoned about 9 months ago, again taken up to test for deep lead.
- December 1872:** Yields from Freestone Creek very poor - most miners have left. (MSR, Donnelly's Creek)
- September 1873:** Number of miners at Freestone Creek greatly fallen off. Company formed to search for a deep lead - shaft to be sunk. (MSR, Donnelly's Creek)

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1 Flett, p. 149

2 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Sale subdivision), March 1866

3 Flett, p. 149

- March 1874:** Prospecting quartz claim at Lower Gladstone registered as Crystal Reef. 'The existence of a reef on the spur above that portion of Maximilian Creek, from which good returns were obtained four years ago, has long been regarded as a certainty; the discovery of its exact locality is the result of patient and systematic prospecting by Messrs Jorgensen Brothers.' Reef situated at head of Stuart's Gully (in which nuggets of up to 40 oz were found). Prospecting quartz claim on Scandinavian Reef, Upper Gladstone, four miles north of Crystal Reef - also found by following surface indications from old rich workings in creek. (MSR, Donnelly's Creek)
- June 1874:** Crystal Reef - shaft 64 ft down (work stopped soon after). Scandinavian Co. – prospecting. Quartz prospecting claim registered at Long Pat's Creek, three miles north of Crystal Reef. Miners diverted from creek workings by quartz discoveries. (MSR, Donnelly's Creek)
- June 1874:** (R.A.F. Murray, special report on Freestone Creek Deep Lead Co., Appendix A to Mining Surveyors' Reports, Donnelly's Creek Division, June 1874; also *Report of Progress 2*, Geological Survey of Victoria, 1874, pp. 100-101) Shaft situated about 30 chains east of Freestone Creek and three miles north-east from Briagolong township - gold obtained from bore - nearest gold-workings up the creek are those of Gladstone and Maximilian creeks - 'I am not aware of any remunerative gold-workings having been discovered within a watershed of which the upper Palaeozoic, or 'Avon sandstone,' was exclusively the bed-rock. This evidence, though negative, prohibits indulgence of sanguine anticipations as to the payable character of the gravels which the Freestone Creek Deep Lead Company is now prospecting' - whim being erected.
- September 1874:** Seventy frontage claims marked out on supposed line of deep lead - 35 either side of prospecting claim. (MSR Donnelly's Creek)
- December 1874:** Freestone Creek Deep Lead Co. procuring machinery from Melbourne - pump in course of erection, steam engine on the way. Several nuggets found in Maximilian Creek - largest was over 17 oz. Specimen found at Upper Gladstone, 'about one and a half miles from the Scandinavian Prospecting Claim.' (MSR Donnelly's Creek)
- 1875:** '...at the heads of all the rich alluvial patches, which are of a character indicating a matrix near at hand, are basaltic dykes whose mode of occurrence suggests them to be the sources, or connected therewith, whence the gold was derived; and, as the local miners have paid no attention to them, it is desirable that they should be tested.'<sup>4</sup>
- March 1875:** Many Freestone Ck mines suspended work pending result of Deep Lead Co.'s test of ground. (MSR Donnelly's Creek)
- September 1875:** Deep Lead Co. suspended operations. (MSR Donnelly's Creek)
- 1875-6:** Stratford and Avon Co. worked Jorgensen's Reef, north of Donnelly's Creek – connection with Jorgensens of Gladstone Creek? - see Jordan goldfield)
- June 1882:** Briagolong GMC crushed small quantity of stone, 'which was hardly satisfactory'. (MSR Donnelly's Creek)
- c.1880?:** See it Out Reef discovered by John Polish, a Hungarian digger who earlier opened the Eureka Reef on the Dargo and later (1882) discovered the first reef (Passover) at Haunted Stream.<sup>5</sup>
- 1889:** See-it-out Reef, at head of Stewart's Gully, Maximilian Creek has been worked for some time - two shafts and tunnel on hillside - poor averages from crushings – expensive crushing plant on Maximilian Creek, at junction with Stewart's Gully - 10-head stamp battery and Chilian mill. Mine presently idle, but prospecting underway in neighbourhood. Freestone Creek has been worked for alluvial gold both above and

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<sup>4</sup> Murray (1876), p. 170

<sup>5</sup> Flett, pp. 173-4



below its junction with Maximilian Creek, with moderate success; however, auriferous deposits are of limited extent. Old alluvial workings extend up Maximilian Creek for about 100 yards from junction - creek has been worked some 20 years ago below the junction of Stewart's Gully - some nuggets found - miners presently working terraces by driving and ground-sluicing. Very little, if any, gold obtained in Maximilian Creek from Mick's Gully up to Pat's Gully, but above Pat's Gully, workings are more or less continuous up to a point near Blink Bonny Creek, recently worked by the Jorgensen's - numerous tunnels in terraces - drifts worked out - very rich locality - first worked some 17 years ago - nuggets of 42 and 44 oz found in Blink Bonny Creek. (Stirling, J., 'Report on mining and prospecting operations in the Gippsland and Castlemaine Districts', Appendix H to Mining Surveyors' Reports, December 1889, pp. 75-6 + map).

**1894-99:** Between the Walhalla belt and the next easterly, or Grant belt, the auriferous rocks are overlaid with Devonian rocks, and though this strip of country has not yet been gold-bearing, in one place at its lower extremity, Freestone Creek, very heavy alluvial gold has been obtained. The source of this gold has been found, and a large amount of gold taken out. The yellow metal occurred in lumps between two bedding planes. This discovery was the first of reef gold being discovered in Devonian rock in Victoria. Possibly this rock may yield important and rich reefs when thoroughly prospected. Geologists believed that upper Devonian rocks were extremely unlikely to contain auriferous lodes - 'those acquainted with them therefore experienced considerable astonishment when, about four years ago, a lode was discovered at Gladstone Creek in upper Devonian rocks, bearing very rich gold'. Several hundred ounces of nuggetty gold was taken out during 1894-5 near Blink Bonny Gully, known as Boyce's Find, but worked in 1899 by Jorgensen brothers - shaft down 20 ft in bed of sandstone.<sup>6</sup>

**1915:** At Gladstone Creek, Jorgensen and party driving a tunnel in quest of further deposits of the rich matrix worked profitably from shallow shafts in earlier years.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *Australian Mining Standard*, pp. 65-71

<sup>7</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1915

## **GIBBO GOLDFIELD NOTES**

- 1851-2:** Gold first found in Gibbo River region. (Flett, p. 164)
- 1854-5:** New goldfield at Mt Gibbo - some say Gibbo rush was a hoax, that the real site was on a creek towards the Mitta Mitta. (Flett, p. 164)
- 1858-9:** Diggers at Mt Gibbo in 1858 - water-races cut and some stores erected - abandoned in 1859 - plenty of gold, but too difficult to work without machinery - supplies expensive. (Flett, p. 164)
- June 1865:** Alluvial gold found at Buembah (Buenba) Flat, head of Gibbo River.
- December 1866:** Two parties of Chinese re-opening Gibbo Creek - rushed ten years ago, then abandoned.
- 1866-7:** Alluvial mining was in progress on Saltpetre Creek as early as 1866-7, when terraces on the spurs above Hatter's Creek were worked - the creek itself was considered too deep to work.<sup>1</sup>
- September 1868:** Rush to upper part of Gibbo River - Chinese at work on lower part of river.
- 1868:** Saltpetre and Sassafras (or Cribbage) creeks were first rushed in 1868, by about 150 diggers. (Flett, p. 164)
- 1870s:** Upper Gibbo River worked by alluvial parties throughout 1870s - gold found in Exhibition Creek and Hatters Creek. (Flett, p. 164)
- December 1878:** Rush to Sassafras Creek - Mines Department cutting a track thence from Omeo.
- March 1879:** Increased no. of miners on Sassafras and Saltpetre creeks - active prospecting on Saltpetre Creek, with good indications.
- June 1879:** Likely to be a rush towards the Sassafras in the spring - some parties on the Mitta Mitta side of the range getting very good gold - nugget of more than 8 oz found.<sup>2</sup>
- September 1879:** Influx of miners to Sassafras Creek - also to Zulu Creek and other Wheeler Creek tributaries, to the north -about 300 miners on the ground.
- December 1879:** Sassafras Creek eclipsed by discovery of reef at Zulu Creek, to which Mines Department track from Omeo now extended.
- March 1880:** (Gibbo Subdivision) Two or three good paying claims on Sassafras Creek.
- March 1881:** Discovery of apparently payable quartz reef on dividing range, between head of Benambra Creek and the Gibbo River - prospecting assn being formed to further test locality.
- September 1881:** Albion mine on Saltpetre Creek put first crushing through a very small mill - Just in Time battery.<sup>3</sup>
- March 1884:** Discovery of silver lode on Gibbo River.
- In 1884, a reef was discovered at Saltpetre Creek, along which a string of mines - the Mountaineer, Lady Loch, Lone Hand, and Golden Treasure - were soon operational.<sup>4</sup>*
- March 1884:** Wild Boar Co. had driven tunnel 120 ft and purchased good battery.<sup>5</sup>

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1 Fairweather, p. 208

2 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitta Mitta South Subdivision), June 1879

3 Fairweather, p. 210

4 Flett, p. 164

- June 1884:** At Albion (or Sailor Bill's) mine, men laying bedlogs for machinery. Native Youth considered best reef.<sup>6</sup>
- September 1884:** 25 men employing sluicing &c., on Zulu, Cribbage, Sassafras, Saltpetre, and Wheeler's Creeks, and the Gibbo River.<sup>7</sup>
- December 1884:** Several small parties of prospectors have been away at the upper parts of Wheeler's, Saltpetre, the Straight-running, and other creeks, but as yet no information has been supplied of discoveries of any value.<sup>8</sup>
- March 1886:** Various sluicing claims at Gibbo River and Saltpetre Creek - plant comprises sluice boxes and small water wheels.
- 1886:** Quartz mining claims were held on Saltpetre Creek.<sup>9</sup>
- 1887:** Burning dense scrub at Saltpetre Creek to aid prospecting.<sup>10</sup>
- December 1887:** King's prospecting party on Gibbo River - about 9 miles above junction with Saltpetre Creek - cut tail-race 50 yards long. Undergrowth heavy - looking for reefs almost useless until country well burnt. Company being formed to bring water at a high level for purpose of sluicing terrace on each side of river. At present, miners wheel and carry washdirt from hills to river - even this primitive mode of working pays wages. (Foster, H., 'Preliminary Report on the Operations of the Omeo Prospecting Party')
- March 1888:** Reefs discovered at Saltpetre Creek - appear to be best yet found in division - prospect from surface stone at Golden Treasure Mine went as high as 30 oz/ton - many good miners now on field - country covered with dense scrub.
- March 1888:** Prospectors' camp about 7 miles above junction of Sassafras and Saltpetre creeks. 10 men's ground pegged out as well as prospectors' - 25 men on ground. Meurant's Mountaineer quartz claim, on a spur halfway between prospectors' camp and Thompson's Creek. Lady Loch claim (Nos 1 and 2 amalgamated) on same line of reef. Site has been selected for water-powered battery - 'As there are plenty of batteries lying idle about both Zulu Creek and Dark River a suitable battery can easily be erected at a cheaper outlay than importing the same from Melbourne.' New reef discovery on eastern side of Saltpetre Creek (former discoveries all on western) - reef traced almost to Straight-running Creek, about 2.5 miles below Golden Treasure. Very rich surface specimens. Alluvial (sluicing) claims on Gibbo River include King's (prospecting party), McKibbin's, German Harry's - also Hatter's Creek. (Tetu, S., 'Reports on Recent Quartz and Alluvial Discoveries at Saltpetre Creek', Appendix J to MSR, March 1888, pp. 91-3, plus map)
- June 1888:** Payable gold found in recently discovered reefs at Saltpetre Creek.
- June 1889:** Saltpetre Creek United erecting battery.
- Sept 1889:** Saltpetre Creek United Co. yielding well.
- 1890s:** First battery erected by South Federation Co. was on a tributary of Saltpetre Creek - there was insufficient water to operate the waterwheel, and ore from Treasure and Lone Hand mines had to be carted uphill for crushing. Battery moved to Saltpetre Creek - 10-head, driven by 30-ft overshot waterwheel - sawmill at northern end of property - 3,000-ft long track connected sawmill and battery - track was 7 ft wide and

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5 Fairweather, p. 210

6 Fairweather, p. 211

7 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Dark River Subdivision), September 1884

8 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Dark River Subdivision), December 1884

9 Fairweather, p. 209

10 Fairweather, p. 211

carried a tramline and a flume measuring 2\_ ft x 15 in. deep - also two quartz-roasting kilns at works.<sup>11</sup>

At Saltpetre Creek in c.1898, the leases containing the Mountaineer, Lady Loch, Treasure and Lone Hand mines were taken over by the South Federation Co. A ten-head battery already stood on the Lady Loch lease, but the Pelton-wheel-powered plant could only run for a few months of the year and ore from the other mines had to be packed uphill for crushing. The battery was moved to a new site (leaving the Pelton wheel and stone-crusher at the Lady Loch) on Saltpetre Creek, nearer the Treasure mine, where it was driven by a 30ft-diameter overshot waterwheel. Two kilns roasted the ore prior to crushing. A tramway led from the mine workings, north of the battery; alongside the tramway ran wooden fluming, which conveyed water to the crushing plant. A 15m-long bridge crossed the creek. Timber for the works was supplied by a water-powered sawmill (20ft-diameter waterwheel, fed by race), to the north of the battery. After a couple of years' working, it was found that the eyes had been picked out of the Treasure mine and only low-grade ore remained. The South Federation Co. sought government assistance, arguing that, if forced to sell up, it could expect little recompense for its outlay on mining plant, 'owing to its extreme isolation from any settled or mining district'.<sup>12</sup>

- 1899:** Agememnon Gold Sluicing Co. formed to work on Gibbo River - also Chatsworth Gold Sluicing Co.<sup>13</sup>
- 1901:** Agememnon Co. had seven sluice boxes in position and working three shifts - but still not paying expenses.<sup>14</sup>
- 1905:** A few individuals and small parties working Saltpetre Creek and Gibbo River.<sup>15</sup>
- 1938:** Grinding pan removed from Saltpetre Creek to Maude & Yellow Girl, Glen Wills.<sup>16</sup>

#### **SOURCES:**

Fairweather, K.M., *Brajerack: Mining at Omeo and Glen Wills*, published by author, Bairnsdale, 1983  
Flett, J., *The History of Gold Discovery in Victoria*, Poppet Head Press, Melbourne, 1978

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11 Fairweather, p. 212  
12 Mines inspectors' reports, Mines Department, 1898-1900  
13 Fairweather, p. 209  
14 Fairweather, p. 209  
15 Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1905  
16 Fairweather, p. 220

## ***HAUNTED STREAM GOLDFIELD NOTES***

- c.1863:*** Alluvial gold discovered at Haunted Stream - name originated either (a) from alleged ghost of murdered 'Ballarat Harry', or (b) from noise of mopokes, etc. at night.
- 1865-6:*** Another rush to Haunted Stream, 1866. (Flett, p. 173)
- June 1866:*** Alluvial rush to 'Haunted Creek, near the Tambo', drawing miners from adjacent fields - 40 miners on the ground - unsuccessful - only 9 miners on ground by September. (MSR (Mitchell River subdivision), June & September 1866)
- June 1882:*** Mr Polick, an old Crooked River prospector, has discovered what appears to be a highly auriferous quartz reef on a tributary of the Haunted Stream. It is situated in the bed of the creek and is about from 3 to 4 feet in width. A lease has been applied for and a company formed, named The Haunted Stream Gold Mining Company. Two or three men are employed at present sinking along the reef.<sup>1</sup>
- September 1882:*** Mr Polick's recent discovery at the Haunted Stream has caused quite a stir in the locality. Several prospecting claims have been registered, all of which are being worked. Experienced quartz miners speak very highly of the reefs in this locality.<sup>2</sup>
- 1882:*** Three mines working at Haunted Stream - Mercury Mining Co., Rob Roy Co., and Haunted Stream Mining Co.<sup>3</sup>
- 1882-3:*** Ernestine reef found by Radcliffe in 1882 - Ernestine Co. formed - mine located at lower end of Haunted Stream, where the main tunnel passes under the present road – 10-head battery (waterwheel) erected, but was a disaster - built on spongy ground, foundations not true, and water race ran uphill - battery moved to site just outside the mine adit and another race cut - waterwheel was 18 ft diameter with 5-ft breast – opened in October 1883 - mine worked intermittently until 1905.<sup>4</sup>
- 1882:*** Discovery of reefs at Haunted Stream - Passover, Rob Roy, and Ernestine reefs. Township began by end of year - later (1891) named Stirling, after geologist James Stirling. Later reefs included Hans, Rosebud, Commotion, Mint, and Mount Dow. (Flett, p. 174)
- 1882:*** Stirling township situated about 8 miles above junction of Haunted Stream and Tambo River - access via mining track from Tambo Crossing.<sup>5</sup>
- March 1883:*** Reefs attracting attention of some Melbourne capitalists, who are so favourably impressed with their prospects that they have resolved to erect machinery forthwith. Track being cut from main Omeo road, a distance of about 12 miles, to cart machinery along.<sup>6</sup>
- September 1883:*** Haunted Stream GMC have four shafts, each down 70 ft. Ten-head battery being erected at Ernestine mine - about £3,000 already expended on this mine. A new find, three miles below the Ernestine, has been opened - about 50 men on ground. No alluvial claims worked.<sup>7</sup>
- December 1883:*** Ernestine battery at work - about 20 men employed by the company. Haunted Stream GMC cut road to Ernestine battery.<sup>8</sup>

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1 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1882

2 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1882

3 Fairweather (2), p. 211

4 Fairweather (2), p. 233-4

5 Whitelaw, p. 35

6 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1883

7 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1883

8 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1883

- March 1884:** Ernestine Co. - 'I am informed on reliable authority' that 1,281 tons from their mine yielded 320 oz. Jorgenson brothers (old Gippsland prospectors) discovered what they consider to be a rich quartz reef - the Hans - about five miles upstream from Ernestine Co. mine - plan to erect small battery to test it.<sup>9</sup>
- September 1884:** Hans Co. battery erected - 10-head, waterwheel (30-ft diameter).<sup>10</sup>
- December 1884:** Hans Co. - 460 tons yielded 200 oz gold. Rob Roy Co. had trial crushing at Ernestine battery - 40 tons yielded 169 oz. Ernestine Co. - work suspended pending reorganisation of company.<sup>11</sup>
- 1884:** Hans mine situated at what became known as Dog Town - was probably the most important at Stirling.<sup>12</sup>
- 1884:** United Brothers mine owned and worked by Jorgensen brothers - situated on eastern side of creek, south of Hans mine.<sup>13</sup>
- March 1885:** Hans Co. - 12-hp steam engine and further 5-head battery added to plant. Ernestine Co. mine and battery let on tribute.<sup>14</sup>
- June 1885:** Hans Co. employing 30 men - 750 tons crushed for 216 oz. Rob Roy Co. tunnel in about 120 ft - about 140 tons yielded 560 oz.<sup>15</sup>
- September 1885:** Hans Co. crushed 720 tons for 238 oz - stone from between 100-200 ft depth - ground worked by tunnels - yield considered to be fairly payable, but on account of the extra large amount of 'dead' work no dividends have been declared. Ernestine tributers crushing for themselves and others - best yield was from Oversight mine - 36 tons gave 153 oz.<sup>16</sup>
- December 1885:** Commotion Co. - just started work on surface. Brothers Co. - four men employed near surface. Oversight Co. - tunnel driven 110 ft - 4 men employed.<sup>17</sup>
- June 1886:** Rob Roy Co. erected 10-head battery powered by 10-hp engine. Population increasing.<sup>18</sup>
- December 1886:** Haunted Stream Subdivision created.
- December 1886:** Increased activity at Haunted Stream.

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9 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1884  
10 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1884; Fairweather (2), p. 241  
11 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1884  
12 Fairweather (2), p. 241  
13 Fairweather (2), p. 246  
14 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), March 1885  
15 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1885  
16 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), September 1885  
17 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), December 1885  
18 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Mitchell River Subdivision), June 1886

- 1886:** Houses and business premises were reported as springing up in all directions – residents included some 90 Chinese - town named Stirling - new track opened from Haunted Stream to Sarsfield, following the divide between the Tambo and Nicholson rivers.<sup>19</sup>
- 1886:** Battery erected at Rob Roy mine.<sup>20</sup>
- 1886:** Commotion Reef discovered in 1886 - it was one of the Hans Co. leases, which was held for 9 years without working.<sup>21</sup>
- 1886:** Rose of Denmark GMC formed to work mine at Tierney's Creek, on north side of Rob Roy Hill.<sup>22</sup>
- March 1887:** (Haunted Stream Division) Several fresh discoveries. Companies at work include: Ernestine Tribute Co., Mint Co., Rosebud Co., Rob Roy Co., Rob Roy Extended Co., Rose of Denmark Co., Exhibition Co., Victoria Co., Passover Co., Hans Co.
- March 1887:** Miners' huts at Dogtown were surrounded by good gardens. Hans mine had 14 men employed and a 5-head battery, made by Munro & Co. of Melbourne - driven by 30-ft waterwheel, 4ft breast - 10-hp Robey portable engine was held in reserve.<sup>23</sup>
- March 1887:** A.W. Cobb erected Falka battery at junction of Tierney's Creek and Haunted Stream; crusher and sawbench driven by steam.<sup>24</sup>
- June 1887:** Trial crushing of 11 tons from Homeward Bound claim yielded nearly 80 oz. Most mines doing dead work.
- September 1887:** Mint Co. has about 200 tons of stone at grass - plans to erect battery soon.

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19 Fairweather (2), p. 211, 214  
 20 Fairweather (2), p. 231  
 21 Fairweather (2), p. 244  
 22 Fairweather (2), p. 248  
 23 Fairweather (3), p. 118  
 24 Fairweather (3), p. 118

**September 1887:** Commotion and Hans mines, situated about 3 miles up Haunted Stream from township, comprise workings on several different reefs. Large amount of gold won from Commotion and Hans reefs, but proprietors have spent profits mostly on development of mines. Water-driven battery. Victoria mine - just above junction of Tierney's Creek and Haunted Stream - tunnel about 30 ft above creek level and several shafts on hill above. Exhibition mine - surface excavations and stopes to about 50 ft deep, also tunnel. Rob Roy, Oversight, and Rob Roy Extended mines - all on Rob Roy Reef - Oversight mine (formerly held under miners' rights) now in Rob Roy Co. ground. Passover Reef near Tierney's Creek, between Rob Roy and Victoria ground. Homeward Bound Reef on range north of Exhibition Gully, north of Victoria ground - excavation 25 ft long x 35 ft deep. Rose of Denmark Reef - difficulty conveying quartz from mine to nearest battery has retarded development. Sawyers' Reef - near head of Tierney's Creek, about three miles above junction with Haunted Stream - tunnel about 150-200 ft above creek - quartz is packed over difficult route 3 miles to battery. Rosebud Reef - on northern side of Haunted Stream, a little below township. Octopus Reef - northern side of stream, about 1.5 miles below township. Ernestine Reef - has paid dividends - water-powered battery. Mint Reef - workings in a deep gully running into Haunted Stream from the south, about 2 miles below township - battery being erected. Many other reefs. More batteries needed on field, and better access from mines to batteries - inaccessible country. Quartz of a pyritous character - appliances needed for treatment of pyrites, and chlorination works for saving fine gold. (R.A.F. Murray, 'Notes on the Mining Features of the Haunted Stream Gold-field', Appendix H to MSR, Sept 1887, pp. 85-90).

**1887:** Governor General mine situated on lower reaches of Tierney's Creek - sinking on old Albion lode - erecting machinery.<sup>25</sup>

**1887:** Battery installed at Sawyer's mine, Tierney's Creek.<sup>26</sup>

**March 1888:** A number of mines not being worked at all - under offer to Melbourne syndicate which intends floating them on the English market.

**1888:** Mining track cut up Haunted Stream from Stirling to the vicinity of Power's Gully, Cassilis, with a branch track over onto the Bulumwaal-Omeo Road.<sup>27</sup>

**1889:** Hans mine was the deepest at Stirling and had produced £23,000 worth of gold.<sup>28</sup>

**August 1889:** Mother of Millions Co., Passover Reef, erected battery.<sup>29</sup>

**September 1889:** The greatest drawback to the place is the number of leases that are held and not being worked.

**December 1889:** Victoria mine likely to be floated on English market - 'If this comes off, it will do much to advance this at present heavily handicapped little gold-field.'

**June 1889:** Never-can-Tell Co., Cassilis, purchased and removed Rob Roy battery.

**1892:** Track cut from Stirling to Brookville.<sup>30</sup>

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25 Fairweather (2), p. 249  
 26 Fairweather (2), p. 244  
 27 Fairweather (2), p. 221  
 28 Fairweather (2), p. 241  
 29 Fairweather (3), p. 241  
 30 Fairweather (2), p. 221



- 1892:** Federal Convention (also called Sisters) mine - main workings were between the road and Haunted Stream - much troubled by water, as tunnel passed under stream bed – battery erected 1892.<sup>31</sup>
- 1894:** Ten-head battery (probably steam-powered) erected at Victoria mine by Charsley brothers - mine previously worked by a syndicate, but they were beaten by water – mine located in lower part of Tierney's Creek - ore conveyed to battery by gravity tramway.<sup>32</sup>
- 1894:** Murrell and Gallagher working Commotion mine - first crushing yielded 157 oz from 50 tons - installed 5-head battery and waterwheel - battery located a few chains downstream from Hans battery, on opposite side of stream.<sup>33</sup>
- 1895:** Stirling was booming.<sup>34</sup>
- 1895:** Hans mine idle, then leased to Cherry and Co. - 10-head battery installed a little lower down the stream (later known as Domney's battery) - mine at this time had 2,400 ft of outside tramways to bring ore from the Commotion and other mines, plus a firewood tramway and a 325-ft iron-lined chute.<sup>35</sup>
- 1895:** Ernestine mine operations lately renewed - other mines at work included Lilly Reef and Victoria.<sup>36</sup>
- 1898:** Haunted Stream almost quiescent, although an endeavour is being made to float the old Hans mine.<sup>37</sup>
- 1899:** '... the lodes of this field are of fair size, the gold chutes fairly well defined and continuous, the country admirably adapted, on account of its great altitude, for economic working by tunnels, while Haunted Stream is a never-failing water power.'<sup>38</sup>
- 1900:** Haunted Stream goldfield was producing gold to the value of £2 a week for every many, woman and child on the field.<sup>39</sup>
- 1900:** Hibernia reef discovered by James Swetnam - reckoned to be one of the best mines at Stirling, with early crushings yielding as much as 20 oz.<sup>40</sup>
- 1900:** Commotion mine being worked - ore carted to Little Arthur battery (3-head, steam-driven) while additions made to Commotion battery = 10-head - like Hans battery, was eventually stripped of cast iron parts by scrap dealers.<sup>41</sup>
- early 1900s:** Dawson City, a small mining centre, developed 5-head battery working there.<sup>42</sup>
- 1902-7:** Last Hope Co. reopened Rob Roy mine - winding gear, cages and pumps purchased from the Federation Convention mine - powerful tubular boiler installed - flying fox took ore to the Falka (township) battery - company ceased work c.1907.<sup>43</sup>

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31 Fairweather (2), p. 239  
 32 Fairweather (2), p. 240  
 33 Fairweather (2), p. 244  
 34 Fairweather (2), p. 222  
 35 Fairweather (2), p. 242; Murray, p. 4  
 36 Murray, p. 4  
 37 *Australian Mining Standard*, 5 May 1898, p. 2896  
 38 Whitelaw, p. 36  
 39 Fairweather (2), p. 40  
 40 Fairweather (2), pp. 235-6  
 41 Fairweather (2), p. 245  
 42 Fairweather (2), p. 253  
 43 Fairweather (2), p. 232

- 1902-9:** New Stirling Proprietary Co. formed - amalgamation of ex-Ernestine and Hibernia leases - equipped with new battery and winding gear, and chamber cut to house winding gear - mine worked with mixed success - plant disposed of in 1909 included 3 boilers, 2 engines, turbine wheel, overshot waterwheel, and other battery gear.<sup>44</sup>
- 1902-12:** Hans mine purchased by Ballarat syndicate, Jorgensen's Proprietary Co. - mine proved very rich, making about £20 per man per week (8 men employed) - in later years, a new 20-head steam-powered battery was installed - battery and plant sold at auction in 1912 - battery was sold but never removed. Over the ensuing years, scrap merchants broke all the cast iron battery boxes and pulleys and carted them away for sale - all that remained in 1975 were the stamper shanks and steel shafting, neither of which could be broken with sledge hammers or blown up.<sup>45</sup>
- 1904:** Principal mines: New Stirling (ex-Ernestine), Jorgensen's, Hans, Hibernia, and Rob Roy - also a number of co-operative and small parties. New Stirling sinking 3-compartment main shaft, erecting winding plant, obtaining 10-head water-powered battery. Hans Co. erected winding plant. Small crushing plant erected at Hibernia mine - poor quality ore so far. Rob Roy planning to unwater old shaft - winding and pumping plant being erected.<sup>46</sup>
- 1905:** New Stirling erected new winding plant on main shaft - battery erected below mouth of adit level - driven by 15-inch turbine, under a 30-ft head of water - 2,000 tons yielded 940 oz. Jorgensen's Co. treated 1080 tons for 653 oz - working by tunnels. Hans Co. working on low-grade ore - erecting 20-head battery with four Wilfley concentrators - 'The future prospects of this company are good, but would have been much better had water power, which is close at hand, taken the place of steam.' A.J. Giffney and party at Dawson City erecting a centrifugal crusher, driven by 18-hp oil engine and concentrating plant.<sup>47</sup>
- 1905:** Hibernia Co. purchased battery and boilers from Federal Convention mine - overhead tramway built to convey stone to battery - 40-ft trestle bridge across Haunted Stream.<sup>48</sup>
- 1905:** Lone Hand mine, some distance upstream from Hans, worked by Moylan, Cooper and Spence - 5-head battery and Pelton wheel.<sup>49</sup>
- 1906:** Governor General mine, Tierney's Creek, re-opened - estimated one year's payable ore in sight - 10-head battery.<sup>50</sup>

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44 Fairweather (2), p. 238

45 Fairweather (2), p. 242

46 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1904

47 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1905

48 Fairweather (2), p. 235

49 Fairweather (2), pp. 249-50

50 Fairweather (2), p. 249

- 1906:** 22 men employed on New Stirling mine - 1,899 tons yielded 609 oz. Hibernia mine yielded 622 oz from 939 tons. Rob Roy Co. making slow progress. Hans Co. ceased work after treating 700 tons for only 60 oz. Jorgensen's mine employed 22 men and crushed 1,229 tons for 628 oz. Star of Stirling GM Association Co., Dawson City, erected 8-head battery, driven by 14-hp oil engine - 390 tons yielded 53 oz - crushing costs 3s per ton; with mining operations, 6s per ton - very cheap ore to treat. Eight other small parties treated 241 tons for 360 oz.<sup>51</sup>
- 1907:** New Stirling and Hibernian companies amalgamated - working shallow levels with poor results. Rob Roy still prospecting - dogged by financial troubles - 196 tons yielded 97 oz. Jorgensen Co. closed down. Hans Co. recommenced - large bodies of low-grade ore in sight, which 'with judicious handling' should be payable.<sup>52</sup>
- 1908:** Mining at very low ebb. Rob Roy Co. defunct. Water proved too much for Jorgensen Co. appliances.<sup>53</sup>
- 1909:** Hans Co. 'vigorously prospecting', with the help of a government grant - main shaft sunk to 360 ft - hundreds of feet of drives and winzes constructed - shaft equipped with substantial winch for winding, and an air compressor - neighbouring lease acquired and winding plant erected thereon, shaft sunk and timbered to 200 ft. Very little work done by other companies at Stirling. Sawyer and party working with profitable results at Dawson City.<sup>54</sup>
- 1910:** Hans Co. failed to find payable gold - operations curtailed. Sawyer & party's operations continue prosperous. Otherwise, a very dull year for the field.<sup>55</sup>
- 1911:** Sawyer and party, Dawson City, got more than 1 oz per ton.<sup>56</sup>
- 1912:** Unusual depression exists on the Stirling goldfield, no new discoveries having been made during the year, which is an unusual circumstance.<sup>57</sup>
- 1913:** Mining has almost ceased in this once prosperous district. Wonga Co. prospecting in vicinity of old Hans mine - unsuccessful. Two small parties continue to make a living from patches of stone left by the companies. At Dawson City, Collins and party depleted the stone above the adit level - tribute party has taken over mine - intend to install pumping plant to work reef at depth.<sup>58</sup>
- 1914:** Dominey & Swetmen getting good returns from old Hibernia lease - 40 tons gave 75 oz. Star of the West claim, in Jorgensen's back lease, gave 55 oz from 75 tons.<sup>59</sup>
- 1915:** Hibernia mine abandoned due to foul air - last crushing in 1915.<sup>60</sup>
- 1915-16:** 'This old-time goldfield is in the hands of three co-operative parties, who, with the advantage of having water power for milling, are making subsist wages.'<sup>61</sup>
- c.1915:** Lone Hand battery shifted to a mine at head of Tierney's Creek - driven by gas producer.<sup>62</sup>

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51 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1906  
 52 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1907  
 53 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1908  
 54 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1909  
 55 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1910  
 56 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1911  
 57 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1912  
 58 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1913  
 59 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1914  
 60 Fairweather (2), p. 236  
 61 Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1915-16  
 62 Fairweather (2), p. 251

- 1917-18:** Only a few old prospectors and alluvial fossickers now at work.<sup>63</sup>
- 1936:** Short tunnel driven at Hibernia mine.<sup>64</sup>
- 1937:** Prospectors on Tierney's Creek reefs.<sup>65</sup>
- 1975:** About the only sign of the Stirling township evident in 1975 was the terraced stonework of the hotel front - even that was hidden behind a thick bank of scrub.<sup>66</sup>
- 1975:** Of the dozens of batteries which once thundered out their song, it would now be difficult to find one for a museum piece, so complete has been the finish of the mining industry.<sup>67</sup>
- 1975:** Haunted Stream now a popular fishing spot.<sup>68</sup>

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63 Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1917-18

64 Fairweather (2), p. 236

65 *Mining & Geological Journal*, July 1937

66 Fairweather (2), p. 213

67 Fairweather (2), p. 244

68 Fairweather (2), p. 254

## **JORDAN - DONNELLY'S CREEK - ABERFELDY**

*Alluvial mining - diggers worked creek claims in dry months and 'spur claims' during winter.*

*Jordan River - MSRs show pronounced cycle of drought and flood - one quarter, a severe 'want of water' will be reported; the next, all work will be at a standstill due to flooding - this occurs almost on an annual basis.*

- 1861-2:** BB Creek and Jordan River goldfield discovered, following opening of Upper Goulburn fields. Supplies packed fifty miles from Jamieson. Township of Jericho formed at junction of Jordan River and BB Creek. Two reefs discovered by early 1862; also many Jordan tributaries - Fern Tree Creek, Red Jacket, Garibaldi (originally called One Speck<sup>1</sup>), and Wooden Fork (Dry) Creek. Donnelly's Creek, about 15 miles from Jericho, opened mid-1862. Quartz reefs discovered at Fulton's Creek, 18 miles south of Donnelly's, later in 1862, followed by rush to Sophy's Gully (a tributary).<sup>2</sup>
- c.1861:** BB Creek got its name because the earliest diggers in the area had their trousers torn to shreds making their way through the almost impenetrable undergrowth. Its full name was Bare Bollocks Creek.<sup>3</sup>
- February 1862:** An important rush has taken place to a district ten miles from the Upper Goulburn workings, and thirty miles south of Mount Bulla, contiguous to a creek denominated by the miners the River Jordan. The river runs through a flat 500 yards wide, and already a small township has been built on its banks. The bed consists of clay, slate, and, in some instances, sandstone. The flats on each side are composed of gravel, covered with rich soil, the whole of which appears to be auriferous, although the present workings are confined to the bed of the creek, and its intermediate sides. The workings on the main creek extend for fourteen miles, besides which there are numerous tributaries that are worked successfully, particularly one named Fern-tree Creek, which is ten miles long. A party of four got here 280 oz in one week. About 4,000 persons were on the ground, many of them having left the Jamieson Diggings. No authentic information respecting quartz-reefs has been received.<sup>4</sup>
- 1862:** The first of numerous tracks cut to the Jordan from South Gippsland and the Upper Yarra - McEvoy's Track. Prospecting increased.<sup>5</sup>
- 1862:** First rush to Aberfeldy River - township originally called Mt Lookout.<sup>6</sup>
- early 1860s:** Red Jacket township grew up on river flat at junction of Jordan, Red Jacket and Dry Creeks.<sup>7</sup>
- January 1863:** Bank claims on the Jordan paying upwards of £20 per week per man.<sup>8</sup>
- early 1863:** Reefs discovered at Edwards Hill, close to Donnelly's Creek. Population moved there. Reputed population of 3,000 in early 1860s - no sign of habitation remained in 1925 - only graves in scrub NE of township site.<sup>9</sup>
- 1863:** Main mines at Donnelly's/Fulton's Creek were the White Star and Crinoline.<sup>10</sup>

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1 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Part of Jordan South and part of Omeo Subdivisions), June 1864

2 Flett, pp. 125-9

3 Tomlin, Bosa and Chamberlain, p. 76

4 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Western Buckland Division), February 1862

5 Bailey & Bailey, p. 5

6 Tomlin, Bosa & Chamberlain, p. 120

7 Tomlin, Bosa and Chamberlain, p. 102

8 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Gipps Land Division), January 1863

9 Bailey & Bailey, p. 6; Baragwanath, p. 13

10 Bailey & Bailey, pp. 6-7

## **KILMORE HISTORICAL NOTES**

*Reefs at Reedy Creek, Goldie, Strath Creek, King Parrot Creek, etc. appear to have been on private land (McKenzie's Run, Snodgrass's Run, etc.). Only the Larry Bourke's Reef and the Old Diggings at Kilmore seem to have been on government land: originally a farmer's common, later a mining reserve.*

- 1851:** Gold finds reported at Kilmore.<sup>1</sup>
- 1851:** Gold found at King Parrot Creek, one of the creeks running north from the Mt Disappointment-Kinglake area to the Goulburn River.<sup>2</sup>
- 1855:** Gold diggings scattered along east side of Price's Creek, flowing from Goldie, north-west of Kilmore.<sup>3</sup>
- 1856:** Alluvial gold discovered at Reedy Creek.<sup>4</sup>
- 1858-9:** Reefs opened at Reedy Creek - Reedy Creek township was established in 1859.<sup>5</sup>
- 1859:** Alluvial gold worked and reefs discovered on King Parrot and Strath creeks.<sup>6</sup>
- August 1859:** Several parties taking advantage of dry season to further work the alluvial deposits known to exist near Reedy Creek—below Cunningham's, or the lower crossing-place, parties are draining the water-holes in the bed of the creek. Machinery near the township is now at work. Principal reefs maintain their character as highly auriferous—many people are of the opinion that they are merely surface leaders, but the lode in these claims is increasing in thickness and value as it descends. Strath Creek—Sloane's powerful and compact machinery now in full work—White Star Reef yielded a fair return from crushing. King Parrot Creek—reefs looking well, but gold of a poor quality, especially from northern end of Whittaker's Reef.<sup>7</sup>
- December 1859:** Population in vicinity of Reedy Creek: 300 quartz miners, 100 alluvial miners/sluicers, 120 engaged in erecting machinery, 30 quartz crushers, 200 engaged in stores, &c. Machinery at work and in course of erection: Johnson's 6-hp engine, stampers and chilian wheels, Reedy Creek; Hart's 16-hp engine, stampers and shaking-table, Reedy Creek; Perkins & Co.'s 25-hp engine, stampers and chilian wheels, Reedy Creek; Nickinson & Co.'s 25-hp engine and stampers, Reedy Creek; Sloane's 16-hp engine, stampers and Chilian wheel at Strath Creek; C. Johnson's 6-hp engine (plans to erect powerful machinery worked by water-power) at King Parrot Creek. Reedy Creek—Several claims on the old line of quartz-workings have changed hands, and at figures remunerative to the original discoverers. New quartz veins opened at Strath, King Parrot, and Muddy Creeks. Those erecting machinery are constructing capacious dams for storing water during summer months. 'With some few exceptions the reefs here can scarcely be said to have received a fair trial, the operations not being conducted on that scale of magnitude, or with that energy necessary to the speedy development of a gold-bearing district.'<sup>8</sup>

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1 Flett, p. 110

2 Flett, p. 115

3 Flett, p. 111

4 Flett, p. 114

5 Flett, pp. 114-5

6 Flett, p. 115

7 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), August 1859

8 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1859

- 1859-60:** Triangle Lead first worked at King Parrot Creek - lead discovered at depth of 70 ft.<sup>9</sup>
- early 1860s:** Good gold, both alluvial and reef, worked in Price's Creek vicinity during early 1860s.<sup>10</sup>
- January 1860:** Mining population: Reedy & Strath creeks—500 quartz miners, 80 alluvial; King Parrot Creek—90 quartz miners. Kilmore Diggings situated about 5 miles from Kilmore—several east and west quartz leaders have been worked and very good stone raised. Patch of alluvial surface ground also worked—good results obtained. Prospecting claim taken up for north and south quartz reef. Immediately adjoining old workings, gold has been found in this reef, which is well defined—stone at present is bastard quartz, but stone looks better as shaft descends. Lease of 4 acres of the old ground has been applied for. Reedy Creek—several good reefs have fallen off considerably—oldest established lines, however, are still giving handsome returns. King Parrot Creek—Alterations being made to Fortune's machine—another machine purchased by Doyle on Reedy Creek is being erected. Payable gold has been found for nearly 1\_ miles on Whittaker's line of reef. Gold on Hannigan's and Murchison's lines will give payable results from crushing at a moderate price. Alluvial sinking on Triangle Creek has been abandoned, due to excessive water.<sup>11</sup>
- February 1860:** Many alluvial miners have left for Inglewood and Snowy River diggings. Returns from Langridge Reef, Perkins & Co. (late Doyle), Ryans, &c. still prove remunerative. Strath Creek—almost all reefs either registered or abandoned—crushing machinery only lately erected, at a very considerable expense, has been removed—Sloane's machine moved to Muddy Creek (Yea). King Parrot Creek—some claims yielding a fair return, but gold is of a very poor quality—worth at most £2 15s by assay. Claim at extreme north end of Whittaker's Reef gave at the rate of 2 oz/ton—most northerly claim on these diggings, and immediately joins Sugar Loaf Hill. Most claims on King Parrot Creek registered (ie. suspended), the water proving too strong for ordinary parties.<sup>12</sup>
- April 1860:** Great depression in quartz mining on Reedy Creek (300 quartz miners)—large quantities of water on payable reefs—Hart removed his water-powered battery from Reedy Creek to Tea Tree (Yea). Considerable improvement in alluvial mining (120 miners)—small rush on flats adjoining the creek, near Cunningham's. Strath Creek deserted. King Parrot Creek—the few quartz claims at work on the Triangle line are still yielding an average of 2 oz/ton—one claim recently gave 12\_ oz/ton—large body of water on this line has proved an insuperable obstacle to many of the original claimholders, who have left for other fields—Mr Fortune has applied for 4 acres of abandoned ground on Triangle line and intends erecting pumping machinery for draining the reef.<sup>13</sup>
- June 1860:** Reedy Creek—some few of the old reefs are still working, but most claim holders seem dispirited and are disinclined to venture more capital in exploring the reefs. Triangle Reef, King Parrot Creek—Fortune & Co. sinking engine shaft—Hurley & Co., Ross & Co., and Marnell & Co. still raising good stone—Doyle sinking shaft farther north, immediately adjoining the Germans.<sup>14</sup>
- July 1860:** Despite rush to Gaffney's Creek, considerable number of quartz miners has returned to Reedy Creek—rich vein of quartz struck on Langridge's Hill. King Parrot Creek—preparations being made for erection of machinery to work reefs on a larger scale.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Flett, p. 115

<sup>10</sup> Flett, p. 111

<sup>11</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), January 1860

<sup>12</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), February 1860

<sup>13</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), April 1860

<sup>14</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1860

<sup>15</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), July 1860

- August 1860:** New reef at Reedy Creek, called the Wellington—a saddle reef—section of reef now opened lies on eastern slope of dividing range, between watersheds of Reedy and Sunday Creeks, and crossing the line of range at an oblique angle—almost all the present quartz workings lie on the eastern side of this range, although alluvial ground has been found on Sunday Creek and the flats adjoining. 'Reedy Creek would have been the exact spot to exemplify the theory of quartz reefs becoming poorer the deeper they descend; almost every vein opened here has become thinner, as well as less productive in gold, after reaching a depth say of 140 feet'—water on the reefs is still exceedingly troublesome. King Parrot Creek—Fortune & Co. still sinking water shaft on Triangle Lead—pumping machinery not yet in full work. New quartz veins has been struck on spurs running easterly from the Boundary Range, 'in close proximity to where the Yankees were working last year'.<sup>16</sup>
- September 1860:** Satisfactory trial crushing from Wellington Reef. Langridge Reef Co. putting their crushing plant in thorough repair. Rich specimens raised from Captain's Reef (Nickinson & Co.). Quartz has been crushed from the Albert and Magenta Reefs, but was not payable. King Parrot Creek—Fortune and Co.'s shaft sunk to 100 ft—large buckets hauled by steam power have been found sufficient for draining so far.<sup>17</sup>
- March 1864:** 315 miners and 8 puddling machines on Reedy Creek. 'While many of the reefs are in the hands of poor people, much good cannot be expected.' Reefs at Reedy Creek, King Parrot and elsewhere almost deserted following rush to the Jordan. In the past, reefs at Reedy Creek produced three to four oz/ton; but they were taken up by men without capital and when the workings were obstructed by water, they could not afford pumping apparatus and the claims were abandoned. Likewise at King Parrot Creek - there were ten good claims on the Triangle line of reef, and an antimony reef adjoining. Only three claims are presently taken up at Reedy Creek - Albert and Captain's return an average 4 oz/ton - they can raise little stone, because of water in their shafts - whim or pumping apparatus is required. Reedy Creek QMC has 15-acre lease, taking in three established lines of reef, known as Langridge's, Doyle's, and Saddle reefs - 18-head battery being erected. Kilmore GMC, at old diggings, applied for 12-acre lease and 3 acres to erect steam crushing mill (ex King Parrot) - crushing quartz and cement.<sup>18</sup>
- July 1864:** Rush on Reedy Creek, about two miles north of Cunningham's Hotel, on a branch called Nuggetty Gully. About 400 miners were said to be on the creek. A man named 'Ballarat Jem' found a piece 13-oz. About twenty shafts were sunk in the gully, but nothing remunerative was found.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), August 1860

<sup>17</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1860

<sup>18</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1864

<sup>19</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1864



**September 1864:** 215 alluvial miners remained on the creek following the July rush. Prospecting parties working on the range over Nuggetty Gully, searching for a reef. Only four creek claims on the creek - they have 3 puddling machines, one waterwheel, and a few sluice boxes. The others are in small detached parties along the creek, using only tub, dish, and cradle. Reedy Creek reef. Thompson & Co., Albert Reef, crushing with a pair of Chilian wheels, worked by horses - crush 3 tons per week - 12 tons gave 30 oz. Hayes and Co., Captain's Reef, crush with a small basin with two balls, turned by hand - crush two tons per week - 7 tons gave 21 oz. Laurence Bourke & Co. have lately taken a lease of 12 acres for gold-mining purposes, commonly known as Kilmore Old Diggings - on government land, the farmers' common - 25 men employed. King Parrot Creek abandoned.<sup>20</sup>

**1864-8:** Larry Bourke's Reef, Goldie, yielded a total of 1,070 oz from 5,620 tons.<sup>21</sup>

**December 1864:** Improvement expected in alluvial mining at Reedy Creek - increasing population and capital - a few new races being made and some of the old ones cleaned up. A party of Italians, lately come here from Daylesford, were cleaning up one of the races a little below Cunningham's Hotel, at the crossing on the creek, found a rich quartz reef. Ferrell & Co., Reedy Creek, failed to dewater flooded shafts with 6-hp engine - now erecting 12-hp engine - they now have three engines on the ground. Other Reedy Creek quartz mines also flooded. Ten good quartz claims at King Parrot Creek, and 8 at Reedy Creek, and many others that paid well when worked between 1858 and 1862. Kilmore GMC (Laurence Bourke and Co.) have crushed very little, water having failed them both in the new race and Price's Creek.<sup>22</sup>

**1865:** New alluvial discoveries caused a rush to Reedy Creek, mainly by Chinese - Dabyminga Creek (a continuation of Reedy) was also worked at this time.<sup>23</sup>

**March 1865:** Magenta, Leviathan, Sailor's and Solferino Reefs taken up after having been abandoned for two or three years. Ferrell & Co., at Reedy Creek, have engine and mill in good working order - about 20 men employed - engine shaft 175 ft deep - will commence to crush in a few days.<sup>24</sup>

**September 1865:** To all appearance Reedy Creek gold fields will, in a short time, become as important in gold-bearing and quartz-reefing as any part of the colony'. Prospecting claim taken up on Back Creek, Mount William Ranges; two at Mollison's Gap, near Pyalong; one on Victoria Spur, Reedy Creek; one on the Vulcan Reef, Strath Creek; one on the Leviathan Reef, Reedy Creek. 'It is very likely that all the ground that has been hitherto in occupation and opened, and for some time abandoned, will shortly be taken up and worked again'. Reedy Creek alluvial - about 300 men working on the creek, occupied in puddling, box and ground sluicing - double this number are expected here - fourteen sluicing companies, three ground sluicing companies, the remainder box and tub washing - average earnings are 30s to 40s per man/week. Kilmore GMC - Laurence Bourke and Co. crushed about 80 tons of cement a week and produced only 10 oz - cement taken from surface to about 20 ft deep - two shafts of 70 ft deep each have been sunk during the quarter, in search of the main reef - 17 men employed. New reef discoveries north of Lancefield and near Pyalong - some of the King Parrot reefs taken up again, also Strath Creek.<sup>25</sup>

**March 1866:** Reedy Creek QM & Crushing Co. have an 18-head battery, powered by a 25-hp engine. Strath Creek Co. has a 6-head battery and 10-hp engine. At the Kilmore Old Diggings is an 8-head battery and 10-hp engine. No Chinese miners.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1864

<sup>21</sup> Kenny (1937/7)

<sup>22</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1864

<sup>23</sup> Flett, p. 115

<sup>24</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1865

<sup>25</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1865

<sup>26</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1866

**June 1866:** 200 European and 300 Chinese on Reedy Creek - it is reported there will be 500 or 600 Chinese in a week's time. Some are surfacing and ground sluicing, others puddling; the remainder working with dish and cradle - 2 puddling machines and 15 sluice-boxes at work. Earnings estimated at 25s to 30s per man/week. 'There are at present five Chinese stores in course of erection on the creek. This place has at present all the appearance of a new gold-field. About fifty huts have been erected here during the week, as if by magic, and building is still going on.' Italian Sluicing GMC constructed water-race, extending about 6 miles from McKenzie's Station to Nuggetty Gully, for ground sluicing. Reedy Creek QM and Crushing Co. crushed about 600 tons of cement taken out of their shafts, formerly known as Langridge's and Doyle's Reefs. Party of 8 men has taken up Sailor's Reef claim, which was a long time abandoned - working by tunnel, now in 230 ft - have made a dam across the gully - battery being erected. Working on the Albert Reef suspended, 'in consequence of the defective state of the old shaft', which is 240 ft deep - company intends putting in a tunnel. Magenta and Solferino Reefs Co. tunnelling. Leviathan and Wallaby Reefs sinking new main shaft. New goldfield discovered on Sunday Creek, on Mr McKenzie's run, about 9 miles SE of Kilmore. Ryan and Cushian's GM Prospecting Co. applied for 25-acre lease already five gold-bearing leaders opened in their ground - small quantities crushed in a Berdan machine, with results of 6 oz, 9 oz, and 3 oz/ton - now erecting machinery, consisting of waterwheel and 6 head of stamps. 'This will give a great impetus to this part of the division, as there is not one machine on the creek, and already a number of gold-bearing reefs have been discovered there.' Windsor Castle claim situated on and above the same hill as the Sunday Creek prospecting claim. Rising Sun claim adjoins Windsor Castle - stone is a kind of hard cement. Golconda claim adjoins the Rising Sun. An alluvial prospecting claim has been taken up at the head of a branch of the creek near McKenzie's home station - also other parties working in the bed and banks of this creek. 30 reef miners, 25 alluvial miners. Lease of 15 acres applied for at Golden Point, Strath Creek, called Sailor Jack's Reef - chute and tramway erected, and about 150 tons of stone raised. Phoenix GMC working two leases at Strath Creek - leases known as Wild Dog and Homeward-bound - working by tunnels. Hayes Hill GMC applied for 16-acre lease at Strath Creek - driving a tunnel. Volta Co. have a battery and engine erected, crushing for themselves and others - 70 tons of their own produced 1 oz/ton. Three or four other parties on the creek, tunnelling. King Parrot and Cattle Range quartz reefs abandoned - unpayable.<sup>27</sup>

**September 1866:** 240 Chinese and 210 European alluvial miners at Reedy Creek, 160 quartz miners at Reedy Creek, Strath Creek, King Parrot Creek, Sunday Creek, Lancefield, and Kilmore Old Diggings. Reedy Creek QMC put in new stamp-boxes, repaired engine and gear, sank and cleaned reservoir, repaired dam - shafts from 50 to 180 ft deep. On Leviathan and Wallaby Reefs - main shaft sunk, erected battery, engine, and other fixtures. Shepherd's Reef Co. cleared two shafts, 140 & 75 ft, of mullock and water, and timbered old ground - also 200-ft tunnel put into this ground. Sailor's Reef Co. crushed 200 tons for 1 oz/ton - tunnel 230 ft. Sailor Jack's Reef Co., Strath Creek, crushed 112 tons for 3 oz/ton - 6-head battery, 8-hp engine - purchased from Volta Co. Also several other claims on Strath Creek. Three prospecting quartz claims taken up at Sunday Creek - 8-head battery erected, with 30-ft waterwheel. Kilmore Old Diggings, Moranding - mill and gear repaired and improved, and amalgamator added - reef is a kind of rubbly sandstone, intermixed with small leaders - large parcels of picked rubble quartz crushed. Harp of Erin Reef, on Lancefield-road side, about midway between Kilmore and Lancefield, in the Parish of Goldie at Moranding West - prospecting shows good reefing indications - 25-acre lease applied for. New rush between Tallarook and Seymour, near junction of Sugarloaf and Sunday Creeks, about one mile on Kilmore side of Sunday Creek bridge - several shafts put down.<sup>28</sup>

**December 1866:** 545 alluvial miners (450 Chinese, 75 European) on Reedy Creek, 106 quartz miners at Reedy Creek & Sunday Creek, 30 at Strath Creek, 20 at Kilmore Old Diggings. Antimony found at Sunday Creek. Ryan & Co. have 10-head battery, driven by waterwheel 22 ft 6 inches diameter (15 hp) - 16 men employed. Reedy Creek Co. sinking shaft at south end of their claim (formerly Langridge's) and remodelling engine gear. Magenta & Solferino GMC driving tunnel. Peruvian, Wellington, Butler, and Albert reefs abandoned. Captain's Reef GMC erecting machinery. At Strath Creek, Hayes' Hill GMC tunnel is 320 ft long, and Phoenix GMC is driving tunnel in Homeward Bound lease, Wild Dog Gully. Kilmore GMC, Moranding, are remodelling their mill, putting in a new battery, and raising rubble - will have 1,000 tons of this debris ready to crush when mill is in order.<sup>29</sup>

**June 1867:** Chinese miners making excellent wages on Reedy Creek - new rush close to McKenzie's homestead. Shepherd's Reef Co. let their claim on tribute. Magenta & Solferino Co. tunnel in about 250 ft - still very hard. Albert Reef taken up by Thompson & party. Leviathan Co. wound up. Phoenix GMC, Wild-dog, abandoned claim. Sailor's Reef Co. putting up new battery of six stamps - water-powered. Ryan's waterwheel battery, Sunday Creek, kept constantly employed - Ryan's Reef gave 975 oz from 325 ton - a small party of alluvial miners make fair wages sinking near the machine. Hunt & party, Mt William, suspended operations. Pyalong, Tullarook, and King Parrot Reefs abandoned.<sup>30</sup>

**September 1867:** Great rush to Alexandra diggings. Reedy Creek mines at work: Shepherd's Reef Co., Thompson & Co. (Seek & Find Reef), Reedy Creek Co. (Langridge Reef), Sailor's Reef - Leviathan, Captain's, and other reefs abandoned - Magenta & Solferino tunnel exempted. New line of reef, called Duke of Edinburgh, at head of Nuggetty Gully, Reedy Creek. Sunday Creek mines include: Ryan & Co.'s, Golconda (Tobin's Reef), Rising Sun (Kelly & Mitchell's Reef), Windsor Castle (Davis's Reef), and Root-Hog-or-Die (Tollett's Reef). Perseverance Co., Mount William, (new company) plan to erect machinery. At Kilmore Diggings, Bourke & party are crushing all before them - 1,000 tons gave 200 oz - labour consists chiefly in carting.<sup>31</sup>

**1868:** About 450 miners working at the sources of Dabyminga, King Parrot, Muddy, and Kurucuruc creeks.<sup>32</sup>

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28 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1866

29 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1866

30 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1867

31 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1867

32 Brough Smyth, p. 94

- June 1868:** The sale of the Reedy Creek Co. (Langridge's Reef) battery will be a serious check to prospectors, as there will be no battery on the creek to give stone a trial. Magenta Co. prospecting - provided with a very snug plant the moment it is required. Chinese miners now partially employed by puddlers.<sup>33</sup>
- September 1868:** The machine at the Kilmore diggings still at work, crushing cement from the hill, formerly Bourke's lease - removed from its former site during the past quarter to a more convenient spot for water. At Reedy Creek, Magenta Co. struck reef in their tunnel (430 ft). Prospecting claim taken up, partly on Doyle's and partly on Langridge's abandoned claims, to search for the lost vein. In alluvial, Chinese have nearly deserted the place - Europeans still puddling, and some holders of bank and creek claims between Upper Bridge and Greek's Point have made good finds. At Sunday Creek, on three quartz claims at work - Rising Sun claim, Ryan's & Co. (200 oz from 200 ton - very superior quality gold, fetches nearly £4 1s 6d per oz), and Tobin & Co. (also called Golconda, erecting machinery). Fortune's abandoned lease, at King Parrot Creek, again taken up.<sup>34</sup>
- December 1868:** Rush to Spring Creek (near Alexandra) drained Kilmore division of most of its miners. Ryan & Co., at Sunday Creek, got 196 oz from 210 tons. 800 tons of cement (taken as it comes) from Bourke's Reef, Kilmore, gave only 80 oz.<sup>35</sup>
- June 1869:** Langridge Reef Co. putting up new and perfecting old machinery. Leviathan, Morning Star, Fanny, Albert, Doyle's, and Magenta mines still at work. Quartz reefing at Sunday Creek looking up. Kilmore diggings quartz claim abandoned.<sup>36</sup>
- September 1869:** Chinamen returning after a party of six met with great success a short distance above McKenzie's home station and made £4-£6 per man/week. At Strath Creek, party of 12 has whim erected and all appliances to test the ground - good gold got before, but water was an obstacle. Langridge Co., Reedy Creek, still sinking main shaft - battery commenced work. Eclipse Co., Leviathan Reef, erecting battery. A new reef, the Golden Point, has caused excitement - situated down Reedy Creek, about three miles from Cunningham's - nine claims registered on reef. Sailor Jack's Reef, Strath Creek Ranges, has again been struck - trial crushing of 1\_ tons at Langridge's machine, Reedy Creek, yielded one pound of gold. Hayes' Reef, Strath, also at work. King Parrot reefs again abandoned. Ryan & party, Sunday Creek, taking down a large portion of their hill and crushing everything before them - crushing with their waterwheel, they can make 3 dwt/ton pay handsomely.<sup>37</sup>
- December 1869:** Rich & Rowe/Specimen Hill Co., Star Reef, Reedy Creek (near the old Langridge claim) got good yields from trial crushings - formed company, and erected machinery.<sup>38</sup>

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33 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1868  
 34 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1868  
 35 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1868  
 36 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1869  
 37 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1869  
 38 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1869

- March 1870:** About 60 Europeans and 50 Chinese alluvial miners still employed about Reedy Creek. Langridge Co. still sinking shaft - down 200 ft. Magenta, Doyle's, Rantoon, Red Rover, and others at work. Tostal GMC raising 'some really fine stone' from their No. 3 shaft - last crushing yielded 17 oz/ton. Ryan & Co. and Tobin & Co. working at Sunday Creek. Strath Creek GMC working reef at Strath Creek - Exchequer Co. working alluvial lead.<sup>39</sup>
- June 1871:** About 60 Chinese on Reedy Creek, some doing well - Europeans making bare wages. Two quartz mines working on Reedy Creek - Chapman & Co. (near Magenta claim), and McMann & Co (Langridge).<sup>40</sup>
- September 1871:** Perseverance Antimony & GMC, Sunday Creek, wound up after three months, due to excessive water.<sup>41</sup>
- December 1871:** Most prosperous locality is Sunday Creek, where crushing is cheap, on account of the water power available for machinery.<sup>42</sup>
- March 1872:** Mining plants that were on the Reedy Creek have been sold and removed - a parcel of quartz from Russell's Reef has to be taken to Sunday Creek for crushing.<sup>43</sup>
- June 1872:** Old quartz reefs, although considered payable by many miners, are abandoned owing to heavy expense of carting and crushing.<sup>44</sup>
- August 1872:** Payable gold discovered in Comet Creek, about three miles up Sunday Creek from the waterwheels - sinking from three to eight feet and some paddocks made excellent wages - about 50 men at work over small area. Alluvial prospectors out towards Mt Disappointment - nothing payable yet. Quartz miners again at work on the North-East Co. ground, Reedy Creek, at the Tostal Hill, and on the Strath. Quartz workings at Kilmore diggings applied for on lease and company formed to again work this once flourishing property. Sunday Creek mines - Ryan & Co., Tobin & Co., Tollitt & Co., McMurray & Co., and Dwyers' claim - making good returns - some also show fair prospect of antimony.<sup>45</sup>
- December 1872:** Sunday Creek quartz mines still working and paying miners well.<sup>46</sup>
- June 1873:** Ryan and Co., Sunday Creek, sold out their quartz claim, with water-race and machinery, to a Melbourne company, who are now crushing and plan an addition to the battery. Alluvial mining still being followed by Europeans and Chinese on Reedy Creek, but bare wages are made.<sup>47</sup>
- December 1874:** There is utter stagnation. "The bye-law requires no registration when claims are distant ten miles from the registrar's office, and the scattered quartz mines and patches of alluvial in the district are over this distance."<sup>48</sup>
- March 1877:** Prospecting party raising quartz at Shepherd's Reef, Reedy Creek, but distance to nearest battery makes it unprofitable. Alluvial miners on Sunday and Reedy Creeks are obtaining a mere pittance.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1870  
<sup>40</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March & June 1871  
<sup>41</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1871  
<sup>42</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1871  
<sup>43</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1872  
<sup>44</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1872  
<sup>45</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1872  
<sup>46</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1872  
<sup>47</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1873  
<sup>48</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1874  
<sup>49</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1877

- September 1877:** Prospecting party sinking shaft at Doyle's Reef, Reedy Creek, which gave excellent returns some years since.<sup>50</sup>
- March 1878:** Two quartz mines worked at Reedy Creek.<sup>51</sup>
- September 1878:** Quartz mining improving, due to operations of Doyle's Reef QMC, Reedy Creek - erected winding and pumping machinery, and beat the water - now prospecting and sending trial crushing to Sandhurst - if satisfactory, crushing plant will be erected, which will be of great service on Reedy Creek. Other mines at work include Shepherd's Reef Co., Magenta claim, and McMann's on Langridge Reef - other leases marked out. Kummerlos GMC, Strath Creek, working alluvial by shaft.<sup>52</sup>
- March 1879:** New battery erected by Doyle's Reef QMC. Great expectations are indulged in as to the future of the Kilmore diggings, three claims being at work - battery needed on the ground. Kimmerlos Co., Strath Creek, bottomed and drove 10 ft, with poor results.<sup>53</sup>
- June 1879:** Machinery being erected at Kilmore diggings to test reefs there - no other mining operations carried on there at present. Several Reedy Creek reefs now opened out - Crown and Doyle's claims are the best.<sup>54</sup>
- September 1879:** L.L. Co., Strath Creek, driving on very rich leader. The machinery at the Kilmore diggings made a start about a fortnight ago - poor results so far. Alluvial workings confined to Chinese and a few Europeans, who earn bare wages.<sup>55</sup>
- March 1880:** Alluvial mining exists only in name. Quartz mines being taken up and returns should soon show that 'this long neglected district' is worthy of attention.<sup>56</sup>
- September 1880:** Crown Co. the principal crusher of stone. Doyle's Reef QMC, after sinking their main shaft 100 ft further and cross-cutting 50 ft, now raising and crushing good stone. Prince of Wales claim yielded well. Eureka Co. (in the same line) is crushing.<sup>57</sup>
- December 1880:** Quartz mines at Reedy Creek have been developed to a great extent in the past three months.<sup>58</sup>

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50 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1877  
 51 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1878  
 52 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1878  
 53 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1879  
 54 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1879  
 55 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1879  
 56 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1880  
 57 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1880  
 58 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1880

- 1881:** Reedy Creek reefs form a belt along the line of an anticlinal fold, running WSW-ENE, passing through what is known as the upper township. Kaiser Reef on south side of anticlinal - mines on Kaiser line include Evening Star, Band of Hope, and Happy Land - no crushing machine in vicinity. Reefs near the Reedy Creek township are Langridge, Crown and Doyles - all famous for rich yields. Other reefs include the Saddle, Prince of Wales, Albert, Morning Star, Red Rover, Empress, Queen Victoria, Beaconsfield, Captain's, Kangaroo, Palmerston, Russell's, and the President. Average yields from reefs are very high - from 1 oz to 10 oz+ per ton. Map accompanying report shows four batteries: two at Reedy Creek township; one (with huts) on the west bank of Reedy Creek, to the south of Thompson's Spur; and the fourth at the south-eastern end of the field, up a northern tributary of Blackman's Creek, serving Beaconsfield, Russell's, and other reefs in that locality. At the lower township, three miles down the creek from the upper, alluvial diggings were very good.<sup>59</sup>
- March 1881:** Mines on Kaiser line of reef, Reedy Creek, include: Kaiser, Evening Star, Band of Hope, and Happy Land - the distance to a crushing mill retards progress.<sup>60</sup>
- June 1881:** Long Tunnel Co., Reedy Creek, installed Humboldt rock-boring machine, to complete their tunnel seeking the Albert line of reef, 'which was worked so successfully about twenty years ago'. Doyle's Co. ordered a National rock-drill, to be used in sinking their shaft - also erecting pumping and winding gear. Langridge Co. intends to erect machinery to enable them work at a lower level. Multistriate Co. and St Ann's Co. driving tunnels. Machinery about to be erected on President claim.<sup>61</sup>
- September 1881:** Grimshaw & party got nearly 2 oz from trial crushing of 2 tons from reef they are opening up at Kinglake, near Mt Disappointment.<sup>62</sup>
- September 1881:** Apollo Co. formed to work ground at Sunday Creek for antimony and gold. Party of Italians sluicing ground at Lower Reedy Creek, with poor results.<sup>63</sup>
- early 1882:** United Crushing Battery ('a first-class battery') erected in Spring Gully (Reedy Creek), to test claims on the Kaiser line, 'as the distance is so great from any crushing plant' - 'this battery ought to be kept employed, owing to the large quantity of quartz in that locality and the number of claims containing gold already opened out.'<sup>64</sup>
- September 1882:** Langridge Extended Co. erected battery. Overland Co. erected machinery. Apollo Gold and Antimony Co., Sunday Creek, erected battery.<sup>65</sup>
- 1882:** Companies working at Reedy Creek include: Doyle's, Crown, Langridge, Langridge Extended, Bismarck, Sovereign, Empress of India, Queen Victoria, North Langridge, South Langridge, Overland, and Long Tunnel.<sup>66</sup>
- June 1883:** Langridge Extended Co. battery situated near the shaft, saving expense of cartage. Gold struck at 380-ft depth in 'the once celebrated' Doyle's claim.<sup>67</sup>
- September 1883:** Langridge Extended GMC erecting additional battery of five heads - only company yielding payable gold. Doyle's Co. installed an air winch at the 320-ft level.<sup>68</sup>

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59 Murray (1884)

60 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1881

61 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1881

62 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Alexandra Subdivision), September 1881

63 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1881

64 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June, September & December 1881, March

1882

65 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1882

66 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September & December 1882

67 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1883

68 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1883

- September 1884:** Sailor Jack's Co., Strath Creek, erected battery 'on the flat'.<sup>69</sup>
- December 1884:** Deepest shaft is Doyle's - 610 ft. Golden Gate Co. purchased crushing plant.<sup>70</sup>
- June 1885:** South Queen Co. got an average 9 oz/ton from a crushing from the 160-ft level. Golden Gate Co. put a large amount of quartz through its battery for a low yield.<sup>71</sup>
- 1885-6:** Alluvial mining is only done when men have no other work.<sup>72</sup>
- 1886-8:** Goldie mine yielded a total of 748 oz from 2,414 tons.<sup>73</sup>
- September 1886:** Shaft on old Langridge claim to be sunk a further 100 ft - 'this has always been the premier claim'. Also at work at Reedy Creek: Crown Co., Doyle's Co. (down 600 ft), Shepherd's Co., Lady Loch Co., Oriental Co., Queen Victoria Co., and Golden Gate Co. (own battery).<sup>74</sup>
- December 1886:** Crown Co. installed new boiler.<sup>75</sup>
- March 1887:** Party prospecting for alluvial lead at Strath Creek.<sup>76</sup>
- March 1888:** Working Miner's Co., Reedy Creek, erected battery.<sup>77</sup>
- June 1888:** None of the three principal claims in the division - the Langridge, Crown and Doyle's, at Reedy Creek - has struck payable gold. The three lines of reef are only about 400 ft apart and the companies would do better to amalgamate and sink one main shaft. 'At present there are nine engine-drivers, three legal managers, and three mining managers, besides firewood for three engines, required.' All of the claims have worked out their shallow ground and now need to prove deeper ground.<sup>78</sup>
- 1888-9:** Langridge and Doyle's companies, Reedy Creek, amalgamated.<sup>79</sup>
- September 1889:** Only a few alluvial miners working - results poor.<sup>80</sup>
- December 1889:** Langridge & Doyle's United GMC extending drive at 325-ft level, with a view to cutting the Langridge lode.<sup>81</sup>
- 1890:** Fresh gold discovery and rush to Kilmore.<sup>82</sup>
- 1890:** Alluvial lead discovered by boring on the old Kilmore diggings (parish of Goldie). Prospects justify erection of pumping and puddling plant. Old diggings (reef workings and surfacing) on a low hill surrounded by basalt - reef [Larry Bourke] appears to have yielded richly to 70 ft, but was abandoned for want of 'efficient crushing appliances and ordinary mining skill'.<sup>83</sup>

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69 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1883, September 1884

70 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1884

71 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1885

72 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division)

73 Kenny (1937/5) - based on mining surveyors' reports

74 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1886

75 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1886

76 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1887

77 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1888

78 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1888

79 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March & June 1889

80 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1889

81 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1889

82 Flett, p. 111

83 Murray (1890)



- 1899:** Reedy Creek—principal reef was Langridge's—gave splendid returns to depth of 300 ft—not worked below that. Leviathan and Tunstall reefs—on large dyke formation with rich veins—worked to water-level—very rich. Goldie diggings—in 1860s gave Mr L. Bourke over £20,000—now being given new trial.<sup>84</sup>
- 1903:** Mines operating at Reedy Creek: Balmers United, Long Tunnel Co., Alpine Co., Marion Co.—largest amount crushed for year was 42 tons (for 77 oz) by Balmers United. Golden Dyke Consols at Clonbinane.<sup>85</sup>
- 1904:** Balmers United (three brothers) prospecting—5-head battery, 8-hp portable engine. Golden Dyke Consols got 674 oz from 536 tons—pair of 8-inch cylinder winches, 2 vertical boilers (10 x 4 ft), 8-hp horizontal engine, 5-head battery. At Strath Creek, Derril's Reef Co. is prospecting, Columbia mine is worked by tributers—98 tons gave 87 oz.<sup>86</sup>
- 1905:** Prospecting for gold in Oliver's Paddock, 5\_ miles W of Kilmore, by Kilmore Prospecting Association. Alluvial mining and quartz prospecting in vicinity 20 or 30 years ago.<sup>87</sup>
- 1905:** Larry Bourke's Reef - about 6 miles of Kilmore, in the parish of Goldie, on a mining reserve. Not now being worked. Workings comprise a shaft (100 ft deep) and a very extensive excavation (175 ft long<sup>88</sup>) - also a dam and 'old mill site', to the east of the mine workings. South of the reef a large area has been surfaced for alluvial gold, and to the south-east a 140-ft shaft was sunk on a lead, but abandoned due to heavy water. A small quartz vein still being worked in vicinity of reef, and others were formerly worked.<sup>89</sup>
- 1905:** Watson & Patterson's mine, Goldie - 6 miles from Kilmore on the road to Mt William, and \_ mile back from the road. Not now worked, but a considerable amount of work has been done underground (incline shaft sunk 120 ft) - large tailings heap.<sup>90</sup>
- 1906:** Balmers United Co. formed to work Balmer brothers' mine—new shaft sunk to 215 ft. Empress of India Co. opened up one of the old Reedy Creek mines—small winding plant erected. Alpine Co. (ex Peal & Lack) floated to test mine. Golden Dyke Consols Co. replaced old vertical boilers with one Cornish flue boiler.<sup>91</sup>

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84 *Australian Mining Standard*, 1 June 1899, p. 63

85 Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1903

86 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1904

87 Dunn (1907/1)

88 Kenny (1937/7)

89 Dunn (1907/2)

90 Dunn (1907/3)

91 Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1906

- 1907:** Balmers United, Balmers United North, Broadford Co., and Alpine Co. at Reedy Creek, Golden Dyke Consols at Clonbinane—all doing good work, but getting poor results. Golden Dyke West Co.—main shaft down 300 ft—three Wilfley tables installed at battery—milling about to commence.<sup>92</sup>
- 1908:** Alpine mine, Reedy Creek, located reef—payable crushings—working by tunnel. Broadford syndicate also located reef in its mine.<sup>93</sup>
- 1909:** Four mines worked at Reedy Creek, three of them by tunnel. Broadford Co. adjoins Alpine Co. Baker and party, Strath Creek, working on a very small but rich vein—getting only subsistence wages.<sup>94</sup>
- 1910:** Alpine Co. on tribute. Brooklyn Co. prospecting without success.<sup>95</sup>
- 1911:** Reedy Creek in steady decline—only three mines at work in a small way, two of them on tribute.<sup>96</sup>
- 1912:** Reedy Creek Timber Mills and Mines Ltd doing very little else than baling the water. Balmer and Jenkins getting good results from old Broadford mine.<sup>97</sup>
- 1913:** King Parrot Creek GMC resumed operations. Sunrise and Sunlight companies erected batteries on their properties at Flowerdale—operate on large low-grade formation exposed on surface. E. Quilliam erected 10-head battery on old Golden Dyke mine at Clonbinane—to treat waste dump. Balmer and Jenkins getting fair returns at Broadford mine. Guy and party prospecting old Alpine lease.<sup>98</sup>
- 1914:** Several prospectors, but no mining work at Reedy Creek. King Parrot Co. suspended operations. Very little work done on Flowerdale leases.<sup>99</sup>
- 1915:** Mining practically dead.<sup>100</sup>
- 1919:** Matthews' gold mine, 3 miles north of Flowerdale hotel - 5-head battery driven by portable engine - open cut adjacent to battery, and adit driven south from open cut - unpayable.<sup>101</sup>
- 1931-6+:** Goldie mine (ex Watson & Patterson's), on private property, 6 miles west of Kilmore - formerly a battery on the mine, and tailings dump is evidence of some thousands of tons having been treated. Mine taken up in 1931 - new underlay shaft sunk south-east of old main shaft - now 100 ft deep. A one-head prospecting mill with a petrol engine is installed - 12 tons of picked ore gave 60 oz. Dam which serviced old battery is still serviceable.<sup>102</sup>
- 1932:** Quartz prospecting on Spion Kop Reef, Flowerdale - worked many years ago by shaft and tunnel.<sup>103</sup>
- 1933:** South Golden Gate mine, on Prince of Wales Reef, Reedy Creek, being prospected by shaft - trial crushing at Maldon government battery - promising prospects.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1907

<sup>93</sup> Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1908

<sup>94</sup> Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1909

<sup>95</sup> Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1910

<sup>96</sup> Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1911

<sup>97</sup> Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1912

<sup>98</sup> Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1913

<sup>99</sup> Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1914

<sup>100</sup> Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1915

<sup>101</sup> Kenny (1921)

<sup>102</sup> Kenny (1937/4 & /5)

<sup>103</sup> Kenny (1937/2)

- 1934:** Goldie deep lead (south of Larry Bourke's Reef) being prospected - formerly worked during 1890s.<sup>105</sup>
- 1937:** Hunt's shaft, Larry Bourke Reef, (the second of three shafts on the north side of the main open cut) was recently opened up - 84 ft deep, equipped with oil engine and lift pump. Gold and specimens recently obtained by sluicing south face of open cut.<sup>106</sup>

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104 Kenny, (1937/6)  
105 Kenny (1937/3)  
106 Kenny (1937/7)

- SOURCES:** *Australian Mining Standard*, special edition: 'Victoria: its mines and minerals', 1 June 1899
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- January 1863:** Newly opened bank claims on the Jordan paying upwards of £20/week per man.
- May 1863:** Crushing mill (s?) in course of erection at Red Jacket. Reef lately discovered at BB looks promising - from position and nearness to water can be worked to great advantage. Jordan goldfields still yield handsome returns - capable of carrying double present popn. Spurs on Jordan and BB yielding 20-43 oz per paddock – stripping from 7-20 ft deep.
- May 1863:** Macmillan's crushing machine erected (brought overland by bullock wagon from Port Albert) at Donnelly's Creek - Edward's Hill?<sup>11</sup>
- 1864:** Batteries erected on Blackwall Reef and for White Star and Crinoline Cos., Donnelly's Creek. Blackwall Reef battery powered by water supplied by a long race on NW slope of Mt Useful - trial crushings disappointing - highly mineralised ore – White Star closed 1867, Crinoline closed by 1870.<sup>12</sup>
- 1864:** Blue Jacket Creek first opened up. Blue Jacket mine on south side of creek - first worked for several years from 1865, then abandoned until late 1890s.<sup>13</sup>
- December 1865:** Concord Co., Edwards Hill, installed battery - 40-hp engine, 10-head (with foundations laid for a further 10-head), tramway, shoots, &c.<sup>14</sup>
- December 1865:** Powerful' water-powered battery erected on Golden Wall Reef, Fulton's Creek.<sup>15</sup>
- 1865-7:** Population of Donnelly's Creek area diminished greatly due to mine closures and better prospects at Stringers Creek/Walhalla. Many DC mines on tribute.<sup>16</sup>
- 1865:** BB Quartz mine, located within a quarter of a mile of Jericho on the spur dividing the Jordan from BB Creek, first opened in 1865 - worked until late 1870s.<sup>17</sup>
- 1866:** MS of the opinion that working of spurs on banks of Jordan River and BB Creek would be profitable - so far, only beds of creeks had been worked. So encouraging are the results from this branch of mining (hydraulic), that almost every foot of ground on the Jordan River and BB Creek is now held under the bye-laws of the district, or the leasing regulations.<sup>18</sup>
- March 1867:** Golden Wall Co. battery (installed 1866) sold 'for a very small sum' and removed to the Scrat-a-bit prospecting claim. Concord, Ranger, Donnelly's, Bullock, Tara's Hall, Spring's Creek, Dick's Reef, Golden Union, North Mount-Useful, Independent, London Amalgamated, National, Edwards Oriental, and Golden Wall cos. have all suspended work '- cause, want of funds'. Quartz miners reverting to alluvial workings pending revival of quartz mining.<sup>19</sup>
- 1867:** At Donnelly's Creek, 'mining operations ... have still a downward tendency. The population has greatly decreased ... partly owing to the introduction of the system of working the claims upon tribute, for which less men are required.'<sup>20</sup>
- 1867:** Smile of Fortune No. 1 South claim, Jericho -battery erected, but trial crushing unsatisfactory.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Baragwanath, p. 9

<sup>12</sup> Baragwanath, p. 9; Tomlin, Bosa & Chamberlain, p. 134

<sup>13</sup> Tomlin, Bosa & Chamberlain, p. 116

<sup>14</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Part of Jordan South Subdivision), December 1865

<sup>15</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek subdivision), December 1865

<sup>16</sup> Baragwanath, p. 10

<sup>17</sup> Tomlin, Bosa & Chamberlain, p. 83

<sup>18</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Matlock Subdivision), March & June 1866

<sup>19</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), March 1867; Adams, p.38

<sup>20</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), September 1867

<sup>21</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), June 1867

- 1867-70:** Donnelly's Creek gold yield for 1867 totalled 2,450 oz; in 1868, 760 oz; in 1870, quartz yielded only 36 oz.<sup>22</sup>
- 1868:** Eldorado Co., Jericho, erected 5-head battery.<sup>23</sup>
- September 1868:** North Crinoline mine (and battery) purchased by Bank of Victoria - renamed Victoria Co.<sup>24</sup>
- September 1868:** Hodgson's crushing plant (later Polglaise's?) erected on Red Jacket/Dry Creek to crush stone from New Chum Reef (New Chum No. 1 South and Manoa GMC) and Moonlight Reef - 17-head, steam-powered - battery ex-Smile of Fortune mine.<sup>25</sup>
- 1868:** Eldorado Reef Co., on Aberfeldy Spur, erecting second battery of five stamps.<sup>26</sup>
- 1868-69:** Donnelly's Creek mining very depressed - miners mainly reworking creek bed.<sup>27</sup>
- March 1869:** Moonlight Reef, Dry Creek (above Polglaise's battery), reopened by prospectors.<sup>28</sup>
- June 1869:** At Donnelly's Creek, two or three companies are being formed to work quartz reefs on a large scale. At Fulton's Creek some of the abandoned claims are being taken up, with a view of reworking them, as it is considered that the greater part of the gold was formerly lost through inefficient machinery.<sup>29</sup>
- 1869:** The old 'nuggetty' claims on the Jordan immediately above Jericho giving good yields.<sup>30</sup>
- 1869-70:** Harbinger Reef ('Hemphill's new reef') discovered on Dry Creek, 'immediately below Polglaise's crushing mill' - trial crushing yielded over 3 oz/ton. Three claims at work in Dry Creek vicinity - Commercial Reef, Harbinger, and Manoa (on New Chum line) - keep Dry Creek battery (Polglaise's?) busy - 17 head of stamps.<sup>31</sup>
- September 1870:** 'A new reef on the Aberfeldy, containing fine gold, and of considerable width, has been taken up within the last week ... situated four miles below the crossing of the Gippsland road'.<sup>32</sup>
- December 1870:** Harbinger Co. laying tramway to Dry Creek machine. Eldorado mine idles.<sup>33</sup>
- 1870:** Alluvial rush to 'old ground known as the Thomson River bed' - about 60 Chinese and 40 Europeans. A slight fall in the river, requiring long races to work the claims, is a great drawback to this goldfield, and will permanently keep it in a struggling condition. Fifteen feet in the mile is little fall enough where rock has to be cut, or sawn-stuff flumes erected, and does very little towards opening up for sluicing such broad tracts of land.' Company formed to construct long race - expensive undertaking.<sup>34</sup>

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22 Baragwanath, p.10

23 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), Sept 1867

24 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), Sept 1868 & Sept 1869

25 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), June & Sept 1868

26 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), Dec 1868

27 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), Dec 1868 & March 1869

28 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), March 1869

29 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), June 1869

30 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), Dec 1869

31 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), Sept & Dec 1869, March & June 1870

32 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), Sept 1879

33 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), Dec 1870

34 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), Dec 1870

- 1870-97:** Toombon mine, on Toombon Creek near the Aberfeldy River, discovered 1870 by Fleming. Aberfeldy Co. erected 10-head, water-powered battery in 1872. Mine worked at intervals until 1880, then Toombon Co. formed and sunk new main shaft. 20-head battery powered by 40-ft waterwheel erected 1888 - supplied with ore by aerial tramway. Mine closed down 1898. Reached depth of nearly 1,000 ft. Total yield 50,844 oz from 61,888 tons. Largest gold-producer in Aberfeldy-Donnelly's Creek district.<sup>35</sup>
- 1870-85:** Golden Key Co. commenced work on a claim south of original workings on Morning Star Reef early in 1870 - purchased mine and plant of Victoria Co., North Crinoline Reef in 1871 - Golden Key Co. active until at least Sept 1875.<sup>36</sup>
- 1871:** Heaviest flood on record - dams and races on Donnelly's Creek swept away, claims levelled.<sup>37</sup>
- 1871:** 'A great many prospecting parties are out near the heads of Fulton's, Donnelly's, and Aberfeldy's Creeks, in search of quartz reefs.'<sup>38</sup>
- 1871:** Rush to reefs near Mt Lookout, Aberfeldy - included Lily of the Valley, Fleming's (or Aberfeldy), Jessop's, Comet, Stockholm Tar, Lone Star, and Hanoverian.<sup>39</sup>
- 1871:** The main feature in alluvial is the gradual migration of the Jordan miners southward on their river, and on to the Thomson, which is opening up as a large and permanent alluvial field.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Bailey & Bailey, p. 10; Kenny; Baragwanath, p.11

<sup>36</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), March 1870 & Sept 1871

<sup>37</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), June 1871

<sup>38</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), Dec 1871

<sup>39</sup> Baragwanath, p.10

<sup>40</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), June 1871

- 1871:** Aberfeldy River and Thomson Rivers have been essentially of late poor man's diggings. Mining popn on Thomson has quadrupled within last two years - Chinese in large majority. Scarcely any alluvial miners on Aberfeldy River. Popn of Mt Lookout settlement about 40 - miners, prospectors, speculators, and mining managers or brokers. Two '42nd' (residence) leases were taken up at Mt Lookout in 1868, now occupied by one of the original prospectors of the BB and known as The Farm, on which fine vegetables, potatoes and corn are grown. Lily of the Valley, Jessop's and Fleming's reefs are one and the same lode - first worked by Jessop in 1864 - He sank a number of shafts and drove two tunnels, obtaining such encouraging results that he underwent great privations rather than relinquish his hold on the ground, in consequence of which he died about twelve months ago. "Commenting on prospectors of Stockholm Tar claim - 'it may be remarked that most of our new discoveries for years past have been made by Germans and Swedes'. No batteries yet on Aberfeldy reefs - crushings at nearest battery, Eldorado Reef". Fleming Reef party cutting a race with a view to erecting a battery near the mouth of their tunnel.<sup>41</sup>
- 1871-88:** Lily of the Valley Reef discovered near Aberfeldy, 1871 - 10-head battery erected 1874 - mine name changed to New Lily in 1882 - co. reorganised as Mt Lookout Co. in 1885 - mine closed 1888 - total yield of 2,936 oz from 11,052 tons.<sup>42</sup>
- 1871-85:** Lone Star Reef discovered, west of Lily Valley, in 1871 - renamed Star and Thomson by 1876 - 10-head water-powered battery erected 1877 - low yields - mine idle from 1885.<sup>43</sup>
- 1871:** Eldorado Reef battery crushing for the Aberfeldy Reefs.<sup>44</sup>
- 1871-89:** Bismarck Co., Donnelly's Creek, worked rich shallow ground, 1871-5 - continued work through 1870s with mixed success - on rich ground again in 1882 - yielded 2,351 oz from 1,215 tons during 1882 and similar in 1883 - prospecting with mixed results thereafter - closed down in 1889 (when 'the principal mine on Donnelly's Creek'<sup>45</sup>), after treating old tailings.<sup>46</sup>
- 1872:** Gippsland Consols Co. moved battery and plant a few hundred yards down the gully, closer to their lower workings. Bismarck Co. formed tramway to connect their mine with the Golden Chest Co. battery. No puddling machines in division.<sup>47</sup>
- 1872:** Steam battery erected at Mt Lookout (by Messrs Williamson) for public crushing. Aberfeldy Co. erected battery. Cost of packing to batteries elsewhere had hitherto been prohibitive to Aberfeldy miners.<sup>48</sup>
- 1872:** European mining population of Jordan district not increasing, 'but are gradually making way for the Chinese'. Old creek claims on Jordan and BB falling into the hands of Chinese.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> 'Special Report on the Newly-discovered Reefs Termed the Aberfeldy Reefs', Appendix A to MSR, June 1871, pp.45-6

<sup>42</sup> Tomlin, Bosa & Chamberlain, p.126

<sup>43</sup> Tomlin, Bosa & Chamberlain, p.131

<sup>44</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), Dec 1871

<sup>45</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek subdivision), December 1889

<sup>46</sup> Baragwanath, p.10

<sup>47</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), June 1872

<sup>48</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Stringer's Creek subdivision), June & September 1872

<sup>49</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), June & Sept 1872



- 1872:** On Thomson River, near junction with the Jordan, there are still a few creek claims yielding fair returns - loose ground and light scaly gold.<sup>50</sup>
- 1872:** Thomson Co. (on Thomson River) erected 10-head battery. Aberfeldy Co. (on Aberfeldy River) erected 'powerful' water-powered battery.<sup>51</sup>
- 1872:** Several quartz claims in Mt Look Out vicinity 'have come under the vigorous test of the iron stampers' - disappointing results.
- 1873:** Jericho alluvial mining - 'In the older creeks and spurs a considerable number of miners are still employed, one-half at least of the number being Chinese. The ground that was considered worked out by the lucky ones ten years ago will continue to pay a low rate of wages for re-working, by the more industrious though less fortunate miners, for many years to come.'<sup>52</sup>
- 1873-4:** My Dream Co. erected 12-head battery on Satin Bird Reef, in branch gully east of Aberfeldy River, Toombon.<sup>53</sup> (Yields fell off and workings abandoned - little to be seen of 'old workings' in 1885.<sup>54</sup>)
- 1873-4:** Jericho quartz mining almost at a standstill.<sup>55</sup>
- 1874:** Aberfeldy quartz mining 'exceedingly dull' - 'the development of the district, which is undoubtedly highly auriferous, is retarded, like all new fields, for want of funds.'<sup>56</sup>
- 1874:** Jericho alluvial mining - 'all the creeks and most of the spurs have been thoroughly worked out, consequently the miners are leaving the place almost daily, making towards the Gippsland railways, are off for some of the Queensland and other new diggings, or are looking out for harvest work.'<sup>57</sup>
- 1874-9:** 10-head battery erected by Wilson and Barthold near Mt Lookout on former Lily of the Valley ground - crushed large quantities of stone - mine worked by tunnels. Closed down 1877 - mine reopened by Lily of the Valley Co. - worked by tunnel 300 ft below crown of hill.<sup>58</sup>
- 1875:** Stratford & Avon QMC (on Jorgensen's Reef, on the range north of Donnelly's Creek) erecting battery - 10-head, 28-ft waterwheel, 2,000-yard race from Donnelly's Creek, incline tramway 428 yards long - mine stopped work in 1876.<sup>59</sup>
- mid 1870s-83:** Principal Aberfeldy mines: Aberfeldy/Toombon, Star & Thomson, New Lily.<sup>60</sup>

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50 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), Sept 1872  
 51 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), Sept 1872  
 52 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), June 1873  
 53 Baragwanath, pp.10, 38  
 54 Murray (1885), p.68  
 55 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division)  
 56 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Stringer's Creek Division), March 1874  
 57 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), Dec 1874  
 58 Baragwanath, pp.10-11, p.36  
 59 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), December 1875; Murray (1885), p.69  
 60 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Aberfeldy Subdivision), 1876-83

- 1876:** Track cut over NW flank of Mt Baw Baw, connecting Aberfeldy township with Reefton on the Yarra. Large part of Upper Thompson River made available for prospecting, but nothing of value found.<sup>61</sup>
- 1876:** Harbinger GMC mine and plant (including steam-powered battery) purchased by ex-tributer, McDougall - increased in value - mine again let on tribute.<sup>62</sup>
- 1878:** Bismarck United QMC - 15-head battery. Gippsland Consols QMC - 10-head steam battery. Aberfeldy QMC - 10-head water-powered battery. Florence QMC – battery.<sup>63</sup>
- 1878:** A few alluvial miners still working on Donnelly's Creek and Aberfeldy, and on some of the terrace drifts along the Thompson River - 'but rich alluvial yields for a large population are now things of the past as regards the area under notice'.<sup>64</sup>
- 1878:** Hit-or-Miss Co., Donnelly's Creek, obtained a patent rock-drill for boring - first of the sort in Gippsland.<sup>65</sup>
- 1878:** Tributers at Harbinger GMC mine burning and crushing quartz at their battery.<sup>66</sup>
- 1879:** Alluvial miners sluicing on Thompson and Aberfeldy - making £4 to £10 per week per man.<sup>67</sup>
- 1880:** Quartz mining at Donnelly's Creek 'was never so dull'.<sup>68</sup>
- 1880:** Revival of alluvial mining at Blue Jacket Creek, which has been abandoned for years - 20 miners on site and prospecting party formed.<sup>69</sup>
- 1880-2:** Reef discovered at Sophys Gully, Fulton's Creek - prospecting carried on in 1881 – tunnel driven and battery erected by Fulton's Creek Co., 1882.<sup>70</sup>
- 1881:** Toombon GMC formed to work Aberfeldy mine - erected new machinery and drove tunnel at lowest possible level.<sup>71</sup>
- 1881:** Reef discovered in Harbinger mine, Dry Creek, after more than two years' tunnelling and prospecting.<sup>72</sup>
- 1881:** Star and Thomson Co., near Aberfeldy, erected battery, connected to tunnel by tramway - claim worked since c.1876.<sup>73</sup>
- December 1882:** Toombon GMC winding and pumping plant completed - main shaft down 120 feet – sinking to 200 ft.<sup>74</sup>

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61 Baragwanath, p.10

62 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), June 1876

63 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), Sept 1875

64 Murray (1878), p.44

65 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), June 1878

66 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), June & Sept 1878

67 Baragwanath, p.11

68 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), March 1880

69 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), March 1880

70 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division)

71 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), June 1881

72 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), June 1881

73 Baragwanath, p.11

74 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), December 1882

- June 1883:** Toombon GMC struck a reef in their shaft - many new claims pegged out.<sup>75</sup>
- 1883:** New Hit or Miss GMC struck payable shoot of stone - longest tunnel in Gippsland and this is the first gold obtained from it.<sup>76</sup>
- 1884-6:** Harbinger Co., Dry Creek, repaired battery and steam engine, burnt down by bushfire some years ago - 1885, built kilns for quartz burning - 1886, stacking tailings for future treatment, 'as they are known to contain a large quantity of pyrites charged with gold'.<sup>77</sup>
- 1885-9:** Donnelly's Creek mining increasingly dull; Toombon mining increased and thrived.<sup>78</sup>
- 1885-9:** White Star mine, Donnelly's Creek, taken up in 1885, after being idle nearly 20 years - worked until 1889.<sup>79</sup>
- 1885:** 'The alluvial miners [of Jericho], finding employment in the reefs about Toombon and elsewhere, are gradually deserting the creeks - now nearly worked out - for the more certain prospect of daily wages.'<sup>80</sup>
- 1886:** Bismarck Co. moved battery lower down Donnelly's Creek, near mouth of lowest adit.<sup>81</sup>
- 1886:** New Blue Jacket GMC formed - lode never worked below creek level - sinking shaft, built offices, erected pumping and winding machinery.<sup>82</sup>
- 1886:** 'There is nothing new in alluvial mining in this division, nor is there likely to be. Those who are now following this occupation are principally old diggers turning over old ground - men of independent spirit, unaccustomed to work for wages, and too old to direct their energies in any other groove with any reasonable prospect of success. A hut, a garden, and five or six dwt. of gold a week, appear to satisfy the requirements of the majority of them.'<sup>83</sup>
- 1886:** 'Some attention is being paid to the old deserted mines from which good crushings were obtained in the early quartz-reefing days, and, no doubt, the knowledge gained of reefs during the last 20 years will result in many of the lost shoots of gold being picked up and followed.'<sup>84</sup>
- 1886:** Toombon GMC's new battery erected - 20-head, water-powered with auxiliary steam - replaced existing 10-head water-powered battery.<sup>85</sup>
- 1888:** Dry Creek and Blue Jacket mines: - Harbinger mine - on branch of Dry Creek - has been at work many years 'with many vicissitudes of fortune'. Other mines on Dry Creek - O'Keefe's claim, South Harbinger, Guiding Star. Blue Jacket mine - on south side of Blue Jacket Creek - worked many years ago with good results, but thought to be exhausted - recently taken up again and rich gold-bearing quartz veins found - steam winch and light stamp battery. Aberfeldy mines:- Mount Look-out (ex-Lily, since 1886) mine - idle, but good yields in the past. Also Toombon mines.<sup>86</sup>

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75 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Aberfeldy Subdivision), June 1883  
76 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), December 1883  
77 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), June & Sept 1885, June & Sept 1886  
78 Mining Surveyors' Reports  
79 Baragwanath, p.33  
80 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), Sept 1885  
81 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), June 1886  
82 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), March & June 1886  
83 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), December 1886  
84 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), September 1888  
85 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), September 1886  
86 Murray (1888)

- late 1880s:** Much government-sponsored prospecting.<sup>87</sup>
- 1888:** New Blue Jacket GMC erected 12-head steam-powered battery - 30 men employed.<sup>88</sup>
- 1888:** New Toombon Co. erected 10-head battery, 40-ft waterwheel, water-race - mine situated on top of a spur on eastern watershed of Aberfeldy River, about 700 ft above river and battery - stone conveyed to battery by aerial tramway - about 1 mile of wire rope - **first aerial tramway in Gippsland ('probably in the colony')**.<sup>89</sup>
- June 1888:** Harbinger Co., Dry Creek, crushed 400 tons for 711 oz 15 dwt.<sup>90</sup>
- 1889:** New Hit or Miss Co., Donnelly's Creek, 'one of the most persevering companies in the mountains', struck a promising shoot of stone - overhauled their battery 'which has been idle for a very long time' (co. engaged mainly in dead work since c.1884-5) and commenced crushing - longest tunnel in the mountains.<sup>91</sup>
- 1889:** Mining at Donnelly's Creek had virtually ceased. Donnelly's Creek mines much less than Woods Point, Matlock or Walhalla mines.<sup>92</sup>
- September 1889:** Creeks around Jericho now all but exhausted of alluvial gold, having been worked for more than 25 years.<sup>93</sup>
- 1889:** Battery being erected at St Valentine Reef, Thomson River, for Brohan and party – reef discovered in 1887 with assistance of Prospecting Vote - battery will aid other local prospectors.<sup>94</sup>
- early 1890s:** William Bennett's Jet Elevator Co. commenced hydraulic operations on the Jordan River, sluicing the banks from above Jericho to Blue Jacket. About half a mile below Jericho, a new course was cut for the river, turning it at a sharp right angle to enable the working of the old river bed. Bennetts continued sluicing operations on the Jordan until the 1950s.<sup>95</sup>
- 1890s:** Government scheme to establish unemployed in new trades led to a mining settlement in the Thomson River valley, near Cascade Creek - a party of men and their families were helped to build huts and each took up an area for sluicing - a water race 6-8 miles long was constructed - the project was abandoned within months.<sup>96</sup>
- 1893:** The Board of Education was applied to for permission to sluice the Jericho schoolgrounds. After a lengthy wrangle between the Board and the Mines Department, the school was closed in 1896 and the grounds sluiced. Jericho pupils had to attend school at Red Jacket until the Jericho school reopened in 1901.<sup>97</sup>
- 1894:** Landy's Dream Reef discovered - mine situated about 6 miles N of Walhalla - worked by tunnels - water-powered battery on Aberfeldy River - aerial tramway.<sup>98</sup>

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87 Baragwanath, pp.11-12

88 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), March & September 1888

89 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), March 1888

90 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), June 1888

91 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Donnelly's Creek Division), June & September 1889

92 Bailey & Bailey, p.10

93 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), Sept 1889

94 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jericho Division), June & Sept 1887, Sept & Dec 1889

95 Tomlin, Bosa and Chamberlain, pp.88, 91 & 116

96 Adams, p.98

97 Tomlin, Bosa and Chamberlain, p.82

98 Baragwanath, p.35

- 1894-1902?:** Victor's quartz mine operating on Victor's Spur, on high range between Ross Creek and Dry Creek - originally named the Defiance Reef and worked during the 1860s, it was renamed Victor's Reef - Victor's quartz mine yielded 21,193 oz from 42,634 tons during 1894-1900 - floated as public co. in 1900 - fell prey to Melbourne speculators little development of mine - mine closed and machinery scrapped - mine reworked at a later date (when?)<sup>99</sup>
- c.1897-1917:** Mining revival caused reopening of BB Quartz Mine, after 20 years idle, in c.1897 – 5-head battery, 38-ft overshot waterwheel - mine operated by BB Quartz GMC until 1918 - 1,768 oz from 2,076 tons - then continued in a small way until 1935.<sup>100</sup>
- late 1890s:** Mines active in the Dry Creek area - Harbinger, New Chum, Moonlight, South Harbinger, Guiding Star, and Wildflower (originally worked as Homeward Bound in 1862). New Chum had been abandoned for 20 years - 5 adits driven, good returns – pair of ore-roasting kilns, built of local stone - mine closed in 1915.<sup>101</sup>
- late 1890s:** Blue Jacket mine reopened - closed 1908, due to excessive water - yields 4,969 oz from 7,364 tons. Excelsior mine situated immediately north of Blue Jacket mine – 1890s-1913 - 1,656 tons yielded 1,332 oz. Blue Jacket and Excelsior mines shared a 9-head battery.<sup>102</sup>
- 1899:** [Jordan mines such as] Landy's Dream, the New Centennial, the BB Quartz have not justified the reputation of the district, while more to the east lies the Donnelly's Creek and Toombon mines. The past history of these mines show that they are still worth spending money on, but, unfortunately, the first policy of a new company is to see what was left in the old workings, and by the time it is found that nothing payable is there the money is all spent, and the same history if repeated.<sup>103</sup>
- early 20thC:** Busiest area outside Walhalla was Aberfeldy, where two successful companies operated: Star & Thomson (closed down 1910) and Anderson brothers (paid well in years before WWI)
- 1902:** McIntyre's quartz mine discovered at Ross Creek in 1902 - total yield 1,346 oz from 1,874 tons. Pheasant Tail mine opened in same year - 78 tons yielded 234 oz, then mine abandoned - mine reopened and worked in a small way a few years later.<sup>104</sup>
- 1903:** Excelsior Co., Blue Jacket, crushed 168 tons for 39 oz. Dredge will shortly be erected on Jordan River.<sup>105</sup>
- 1920s-30s:** Extensive sluicing operation conducted by Bennett family at Blue Jacket township/BB Creek-Thomson River junction - plant powered by brace of boilers, still standing in 1970s, but since removed or covered by waters of Thomson Dam.<sup>106</sup>
- 1904-06:** Jordan River Bucket Dredging Co. operated small dredge above Red Jacket - yields not recorded - dredge broken up in 1905.<sup>107</sup>
- 1904:** Hidden Face mine, Donnelly's Creek - some good returns. Star and Thomson mine, Aberfeldy, active. Jordan River dredge worked only part of the year.<sup>108</sup>

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99 Tomlin, Bosa and Chamberlain, pp.104 & 107  
100 Tomlin, Bosa and Chamberlain, p.84  
101 Tomlin, Bosa and Chamberlain, pp.107-10  
102 Tomlin, Bosa and Chamberlain, p.116  
103 *Australian Mining Standard*, 1/6/1899, p.72  
104 Tomlin, Bosa and Chamberlain, p.104  
105 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1903, p.84  
106 Tomlin, Bosa & Chamberlain, p.118  
107 Tomlin, Bosa and Chamberlain, p.113  
108 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1904, p.78

- 1905:** Fulton's Creek Co. erected 10-head battery, ex-Black Prince Co., Bulumwaal. Victor's Quartz mine, Red Jacket, let on tribute. No work done by Jordan River dredge for some time.<sup>109</sup>
- 1906:** A few men working in White Star mine and some tributers in Crinoline Extended, Donnelly's Creek. Fulton's Creek Co. crushed 691 tons for 441 oz - 16 men employed. Lady Vera Co., Fulton's Creek, crushed 329 tons for 580 oz - 14 men employed. Excelsior Co. still prospecting at Blue Jacket. Jordan River dredge resumed works mid-year - only moderate results.<sup>110</sup>
- 1907:** Bismark mine, Donnelly's Creek, worked for some time without success - worked ceased. New find reported at Clear Creek - company formed, a few parties prospecting. Victor's Quartz mine, Red Jacket, erected new oil engine and winding plant at end of lower adit. Hughes and party working old Harbinger lease, Dry Creek.<sup>111</sup>
- 1908:** White Star Co., Mt Useful, still prospecting - installing a water scheme and driving No. 2 creek tunnel. Lady Vera Co. suspended operations during year.<sup>112</sup>
- 1910:** Fulton's Creek Co. erected small steam winding plant in tunnel workings - poor stone. North Toombon Syndicate - payable stone not found. Aberfeldy Co. shut down. Victor's Quartz Co., Red Jacket, prospecting with disappointing results. Bennett and son working old alluvial ground at Jericho by hydraulic sluicing.<sup>113</sup>
- 1911:** Prospecting of old workings carried on in all areas, without success.<sup>114</sup>
- 1912:** George and party, Ross Creek, payable stone found in lower tunnel - erecting steam machinery to augment water-powered plant.<sup>115</sup>
- 1913:** Oriental mine (Spargo and Dedman), Fulton's Creek - stone diminishing with depth. Landy's Dream Syndicate, Aberfeldy, prospecting.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1905, pp.111-12; Fairweather, p.38

<sup>110</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1906, pp.121-2

<sup>111</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1907, p.142

<sup>112</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1908, pp.126-7

<sup>113</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1910, p.129

<sup>114</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1911, p.139

<sup>115</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1912, p.114

<sup>116</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1913, p.111

- 1917:** Oriental mine, Fulton's Creek, continues to open out well in lower tunnel workings. Lone Star and Lily mines, Aberfeldy, are being prospected. On new Toombon line of reef, Clark brothers working small shoots of stone by stoping - crushing by water-power.<sup>117</sup>
- 1918:** Operations resumed in Lady Vera mine, Fulton's Creek - lengthy tramway being constructed from mine to Fulton's Creek battery. Lily mine, Aberfeldy, closed down. Three sluicing parties at work on the Jordan. Clark brothers 'are experiencing prosperous times' on northerly extension of Toombon lode system.<sup>118</sup>
- 1923:** Golden Lily Co., Aberfeldy, opened - 10-head battery erected, but crushings poor.<sup>119</sup>
- 1925:** Remains of old Independent water-powered battery, supplied by race from Growler's Gully, marked site of Independent mine operations, Donnelly's Creek.<sup>120</sup>
- 1932:** Old Oriental claim, Fulton's Creek, worked by New York Co. from 1932, with some success.<sup>121</sup>
- 1932-6:** Aberfeldy Amalgamated Mining Co. - hydraulic sluicing co. operating at Aberfeldy.<sup>122</sup>
- 1930s:** Harbinger mine reworked.<sup>123</sup>
- 1934-40s:** Toombon Co. formed to re-open old Toombon mine. Spent £30,000 clearing out main shaft and winzes until 1940, then poor prospects caused closure of mine.<sup>124</sup>
- 1947- :** Pride of the Mountains mine, Aberfeldy - small but rich reef being worked - first crushing gave 6 oz/ton; later crushing gave 15 oz/ton - small battery installed, 1948<sup>125</sup>
- 1948:** Christie brothers built new settling dams for their hydraulic sluicing operations on the Jordan River, near Aberfeldy - sluicing continued until 1950+.<sup>126</sup>
- 1970s:** New Dawn Co. reopened former Lily mine in Lily Valley, near Aberfeldy.<sup>127</sup>
- 1974:** Harbinger mine, Dry Creek, still occasionally worked.<sup>128</sup>

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117 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1917, p.16

118 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1918, p.16

119 Adams, p.120

120 Baragwanath, p.35

121 Adams, p.120

122 Adams, p.120

123 Adams, p.120

124 Kenny

125 *Mining and Geological Journal*, Sept 1947, Sept 1948

126 *Mining and Geological Journal*, Sept 1948-March 1950

127 Tomlin, Bosa & Chamberlain, p.133

128 Bailey & Bailey, p.10

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## **OMEIO DISTRICT GOLDFIELD - NOTES**

- 1851:** Gold officially discovered at Livingstone Creek, Omeo, by men employed by Edward Crooke, licensee of Hinno Mungey station, about 10 miles below Omeo - small rush followed - about 100 - worked with shovel and tin dish - almost abandoned mid-1852. Area prospected as far as Cobungra station. Among early parties was Hedley. (Flett, p. 169)
- 1852:** Gold found at Bindi on Tambo River. (Flett, pp. 171-2)
- 1854:** Early in year, 50 miners at Omeo, surfacing and sluicing - later that year, 180 men 'between Mt Livingstone and the Swamp', working in creek or on eastern bank terraces. (Flett, p. 170)
- 1854-6:** Mining camp called Omeo - became a town in 1856. (Flett, pp. 170-71)
- 1855-7:** First in series of long sluicing races constructed - Champagne and Co. (Frenchmen) built theirs early in 1855 - they were original party to work the area now known as the Oriental claims. Fitzgerald and party commenced cutting races, which delivered water to Bloomfield's Gully, and (later) Pioneer claims.<sup>1</sup>
- 1856-7:** Gold found in tributaries of Livingstone Creek - Dry Creek and New Rush Creek opened, 1857. (Flett, p. 170).
- 1856+:** The alluvial deposits in the Dry Gully area (now loosely grouped as the Oriental claims) 'are over one hundred feet thick in parts [and] apparently occupy the bed of an ancient tarn or mountain lake, and are auriferous for almost the complete depth...'<sup>2</sup>
- 1857-60s:** Fitzgerald and party took up claims on hill at junction of Livingstone Creek with Dry Gully and Mountain Creek in 1857 - working ground as Pioneer claim, ground sluicing, in 1858. Pioneer and French parties competed for water rights - Fitzgerald took up agricultural ground around Dry Hill and west of Livingstone Creek - restricted others from building water rights around his ground.<sup>3</sup>
- 1863-4:** Township and Pioneer reefs opened up. (Flett, p. 171)
- June 1864:** 425 alluvial miners (275 Chinese, 150 Europeans) - no quartz miners. Population focused on Livingstone Creek (265) and Mitta-mitta River, from Cobungra to Wombat Creek (120) - 20 at Tambo River and Swift's Creek, 15 at Wombat Creek. Chinese population does little mining in winter months - cannot endure the cold at Omeo.
- December 1864:** Three quartz prospecting claims opened: Star, Swift's Creek; one partly on private land at back of Livingstone township; and Pioneer, on a spur of Mt Livingstone. Township Reef at standstill - parties left for Pioneer. In alluvial mining, '... the Chinese, from the large unoccupied area, are enabled to pick just the kind of ground that suits their mode of working, and are particularly successful.'
- December 1864:** First report of digging in Bloomfield Gully, a mile NW of Omeo. (Flett, p. 171)
- March 1865:** 570 alluvial miners (400 Chinese, 170 Europeans), 20 quartz miners - includes population at Mitchell River (130) and Nicholson River (30). Popn greatest at Middle Livingstone Creek (200), Mitta-mitta River, below Cobungra to Wombat Creek (180).
- June 1865:** Prospecting for deep lead under Mt Livingstone - down 290 feet.

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1 Flett, p. 170; Christie, pp. 9-10

2 Griffiths, p. 33

3 Christie, p. 12

- March 1866:** Seven miners at New Rush Creek, Upper Livingstone. Large Chinese parties have worked out their claims on Livingstone Creek and shifted to Swift's Creek.
- December 1866:** 530 alluvial miners (305 European, 225 Chinese), 50 quartz miners - largest mining population at Wombat Creek (175), Swift's Creek (150), Tambo River (100), Livingstone Creek (50).
- March 1867:** (Kobana Subdivision East) 700 sluice boxes, 35 Californian pumps and wheels, 1 battery of 15 heads (under construction).
- June 1868:** Extensive tunnel and tail-race just completed by New Adventure Co., by cutting through high rocky bluff known as Frenchman's Hill, on Livingstone Creek opposite Omeo township.
- March 1869:** Deep lead prospecting area registered, including deep shaft sunk four years ago at foot of Mt Livingstone and abandoned.
- September 1869:** Party of Europeans seeking to race continuation of deep lead discovered by Chinese on west side of Livingstone Creek - very wet - cutting deep tail-race of about 200 yards from creek to shaft.
- 1869-83:** Reefing in Swift's Creek area almost ceased in 1869 - revived in 1872 - kept alive until 1883 mainly by enterprising battery owner, Peter Forsyth. (Flett, p. 173)
- 1870:** Peter Forsyth discovered Rob Roy Reef, Gum Forest.<sup>4</sup>
- March 1870:** Alluvial mining on Swift's Creek suspended during dry weather - claimholders (mainly Chinese) took up new claims on Livingstone Creek, where water is always available - claims turned out well - doubtful whether miners will return to Swift's Creek.
- 1870-71:** Floods: 'claims filled up with drift, their tools, pumps, and wheels in most cases buried before they could be removed; their boxes and flumes carried away, and all the lower races either filled up or totally obliterated.' Floodwaters also swept away 100s of tons of tailings that clogged rivers and creeks.
- September 1871:** Chinese mining population increased by immigrants direct from China, for whom their countrymen had sent. European population also increased, chiefly by quartz miners.
- September 1872:** Alluvial creek claims on Livingstone Creek making good returns, particularly New Adventure claim opposite township, now owned by Chinese. Chinese also struck rich ground on Swift's Creek Swamp.
- 1873:** Pioneer Co. (Fitzgerald) water races enabled them to change from box sluicing to hydraulic sluicing.<sup>5</sup>
- March 1875:** No new alluvial ground - yields diminishing - miners lack funds to prospect to any extent.
- mid-1870s:** Settlement at junction of Swift's and Gray's creeks named Tongio West by mid-1870s - butcher, store, mines registrar, two pubs.<sup>6</sup>
- 1876:** Oriental Sluicing Co. formed - consisted of France and Champagne of the old French company, and Hadden, Rodgers and Clarke - two leases comprising 34 acres and a purchased right of 25 acres - ground situated south of Pioneer, between Mountain and Livingstone creeks (in fact, wedged between Pioneer and Fitzgerald's private land) -

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<sup>4</sup> Fairweather (2), p. 195

<sup>5</sup> Christie, p. 12

<sup>6</sup> Christie, p. 38

cut six-mile race up Livingstone Valley, but it passed through Fitzgerald's land and he refused to allow its use until Mining on Private Property Act was passed in 1884.<sup>7</sup>

**September 1876:** Oriental Co. proceeding with large race - 2 miles so far cut; 4 more will bring them to a selector's fence - landowner objects to them cutting race through his land.

**June 1879:** Tommy Dodd water-powered battery at work at Omeo. Interest focused on Saltpetre, Sassafras and Wheeler's Creeks (later Dart River subdivision).

**December 1879:** Small party put in tunnel above Bloomfield's Gully, seeking deep lead.

**March 1881:** Oriental Sluicing Co., Dry Hill, completing new race - 9 miles long.

**September 1881:** Apparently rich line of reef discovered in Dry Gully, about 4 miles from Omeo township - about 40 claims registered and prospecting being vigorously carried on.

**1881+:** Gambetta and Surprise reefs, Dry Gully - very rich. (Flett, p. 171)

**March 1882:** Dry Gully reefs - great drawback is want of machinery - company has been formed (40 shares of £20) and engine and battery purchased.

**June 1882:** Gambetta Reef giving best prospects of Dry Gully reefs.

**September 1882:** Omeo Quartz Crushing Co. erected battery at Dry Gully. First crushing was of stone from Polar Star Co. mine - 74 tons gave 239 oz - first crushing in Omeo.

**1882:** Polar Star mine closed down after a few rich, small crushings.<sup>8</sup>

**December 1882:** Results of reefing at Dry Gully, Omeo, have exceeded expectations - 440 tons gave 1,402 oz, or average of 3 oz +.

**June 1883:** Several new quartz finds in vicinity of Dry Gully and elsewhere - 12 applications for leases during quarter.

**1883:** Pioneer claim's estimated production, 1858-83 was 7,500 oz.<sup>9</sup>

**1883:** Gambetta GMC formed - battery - short-lived operation - subsequently worked by succession of partnerships and syndicates.<sup>10</sup>

**September 1883:** Pioneer claim, Dry Hill, has been worked by Fitzgerald and party for past 25 years - sold to party of Chinese for £1,000. Deep Lead Co. testing deep ground at Pioneer Hill - could lead to a new era in mining - at present, no deep ground worked in subdivision.

**1883:** Omeo Deep Lead GMC sank shaft 170 ft - beaten by water - short-lived venture.<sup>11</sup>

**1883-8:** Chinese co-operative working Pioneer claim did little work from 1883-5, because of drought - began work in earnest in 1886 - by 1888 had produced 1,000 oz.<sup>12</sup>

**December 1883:** Pioneer Co.'s battery at work. Federal Australian Co., Dry Gully, purchased 15-head battery ex-Duke of Cornwall Co., Swift's Creek.

**1884+:** Main period of activity on Cobungra River began, with large leases taken up for sluicing, on the river itself and at Brandy and Murphy's creeks. Mining township began at this time. (Flett, p. 160)

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7 Christie, p. 12

8 Fairweather (1), p. 21

9 Christie, p. 16

10 Fairweather (1), p. 25

11 Christie, p. 16

12 Christie, p. 14

- 1884:** Mountain Maid mine - on hill where Omeo-Bright road climbs up out of Mountain Creek - 6-head battery erected, with 10-hp portable steam engine.<sup>13</sup>
- June 1884:** Federal Australian mine - two shafts down 70 ft - machinery erected, costing £1,200 - now tunnelling on Omeo line of reef.
- September 1884:** Great scarcity of water. Several small parcels waiting for crushing at Jorgensen's Union battery. Mountain Maid battery just completed.
- December 1885:** (James Stirling appointed Mining Registrar) 'Owing to the decreasing rainfall at Omeo there seems to be a general drying up of what have hitherto been considered perennial water-courses ['Swift's Creek is now dry'], source runnels, and springs, resulting in serious drawbacks to the mining community, especially to alluvial miners.' Dry Hill Pioneer Co. suspended operations - water cut off to supply races used for Omeo domestic water. Oriental Sluicing Co, Dry Hill, Omeo - 'After protracted law suits, harassing delay, and much expense, this company have at last obtained the right under the new Mining on Private Property Act to cut their race through strips of private property intervening between their claim and the race.' Total value of plant, race, &c, about £6,000. Tail race in Ah Sam's claim, Bloomfield's Gully cost over £1,000. Several Chinese hatters at work on Livingstone Creek. Livingstone Creek GMC, Hinnomungee Swamp, erecting plant and extensive machinery, 'on modern scientific principles'. Dalmatia claim, Mountain Creek - crushing at Mountain Maid battery.
- 1880s:** Many claims along Mountain Creek and Dry Gully were operated by Chinese - Ah Fong and party were most successful - working small claim at junction of Dry Gully and Livingstone Creek, opposite Pioneer - got over 2,000 oz up to 1886 - had high race cut on north side of Dry Gully, branching to Mountain Creek - fluming crossed the gorge washed out by Ah Fong and Starlight claim (Dan Ah Sam)<sup>14</sup> - Ah Fong washed into Dry Gully while Starlight claim washed into the Livingstone.
- March 1886:** Dan Ah Sam, Bloomfield's Gully - 'The intelligent Austral-Chinese proprietor of this claim has managed to continue operations [during drought] by judicious storage of water and tunnelling - nine men employed - tunnel 170 yards long - deep lead. Quartz mines at work: Hidden Treasure, Golden Crown, and Surprise. Not working: Snowflake (abandoned), Snowstorm, Polar Star, Association claim, Southern Cross (old Gambetta), Grey Dawn Claim, Sunbeam, Hill-top, Try-again, North Cross. Also Mountain Maid - gold run out - 10-hp engine & 6 stamp-heads now lying idle - plant worth £850.

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<sup>13</sup> Fairweather (1), p. 27; Fairweather (2)

<sup>14</sup> Christie, p. 14

- June 1886:** 'Many of the Chinese small parties retain the gold they obtain as the result of their sluicing operations until a sufficient sum has been accumulated to enable them to visit China; such amounts do not appear in the returns. I find also that there is a reluctance, both on the part of companies and small parties of miners, or even "hatters," to furnish any information when the yield of gold in the several mines is small. Some of the tradesmen who purchase gold frequently take it with them to Melbourne when visiting the metropolis for the purpose of purchasing supplies of goods.' Oriental Sluicing Co., Dry Hill - head-race cut through private land, tail-race deepened. Also working alluvial in Dry Gully-Livingstone Creek - Pioneer claim (Chinese), Ah Man, Peter Ah Sin, Dan Ah Sam (Bloomfield's Gully), and Coon Sang (Jack Sheean's Flat, opposite junction of Livingstone and Wilson's creeks).
- 1886:** Oriental Sluicing Co. in full production at last - race provided enough water to supply two hydraulic hoses and twelve 36-inch sluices - Oriental Co. achieved similarly good returns to those of Pioneer Co.
- September 1886:** New Rush Creek (Livingstone Creek valley) - alluvial operations by Messrs Mahoney and small party of Chinese - D. Mahoney says he got gold from the creek as early as 1856. Livingstone Creek GMC, Hinnomungee Swamp - prospecting deep lead and erecting winding and pumping gear (10 hp engine). Oriental Sluicing Co. and Chinese parties sluicing Dry Gully and Livingstone Creek. Buckwong Creek, Indi River valley - parties working alluvial claims on creek flats. Since Sept 1884 (very low rainfall), alluvial yields reduced from 1,300 oz to 370 oz; quartz yields increased from 246 oz to 854 oz.
- December 1886:** New Rush Creek - Messrs Mahoney have put a tunnel in their sluicing claim at junction of New Rush and Livingstone creeks, to a distance of 100 ft - influx of water has caused tunnel to be abandoned. Choo Toy & Co. sluicing claim, Bloomfield's Gully, Omeo - employs 7 Chinese men 'upon a sort of co-operative system' - more than 200 sluice-boxes - tail-race cost over £500 - mining plant, race, &c. worth £1,500. Old Pioneer sluicing claim, Bloomfield's Gully - 6 Chinese working under co-operative system - expect to wash up before Chinese new year. Ah Sen and Co. sluicing claim, Jack Sheean's Flat, Omeo - getting fair gold. Several other parties of Chinese sluicing: Ah Sen and Ah King on Mitta Mitta terraces below Hinnomunje, Ah Man and Ah Hon at Dry Gully, and Peter Ah Sen at Livingstone Creek. Oriental Sluicing Co., Dry Gully, Omeo - operating on a face of 35 feet - were sufficient water available, their race would carry 12 sluice-heads of 36 in. - only 4-6 sluice heads available - after years of litigation and expenses in which they became involved in constructing and passing their race through a narrow strip of private property, finally getting good results - concession obtained under provisions of recent Mining on Private Property Act.
- March 1887:** Alluvial claim registered on Middle Creek, a branch of Big River. Dry Gully - trial shaft being sunk to test locality at depth - Constable & Co. resuming operations at their mines - splendid samples from old Gambetta mine - other mines restarting.
- June 1887:** New Rush Creek runs from Little Baldhead in main dividing range to Livingstone Creek, about 12 miles above Omeo township. Mahoney brothers working alluvial flats in lower valley - also tunnelling for supposed deep lead. A series of small flats occurs along the river's southward course, worked variously by Ah Sen, Ah Tong, Griffith, Graham, and Chin Yah. Despite its name, New Rush Creek is really an old diggings - Messrs Mahoney have worked it for about 30 years, and gold has been got from almost the entire length of the creek. Reef recently discovered - also reefs on north side of New Rush Creek, towards Swift's Creek mining area. (Stirling, J., 'New Rush Creek', Appendix D to MSR, June 1887, pp. 81-2, plus map)
- September 1887:** Omeo Gold and Silver Mining Co., Dry Gully - put boiler in order, commencing operations.
- December 1887:** Mahoneys prospecting by tunnel at New Rush Creek.

- March 1888:** Chinese alluvial miners mainly working in and around Omeo township. Prospecting abandoned at New Rush Creek.
- June 1888:** Payable reefs discovered at Mountain Creek, about four miles NW of Omeo - about 15 men at work.
- September 1888:** Mining at a standstill at Long Gully. Oriental Sluicing Co., Dry Hill. Lady Loch Co. (Saltpetre Creek/Upper Dargo?) to erect machinery. 'The latest and greatest sensation in mining has been caused by the recent discovery of large tin deposits at Wombat Creek by the Government prospecting party' - traced for several miles from head of Wombat Creek - 'it is believed to be the largest tin deposit that has yet been found in any of the colonies; in fact, I have heard some experienced Cornish tin miners say they believe it is the largest in the world' - 30 leases already applied for and company being formed - stone assayed at 19-35% tin.
- December 1888:** Several parcels of stone crushed at Mountain Maid (Dry Gully) - only picked stone, due to high cost of transport. Discovery of tin lodes at Wombat Creek - 'the most important yet made in this division, if not in the whole of the colonies.' Mt Wills Tin Proprietary Co. suspended prospecting operations due to objections being lodged against the granting of some of the leases applied for - 'The action of a small section of malcontents in this matter is generally condemned throughout the district, as the grounds of objection are considered frivolous, and legitimate enterprise and the influx of capital have, for the time, been retarded.'
- 1888-9:** Up until 1888, the Oriental Sluicing Co.'s gold production was only 500 oz/year or less. A Giant hydrant and nozzle were then installed, with the hope of increasing production to nearer 1000 oz/year. By undercutting the huge face of wash, they could bring down 100 tons at a time.<sup>15</sup>
- 1888-90:** Eugene Storenatta discovered reefs about 3 miles NW of Omeo, at head of Bingo Mungee Creek - not much outside interest, but slow improvement of prospects - by 1890, small mining centre of Bingo was well-established. Reefs included Hidden Treasure, Homeward Bound, Larboard Watch, and Smile of Fortune - very rich.
- 1888+:** Bingo quartz mines opened - mines included Trojan, Day Dawn, Smile of Fortune, Rip Van Winkle, Happy go Lucky, Inexhaustible, McNaulty - most mine workings were simply holes gouged out of the rock, designed to return the most gold for minimum effort - 10-head battery installed on Bingo Creek (5-head still remained in 1908).<sup>16</sup>
- March 1889:** Oriental Sluicing Co. - 'bringing tail-race up deeper' and laying iron pipes on the face into which tail-race is being cut.
- June 1889:** Livingstone Creek valley, east of Omeo, is non-auriferous, except for terraces and alluviums along Livingstone Creek itself. Reefs have been discovered at Dry Gully and Mountain Creek, about 3 miles W and SW of Omeo. Dry Gully workings are on route to Cobungra - Mountain Creek reefs on road to Parslow's Plains, via Jim-and-Jack Creek. Some very rich gold, but no deep shafts yet sunk. Alluvial workings at Dry Gully, at Bloomfield's Gully, and along upper and lower sections of Livingstone Creek. Recent discoveries towards head of Deep Flume Creek and on dividing range towards Bald Hill Creek. (Stirling, J., 'Notes on Some Metamorphic Rocks and Dyke Stones at Omeo', Appendix B to MSR, June 1889, pp. 77-81).
- June 1889:** New reef on Bingo Hill, about 5 miles NW of Omeo township - rich specimens, little development. Deep Lead Co. suspended operations - have gone to a lot of expense erecting machinery and other works - public confidence low - calls not paid. Oriental Sluicing Co. adding hydrant and giant nozzle for larger-scale operations.
- 1889:** Oriental Sluicing Co. installed a No. 1 Giant hydrant and nozzle, allowing them to work deeper ground - tail-race deepened, 600 yards long - gold production increased

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15 Fairweather (1), pp. 36-7

16 Fairweather (1), p. 32

from 40-100 oz in preceding years to 275 oz in 1889 - 'At delivery of head race there is 60 feet of pressure, but 10 feet more are available. The water being conducted throughout pipe columns 100 yards in length increases this pressure. The first one foot, the second nine inches and the third six inches. Then the water passes through a nozzle from two to three inches as required. The sluices are wooden, thence through a paved ditch to the gateway, with ample fall all the way.'<sup>17</sup>

- December 1889:** Largest gold output for years - 3,067 oz. Most raised by private parties, but major contributors were Oriental Sluicing Co. (275 oz from 4 months' work) and Cobungra Sluicing Co. (274 oz from 12 months' work). Oriental Co. has just introduced giant nozzle - best yield for many years.
- 1890:** All Nations installed battery (ex-Mountain Maid, Omeo) to Upper Swift's Creek.<sup>18</sup>
- 1892:** Warden GMC (formed 1887) purchased Never Can Tell claim - battery (10-head) removed to Bingo.<sup>19</sup>
- 1892:** Larboard Watch mine, Bingo - company floated and battery erected (ex-Never Can Tell?).<sup>20</sup>
- 1894:** Coughlan's 8-head Oonah battery erected at Bingo.<sup>21</sup>
- 1894:** Jack Dow found gold at Bluey's Creek, a tributary of the upper Tambo River some 30 miles from Omeo - access was initially from the Benambra side - syndicate formed to work Comrade mine - battery erected.<sup>22</sup>
- 1894-5:** Day Dawn mine - largest mine on Bingo field - worked by Patrick Doolan - Omeo Mining Co. floated in 1895 - 10-head battery erected (ex Shamrock, Glen Wills).<sup>23</sup>
- 1898-9:** Oriental Co. still sluicing in 1898 - Oriental Sluicing and Dredging Co. formed in 1899.<sup>24</sup>
- 1899:** Comrade Mining Co. formed to work Comrade mine at Bluey's Creek - new battery erected? - 6-head, water-powered battery - auxiliary steam engine hired from Tongio - also assay room/laboratory and cyanide works.<sup>25</sup>

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17 Christie, p. 16; *Omeo Standard*, 24 April 1891, quoted by Christie  
18 Fairweather (2), p. 203  
19 Fairweather (2), pp. 93, 108  
20 Fairweather (1), p. 33  
21 Fairweather (1), p. 34  
22 Fairweather (1), p. 255  
23 Fairweather (1), p. 33  
24 Fairweather (1), p. 37  
25 Fairweather (1), p. 255

- 1899-1900:** Pandora Co. began dredging first operations on Livingstone Creek, with rather primitive equipment. Later in 1899, Rebeci and Goldsworthy took out the first dredging lease on the creek, to work the area known as Hinnomunjie Swamp - then two leases taken out by Bostock. Livingstone Dredging Co. commenced 1900 - pump-type - dredged some 8\_ acres for poor returns. Hinnomunjie No. 1 & 2 dredges - bucket dredges.<sup>26</sup>
- 1899-1904:** Omeo Deep Lead Prospecting Co. operated on west side of Livingstone Creek, opposite the town.<sup>27</sup>
- 1901:** New Gambetta Co. formed - 10-head battery (ex-Association mine).<sup>28</sup>
- 1900s:** Cassilis treatment works supplied by limeworks at Bindi.<sup>29</sup>
- 1901:** Government battery on Mountain Creek - remained only a short time.<sup>30</sup>
- 1903-5:** New Polar Star GMC, Omeo - tunnel in 703 ft - ceased operations in 1905.<sup>31</sup>
- 1903:** Principal mines at Omeo are Polar Star, Gambetta, North Gambetta, Oriental Hydraulic Sluicing, and Livingstone Dredging Company.<sup>32</sup>
- 1904:** At Omeo, the Livingstone Creek and Omeo bucket dredges working payable ground - 'This part of mining has helped to keep a little mining life in the locality.'<sup>33</sup>
- 1904:** Sludge Abatement Board stopped work on Oriental and other sluicing claims until tailings could be prevented from flowing into Livingstone Creek. Estimated production from Oriental Sluicing Co. claim to that date was 12,500 oz; other sluicing claims on Livingstone Creek and tributaries thought to have produced about 21,000 since 1857.<sup>34</sup>
- 1905:** Gambetta Reef, about 4 miles W of Omeo - worked by adit, 1,000 ft long. Polar Star mine, about 20 chains NW of Gambetta - adit 900 ft long. Thistle Reef, about 300 yards W of Gambetta - new discovery. Several small reefs formerly worked higher up hill than Gambetta - all deserted. Small reefs, but rich - complex ore.<sup>35</sup>
- 1905:** Mining at Omeo very dull, apart from dredging operations. Third dredge being built on Livingstone Creek. Gambetta party repairing battery.<sup>36</sup>
- 1908:** Co-operative party working old Polar Star mine - tunnel in 932 ft, worked to depth of 200 ft. Two bucket dredges on Livingstone Creek near Hinnomungie getting payable results - another dredge about to be erected in locality. Parties working old Day Dawn mine at Bingo (5-head battery, part of 10-head battery erected c. 1888, still on site).<sup>37</sup>
- 1910:** Gambetta mine, Omeo, floated into a company - sinking below tunnel level.<sup>38</sup>

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26 Fairweather (1), p. 41  
 27 Fairweather (1), p. 29  
 28 Fairweather (1), p. 25  
 29 Fairweather (2), p. 52  
 30 Fairweather (1), p. 27  
 31 Fairweather (1), p. 21  
 32 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1903  
 33 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1904  
 34 Christie, p. 16 (quoting Griffiths)  
 35 Dunn (1907/1)  
 36 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1905  
 37 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1907; Fairweather (1), p. 23  
 38 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1910



- 1911:** Lodes carrying silver and gold discovered by G.W. Forsyth on east side of Livingstone Creek, 2\_ miles south of Omeo in Allotment 114, Parish of Cobungra - lodes carries some rich silver ore - one sample gave 1 oz of gold and 420 oz of silver per ton - lodes named Silver King and Auro-Argentum - further prospecting revealed other lodes 1\_ miles SE, on east side of Three Mile Creek, known as Comstock Lodes - lodes prospected throughout 1910s-20s.<sup>39</sup> (Fairweather claims battery was erected on Silver King claim.<sup>40</sup>)
- 1911:** New Gambetta Co. prospecting below tunnel level - nothing payable. Old Oriental Sluicing Co. ground, Dry Hill, taken up by a financially strong company - installed powerful pump sluicing plant, driven by new 30-hp Robey & Co. portable engine - large area of ground to deal with, in places over 100 ft deep - 'It is confidently expected that the treatment of this immense deposit by up-to-date methods will be done with profitable results, thus giving employment to from 25 to 50 men for many years.'<sup>41</sup>
- 1911-12:** Oriental GMC took up lease of 232 acres - sluiced a 120-ft face by gravitation, running tailings over elevated boxes and depositing them in ground already worked (so as not to pollute creek)- 150-hp engine, 14-inch elevator pump deposited tailings to north of working area - elevator pit can still be seen today as a deep waterhole surrounded by rushes - by June 1912, produced only 54 oz (worth £191) - operations ceased.<sup>42</sup>
- 1912:** Oriental Sluicing Co., Dry Hill, idle - pump sluicing plant inadequate to deal with immense wash. Three bucket dredges at Hinnomungie swamp, some 6 miles from Omeo.<sup>43</sup>
- 1914:** Two dredges still operating profitably on Livingstone Creek, about 5 miles below Omeo.<sup>44</sup>
- 1916:** Two dredging plants employed continuously on Hinnomunjie swamp - one highly payable, the other barely remunerative. A few small sluicing claims at work in Omeo area, making from subsistence to a fair wage. Forsyth's silver mine taking out small parcels for treatment elsewhere.<sup>45</sup>
- 1917:** Hinnomunjie dredge running continuously.<sup>46</sup>
- 1918:** Old Polar Star mine, Dry Gully, taken up - further prospecting of old workings in progress. Hinnomungie No. 1 dredge still working profitably.<sup>47</sup>
- 1934:** Gambetta mine, Omeo, worked by Mr Tunbridge - tunnel in 960 ft, mine worked to depth of 200 ft.<sup>48</sup>
- 1946:** High silver and gold prices caused McRae Bros to take up lease on Comstock silver lodes, near Omeo - prospecting by trenches.<sup>49</sup>

**SOURCES:**

*Australian Mining Standard*

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- 39 Kenny  
 40 Fairweather (1), p. 39  
 41 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1911  
 42 Christie, p. 16  
 43 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1912  
 44 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1914  
 45 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1916  
 46 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1917  
 47 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1918  
 48 Fairweather (1), p. 26  
 49 Kenny

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## ***Shady Creek, Red Hill and Tarwin – Historical Notes***

*Mainly nuggetty gold.*<sup>1</sup>

- 1851:** First (unconfirmed) discovery of gold at Shady Creek.<sup>2</sup>
- 1860:** McCrea and party announced their gold find at Shady Creek - track between Buneep (Bunyip) and Shady Creek hazardous even for packhorses - Shady Creek and German Gully initially regarded as part of Baw Baw (Tanjil) diggings.<sup>3</sup>
- 1861:** 'Shady Creek on Melbourne Road is almost deserted now. Two hundred were there once, but now only thirty diggers, mostly Melbourne prowling and loafing class.'<sup>4</sup>
- 1864:** Rush to Red Hill, Tarrago (or Tarwin or 'Tarween') River - gold said to have been worked there several years earlier. Localities opened up by late 1864 included: Red Jacket Creek, Jackson's Creek, New Zealand Gully, Good Friday Gully, Live Horse and Dead Horse gullies, Long Gully, and upper Shady Creek. Crossover Creek also opened up in 1864.<sup>5</sup>
- 1865-6:** Claims on Guiding Star Reef, Crossover Creek, being amalgamated - prospecting claim sent two tons of quartz to Castlemaine for trial crushing, with poor results - all claims suspended or abandoned by end of 1866 - miners occupied instead in sluicing Live-horse and Dead-horse gullies.<sup>6</sup>
- 1868:** Happy-go-lucky Reef discovered at Crossover - numerous claims (including Albion, Happy Elizabeth). Guiding Star prospectors installing battery. Both reefs worked by shaft.<sup>7</sup>
- 1869:** Happy-go-Lucky Co. installed machinery - suspended operations in 1870.<sup>8</sup>
- 1870:** Alluvial prospecting on Tarwin (Tarago) River and towards head of Latrobe River.<sup>9</sup>
- 1871:** Several claims registered on the 'Tarween' River, situated about two miles above the old Melbourne road through the Fern-tree gullies - area attracting considerable attention - 'The Tarween River ... is a small river taking its rise between the Latrobe and Buneep rivers. I mention this because it is often confounded with the Tarwin River, in South Gippsland' - leases taken up for tin and gold in the locality (about four miles NE of old Gippsland - Fern-tree Gully road) in 1874.<sup>10</sup>
- December 1872:** Crossover reefs entirely abandoned.<sup>11</sup>
- 1873:** Crossover quartz mining revived by successful crushing by Albion tributers - Happy-go-lucky ground also taken up.<sup>12</sup>
- 1875:** Alluvial mining at Crossover dwindled to mere fossicking - plans to re-work old creeks by ground sluicing.<sup>13</sup>

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1 Murray

2 Flett, p. 123

3 Flett, p. 123

4 *Ovens Constitution*, 24 January 1861 (quoted by Flett, p. 123)

5 Flett, pp. 124-5

6 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Sale Subdivision), December 1865, March 1866

7 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Russell's Creek Subdivision), September 1868, September 1869

8 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Russell's Creek Division), March & September 1870

9 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Russell's Creek Division), March 1870

10 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Russell's Creek Division), June 1871, March 1874

11 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Russell's Creek Division), December 1872

12 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Russell's Creek Division), June 1873

13 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Russell's Creek Division), March 1875

- 1875-6:** Crushing from Albion claim anticipated - unsatisfactory - machinery removed to Melbourne.<sup>14</sup>
- 1877:** Party cut water race at Crossover Creek to bring water 8-10 miles, to sluice some old ground formerly held by Albion and Happy-go-Lucky QMCs.<sup>15</sup>
- 1882:** Several quartz claims taken up at Jindivick and Neerim.<sup>16</sup>
- 1886:** Gold first worked at Bear Creek, near the Strezlecki Ranges, south of Warragul.<sup>17</sup>
- 1887:** 'The rush to Neerim turned out very different to what a few expected, it being confined to the prospectors' claim'.<sup>18</sup>
- 1887:** 'The Red Hill Creek and gullies tending thereto on the east side of the range, and the gullies running into the Tarago (late Tarween) River from the western slope, have in some cases yielded rich deposits of alluvial gold, principally of a nuggety character. Jackson's Gully, in particular... is stated to have yielded gold to a value estimated at £80,000, including many nuggets up to 16 ounces in weight. In fact, nearly all the gold extracted appears to have been found in tolerably large-sized pieces, as - owing to the scarcity of water in the gullies, and the difficulty of conveying wash-dirt to the river - the diggers washed very little, contenting themselves with turning over the dirt and picking out the visible pieces of gold. I saw, washed indiscriminately from the old heaps, prospects of fine gold, indicative of a payable yield were the stuff washed on a large scale with plenty of water. The lower part of Jackson's Gully remains unworked, the sinking, though only 25 feet, being too wet for ordinary diggers' appliances, but good prospects are reported to have been obtained from some holes that were with difficulty bottomed, and had to be abandoned on account of the influx of water. There is certainly a very large amount of stuff here available for hydraulic sluicing operations ... I understand that surveys have been made which show that water in ample quantity can be conveyed from some ten miles up the Tarago, so as to command from the top of the range the slopes into Jackson's Gully and Red Hill Creek; also, that the race has been partly constructed.'<sup>19</sup>
- 1887:** Deep lead being prospected on west side of Tarago River, near Langridge's Gully - deep lead passes under Neerim plateau, from NE to SW - of very promising appearance.<sup>20</sup>
- 1888:** A few parties getting satisfactory gold at Frenchman's Creek, near Neerim.<sup>21</sup>

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14 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Russell's Creek Division), March-December 1875, March 1876  
 15 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Russell's Creek Division), March & December 1877  
 16 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Russell's Creek Division), December 1882  
 17 Flett, p. 141  
 18 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Russell's Creek Division), June 1887  
 19 Murray  
 20 Murray  
 21 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Russell's Creek Division), March 1888

- 1889:** Every probability of Neerim locality looking up - a good many fossickers, all obtaining fair gold. Big Bend Sluicing Co. turned Latrobe River, and has about 45 chains of the bed to work. Neerim Hydraulic Co. obtained good prospects - coarse gold.<sup>22</sup>
- 1889:** Attwood and Co., Frenchman's Creek, have a shaft down 150 feet on alluvial - no sign of bottom - driving a tunnel by end of year.<sup>23</sup>
- 1889:** Alluvial creek and terrace deposits along Live Horse Creek appear to have been profitably worked some years since - discovery of alluvial gold led to systematic loaming of adjoining spurs and finding of reef gold (dyke formations) on both sides of creek - tunnel on south side of creek - Milner Brothers presently driving a tunnel on north side. (plan on file)<sup>24</sup>
- 1894:** Alluvial gold discovered in tributary of Pilgrim Creek, in the Rokeby District - subsequent prospecting revealed auriferous quartz veins on adjoining ranges: Enterprise (Harries') Reef, to south of creek; Golden Crown Reef, north of Enterprise; Wilson's Reef, north of Golden Crown - reefs worked by shaft.<sup>25</sup>
- 1895:** Bear Creek, south of Warragul, worked by Chaffey Co. (driving tunnel in 1899<sup>26</sup>) and South Warragul Co.<sup>27</sup>
- 1898:** Mining at Rokeby, about 1.5 miles west of railway station - shafts, tunnels, &c. on a spur dividing California Gully to the east from Dudley's Gully to the south - California Gully contained alluvial deposits, 6 to 8 feet deep (4 feet surface stripping, 4 feet washdirt), for distance of 400 yards - ie. from old sawmill site to junction with Tarago River - likewise Dudley Gully had payable alluvial for 250 yards downwards from Ellis brothers' tunnel - gold traced up from gullies to quartz veins on ridges - several shafts sunk and auriferous reef discovered - Ellis brothers commenced driving tunnel from head of Dudley's Gully to intersect reefs at lower level than shafts - prospecting continuing, although Stirling concluded that the quartz veins were 'somewhat capricious in their extent and continuity'.<sup>28</sup>
- 1899:** Ellis & Co. prospecting alluvial by shaft at junction of Scalp Creek with Tarago River - locality known as the Golden Horseshoe. Harris & Co. working by tunnel on eastern bank of river, about 400 yards up Tarago River from Scalp Creek junction - alluvial wash partly opened out some 20 years earlier - Stirling suggested that claim might pay by hydraulic sluicing ('the influence of a suitable hydraulic nozzle and tubing'). Alluvial flats immediately west of Harris' claim being 'vigorously worked' by Robert Falconer '(an old and experienced prospector)' and party - good coarse gold obtained from several paddocks - fairly shallow sinking. Albert Watson Reef - tunnel being driven on quartz reef about 1.5 miles above Harries' alluvial workings, into hill on western side of Tarago River - no gold found in reef so far - possibly northern extension of reefs west of Rokeby railway station - reef recently discovered on this line about 1.5 miles north of Rokeby.<sup>29</sup>
- 1899:** Noonan's Reef, on Noonan's block, South Neerim - opened up in two places - no trace of gold in the quartz so far, but good coarse gold reportedly found in bed of Scalp Creek, cutting through reef, about ten years ago. Stephens' Reef - cut by Scalp Creek, about 6 chains higher up than Noonan's Reef - no gold showing in stone. Auriferous gravels and washes being worked by Allison's GMC and Josephine Alluvial GMC. Allison's workings situated on Tarago River, Napier's block -

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22 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Russell's Creek Division), June 1889

23 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Russell's Creek Division), June & December 1889

24 Stirling (1889)

25 Stirling (1894)

26 Stirling (1899)

27 Flett, p. 141

28 Stirling (1898)

29 Stirling (1899)

tunnelling. Josephine GMC working the Frenchman's Gully beds, in the area originally known as the Timber Reserve, about 100 chains from Latrobe River.<sup>30</sup>

**1903-5:** Crossover and Mt Magnus employed only a few alluvial miners, with poor results.<sup>31</sup>

**1908:** Mines Development Act assisted prospectors at Tarago River and Neerim South.<sup>32</sup>

**1937:** Assistance has been given from Unemployment Relief Funds to prospectors in the Neerim district, where commendable efforts are being made to locate payable propositions.<sup>33</sup>

#### SOURCES:

Murray, R.A.F., 'Report on the Tar[a]lgo and Jackson's Gully Workings, Neerim', Appendix B to Mining Surveyors' Reports, September 1887 (report dated July 1887), p. 75

Stirling, J., 'Report on Mining and Prospecting Operations in the Gippsland and Castlemaine Districts', Appendix H to Mining Surveyors' Reports, December 1889, p. 76 (Live Horse Creek, Gippsland District)

Stirling, J., 'Notes on Auriferous Quartz Veins - Rokeby District', Geological Survey of Victoria Progress Report 8, 1894, pp. 63-4 + plan

Stirling, J., 'Report on Reefs at Rokeby', Geological Survey of Victoria Progress Report 9, 1898, pp. 35-6

Stirling, J., 'Report on Gold Workings, Neerim District', Geological Survey of Victoria Monthly Progress Reports 8 & 9, 1899, pp. 16-18

Whitelaw, O.A.L., 'Report on Geological Survey. - Portions of Neerim, Jindivick, Noogee, Nayook, and North Neerim', in *Monthly Progress Report* No. 3, Geological Survey of Victoria, Department of Mines, June 1899, pp. 18-21

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<sup>30</sup> Whitelaw, pp. 18-19

<sup>31</sup> Department of Mines Annual Reports, 1903-5

<sup>32</sup> Department of Mines Annual Report, 1908

<sup>33</sup> *Mining and Geological Journal*, July 1937

## **ST ANDREWS—CALEDONIA GOLDFIELD NOTES**

- 1851:** Alluvial gold was found in small quantities at Scott's Hill, Kangaroo Ground.<sup>1</sup>
- 1854:** Caledonia diggings were opened—they extended from the Yarra, north across Kangaroo Ground, to above Queenstown (St Andrews?), and embraced all the area between Diamond Creek and Watson's Creek (in the east). Gold was discovered in Old Caledonia Gully (now Smyth's Creek) in winter 1854, and followed by a rush early in 1855.<sup>2</sup>
- 1855:** Rush to Caledonia diggings. Early in the year Boston Gully was the main locality, also Ironbark Gully. 500 diggers were on Back (Diamond) Creek in March. Gold was discovered at One Tree Hill (or Distil Creek), which became the richest place on the diggings. First village at Caledonia rush was known as Market Square, on the east side of Ruggy's Gully, where it joins Old Caledonia Gully, about 1½ miles above Queenstown. Diggers dispersed to Watson's Creek, New Caledonia Gully, Yow Yow, Wild Dog, Cherry Tree Gully, Happy Valley, and Red Shirt Gully, all of which were worked in 1855. Quartz reefs were also discovered at Caledonia in 1855.<sup>3</sup>
- 1855:** Mark Amos worked quartz reefs on Caledonia diggings in 1855. There was no crushing machinery on the field, so ore was carted 30 miles to Langlands' Foundry in Melbourne—crushing cost £3 per ton and cartage about the same—crushing went about 3 oz/ton, but did not pay.<sup>4</sup>
- 1856:** Long Gully, Stoney Creek (running into Pound Bend near Warrandyte), and Dry Creek were opened in 1856. Also Swiper's Gully, later known as Research. First quartz crusher erected at Back Creek in February 1856. Templestowe Reef discovered in October.<sup>5</sup>
- 1857:** Black Calf Gully opened.<sup>6</sup>
- October 1858:** Oram's (originally Orme's) Reef, one of the main Caledonia reefs, opened.<sup>7</sup>
- 1859:** Fords Gully, Spanish Gully, New Watery Gully, Fryers Creek, and Surveyors Gully all worked for the first time.<sup>8</sup>
- August 1859:** Yield of gold from Swedish Reef on One Tree Hill is greater than ever: 15 lb weight of gold extracted from 60 lb of quartz.<sup>9</sup>
- December 1859:** Allen's reef, Yew Yew, (abandoned for some months) now occupied to whole extent—second reef located parallel to that formerly worked. Reef opened on road between Queenstown and Kangaroo Ground. Gold-bearing quartz discovered on One-Tree-Hill. At Swedish Reef, One-Tree-Hill, every claim was occupied and very busy. Victoria Reef, One-Tree-Hill, was partially abandoned, owing to reef running very thin.<sup>10</sup>

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1 Flett, p. 42

2 Flett, pp. 42-3

3 Flett, pp. 43-45

4 Amos, in *Records of Castlemaine Pioneers*

5 Flett, p. 44-5

6 Flett, p. 44

7 Flett, p. 45

8 Flett, p. 44

9 Kenny (1921), p. 263—quoting J. Easton report, 1914

10 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1859

- 1859+:** One Tree Hill workings, near Queenstown, are on three parallel reef lines, known as Swedish, Moonlight, and Buck reefs respectively. The hill forms part of divide between Watson's Creek and Diamond Creek, the gullies tending NW and S carried alluvial gold with some nuggets. This was an unusual occurrence in the goldfields to the east of Melbourne.<sup>11</sup>
- 1860:** Sensational gold yields from Swedish Reef: one bucketful of quartz yielded over 5 lb of gold; 57 lb of quartz yielded 17 lb of gold; inferior quartz averaged 4 oz/ton at a depth of 65 ft. Smyth's Creek MC formed to work Nos. 2, 3 & 4 claims on Swedish Reef.<sup>12</sup>
- January 1860:** In Spanish Gully some pretty good patches of alluvial soil are occasionally met with. Flyer's Gully near Kangaroo Ground and Oram's Reef also being worked. Preparations for extensive sluice washing being made for a party in Wild Dog Gully which will include the first race of its kind in this division. Swedish Reef, One-Tree-Hill, has very rich gold-bearing quartz at 65 feet in the south end of the claim.<sup>13</sup>
- February 1860:** Rush to tributary of Plenty River at Morang—Hugh Glass's Gully, just north of Joyce's Hill.<sup>14</sup>
- April 1860:** Prospecting between Yan Yean and Queenstown as well as northern part of Caledonian goldfields and Steel's Creek. Steam puddling machine is about to be erected about a mile and a half from Queenstown, on the Old Caledonian Creek. At One-Tree Hill Smyth's Creek QMC (Holmes, Randle, Ricards and Co.), struck reef at 60 feet. A gully at Morang, known to be auriferous, was recently opened and has almost been worked out.<sup>15</sup>
- June 1860:** Tunnel commenced at You You Hill by Shotton and party, with aim of intersecting Reed's, Allen's, Hawkin's, Gillman's and Barker's reefs. Holmes & Co. intend erecting machinery at Smythe's Gully. You You Hill Mining Co. (not Shotton) established. Prospecting intensifying at Steel's Creek.<sup>16</sup>
- July 1860:** Fully one-quarter of alluvial miners at the Caledonian goldfields are not earning a living.<sup>17</sup>
- September 1860:** Machinery of Holmes, Randle & Ricards all but complete—quartz mining at Yow-Yow Hill—tunnel in 500 feet, with tramway extended along its length and 150 yards from tunnel mouth towards part of Old Caledonian Creek called Slater's Rush, which it will cross, to terminate at quartz mill—old crushing machinery has been replaced by three batteries of four revolving stamps each—headings for tunnel are being run down to creek, for double purpose of forming an embankment for tramway and wall for reservoir. Works at Yow-Yow Hill Mining Co. are progressing. In alluvial mining, the heaviest findings are at Happy Valley, otherwise known as Fern-Tree Gully—probably extension of Swedish Reef. Approximately 10 miners at work at Plenty River, Morang diggings.<sup>18</sup>

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11 Kenny (1921), p. 263

12 Kenny (1921), p. 263

13 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), January 1860

14 Flett, p. 46

15 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), April 1860

16 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1860

17 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), July 1860

18 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1860



**November 1860:** Rush at Fern Tree Gully, or upper portion of the Happy Valley. Smythe's Creek Mining Co., Yow-Yow Hill, has driven 560 feet (40 feet short of Allen's reef). Yow-Yow Hill Mining Co. has completed 60 feet of tunnel. Cameron's Reef discovered on one of the ranges on right bank of Old Caledonian Creek and within one mile of Queenstown.<sup>19</sup>

**January 1861:** At Oram's Reef, Oram & party's shaft down 110 feet. At Swedish Reef, One-Tree-Hill, depth of 150 feet attained in Nos. 1 and 2 North with no very great results. On Victoria Reef, One-Tree-Hill a claim has been taken up on ground abandoned for more than a year. Yow-yow Mining Co. tunnel has been completed—first tunnel completed in division. Tunnel on Smythe's Creek workings, Yow-yow, is still progressing—driven 620 feet. Great activity on Barker's Reef, where the Smythe's Creek Co. are carrying on 'tolerably extensive' workings. In Fern-Tree Gully, many parties have been fortunate—three gents have earned sufficient amount in four months to return to England. In Old Caledonia Creek Howlett is doing exceedingly well occupying a puddler's claim—first to pay in the division.<sup>20</sup>

**February 1861:** Kinglake goldfield opened at Moores Rush or Mountain Rush, about eight miles NE of Queenstown—a densely scrubbed tableland just east of Kinglake—today, in a series of gullies on Mountain Creek, above Mt Slide at the head of Yea River. Creeks known as No. 1, No. 2 (Grimshaw's), and Nos. 3, 4 and 5—all rich in gold.<sup>21</sup>

**February 1861:** Two auriferous creeks discovered—one thought to be a tributary of Watt's River, the other joins Watson's creek at Wilson's station. In general, alluvial mining has increased. Specifically heavy finds of gold have occurred at Fern-tree Gully, One-Tree-Hill.<sup>22</sup>

**March 1861:** Drapers Gully, north of Research, rushed. Five Mile Creek, east of One Tree Hill, opened.<sup>23</sup>

**April 1861:** Smythe's Creek Co. battery undergoing repairs and alterations. Now there is only one crushing machine working for public in this division. One-Tree-Hill Mining Co. and Smythe's Creek Co. have amalgamated. Considerable rush to Swiper's Gully, situated within two miles of Eltham—head of gully is at Kangaroo Ground and is separated from one of the branches of Draper's Gully by a low ridge running out from the main range of the Kangaroo Ground—all the stuff is transported about a mile to Diamond Creek for washing.<sup>24</sup>

**June 1861:** Prospecting between Kangaroo Ground and the Yarra has revealed two auriferous gullies: Sawpit Gully commences near SE corner of block 1 section 4 in parish of Nillumbik, and falls into Yarra about a mile below the junction with Watson's Creek. Welcome Gully commences at Ferny Hill, about two miles from Eltham, and falls into Yarra about 1½ miles from that Eltham. Yarra Yarra Mining Co. and One-Tree-Hill Co. are only two leasehold companies in division at present. Only Co. at work here now is You You Hill Mining Co. Mountain rush or Moore's diggings located 930 feet above Queenstown—first discovered by Moore in February 1861 and it extends approximately five miles in a NE direction across four other branches of Moore's Creek.<sup>25</sup>

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19 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), November 1860

20 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), January 1861

21 Flett, p. 44

22 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), February 1861

23 Flett, p. 44

24 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), April 1861

25 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1861

- August 1861:** You You Mining Co. is involved in litigation—mining operations suspended. Smythe’s Creek Co. on Swedish Reef, One-Tree-Hill, is now at a depth of 200 feet.<sup>26</sup>
- September 1861:** At Sawpit Gully on the Yarra about 50 miners are doing pretty well. Some successes have been met with in the upper part of Whisky Gully—intersected near upper end by auriferous quartz vein from One-tree-Hill. Fern-tree Gully now pretty well worked out. Payable gold found in portion of Back Creek between Yow-Yow Creek and Wild-Dog Gully. Slight rush to one of upper branches of New Watery Gully. On One-Tree-Hill only two claims worked on Swedish Reef: Smythe’s Creek Co. and claim No. 2 South. Research and Swiper’s Gullies, near Kangaroo Ground maintain their alluvial mining Population, regardless of the general exodus to New Zealand—likewise Draper’s Gully.<sup>27</sup>
- September 1861:** Swiper's Gully (first worked 1856) was again rushed, this time as Research (re-search) Gully.<sup>28</sup>
- October 1861:** On Caledonia and Queenstown goldfields, alluvial mining is so small and so precarious that the miners cannot procure the necessaries of life from it. At One-Tree-Hill the claim of Mr Gatty Jones & Co. is yielding quartz with above average richness.<sup>29</sup>
- November 1861:** Slight rush (about 60 men) to new ground on the part of Back Creek between Black Calf and Wild Dog gullies. Quartz miners starting to avail themselves of excellent mining machinery at Slater’s Gully—eight stampers and Wilkinson’s patented calcining process reduce quartz with a small amount of steam.<sup>30</sup>
- December 1861:** Slight rush (30 men) at Thompson’s Gully, Kangaroo Ground—the gully commences in portion 2 of section 1 in parish of Nillumbik and runs NE to Ford’s Gully about a mile above the junction of Watson’s Creek. Rumoured discovery of two auriferous reefs in neighbourhood of Yow Yow. Quartz-crushing machine at township of Queenstown changed hands—it is now undergoing considerable alterations and improvements.<sup>31</sup>
- October 1863:** New quartz reef discovered in parish of Linton. Diamond Reef recently discovered on Mr Phipps' property—Beale’s Reef appears to be a continuation.<sup>32</sup>

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26 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), August 1861  
 27 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1861  
 28 Flett, p. 44, quoting Mining Surveyors' Reports, September 1861  
 29 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), October 1861  
 30 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), November 1861  
 31 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1861  
 32 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), October 1863

- June 1864:** The only crushing machine presently at work in division is Sabelberg's, near Queenstown—10-hp engine and 12 stamp heads—the owner of this mill has purchased Yankee machine at Salter's rush, 15 stamp heads erected. A crushing machine is about to be erected 3 miles south of Queenstown, near Oram's Reef. Two sets of machinery forwarded to Upper Yarra (Darling) Reefs, but not yet erected. Quartz mining is not progressing; Oram's Reef is the only one where regular work is carried on. On this gold field about 45 reefs are totally abandoned, including all but one on the previously celebrated One-Tree Hill. Small rush to the 'Mountain Rush', long abandoned. Alluvial mining operations on Caledonia goldfield consist of puddling and sluicing old ground. Steam engine and set of stamp heads now being erected on Gibb's Reef, on private land adjoining Township reserve, parish of Toororong, about 2½ miles east of Whittlesea.<sup>33</sup>
- September 1864:** A 'most excellent' crushing mill was started for work on Oram's Reef by Mr Nickinson—battery of 6 revolving stampers, with 6 feet of copper table and 12 feet of ripple board driven by 10-hp, high-pressure, horizontal engine. Diamond Reef worked to 130 feet. Machinery completed at Gibb's Reef, Whittlesea.<sup>34</sup>
- December 1864:** Quartz mining has improved on the long-abandoned Swedish Reef, One-Tree-Hill. Diamond Creek continues to prosper.<sup>35</sup>
- June 1865:** Swedish Reef, One-Tree Hill—workings in a healthy state. Hydraulic hose in course of erection at Wild Dog, and about 6 puddling machines in other parts of subdivision. Diamond Creek GMC now at a depth of 225 feet.<sup>36</sup>
- December 1865:** In Queenstown area, all workings are confined to old gullies. Alluvial prospecting claim applied for by Burd & Party on Black Spur Creek, near Healesville, followed by a brief rush of about 100 men—now totally abandoned. New reef called 'Eureka' discovered near Queenstown.<sup>37</sup>
- June 1866:** At Yow-Yow Creek a miner discovered a small quartz leader upon the surface of the ground—now known as the German Reef. Prospecting claim, named Autard Reef, situated on an island caused by the diversion of the river some years since.<sup>38</sup>
- September 1866:** New reef discovered about 3 miles from Diamond Creek, called Pioneer Reef.<sup>39</sup>
- December 1866:** A very small rush has occurred at a point known as the head of Boomer's Gully, near Queenstown. Murray & Sloane at Allan's Reef, Yow-Yow, completed their deep shaft.<sup>40</sup>
- March 1867:** Quartz mining at Christmas Hill recently resumed. Queenstown Reef re-discovered, having been lost for last ten years—it was the first reef discovered on this field. New reef discovered about 3 miles south of Pioneer Reef, near Diamond Creek.<sup>41</sup>
- June 1867:** Machinery being erected at Victoria Reef, in Smyth's Gully, One-Tree-Hill. Eclipse Reef discovered on west side of Diamond Creek near junction with Watery Gully.<sup>42</sup>

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33 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1864  
 34 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1864  
 35 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1864  
 36 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1865  
 37 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1865  
 38 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1866  
 39 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1866  
 40 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1866  
 41 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1867

**September 1867:** Welcome Reef discovered on Panton Hill near Queenstown. On the Eureka very little quartz has been raised. On the previously abandoned Perseverance Reef a new body of stone has been struck. Star Reef discovered near the Pioneer Reef, Diamond Creek.<sup>43</sup>

**December 1867:** Lancashire Hero and Perseverance claims have reported extraordinary returns.<sup>44</sup>

**1867-8:** Small rushes to head of Steele's Creek, in Full & Plenty Creek, just east of Mt Slide road. (Steele's Creek originally worked in 1850s.)<sup>45</sup>

**March 1868:** Miners leaving Queenstown for Steel's Creek. Nelson Co., One-Tree-Hill, has driven tunnel to 200 feet.<sup>46</sup>

**June 1868:** Victoria or Nelson Co. One-Tree-Hill, are about to drive their tunnel a further 50 feet. Slight rush on western boundary of Queenstown township, known as Slaughter-yard rush.<sup>47</sup>

**March 1869:** Outard's Reef being re-worked.<sup>48</sup>

**June 1869:** Phoenix Co. on Outard's Reef will shortly erect machinery for pumping and crushing. Puddling machines being established in Whiskey Gully.<sup>49</sup>

**December 1869:** Crushing machinery being erected at Steel's Creek.<sup>50</sup>

**March 1870:** Christian & Patterson, Diamond Creek Reef, erected a powerful engine and stampers at entrance of their drive—trucks empty themselves immediately into hopper of battery.<sup>51</sup>

**June 1870:** Union Co., Diamond Creek, is sinking new shaft.<sup>52</sup>

**September 1870:** Perseverance Co.'s ground embraces the Swedish Reef and Buck Reef, One-Tree-Hill. Two new reefs have been discovered about 3 miles south of Queenstown: New Moon and Never-too-late-to-mend reefs. Union Co. Diamond Creek, erected pumping machinery.<sup>53</sup>

**December 1870:** Perseverance Co. One-Tree-Hill, about to erect new machinery for tunnel driven from the eastern side of their lease.<sup>54</sup>

**March 1871:** Pioneer and Union mines, Diamond Creek are both erecting additional machinery.<sup>55</sup>

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42 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1867  
43 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1867  
44 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1867  
45 Flett, p. 46  
46 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1868  
47 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1868  
48 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1869  
49 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1869  
50 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1869  
51 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1870  
52 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1870  
53 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1870  
54 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1870

- December 1871:** Perseverance Co. is erecting additional machinery.<sup>56</sup>
- March 1872:** Boring operations are now in progress at Steele's Creek.<sup>57</sup>
- June 1872:** Perseverance Co., One-Tree-Hill, has shifted battery to a more convenient site. Union Co, Diamond Creek, reorganised.<sup>58</sup>
- September 1872:** Oram's Reef, Kingstown, has not been tested below 200 feet.<sup>59</sup>
- December 1873:** Allendale Co. is working southern extension of Union Reef, Diamond Creek.<sup>60</sup>
- June 1874:** A rush has taken place in a gully leading from top of One-Tree-Hill to Smith's Gully.<sup>61</sup>
- December 1874:** Nuggets discovered in Cobbler's Gully near One-Tree-Hill.<sup>62</sup>
- March 1875:** Oram's Reef (all but abandoned) has given good yield. Alluvial work at Queenstown is confined to the Chinese.<sup>63</sup>
- June 1875:** Small rush to a gully running into Black Calf.<sup>64</sup>
- September 1875:** On Oram's Reef, Kingstown, Longley & Co. are deepening their shaft. On Jenny Lind Reef, near Queenstown, Cockburn & Co. have sunk a shaft 100 ft. New Perseverance Co., One-Tree-Hill, will cut Swedish Reef shortly.<sup>65</sup>
- December 1875:** Small rush on private land belonging to Phipps, near town of Nillumbik (also known as Drapers Gully). Old Crown Prince Reef at Queenstown is being re-worked. Union Co., Diamond Creek, has abandoned their enterprise and are removing machinery from mine.<sup>66</sup>
- September 1876:** Prospecting claim applied for at new reef called Last Resource, at You You.<sup>67</sup>
- June 1877:** At Oram's Reef, Kingstown, a new crushing machine is being erected.<sup>68</sup>
- September 1877:** Oakley & Co., Kingstown, has finished the battery. Pioneer Reef, Diamond Creek, being re-worked.<sup>69</sup>

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55 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1871  
 56 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1871  
 57 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1872  
 58 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1872  
 59 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1872  
 60 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1873  
 61 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1874  
 62 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1874  
 63 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1875  
 64 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1875  
 65 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1875  
 66 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1875  
 67 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1876  
 68 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1877  
 69 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1877

- September 1878:** New lead has been discovered at Panton Hill, possibly a branch of the Old Boomer Reef.<sup>70</sup>
- December 1878:** Oram's Reef Co., Panton Hill, has re-organised.<sup>71</sup>
- June 1879:** Progress Mining Co. Kingstown, has no water in the dam for crushing.<sup>72</sup>
- December 1879:** Progress Co., Panton's Hill, has not been a success. Old Napoleon Reef, Panton Hill, has been re-worked. Only one claim working at Oram's Reef.<sup>73</sup>
- March 1880:** All work stopped at Oram's Reef.<sup>74</sup>
- September 1880:** No reefs are being worked at Queenstown. Fern-Tree Gully near Queenstown is once again being worked.<sup>75</sup>
- June 1881:** Two companies are joining to work Oram's Reef, Panton's Hill. New reef discovered on the Wild Dog.<sup>76</sup>
- September 1881:** Oram's Reef, Queenstown, erected a winding engine and battery.<sup>77</sup>
- December 1881:** New company formed to work Phipps Reef, Diamond Creek, which has not been worked for 4 or 5 years.<sup>78</sup>
- March 1882:** Two new companies are working Oram's Reef: Bacchante and Phoenix QMCs. Phipps Reef Co. Diamond Creek, has sunk a shaft to 100 ft.<sup>79</sup>
- June 1882:** New reef discovered near Wet Gully, Eltham. Diamond Creek Co. is sinking new shaft.<sup>80</sup>
- September 1882:** Bacchante Co. was unsuccessful in reaching Oram's Reef—abandoned claim and moved further north on same line. New company has commenced work south of Phoenix Co. on Oram's Reef. Prospecting claim applied for at Steele's Creek. Diamond Creek GMC shaft down 215 ft—now erecting a pumping and winding machine.<sup>81</sup>
- December 1882:** Phoenix Co., Oram's Reef, is erecting engine for pumping.<sup>82</sup>
- June 1883:** Bacchante Co., Oram's Reef, erecting a battery. Phoenix Co. erecting poppet-heads and pumping and winding engines. Mining resumed on Old One-Tree-Hill Reef. Diamond Creek Co. has brought the mine from a state of chaos into good working order—new 10-head battery and a 30-hp engine for pumping and winding.<sup>83</sup>

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70 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1878  
 71 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1878  
 72 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1879  
 73 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1879  
 74 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1880  
 75 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1880  
 76 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1881  
 77 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1881  
 78 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1881  
 79 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1882  
 80 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1882  
 81 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1882  
 82 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1882

- September 1883:** Diamond Creek Co., Nillumbik, erecting machinery and prospecting.<sup>84</sup>
- December 1883:** One-Tree-Hill Co. had a satisfactory crushing.<sup>85</sup>
- March 1884:** Phoenix Co's ground has changed hands.<sup>86</sup>
- June 1884:** Diamond Creek GMC, Nillumbik, erected additional machinery for working two air-drills.
- September 1884:** Clifton Co. at work on Panton Hill.<sup>87</sup>
- December 1884:** Small payable lead discovered on private property near Arthur's Creek—known as Rosey's. Queenstown Co., One-Tree-Hill, will shortly erect machinery. Diamond Creek GMC now down to 500ft.<sup>88</sup>
- June 1885:** Queenstown Co., One-Tree-Hill, has completed the battery. Clifton Co. and Bacchante Co. on Oram's Reef lost the vein. Band of Hope Co. Kinglake, intend driving tunnel from battery level to reef.<sup>89</sup>
- September 1885:** Clifton Co. mine resumed work as New Phoenix Co.<sup>90</sup>
- December 1885:** Bacchante Co., Oram's Reef, suspended. Queenstown GMC, One-Tree-Hill, is suspended. Diamond Creek mine has also been suspended.<sup>91</sup>
- March 1886:** Phoenix Co., Oram's Reef, suspended. Wallace GMC, Kinglake, driving tunnel to reef.<sup>92</sup>
- June 1886:** Diamond Creek GMC resumed work.<sup>93</sup>
- September 1886:** Diamond Creek Co. mysteriously collapsed without even striking a pick. Whittlesea Co. erected a winding and pumping engine.<sup>94</sup>
- December 1886:** Prospecting resumed at Queenstown mine, One-Tree-Hill. Kinglake tunnel has been driven to the old workings and will soon be connected.<sup>95</sup>
- March 1887:** Yow Yow Reef re-discovered.<sup>96</sup>

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83 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1883  
 84 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1883  
 85 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1883  
 86 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1884  
 87 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1884  
 88 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1884  
 89 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1885  
 90 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1885  
 91 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1885  
 92 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1886  
 93 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1886  
 94 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1886  
 95 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1886  
 96 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1887

- June 1887:** One-Tree-Hill Co. prospecting their mine. Yow Yow claim known as the Never-Can-Tell is on an old reef formerly known as Clayton's Reef. New company is erecting battery of 12 stampers and a 16-hp engine on Old Pioneer Reef, Diamond Creek—plant ex-Whittlesea—will sink new shaft to 300 ft (120 ft deeper than any former workings on the line).<sup>97</sup>
- September 1887:** Wilson & Joyce discovered a lead on the west side of the Plenty River at Morang (near Hugh Glass's Gully, worked in early 1860s)—worked by tunnel.<sup>98</sup>
- September 1887:** One-Tree-Hill Co., Queenstown, sinking on Swedish Reef. New lead discovered, which starts at a point about 1½ miles south of Morang bridge, on the west side of the Plenty River, and about 30 ft above waters of same. John Wallace Co., Kinglake, has driven the tunnel to 900 ft.<sup>99</sup>
- March 1888:** Never-Can-Tell Co., Queenstown, erecting battery at tunnel entrance. Good prospect found in No. 3 Creek, Kinglake.<sup>100</sup>
- June 1888:** Prospecting claim registered at Yow Yow on Crown Prince line of reef. A small company intends erecting pumping plant to work No. 3 Creek, Kinglake.<sup>101</sup>
- December 1888:** Prince of Wales Co., Yow Yow, driving tunnel and intend to erect a battery upon a dam formed for water supply. Old Queenstown Reef being worked by small company.<sup>102</sup>
- March 1889:** Company known as Prince William Syndicate, Queenstown, recently commenced tunnelling to cut Eureka, Comet and Antimony reefs.<sup>103</sup>
- June 1889:** Prince of Wales Co. has a 600 ft. tunnel—about to erect 12-head stamper. New reef discovered at Queenstown, called Young Colonial Reef. Prospecting carried out on One-Tree-Hill. Gladstone Co., Kinglake, has driven a tunnel 570 ft.<sup>104</sup>
- September 1889:** Prince of Wales Co., Yow Yow, erected seven head of stampers and will soon have the engine ready for work. Continuation of Buck line of reef discovered on One-Tree-Hill, near Queenstown.<sup>105</sup>
- 1893-5:** Alluvial workings at head of Steele's Creek, in Full & Plenty Creek during 1893. Lead opened lower down in 1895.<sup>106</sup>
- 1895-7:** James Freehold mine, South Morang (probably north of Wilton Vale homestead), washed five loads of washdirt for 5 oz 4 dwt. Mines Department put down five bores in the vicinity in 1897.<sup>107</sup>

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97 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1887  
 98 Flett, p. 46  
 99 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1887  
 100 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1888  
 101 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1888  
 102 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1888  
 103 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1889  
 104 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1889  
 105 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1889  
 106 Flett, p. 46  
 107 Kenny (1937/8)



- 1903:** Yow Yow and One Tree Hill contain mines in the hands of small parties, none of which are doing very well. Arthur's Creek has one important mine called the Clean Sweep GM Syndicate. Old Union Co.'s mine (Diamond Creek) now in the hands of a syndicate endeavouring to float a new company with a view to further exploration. Hornabrook's mine, Kangaroo Ground erected crushing battery and puddling machines. Morang—until recently five parties were tunnelling under the basalt from Plenty River—two have now abandoned their mines, and of the other three, only one, the Wilton's Freehold Co-operative party, is obtaining any payable gold.<sup>108</sup>
- 1903-4:** Wilton's Freehold GMC held a lease of 23 acres on the south side of a road just south of Wilton Vale homestead—freehold land. Company extended a tunnel westerly from the cliff of the gorge, at a level of about 40 ft above the Plenty River. In 1903, 168 oz were won from 200 tons treated. In 1904, a yield of 143 oz was obtained. No further work was done.<sup>109</sup>
- 1904:** At Yow Yow no mining has been done. Clean Sweep GM Syndicate, Arthur's Creek, added new double 8-in. steam winch and poppet heads to their plant. Old Union mine was floated—mining began in March but ceased in November. Hidden Mystery mine, One Tree Hill, is meeting with encouraging prospects.<sup>110</sup>
- 1905:** Arthur's Creek Co., Upper Diamond Creek, added an additional boiler. Mining dull in Queenstown. Yarra Glen Co., Steele's Creek, has done a good deal of driving without discovering any extent of payable wash. Other than installing a Pelton wheel which proved hopeless, the Pioneer Co. has done little. Diamond Creek Co. erected a steam winch winding plant, which includes a new set of poppet legs and brace, on the old Diamond Creek. Union Co. erected a serviceable winding and pumping plant.<sup>111</sup>
- 1905:** Union Co. is working a shaft on the northern bank of Diamond Creek, Nilumbik. Southward from this shaft, which is at the end of the workings in this direction, the Union line of reef has been traced for  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile across the alluvial flat, and payable stone, from 2 to 3 oz per ton, is said to have been found; but surface water was too heavy for the appliances used. Allendale mine, nearly a mile further south, is supposed to be on same line of reef. Whole course of reef appears to be on private property. Shaft now being worked is the deepest on the reef, 500 ft—others not worked below 300 ft. Several branch lines extensively worked. The Union lode is of unusual character. It consists of a felspathic dyke, resembling the so-called diorites of Wood's Point and Walhalla, with a quartz vein on the hanging-wall side, and another on the foot-wall side. Close to the main shaft is an adit where an earlier party is said to have obtained £60,000 worth of gold between surface and adit level on one shoot of stone. The last crushing recently taken from a stope below the tunnel gave a return of 542 oz from 520 tons. It is intended to sink the main shaft below the 500-ft level and to work the mine on a more extended scale.<sup>112</sup>

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108 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1903

109 Kenny (1937/8)

110 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1904

111 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1905

112 Dunn

- 1906:** New Pioneer Co., Diamond Creek, erected winding winch plant at the site of an old shaft. Diamond Creek Co. is prospecting the mine. Union Co. replaced old corroded pumps, and erected a 10-head battery and high-pressure boiler. Arthur's Creek Co. is sinking an additional 100 feet. North Arthur's Creek Co. commenced sinking permanent shaft. Caledonia Star Co., Panton Hill, sank main shaft to 180 feet. Old Caledonia Co., Yow Yow Gully, has resuscitated an old mine known as Johansen's—winding winch plant has been erected and the shaft cleaned out. Several prospecting parties on One Tree Hill.<sup>113</sup>
- 1907:** Diamond Creek mine erected a new 5-head battery, of calibre. Union mine erected a new 10-head battery. Operations of Arthur's Creek Co. are now confined to the deepest workings, 300 feet. At Panton Hill, operations are limited to small parties. Old Caledonia Co., Queenstown, closed down. Burgoyne Co., Steele's Creek, put down another shaft and erected pumping machinery.<sup>114</sup>
- 1908:** Diamond Creek Co. extended its shaft another 100 feet and added another high-pressure boiler and a more powerful winding winch. Work ceased at Union mine. Prospecting of Arthur's Creek Co. proved a failure. Rich stone was located by a prospector at Third Trial mine, Upper Arthur's Creek. Gardiner & party, Yow Yow Gully, erected small crushing and winding plant.
- Madame Dobson Co., One Tree Hill, erected crushing plant but, other than milling remnants of stone from the old slopes, little or nothing was done. On Boomer Reef system, Panton Hill, Robinson & Party are sinking a prospecting shaft. Porcupine Co., Steele's Creek, erected a steam winch winding plant. Nairne & Party, Ghosts Gully (Steele's Creek), are conducting small-scale hydraulic sluicing operations.<sup>115</sup>
- 1909:** Diamond Creek Co. sank its shaft to 450 feet and erected pumping plant—company now owns lease to Old Union Co. and the next sink will go below Union workings. Arthur's Creek Co. suspended operations. Robinson & Party, Boomer Reef, Panton Hill, sank a shaft, but the stone proved unpayable.<sup>116</sup>
- 1909-10:** Diamond Creek Co. crushed 4,820 tons for 5,934 oz, from 500 ft level.<sup>117</sup>
- 1910:** Diamond Creek Co. sank the shaft to another level—lode is small, but fairly good—the company is on dividend list.<sup>118</sup>
- 1911:** Diamond Creek Co. has resorted to the expedient of sinking an incline shaft from 45 degrees south from a suitable site in the bottom level—hard hammer work was discarded in favour of machine rock drills. At Panton Hill, Queenstown and Arthur's Creek, the majority is only prospecting.<sup>119</sup>
- 1911:** Diamond Creek Co. crushed 1152 tons for 1100 oz, from 600 ft level.<sup>120</sup>

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113 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1906

114 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1907

115 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1908

116 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1909

117 Howitt, p. 141

118 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1910

119 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1911

120 Howitt, p. 142

- 1912:** At Panton's Hill, Queenstown and Arthur's Creek only one party is working on consistently remunerative stone. Diamond Creek Co. deepened shaft 200 feet. South Diamond Creek mine prospecting.<sup>121</sup>
- 1912:** Diamond Creek Co. crushed 3,878 tons for 5,575 oz, from 700 ft level.<sup>122</sup>
- 1913:** South Diamond Creek Co. closed down. Doctor's Reef Co., Panton Hill, sank vertical shaft. Gerlach & Party, One Tree Hill, are extending tunnel in a quest to reach Swedes lode.<sup>123</sup>
- 1913:** Diamond Creek Co.—dividends paid to July 1913 amounted to £12,250, or 7s per share.<sup>124</sup>
- 1914:** Diamond Creek Co. mine—levels at 312 ft, 414 ft, 500 ft, 600 ft, and 700 ft from the vertical shaft, 783 ft and 885 ft driven from the underlay shaft, and the winze workings to 955 ft. Between July 1907 and June 1914, the mine yielded 29,833 oz from 23,163 tons. In July 1914, the mine was taken over by the Diamond GMC and worked until January 1915 when fire destroyed the plant and mining operations ceased.<sup>125</sup>
- 1914:** Diamond Creek mine was closed down, then taken over by local syndicate which was in a fair way towards success when the mine plant burnt down. Doctors Reef Co., Panton Hill, on tribute. Lode worked by Davies and Party at Arthur's Creek continues to pay good wages. Thomas & Party, Upper Arthur's Creek, met with good stone. Gerlach and party, One Tree Hill, has still to reach Swedes lode.<sup>126</sup>
- 1918:** Swedish reef is the most westerly of three reefs on One Tree Hill, and it has been extensively worked from shafts, and an adit driven north along the line. Moonlight Reef, 110 feet east, has also been worked continuously on the surface. On Buck Reef, one shoot was noted worked to a shallow depth. To test these reefs at a lower level, an adit, now 744 ft in length, has been driven in an easterly direction.<sup>127</sup>
- 1919:** Local progress association applied for use of diamond drill to test Queenstown and Panton Hill reefs. Whitelaw concluded that, because of the faulted nature of the reefs in the vicinity, the use of the drill would probably be useless, but that 'available evidence justifies sympathetic consideration being given to any workable scheme that may lead to the opening up of the reefs'.

The One Tree Hill group of reefs have (in the past) been worked from open stopes on the surface to an adit driven from Fern Tree Creek about 250 ft below the cap of the hill. On the north side of One Tree Hill, about 200 ft below the crown of the range, an adit known as Gurlach's has been driven to cut the One Tree Hill reefs on their northerly extension beyond the open stopes. A Melbourne company is at present exercising an option over this ground. Homeward Bound line of reef, between open stopes and Gurlach's adit, currently being prospected by shaft, about 100 ft deep. Lancashire Lass line, between Homeward Bound and Gurlach's, yielded up to 20 oz/ton to shallow depths.

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121 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1912  
 122 Howitt, p. 142  
 123 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1913  
 124 Howitt, p. 144  
 125 Howitt  
 126 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1914  
 127 Kenny (1921), p. 263

Russell & Party driving an adit to cut Barker's and Murray's reefs below worked ground, at Yow Yow, 1½ miles east of Queenstown.<sup>128</sup>

- 1922-3:** A fourth line of reef, the Mystery, was discovered at depth on One Tree Hill—between December 1918 and July 1922, 152 tons from the Mystery Reef returned 440 oz. The workings on the hill include shafts on the various lines, with the present working adit from the western side of the hill; also a short adit and a lower main adit from the eastern side of the hill (see plan on file). Kenny advised that if further development of the One Tree Hill reefs was successful, a five-head battery could be erected at 'the old battery site on the western side of the hill'—presently crushing at Queenstown government battery?<sup>129</sup>
- 1925:** Golden Stairs mine, Greensborough—crushing at Queenstown government battery—10 tons yielded 14 oz 13 dwt—working by shaft and winze.<sup>130</sup>
- 1930:** Golden Stairs mine found to contain three reefs—Open Cut, Morrisey's, and Clayton's—formerly thought to be faulted portions of a single reef. Shaft down 200 ft—also worked by adit and crosscut, with the object of intersecting the Open Cut reef, worked on the surface. Crushings from 1928-30 total 181 oz from 517 tons.<sup>131</sup>
- 1932:** Smile of Fortune Reef, One Tree Hill, outcrops about ¼ mile NW from Swedish Reef workings—surface workings extend along the line for a distance of about 150 ft—present owners of the mine are testing the reef at a lower level by sinking a shaft on the north end of the old workings, to a depth of 93 ft—mine is equipped with a 25-hp crude oil engine and compressor plant—Queenstown State battery is a short distance away by a fair road.<sup>132</sup>
- 1932:** Smithfield Co., Yarrambat, just NW of Tanck's Corner—about 40 chains north of Golden Stairs mine—crushings at Queenstown and Maldon State batteries gave poor yields—'it is questionable whether the mine justifies further outlay'.<sup>133</sup>
- 1934:** Nillumbik mine, Diamond Creek—on west side of Scrubby Gully, about a mile north of Diamond Creek railway station. Mine formerly worked 'in the early days of mining on the field' and reworked from 1905-c.1915. Syndicate now at work started operations about 12 months ago—mine equipped with oil engine, Chilean mill, lift pump, and friction hoist.<sup>134</sup>
- 1936:** Golden Stairs mine still being worked from 200-ft level.<sup>135</sup>

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128 Whitelaw

129 Kenny (1925), p. 387

130 Kenny (1936)

131 Kenny (1937/1)

132 Kenny (1937/4)

133 Kenny (1937/5)

134 Kenny (1937/7)

135 Kenny (1937/3)

- 1936:** Alluvial gravels discovered at Kangaroo Grounds (at what date?)—NE corner of allotment 16, section 111, Parish of Nillumbik. In the process of excavating two gravel pits to provide material for concrete work on Maroondah aqueduct, gold was found. From a point near the open cut, a tunnel was driven NW along the lead, but little auriferous wash was found. A small dam on the hill provided water supply, and most washdirt was treated on the spot. It is now proposed to work the deposit by stripping the overburden and washing the gravels at Fryer's Gully, ¼ mile south. The lower layer of wash would require blasting to extract it and some form of disintegrator to reduce it before it could be treated. Washdirt could be sent to Fryer's Gully by a gravity tram.<sup>136</sup>
- 1936:** Roach working shallow alluvial lead at South Morang, just south of Wilton Vale homestead—shaft on north side of road—probably the same lead as that worked by the Wilton Freehold Co., 1903-4.<sup>137</sup>
- 1938:** Three Chums mine, Hurstbridge—on ridge between Arthur's Creek and Diamond Creek, 1½ miles NW of Cottles Cridge in allotment 8 of section B, parish of Greensborough. On the surface, the reef has been worked in places for a length of 400 ft. Various shafts have been sunk, with the main shaft 256 ft deep, worked from four levels.<sup>138</sup>
- 1939-47+:** Golden King Reef discovered outcropping in an orchard at Yarrambat. An 8-head battery with an electric generator driven by an oil engine, was erected, and a dam constructed giving ample water for delivery to the battery by an electrically-driven centrifugal pump. Shaft sunk 100 ft, worked from three levels. Golden Crown lease adjoins to north.<sup>139</sup>
- March 1941:** In the Yarrambat district prospecting is being carried on, and two mines, the Golden Crown and the Golden King, have reached the producing stage.<sup>140</sup>
- September 1941:** Crushing of 21 tons from the Black Cameron mine at Smith's Gully yielded 127¾ oz of gold. The Golden Crown mine at Yarrambat being tested with a view to large-scale operations.<sup>141</sup>
- March 1942:** At Smyth's Gully, near Queenstown, some rich returns have been obtained. A crushing from the One Tree Hill mine returned approximately 115 oz of gold from 21 tons of stone. A parcel of 21 tons from the Black Diamond yielded 127½ oz of gold, and from the Black Cameron mine 28 tons were crushed for 78 oz. Golden King mine, Yarrambat, has 8-head battery in operation. Golden Crown mine adjoins the Golden King—operating on stone of fair grade.<sup>142</sup>
- March 1947:** Black Cameron mine near Queenstown changed ownership. Golden Crown mine, Yarrambat, now being operated by Golden Step Syndicate—two crushing batteries of 5 and 10 head installed. Main shaft at Golden King mine, Yarrambat, down 220 feet. After being idle for some years the shaft of the Golden Stairs mine, Yarrambat, has been reconditioned to depth of 200 feet.<sup>143</sup>

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136 Kenny (1937/6)

137 Kenny (1937/8)

138 Kenny (1938)

139 Kenny (1947)

140 *Mining & Geological Journal*, March 1941

141 *Mining & Geological Journal*, September 1941

142 *Mining & Geological Journal*, March 1942

143 *Mining & Geological Journal*, March 1947

**September 1947:** At the Black Cameron mine, a new shaft is being sunk—now down 50 feet. Golden Crown mine, Yarrambat yielding low grade ore. Golden Crown mine, Yarrambat, down 264 feet. Prospecting continuing at Golden Stairs mine, Yarrambat.<sup>144</sup>

**March 1948:** Black Cameron mine taken over by W. Clayton—shaft retimbered to 80 feet and deepened—machinery installed includes new air compressor and winding gear. Golden Step Syndicate, working Golden Crown, continues to mine low grade ore. Stone from Golden King mine, Yarrambat, maintained average value of ½ oz/ton. New machinery, including crushing plant and winding gear, is being erected at Big Ben mine, Kinglake.<sup>145</sup>

**September 1948:** Shaft at Black Cameron mine now timbered to a depth of 105 feet. Golden Crown mine, Yarrambat, continues to yield low-grade ore. New crushing plant and machinery being installed to handle output of stone at Big Ben mine, Kinglake.<sup>146</sup>

**March 1949:** Disappointing results from Golden Crown mine, Yarrambat.<sup>147</sup>

**September 1949:** Good results continue at Black Cameron mine. Labour shortage has hindered operations at the Big Ben mine, Kinglake, and at the Golden Hind mine, Diamond Creek, where sinking operations are temporarily suspended. Disappointing results from Golden Crown mine, Yarrambat, but prospecting is continuing.<sup>148</sup>

**1949:** Crushings from Black Cameron mine, Smith's Gully, Queenstown, gave over 2 oz/ton—further development is in progress.<sup>149</sup>

**March 1950:** Golden Step Syndicate, Yarrambat, (Golden Crown mine) extracting pillars from between south and central shafts, for an average of 10 to 12 dwt/ton.<sup>150</sup>

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144 *Mining & Geological Journal*, September 1947

145 *Mining & Geological Journal*, March 1948

146 *Mining & Geological Journal*, September 1948

147 *Mining & Geological Journal*, March 1949

148 *Mining & Geological Journal*, September 1949

149 *Mining & Geological Journal*, March 1950

150 *Mining & Geological Journal*, March 1950

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## ***ST ANDREWS DIVISION***

### ***Castlemaine District.***

#### ***Mining Surveyor's Reports as Historical Notes.***

- December. 1859:*** Gold bearing quartz has recently been discovered on One-Tree-Hill.
- December 1859:*** Allen's reef on the Yew Yew, which has been abandoned for some months, is now occupied to its whole extent. A second reef has been located parallel to that formerly worked.
- December 1859:*** At Swedish Reef, One-Tree-Hill, every claim is occupied and very busy.
- December 1859:*** The Victoria Reef, One-Tree-Hill is partially abandoned. This is owing to the reef running very thin, only being about 3 inches thickness.
- December 1859:*** A reef has been opened on the road between Queenstown and Kangaroo Ground.
- December 1859:*** At Anderson's Creek a claim of 600 yards x 200 yards of quartz ground, on the Fourth Hill by Mr. Moore and Gerraghty.
- December 1859:*** Mr. Clarke and Brown have commenced operations at Thompson's Creek, on the Yarra. About 25 men are engaged in cutting a canal to divert the river. The canal is proposed to have a top width of 50 feet and slope of 1 to 1 and taking a depth of 12 feet and will have a bottom width of 14 feet. It will have a sectional area of 384 feet.
- December 1859:*** At the Junction of Anderson's Creek with the Yarra, two sluicing operation's have been attempted, but ended in failure some time prior to the submission of this report.
- December 1859:*** At Whipstick Gully, Anderson's Creek, an extended claim of 3 acres has been applied for by Dr. Owen, on which he is about to erect one of his recently patented puddling machines.
- December 1859:*** The Dandenong goldfields are in decline.
- January 1860:*** In Spanish Gully some pretty good patches of alluvial soil are occasionally met with.
- January 1860:*** Preparations for extensive sluice washing are being made for a party in Wild Dog Gully. This will include the first race of its kind in this division.
- January 1860:*** At Anderson's Creek Dr. Owen's has erected his recently invented puddling machine.
- January 1860:*** The Swedish Reef, One-Tree-Hill, has very rich gold bearing quartz at 65 feet in the south end of the claim.
- January 1860:*** At Fourth Hill, Anderson's Creek, Mr. Moore and Gerraghty have extended their tunnel to 108 feet.
- January 1860:*** On the Britannia goldfield the trend is toward prospecting new ground rather than working old ground.



- January 1860:** Auriferous ground has been discovered at what is probably the upper part of the creek that joins the Woori Yallock near its junction with McCrea's Creek.
- January 1860:** On the Cockatoo Creek, Emerald, men are at work on some small flats and gullies.
- January 1860:** Flyer's Gully near Kangaroo Ground, and Oram's reef are being worked.
- April 1860:** Anderson's Creek is being worked by 10 quartz miners and 3 alluvial miners.
- April 1860:** The Yarra Yarra Mining Co. has completed the erection of a steam engine of about 8-horse power. This works a pair of lifts, drives a Start's patented puddling machine with a Russian cradle attached, and draws the washing stuff across the river by way of a tramway inclined from the bottom of the right bank of the river to a height of about 30 feet above the river bed at the left bank, where it is delivered into a puddling machine.
- April 1860:** At Whipstick Gully, Anderson's Creek, Dr. Owen's machine has been completed with a Russian cradle attached.
- April 1860:** At the Yarra Steam Puddling Co. work is practically suspended pending the completion of a culvert being put in for the purpose of draining the workings.
- April 1860:** A gully at Morang, which was known to be auriferous, and which was recently opened, has almost been worked out.
- April 1860:** Both Nicholson (McCrea's Creek) and Emerald goldfields are deserted.
- April 1860:** Hoddle's Creek is being worked by at least 60 men.
- April 1860:** About 60 men are scattered between the Britannia, Yankee Jim, and Scotchman's Creeks.
- April 1860:** Prospecting is occurring Between YanYean and Queenstown as well as the northern part of the Caledonian goldfields and Steel's Creek.
- April 1860:** A steam puddling machine is soon to be erected about a mile and a half from Queenstown, on the Old Caledonian Creek.
- April 1860:** At One-Tree-Hill the Smyth's Creek Q.M. Co. (Holmes, Randle, Ricard's and Co.), has struck a reef at 60 feet.
- June 1860:** The Yarra Yarra Mining Co. and the YarraYarra Steam Puddling Co. has suspended operation's.
- June 1860:** Mr. Holmes and Co. intends erecting machinery at Smythe's Gully.
- June 1860:** Prospecting is intensifying at Steel's Creek.

- June 1860:** A tunnel has commenced at You You Hill by Mr. James Shotton and party. The tunnel is being driven with the aim of intersecting Reed's, Allen's, Hawkin's Gillman's and Barker's Reef's.
- June 1860:** At the Britannia goldfield's, Yankee Jim's Creek, some heavy finds have been made.
- July 1860:** The You You Hill Mining Co. has just been established (not Mr. Shotton).
- July 1860:** Shotton and party propose a drive of 1350 feet. The tramway, or rather railway, is formed of flat bar iron of 2 in. x 7/16 scantling, set on edge and wedged into transverse sleepers.
- July 1860:** Fully 1/4 of alluvial miners at the Caledonian goldfields are not earning a living.
- July 1860:** There has been a quartz reef discovered in the vicinity of Britannia Creek.
- September 1860:** There have been some recent discoveries near Mt. Baw Baw.
- September 1860:** The machinery being erected by Mr. Holmes, Randle and Ricards is all but complete.
- September 1860:** The route to the Mt. Baw Baw goldfields is along the Gipps Land Rd. until the Tarwin is passed; beyond which by about 2 miles the road to the goldfields is to be found. Hawthorn Creek (the first gold bearing country known on Mt. Baw Baw) is located approximately 8 miles S.W. of Mt. Baw Baw.
- September 1860:** Pheasant or Salt Damper Creek, situated approximately 5 miles S. 80 W. from Mt. Baw Baw. Pheasant Creek is of a nuggetty character and not at all water worn.
- September 1860:** On the Caledonian goldfields quartz mining is being carried out by Holmes, Randle, Ricards and Co. at the Yow-Yow Hill. The tunnel is at a distance of 500 feet. A tramway is extended along its length, and 150 yards from the tunnel mouth towards a part of the Old Caledonian Creek called Slater's Rush; it is to cross and terminate at the quartz mill, the old crushing machinery of which, has been replaced by three batteries of 4 revolving stamps each. The headings for the tunnel are being run down to the creek, for the double purpose of forming an embankment for the tramway and a wall for the reservoir.
- September 1860:** The works at the Yow-Yow Hill Mining Co. are progressing.
- September 1860:** In alluvial mining, the heaviest findings are found at the Happy Valley otherwise known as the Fern-Tree Gully. It is probably an extension of the Swedish Reef.
- September 1860:** On the Emerald goldfields about 30 miners are at work at the Sassafras Creek.
- September 1860:** Plenty River, Morang diggings. Approximately 10 miners at work.
- November 1860:** Mt. Baw Baw has approximately 300 miners.
- November 1860:** Rush on at Fern Tree Gully or the upper portion of the Happy Valley.

- November 1860:** Smythe's Creek Mining Co., Yow-Yow Hill has driven 560 feet (40 feet short of Allen's reef).
- November 1860:** Yow-Yow Hill Mining Co. has completed 60 feet of the tunnel.
- November 1860:** At Anderson's Creek the Yarra Yarra Mining Co. has recommenced work.
- November 1860:** Mr. Capper has completed the erection of his crushing machine. It is expected to stimulate quartz mining in and around Anderson's Creek. The machinery consists of a battery of 4 stampers and a small Chilian mill for amalgamating.
- November 1860:** A new reef called Cameron's reef has been discovered on one of the ranges on the right bank of the Old Caledonian Creek, and within one mile of Queenstown.
- January 1861:** At Swedish Reef , One-Tree-Hill, a depth of 150 feet has been attained in No.1 and in No. 2 North, with no very great results.
- January 1861:** On Victoria Reef, One-Tree-Hill, a claim has been taken up on ground that has been abandoned for more than a year.
- January 1861:** The Yow-Yow Mining Co. tunnel has been completed. This is the first tunnel to be completed in this division.
- January 1861:** The tunnel on Smythe's Creek workings Yow-Yow, is still progressing. They have driven 620 feet and intersected the base line of Reed's Reef at 264 feet.
- January 1861:** Great activity prevails on Barker's Reef, also where the Smythe's Creek Co. is carrying on tolerably extensive workings.
- January 1861:** At Oram's Reef 110 feet has been attained by Oram and party.
- January 1861:** At Anderson's Creek, quartz mining has received a considerable impetus from the starting of Mr. Capper's machine.
- January 1861:** Claims have been taken up on Fifth Hill and also on Growler's Reef.
- January 1861:** Mr Wilkinson's calcimining and crushing machine is standing (possibly Anderson's Creek-see April 1860).
- January 1861:** (alluvial mining) Yarra Yarra Mining Co., Anderson's Creek has two steam engines at work, one pumping and the other for the purpose of driving the washing machine and pumping also.
- January 1861:** River workings are being carried out by Mr. Dixon, Jobbin's and party in the Yarra immediately below and adjoining the leasehold of the Yarra Yarra Mining Co. Other workings are being carried out on the three miles above the township of Warrantdyte.
- January 1861:** In Fern-Tree Gully, Caledonian goldfield, many parties have been fortunate. Three gents have earned sufficient amount in four months to return to England.

- January 1861:** In the Old Caledonia Creek, Mr. Howlett is doing exceedingly well occupying a puddler's claim. This is the first puddler's claim to pay in the division.
- February 1861:** Generally, alluvial mining has increased. Specifically, heavy finds of gold have occurred at Fern-tree Gully, One-Tree-Hill.
- February 1861:** Two auriferous creeks have been discovered. The first thought to be a tributary of Watt's River. The second joins Watson's creek at Wilson's station.
- February 1861:** The greater proportion of the mining population on the Britannia goldfield has moved to Starvation Creek and its tributaries. The rest are scattered about between the Little Yarra and Yankee Jim's Creek.
- April 1861:** A gully within two miles of Eltham has been found to be highly auriferous and has caused a considerable rush. The head of the gully is at Kangaroo Ground and is separated from one of the branches of Draper's Gully by a low ridge running out from the main range of the Kangaroo Ground. This gully is known as Swiper's Gully. All the ore (stuff) is transported about a mile to Diamond Creek for washing.
- April 1861:** Prospecting is being carried extensively between Eltham and the Yarra.
- April 1861:** The Smythe's Creek Co's. is temporarily stopped while undergoing repairs and alterations. There is now only one crushing machine working for the public in this division.
- April 1861:** One-Tree-Hill Mining Co. and Smythe's Creek Co. are being amalgamated.
- April 1861:** Mr. Capper's crushing machine is defective as it can hardly crush the quartz.
- June 1861:** Mountain rush or Moore's diggings are located at a height of 930 feet above Queenstown. The goldfield was first discovered by Moore in February 1861 and extends approximately five miles in a north-easterly direction across 4 other branches of Moore's Creek.
- June 1861:** Prospecting between Kangaroo Ground and the Yarra has determined two auriferous gullies. Sawpit Gully commences near the S.E. corner of block 1 section 4 in the parish of Nillumbik and falls into the Yarra about a mile below the junction of Watson's Creek with that river. Welcome Gully commences at what is called Ferny Hill, about two miles from Eltham, and falls into the Yarra about a mile and a half from that township.
- June 1861:** The Yarra Yarra Mining Co. and the One-Tree-Hill Co. are the only two leasehold companies in the division at present. The only co. at work here now is the You You Hill Mining Co.
- August 1861:** Prospecting which has been prominent over the last 4 months has been all but abandoned.
- August 1861:** The workings of the Smythe's Creek Mining Co. on Swedish Reef, One-Tree-Hill are now at a depth of 200 feet.
- August 1861:** All the crushing machines in the division are presently quiet.
- August 1861:** The You You Mining Co. is involved in litigation and the mining operations are suspended.

- September 1861:** (alluvial mining) Research and Swiper's Gullies, near Kangaroo Ground have maintained their population regardless of the general exodus to New Zealand. The same applies to Draper's Gully.
- September 1861:** At Sawpit Gully on the Yarra about 50 miners are doing pretty well.
- September 1861:** A slight rush took place to one of the upper branches of New Watery Gully.
- September 1861:** At Fern-Tree Gully some good patches are still occasionally met with, although this gully is now pretty well worked.
- September 1861:** Some successes have been met with in the upper part of the Whisky Gully. It is intersected near its upper end by an auriferous quartz vein from One-tree-Hill.
- September 1861:** Payable gold has been found in the portion of Back Creek between the Yow-Yow Creek and Wild-Dog Gully.
- September 1861:** On Oram's Reef, between Queenstown and Kangaroo Ground; and on Albert's, Allen's, and Gillman's Reefs on the Yow-Yow Hills, and on One-Tree-Hill, there are but two claims being worked on the Swedish Reef, namely, the ground held by the Smythe's Creek Mining Co. and claim No. 2 South.
- October 1861:** Caledonia and Queenstown goldfields; alluvial mining is so small and so precarious that the miners cannot procure the necessaries of life from it.
- October 1861:** On Anderson's Creek goldfield, Mr. Hewitt and Co. have lately purchased the  
the  
calcimining apparatus of Mr. Wilkinson and added to it a very compact and efficient crushing machine of six stamps.
- October 1861:** The ground held formerly by the Yarra Yarra Mining Co. has been successful for those who took over portions of the claim.
- October 1861:** At One-Tree-Hill the claim of Mr. W.H. Gatty Jones and Co. is yielding quartz with above average richness.
- October 1861:** The Britannia goldfield is rather dull.
- November 1861:** A slight rush (about 60 men) has occurred on new ground on the part of Back Creek between Black Calf and Wild Dog Gullies.
- November 1861:** A rush has taken place to the upper part of Hoddle's Creek. Extensive sluicing operation's are being carried out at present.
- November 1861:** Quartz miners are starting to avail themselves of excellent mining machinery at Slater's Gully and Anderson's Creek, Caledonia goldfield.
- November 1861:** The combination of a set of eight stampers with Wilkinson's patented calcimining process seems to me to be a success, so far as reducing the quartz with a small amount of steam is concerned. Mr. Hewitt and Whitehair have now machinery of this description at Anderson's Creek.
- December 1861:** At Anderson's Creek several parties are doing remarkably well on portions of  
of  
ground formerly held under lease by the Yarra Yarra Mining Co.

- December 1861:*** A slight rush (30 men) has taken place at Thompson's Gully at Kangaroo Ground. This gully commences in portion two of section 1 in the parish of Nillumbik and runs N.E. until it reaches Ford's Gully about a mile above the junction of Watson's Creek.
- December 1861:*** The discovery of two auriferous quartz reefs in the neighbourhood of the Yow Yow has been rumoured.
- December 1861:*** The quartz crushing machine at the township of Queenstown has changed owners, and is about to undergo considerable alterations and improvements.
- July 1862:*** Mining affairs here are exceedingly dull and unsatisfactory, especially in respect to alluvial mining.
- October 1863:*** The Diamond Reef has recently been discovered on Mr. Phipps' property. Beale's Reef appears to be a continuation of the Diamond Reef
- October 1863:*** A new quartz reef has been discovered in the parish of Linton.

#### **SAINT ANDREW'S EAST SUBDIVISION**

##### **Castlemaine District.**

- October 1863:*** Several parties have appeared on the old Emerald diggings, long deserted, and also at the Macclesfield both in the S.W. portion of the division.
- October 1863:*** Two narrow leads have been struck in alluvial upon the right bank of Yankee Jim's Creek, Warburton. The Confederate Lead is doing little owing to an influx of water.
- June 1864:*** The only crushing machine presently at work in the division is that of Mr. Sabelberg, near Queenstown. The engine is 10-horse power and there are 12 stamp heads. The owner of this mill has lately purchased the Yankee machine at Salter's rush, 15 stamp heads erected.
- June 1864:*** A crushing machine is about to be erected 3 miles south of Queenstown, near Oram's Reef, and 2 sets of machinery have been successfully forwarded to the Upper Yarra (Darling) Reefs, but have not yet been erected.
- June 1864:*** Upon the Upper Yarra Reefs, Darling gold field, very little is showing due to the severity of the weather.
- June 1864:*** On the Caledonia Gold Field quartz mining is not progressing; Oram's Reef, being three miles south of Queenstown being the only reef where regular work is being carried on. On this gold field there are about 45 reefs totally abandoned including all but one on the previously celebrated One-Tree-Hill.
- June 1864:*** (alluvial mining) A small rush has occurred to the "Mountain Rush" long abandoned near the Dividing Range.
- June 1864:*** There are some very successful operations on the banks of the Yarra at Anderson's Creek.
- June 1864:*** (alluvial mining) Caledonia Goldfield operations consist of puddling and sluicing old ground.

- September 1864:** On the Darling Gold Field a new reef has been discovered called the 'Excelsior'. Some crushing has been done on the same by Mr. Marston, on Christmas Reef, but no result are forthcoming.
- September 1864:** The applicants for lease No. 28, of a portion of the great Peninsula Upper Yarra, have just completed their tunnel and successfully turned the river.
- September 1864:** (quartz mining) On the Caledonian Gold Field, the only doing is at Oram's Reef, where a most excellent crushing mill was started for work by Mr. Nickinson. It consists of a battery of 6 revolving stampers, with 6 feet of a copper table and 12 feet of a ripple board driven by 10-horse, high pressure, horizontal engine.
- September 1864:** Presently Darling's Reef is the highest pinot where work is doing on the left bank of the Yarra.
- December 1864:** Quartz mining has improved on the long abandoned Swedish Reef, One-Tree-Hill.
- March 1865:** Mr. Marston, Christmas Reef, Darling Gold Field, has sold his claim to a substantial Co.
- March 1865:** Several Yarra River claims where the river is diverted are paying wages but nothing more at present.
- March 1865:** At Big Bill's Creek alluvial mining is at very low ebb at present.
- June 1865:** Work is suspended on the Darling Reefs due to litigation.
- June 1865:** The several Yarra River claims, where the river has been diverted, continue to pay wages, except in the case of the Big Bill's Creek Co. which has been very successful.
- December 1865:** An alluvial prospecting claim was applied for by Burd and party, on Black Spur Creek, near Healesville, followed by a brief rush of about 100 men (Brazil, R., Mining Surveyor for St. Andrew's East subdivision-1865). Armstrong reported the same rush as 200 men on the Upper Yarra track at Wood's Point (Armstrong, A., Mining Surveyor for St. Andrew's Central Subdivision-1856). The area has since been totally abandoned.
- March 1866:** A small rush has occurred on the bed of the Yarra, about 3 miles above McMahon's Creek.
- March 1866:** On the right bank of Hoddle's Creek (about 3 miles from Brazil's office) on a range called Rich Hill, a gold bearing leader has been struck.
- June 1866:** Mr. Mitchell is erecting a crushing-mill with a view to thoroughly prospecting the ranges forming the catchment basis forming Hoddle's Creek.
- September 1866:** At Rich Hill the owner of the steam quartz mill has substituted water power instead of steam-power for the same.
- September 1866:** Two small rushes have taken place. a) near McMahon's Creek and b) Hoddle's Creek.

## **SAINT ANDREW'S METROPOLITAN SUBDIVISION**

**March 1864:** In reference to gold mining, that, excepting on the S.E. side of Mt. Martha, no operations are being carried out within the subdivision.

## **SAINT ANDREW'S WEST SUBDIVISION**

**June 1864:** There is one puddling machine at Back Creek near Eltham.

**June 1864:** A steam engine and set of stamp heads are now being erected on Gibb's Reef, situated on private land adjoining the Township reserve, parish of Toororong, about 2 1/2 miles east of Whittlesea.

**September 1864:** Gibb's Reef, machinery only just completed.

**September 1864:** Ophir Reef, and New Reef, parish of Tyab--work just commenced.

**September 1864:** The Diamond Reef is being worked to 130 feet.

**September 1864:** Quaile's Reef looks promising.

**September 1864:** Two new reefs have been discovered: a) Near Gisborne in the Bullancrook forest, b) about 8 miles east of Frankston.

**December 1864:** Diamond Creek continues to prosper.

**March 1865:** The total value of mining plant in the subdivision at present is nil. The total amount of alluvial ground being worked upon at present is nil. The alterations recently made to the boundaries omit Diamond Creek.

**June 1865:** (alluvial mining) Several puddling machines have been erected.

**June 1865:** (quartz mining) Swedish Reef, One-Tree Hill; the workings are in a healthy state regarding profits.

**June 1865:** The Diamond Creek G.M.Co. is now at a depth of 225 feet.

**June 1865:** There is one hydraulic hose in the course of erection at Wild Dog, and about 6 puddling machines in other parts of the subdivision.

## **SAINT ANDREW'S WEST AND SOUTH SUBDIVISION**

**June 1866:** Mining plant in the subdivision is nil.

**June 1866:** In the vicinity of Mt. Martha 3 gold bearing quartz reefs have been discovered in the Tubba-Rubba Creek Valley. This is located about 8 miles S.E. of Schapper Point. The first discovered reef is known as 'Brown's Reef'. The shaft of the Prospecting claim is 50 feet.



## **SAINT ANDREW'S CENTRAL SUBDIVISION**

- December 1865:* (alluvial mining) In the Queenstown area all workings are confined to the old gullies.
- December 1865:* A new reef called 'Eureka' has been discovered near Queenstown.
- December 1865:* At Anderson's Creek, Caledonia Gold Field; Quartz mining is reduced to one claim situated on Fifth hill.
- March 1866:* Anderson's Creek has risen in population by 35%, all involved in Quartz mining.
- June 1866:* In the Yow-Yow Creek a miner, (a German) discovered a small quartz leader upon the surface of the ground (now known as the German Reef).
- June 1866:* (alluvial mining) At Anderson's Creek, the workings in the bed of the Yarra are discontinued.
- June 1866:* At the German Reef, near Eltham, the Minie Co. has commenced tunnelling.
- June 1866:* At Anderson's Creek, a new crushing machine with a battery of 4 head of stampers, has been erected by Mr. Autard and Journaux, and is in full work.
- June 1866:* A prospecting claim, named Autard Reef is situated on an island caused by the diversion of the river some years since.
- September 1866:* A new reef has been discovered and called the Pioneer Reef. It is located about 3 miles from Diamond Creek.

## **SAINT ANDREW'S EAST SUBDIVISION.**

- December 1866:* McMahan's Creek. The modus operandi is to divert the stream, and sluice the loose shale on the bottom of the creek.
- December 1866:* At Hoddle's Creek the developers have erected a very powerful overshot water-wheel for crushing. The stone will be delivered from the pit's mouth with the greatest economy by means of a self-acting incline.
- March 1867:* A small rush has occurred at Cronin's Creek situated on the S.E. slope of the dividing range on the Upper Yarra.
- March 1867:* Starvation Creek is being worked by a small party of men.
- March 1867:* (quartz) Mining at Christmas Hill has been recently resumed.
- June 1867:* The miners are doing remarkably well at Starvation Creek.
- December 1867:* Two prospecting leases have been applied for near the east side of Donovan's Creek, Upper Yarra, off the Wood's Point track. The more Easterly of the two Reefs is the New Star, and the Westerly Reef is the Golden Bower.
- March 1868:* A tributary to the Yarra called Big Pat's Creek has been prospected showing 1/2 an ounce per man over 3 days.

- March 1868:** Three miles east of the Golden Bower Reef, Donovan's Creek, 2 new reefs have been discovered. The Great Britain Reef is on the east of the new pair while the Sarah Jane Reef is the westerly of the pair situated near Bear's Creek.
- June 1868:** A slight rush has occurred 9 miles from Warburton towards McMahon's Creek on the Upper Yarra track.
- June 1868:** Coultards Lead, Hoddle's Creek has been re-discovered.
- June 1868:** (quartz) The Golden Bower Co. is waiting the erection of machinery.
- December 1868:** Donovan's Creek. The Golden Bower and New Star Quartz Co. have erected crushing machinery. The A 1 Golden Bower Reef has a tunnel of 225 feet.
- March 1869:** The machine owned by the Golden Bower Q.M. Co. is the only one in the subdivision at present.
- June 1869:** Alluvial ground has recently been discovered 2 miles east of Hoddle's Creek on the eastern margin of a swamp known as Big Pat's Swamp.

#### **SAINT ANDREW'S CENTRAL SUBDIVISION**

- December 1866:** A very small rush has occurred at a point known as the head of Boomer's Gully. near Queenstown.
- December 1866:** (quartz) Mr Murray and Sloane at Allan's Reef, Yow-Yow have very recently completed their deep shaft.
- December 1866:** At Anderson's Creek the whole of the quartz workings are discontinued, and the machinery lately erected by Mr. Autard and Journeaux has been removed.
- March 1867:** (alluvial) At Anderson's Creek the river workings are being resumed and several large dams or paddocks have been erected.
- March 1867:** The Queenstown Reef has been re-discovered having been lost for the last ten years. It was the first reef discovered on this field.
- March 1867:** A new Reef has been discovered about 3 miles south of the Pioneer Reef near Diamond Creek.
- June 1867:** In the Upper Yarra district, several parties are now constructing dams and erecting puddling machines.
- June 1867:** The Victoria Reef, One-Tree-Hill, in Smyth's Gully. Machinery is being erected.
- June 1867:** The Eclipse Reef has just been discovered on the west side of Diamond Creek near its junction with the Watery Gully.
- September 1867:** On the previously abandoned Perseverance Reef a new body of stone has been struck.
- September 1867:** On the Eureka very little quartz has been raised.

- September 1867:* The Welcome Reef has been discovered on Panton Hill near Queenstown.
- September 1867:* The Star Reef has been discovered near the Pioneer Diamond Creek.
- December 1867:* The Lancashire Hero and the Perseverance claims have reported extraordinary returns.
- December 1867:* Victoria Reef, One-Tree-Hill. The necessary machinery for stamping has been erected.
- March 1868:* Forty men have left Queenstown for Steel's Creek.
- March 1868:* The Nelson Co., One-Tree-Hill, has driven the tunnel to 200 feet.
- June 1868:* Anderson's Creek. Machinery for crushing is being erected on the Yarra.
- June 1868:* The Victoria or Nelson Co., One-Tree-Hill, is about to drive the tunnel a further 50 feet.
- June 1868:* A slight rush has occurred on the western boundary of the township of Queenstown known as the Slaughter-yard rush.
- September 1868:* New water-power crushing machinery has been recently erected at Warrandyte, but is not quite fully completed.
- December 1868:* The water-power crushing machine at Warrandyte has been recently erected.
- March 1869:* (quartz) Outard's Reef is being re-worked.
- March 1869:* Fourth Hill. The crushing machine driven by water-power is unable to engage more than 2 stamps due to lack of water.
- June 1869:* The Loyal Liberal Reef has been discovered about 2 miles north of the township of Warrandyte. The lessees intend the immediate erection of machinery.
- June 1869:* The Phoenix Co. Outard's Reef, will shortly erect machinery for pumping and crushing.
- June 1869:* (alluvial) Puddling machines are being established in Whiskey Gully.

#### **SAINT ANDREW'S WEST SUBDIVISION**

- June 1869:* Introduction of west subdivision.

#### **GIPPSLAND MINING DISTRICT**

- September 1869:* Loyal Liberal, north of Warrandyte is waiting on the erection of machinery.
- September 1869:* The Yarra Tunnelling Co., Warrandyte is waiting on the alteration of the mill and plant.
- September 1869:* Union Loyal Liberal, Fourth Hill. is waiting completion of machinery.

#### **SAINT ANDREW'S EAST AND CENTRAL SUBDIVISIONS**

- December 1869:* Introduction of joint subdivision

- December 1869:** The Loyal Liberal Co., (on the river) north of Warrandyte found their equipment defective.
- December 1869:** Steel's Creek. (quartz) Machinery is in the process of erection.
- March 1870:** (alluvial) Evelyn Tunnelling G. M. Co. has commenced extensive works. They are tunnelling to divert the course of the Yarra River.
- March 1870:** Yering. C Portions of ground on the river Yarra are being prospected.
- March 1870:** (quartz) Diamond Creek Reef. Mr Christian and Patterson have erected a powerful engine and stampers at the entrance of their drive, the trucks therefrom emptying themselves immediately into the hopper of the battery.
- March 1870:** At Warburton, better known as Yankee Jim's, Upper Yarra is being prospected for the lost deep lead.
- March 1870:** Cargill and Co.'s claim is on the same reef as the Loyal Liberal Co.
- March 1870:** The Yarra Tunnelling Quartz Co. possesses a water-powered crushing mill.
- June 1870:** The Union Co. Diamond Creek has entered into a contract for a new shaft.
- June 1870:** The Loyal Liberal Co. has resumed work in the hands of a new Co.
- June 1870:** The Evelyn Tunnelling G. M. Co. has finished the works and commenced the erection of a dam for the purpose of diverting the river.
- September 1870:** Union Co. Diamond Creek has erected pumping machinery.
- September 1870:** Golden Bower, Donovan's Creek has suspended work.
- September 1870:** Two new reefs have been discovered about 3 miles south of Queenstown. They are the New Moon and Never-too-late-to-mend reefs.
- September 1870:** The Perseverance Co.'s ground embraces the Swedish Reef and Buck Reef, One-Tree-Hill.
- September 1870:** (alluvial) A rush has occurred at the old Go-a-head Lead, Warburton.
- December 1870:** The Perseverance Co., One-Tree-Hill, is about to erect new machinery for a tunnel driven from the eastern side of the lease.
- December 1870:** Union Co. Diamond Creek has sunk an additional shaft for pumping and winding.
- December 1870:** (alluvial) The Evelyn Tunnelling Co. has completed the dam of the Yarra Yarra and has wholly diverted the water through the tunnel.
- March 1871:** At Warrandyte, miners have erected a flume at an elevation of 50 feet above the level of the Yarra for the purpose of pumping by water power and conducting water for sluicing the Whipstick Gully.
- March 1871:** The Evelyn Co is sluicing the dam.
- March 1871:** The Pioneer, Diamond Creek is erecting additional machinery.

- March 1871:* The Union, Diamond Creek is erecting additional machinery.
- March 1871:* The Yarra Tunnelling Co. has let the mine on tribute.
- June 1871:* Races are being cut to work claims in Starvation Creek.
- June 1871:* The Standard Bearer Reef has been discovered between the Whipstick and Thompson Gullies, Warrandyte.
- June 1871:* The Yarra Tunnelling Co. tributors at Warrandyte have sunk a new shaft and erected a pumping and winding engine.
- September 1871:* The Evelyn Tunnelling Co. has suspended operations due to a break in the dam at the eastern bank.
- September 1871:* The Early Bird Co., Warrandyte, is erecting pumping and crushing machinery.
- September 1871:* A new shaft to work the Scotchman's Reef, on the First Hill, Warrandyte, is being put down.
- December 1871:* Perseverance Co. is erecting additional machinery.
- December 1871:* Pioneer Co. is erecting additional machinery.
- December 1871:* Union Co. is erecting additional machinery.
- December 1871:* Evelyn Tunnel Co. has repaired the dam and is continuing work.

#### **SAINT ANDREW'S WEST AND SOUTH SUBDIVISIONS.**

- June 1870:* Introduction of the subdivision.
- March 1871:* No mining has been done during this quarter.
- June 1871:* A Quartz Reef has been discovered about 8 miles from Schapper Point, on the Tubba Rubba Creek.
- June 1871:* Ground at Sassafra Creek, Dandenong Ranges has been registered.
- September 1871:* The shaft in the prospecting claim, Schapper Point, is down to 55 feet.

#### **SAINT ANDREW'S DIVISION.**

- March 1872:* Re-intro of St. Andrew's division.
- March 1872:* (alluvial) Boring operation's are now in progress at Steele's Creek.
- June 1872:* Hoddle's Creek. A Co. has set out to drain the bottom water by means of a tunnel in order to work the deep leads.
- June 1872:* The Union Co. Diamond Creek has merged its interests with a larger body of proprietors. Hence they stopped work briefly.
- June 1872:* Perseverance Co., One-Tree-Hill, has shifted its battery to a more convenient site.
- June 1872:* A prospecting claim has been registered at Berwick.

**June 1872:** A prospecting claim has been registered at Dromana.

**September 1872:** A new lead has been discovered at Parson's Gully, situated about 1/2 a mile north of Warrandyte.

**September 1872:** Oram's Reef, Kingstown, has not been tested below 200 feet.

**September 1872:** Some prospectors are considering sluicing the Yarra on the west side of Yankee Jim's Creek.

**December 1872:** An auriferous gully called Haunted Gully has been discovered 4 miles S.E. of Berwick.

**December 1872:** The Warburton Sluicing Co. is now on the eve of completing arrangements to carry out the scheme at Yankee Jim's.

**March 1873:** (alluvial) Very extensive hydraulic sluicing operations are being initiated at Warburton by the Warburton Hydraulic G.M. Co. The race required to supply the water has been marked for a distance of about 7 miles to an elevation of about 320 feet above the claim, and machinery and piping only awaits transit from Melbourne.

**March 1873:** At Haunted Gully, Berwick, several claims are paying well.

**June 1873:** Discovery of payable auriferous ground called Sailor's Gully has occurred 1.5 miles west of Haunted Gully.

**September 1873:** At Pakenham, near Berwick, 2 new gullies called Welcome Gully and Burke's Gully have been found.

**September 1873:** Warburton Sluicing Co. will shortly operate extensive hydraulic appliances having nearly completed their race.

**September 1873:** Defiance Co., Warburton is progressing but has not yet struck the reef.

**December 1873:** There is an alluvial tunnelling claim at Haunted Gully Berwick.

**December 1873:** Allendale Co. is working the southern extension of the Union Reef , Diamond Creek.

**December 1873:** The Third Hill Co. is sinking a shaft and erecting machinery on new ground which is the northern extension of the Scotchman's Reef (Warrandyte).

**March 1874:** Gold has been discovered in the old river bed, Warrandyte.

**June 1874:** A rush has taken place in a gully leading from the top of One-Tree-Hill to Smith's Gully.

**June 1874:** There are 3 alluvial claims in McMahan's Creek.

**June 1874:** The Yarra Tunnelling Co. claim, which was recently purchased, has been abandoned and the machinery removed.

**June 1874:** The Magnet Co. Warrandyte has struck golden stone.

**September 1874:** Hoddle's Creek. A rich lead called the Dry Lead has been discovered.

- September 1874:** A deep payable lead at Warrandyte has been discovered.
- September 1874:** The Warburton Hydraulic Sluicing Co. is doing well.
- September 1874:** New reef--Warrandyte.
- September 1874:** New reef--Warburton.
- September 1874:** New reef--Reefton, about 3 miles from McMahon's Creek.
- December 1874:** Reef at Reefton has proved to be rich and hence machinery is to be erected.
- December 1874:** Gold has been discovered in Big Pat's River, near its junction with the Yarra.
- December 1874:** Nuggets have been discovered in Cobbler's Gully near One-Tree-Hill, Caledonia.
- March 1875:** Oram's Reef, which is all but abandoned, has given a good yield.
- March 1875:** Stiggant's Reef is located at Anderson's Creek.
- March 1875:** Reefton. Crushing machinery is being erected.
- March 1875:** Alluvial work at Queenstown is confined to the Chinese.
- June 1875:** Reefton, three Co.s' are tunnelling, one of which is erecting machinery on the Yarra. It is a battery powered by a water-wheel.
- June 1875:** A prospecting claim has been taken out for a newly discovered reef at Muddy Creek near McMahon's creek.
- June 1875:** (alluvial) A small rush has occurred at a small gully running into Black Calf.
- June 1875:** The hydraulic sluicing co's at Warburton and Starvation Creek are getting very satisfactory results.
- September 1875:** The old ground in the Upper Yarra is being extensively re-worked with hydraulic hoses.
- September 1875:** Oram's Reef, Kingstown, Mr. Longley & Co. are deepening their shaft.
- September 1875:** The Jenny Lind Reef, near Queenstown. Cockburn & Co. have sunk a shaft 100 ft.
- September 1875:** The New Perseverance Co. One-Tree-Hill, will cut the Swedish Reef shortly.
- September 1875:** Warrandyte. There is only one crushing machine available. The machine is driven by water power and is located at a level above water which renders it useless when the river flows a little above the average summer flow.
- September 1875:** Reefton, the water-wheel, race, and battery are complete. All that is now required is the tramway.
- September 1875:** Reefton. All the tunnels on this reef are being driven from the western slope of the hill (with one exception). From N. to S., 2nd from the N., The

Reefton Co. followed by the All Nations Co., The Great Northern Co. and The Aurora Co. (Talbot & Co.).

*December 1875:* A small rush has occurred on private land belonging to Mr. Phipps, situated near the town of Nillumbik.

*December 1875:* The Old-Crown Prince Reef at Queenstown is being re-worked.

*December 1875:* The Union Co. Diamond Creek has abandoned the enterprise and is about to remove the machinery from the mine.

*December 1875:* Reefs are thin due to the Upper Silurian geology.

*January 1876:* Warburton Hydraulic Sluicing Co. has found an old lost lead. This Co. is soon to complete the water conduit by erecting a flume 50 ft. high across the Warburton saddle. The total length will be 1000 ft.

*January 1876:* Muddy Creek: the reef is called New Reef.

*June 1876:* (quartz) The Warrandyte Co. has suspended operations during the erection of machinery.

*September 1876:* A payable Lead has been discovered in Hoddle's Creek on McCrae Hill.

*September 1876:* A new reef has been opened at Elliot's Freehold, Warrandyte.

*September 1876:* A prospecting claim has been applied for, at a new reef called the Last Resource, at You You, Caledonia.

*September 1876:* Magnet Co. Warrandyte has struck payable gold.

*September 1876:* Reefton presently has 6 Co.'s tunnelling.

*December 1876:* Muddy Creek, a machine will shortly be completed.

*March 1877:* publishing at The Warrandyte Freehold G.M. Co. has been established for steam Warrandyte.

*March 1877:* At McCrae's Hill, Warrandyte, extensive alluviums have been discovered.

*June 1877:* The Warburton Hydraulic Sluicing Co. has suspended work.

*June 1877:* Reefton, Central Co. has struck a reef at 500ft.

*June 1877:* The Aurora Co. has driven 400 ft.

*June 1877:* Magnet Co., Warrandyte, is erecting pumping and winding machinery.

*June 1877:* Oram's Reef, Kingstown, a new crushing machine is being erected.

*September 1877:* A Melbourne Co. is about to take over the operations at McCrae's Hill, Hoddle's Creek.

*September 1877:* Reefton, only 2 co's are working.

*September 1877:* Muddy Creek, machinery for crushing is being erected.



- September 1877:** Defiance Co. has erected a battery with pumping and winding gear.
- September 1877:** Two dykes of diorite have been discovered north of the Warrandyte Freehold G.M. Co's ground.
- September 1877:** Kingstown, Mr. Oakley & Co. have finished their battery.
- September 1877:** The Pioneer Reef at Diamond Creek is being re-worked.
- September 1877:** A new reef called the Great Northern has been opened on the north bank of the Yarra at Warrandyte.
- December 1877:** The hydraulic works at Warburton are about to be resumed.
- December 1877:** Hoddle's Creek, Ewart and Co. have formed a Co. to work their leases.
- December 1877:** Anderson's Creek, the diorite dykes are giving good returns.
- March 1878:** Temporary suspension of work has occurred at Oram's Reef.
- March 1878:** The Union Lead Hydraulic Mining Co., Hoddle's Creek, is now in full progress.
- June 1878:** Hoddle's Creek, a new quartz reef has been discovered.
- September 1878:** The First Hill Co., Warrandyte, has deepened to 100 ft.
- September 1878:** The New Pigtail Co. is erecting a battery plus pumping and winding gear.
- September 1878:** Hoddle's Creek, machinery will shortly be erected.
- September 1878:** Muddy Creek, work has been suspended while a 6 mile water race is being cut to supply the battery.
- September 1878:** Panton Hill, a new Lead has been discovered; possibly a branch of the Old Boomer Reef.
- December 1878:** Big Pat's Valley, Upper Yarra, shows signs of a Lead of gold on the west side of the stream.
- December 1878:** The Pig Tail machine has recently started.
- December 1878:** Oram's Reef Co. Panton Hill has only just re-organised.
- December 1878:** Reefton, Reefton Co. is going to dig a tunnel.
- December 1878:** Hoddle's Creek, a water power battery is under construction.
- December 1878:** Crushing machine plus dam at the intersection of Anderson's Creek and the Yarra.
- March 1879:** There is a new prospecting claim at Bear's Creek, Upper Yarra, near the Great Britain Reef, Donovan's Creek.
- June 1879:** Progress Mining Co. Kingstown, have no water in their dam for crushing.

**June 1879:** Bear's Creek has been abandoned.

**December 1879:** Progress Co. Panton's Hill has not been a success.

**December 1879:** Warrantdyte, Scotchman's and Pig Tail Reefs have not been a success. Near the junction of Wombat and Hoddle's Creeks, a prospecting claim has been applied for on a new reef called the Bonanza Reef.

**December 1879:** The Warburton Hydraulic Sluicing Co. has again been revived and is in full operation.

**December 1879:** Britannia Creek, a new Co. has been formed to re-work the old ground.

**December 1879:** Reefton, Central Co. will erect improved apparatus to operate upon pyrites.

**December 1879:** Hoddle's Creek, United Co. will sink a shaft.

**December 1879:** Panton Hill, Caledonia, the Old Napoleon Reef has been re-worked.

**December 1879:** Only one claim working at Oram's Reef.

**March 1880:** Hoddle's Creek, all work suspended except on the Bonanza Reef.

**March 1880:** Muddy Creek, the reef has been re-worked.

**March 1880:** A Co. is about to erect a small machine for pumping (probably the Central Co.).

**March 1880:** The Victoria Hydraulic workings at Warburton are about to be extended.

**March 1880:** Oram's Reef. All work stopped.

**June 1880:** Hoddle's Creek. All the reefs are not working.

**June 1880:** Reefton, Reefton Co. is erecting an engine and extending the tunnel.

**June 1880:** Muddy Creek Co. (McMahon's) is about to extend the tunnel.

**June 1880:** Hoddle's Creek, pumping appliances are being erected due to an increase in water.

**June 1880:** The Victoria Hydraulic Sluicing Co. is about to extend the race and also a new tail race.

**September 1880:** Queenstown. There are no reefs being worked.

**September 1880:** A thin rich leader has been found on Fourth Hill.

**September 1880:** Fern-Tree Gully near Queenstown is once again being worked.

**December 1880:** A new Oram's Reef Co. at Panton Hill has been floated.

**December 1880:** Fourth Hill Prospecting Co. is doing well on Fourth Hill.

**March 1881:** A small rush has occurred at Turner's Creek, a small branch of Sassafras Creek near Emerald.

**June 1881:** The river claims at Warrandyte for the first time are beginning to be unpayable.

**June 1881:** The Pig Tail Co. has struck payable dirt at the 130 ft. level.

**June 1881:** Warrandyte, the Northern Co. is constructing a tramway from the dyke claim.

**June 1881:** The Crown Co. is driving a tunnel from the dyke claim to the battery (as well).

**June 1881** Two Co's are joining to work Oram's Reef, Pantons Hill.

**June 1881** A new reef has been discovered on the Wild Dog.

**September 1881:** Central Co. has dug the shaft to 280 ft.

**September 1881:** The Pig Tail Co., Warrandyte, has deepened the shaft and erected a new engine and battery.

**September 1881:** The Oram's Reef, Queenstown, has erected a winding engine and battery.

**December 1881:** A new co. is being formed to work the Phipps' Reef, Diamond Creek, which has not been worked for 4 to 5 years.

**March 1882:** Reefton Q. M. Co. has let the mine on tribute.

**March 1882:** Pigtail Co. has suspended work.

**March 1882:** Two new Co's. are working Oram's Reef. They are the Bacchante' and the Phoenix Q. M. Co's.

**March 1882:** Phipps' Reef Co. Diamond Creek has sunk a shaft to 100 ft.

**June 1882:** Britannia Hydraulic Sluicing Co., Warburton, is cutting a deep tail-race, which will give scope for some extensive sluicing operations on the Britannia Creek.

**June 1882:** The Warburton Hydraulic Sluicing Co. has let the mine on tribute and they intend cutting down the tail-race, which runs through solid granite boulders.

**June 1882:** Reefton, sluicing has been unpractical during the quarter.

**June 1882:** Phoenix Co., Aram's Reef (probably Oram's Reef) Kingstown, is still sinking.

**June 1882:** The Diamond Creek Co. is putting down a new shaft.

**June 1882:** A new reef has been discovered near the Wet Gully, Eltham.

**September 1882:** The Hydraulic Sluicing Co., Warburton has let the mine on tribute to a party of Chinese.

**September 1882:** Bacchante' Co. has been unsuccessful in reaching the Oram's Reef and has abandoned the claim and moved further north on the same line.

**September 1882:** A new co. south of the Phoenix Co. on Oram's Reef has commenced work.

- September 1882:** The Diamond Creek G. M. Co. has sunk the shaft to 215 ft. and is now erecting a pumping and winding machine.
- September 1882:** A prospecting claim has been applied for at Steele's Creek.
- December 1882:** Hoddle's Creek, a new water-powered battery of 5-head of stampers is to be erected.
- December 1882:** Phoenix Co. Oram's Reef has stopped work to erect an engine for pumping.
- June 1883:** The Diamond Creek Co. has now brought the mine from a state of chaos into good working order; they have erected a new 10 stamper battery and a 30 horse power engine for pumping and winding.
- June 1883:** The Bacchante' Co., Oram's Reef, is erecting a battery.
- June 1883:** The Phoenix Co., Oram's Reef is erecting poppet-heads and pumping and winding engines.
- June 1883:** Mining has been resumed on Old One-Tree-Hill Reef.
- June 1883:** Hoddle's Creek the water-powered battery erected by Mr. Ewart is ready for work.
- June 1883:** Warburton, a co. has been formed to work the Bluenoses Reef.
- June 1883:** A new co called the Yarra Co. has been formed to work the Muddy Creek, Reefton.
- September 1883:** The Diamond Creek Co. Nillumbik, is erecting machinery and prospecting.
- September 1883:** The hydraulic sluicing claim at Warburton has been abandoned the Chinese tributers, but another party is about to work the ground by tunnelling, instead of removing such large masses of earth with the hose, for small leads of wash.
- September 1883:** Hoddle's Creek, The City of Melbourne Quartz and Alluvial G. M. Co. has taken over the ground of Mr. Ewart and Co. on Green Hill. The present Co. has erected engine and pumping machinery and is sinking a shaft.
- September 1883:** Gembrook, a co. has erected a plant consisting of a pumping and winding engine, and has sunk a 200 ft. shaft.
- September 1883:** Warrandyte, the river workings are again being operated.
- December 1883:** A prospecting party is operating on the Yankee Jim's Creek, opposite the Central Mining Co's. lease at Reefton.
- December 1883:** Hoddle's Creek, Kong Meng and Co. have amassed 30 tons of stone for crushing.
- December 1883:** Warrandyte, a new Co. has been formed to work the diorite dyke by driving a tunnel.
- December 1883:** One-Tree-Hill Co. had a satisfactory crushing.
- December 1883:** The river claim at Warrandyte is being pumped dry ready for working the bottom of the river.

**December 1883:** Warburton, hydraulic sluicing is still working but is slow.

**December 1883:** Several small sluicing parties are working in Hoddle's Creek.

**March 1884:** The Hydraulic Co. at Warburton has suspended operations on the old ground and intends recommencing work on new ground once the water race has been extended.

**March 1884:** Warrantdyte, the river workings have proved unpayable.

**March 1884:** The Crown and Hope Co's., Warrantdyte, have driven tunnels into the diorite dykes at the level of the battery.

**March 1884:** The Phoenix Co's. ground has changed hands.

**June 1884:** The Warburton Co. has suspended work due to the need of extensive repairs of the water race.

**June 1884:** The London Co. at Hoddle's Creek sunk the shaft to the depth of the gutter.

**June 1884:** At Gembrook the Deep Lead Co. has driven 800ft under the basalt.

**June 1884:** Anderson's Creek has been abandoned.

**June 1884:** Reefton, the claims are being worked very quietly.

**June 1884:** The Diamond Creek G. M. Co., Nillumbik, has erected additional machinery for working 2 air-drills.

**September 1884:** The Clifton Co. is on Pantom Hill.

**September 1884:** The sons of Freedom Co., Gembrook, have commenced a tunnel to strike a new reef.

**December 1884:** (alluvial) A small payable lead has been discovered on private property near Arthur's Creek and is known as Rosey's.

**December 1884:** The Creighton's Freehold claim, Gembrook, has suspended operations.

**December 1884:** The Queenstown Co. One-Tree-Hill, will shortly erect machinery.

**December 1884:** The Diamond Creek G. M. Co. are now down to 500ft.

**December 1884:** Reefton, the Central Co. has suspended operations. Little work is being done.

**December 1884:** The Muddy Creek lessees have secured a small crushing plant and race from the former owners.

**December 1884:** The Yarra tunnelling reef (Warrantdyte) has been re-discovered. It is the continuation of the Fourth Hill Reef.

**March 1885:** The Melbourne Deep Lead Co., Hoddle's Creek, is now erecting a puddling machine.

**March 1885:** The machinery from Gembrook Deep Lead has been removed.

**March 1885:** The re-revived Yarra Tunnelling reef had pumping machinery erected.

**March 1885:** The Queenstown Q. M. Co. will not crush until own machinery is erected.

**March 1885:** The Sons of Freedom Co., Gembrook, has driven the tunnel 565 ft.

**June 1885:** The Clifton Co. and Bacchante' Co. on Oram's Reef has lost the vein.

**June 1885:** The Queenstown Co., One-Tree-Hill, has completed the battery.

**June 1885:** The Band of Hope Co. Kinglake, is satisfied with the prospects and intends driving a tunnel from the level of the battery to reef.

**June 1885:** The lessees of the Muddy Creek Reef, Upper Yarra, are repairing the water-race to the mill.

**September 1885:** The Clifton Co. mine has resumed work under the name of the New Phoenix Co.

**December 1885:** The Diamond Creek mine has been suspended.

**December 1885:** The Yarra Tunnelling Co. has suspended work owing to floods, which disarranged the water-wheel.

**December 1885:** The Bacchante' Co., Oram's Reef, is suspended.

**December 1885:** The Queenstown G. M. Co., One-Tree-Hill, is suspended.

**December 1885:** (alluvial) The Melbourne Co. Hoddle's Creek has commenced tunnelling. They found the water difficult to cope with by horse and whim.

**March 1886:** The Diamond Creek Co., Nillumbik, is suspended.

**March 1886:** The Phoenix Co., Oram's Reef, is suspended.

**March 1886:** The Dyke Co. Warrandyte.

**March 1886:** A new co. called the Pioneer Co. has started operations in Hoddle's Creek.

**March 1886:** The Wallace G. M. Co., Kinglake, is driving a tunnel to the reef.

**June 1886:** The Diamond Creek G. M. Co. resumed work.

**June 1886:** The New Yarra Tunnelling Co. has new pumping machinery.

**June 1886:** The lessee of the Muddy Creek claim has been engaged in forming an inclined road from his mine to his battery.

**June 1886:** The Pioneer Co. in Hoddle's Creek is actually the Enterprise Co.

**June 1886:** The Sons of Freedom Co., Gembrook, has erected a horse-puddling machine.

**September 1886:** The Diamond Creek Co. has mysteriously collapsed without even striking a pick.

- September 1886:* The New Tunnelling Co's. pumping engine is nearly erected.
- September 1886:* The Whittlesea Co. has erected a winding and pumping engine.
- September 1886:* The Sons of Freedom Co., Gembrook, have been suspended.
- September 1886:* A prospector has found scaley gold on the north side of the Yarra, between Warburton and Reefton, but the precise locality is as yet unknown.
- December 1886:* The Young Colonial Co. in Warrandyte continues to pay.
- December 1886:* The Yarra Tunnel Tribute Co. is still sinking the shaft.
- December 1886:* The Great Southern Warrandyte has proved payable.
- December 1886:* The Kinglake Tunnel has been driven to the old working and will soon be connected.
- December 1886:* Prospecting has been resumed at the Queenstown mine, One-Tree-Hill.
- March 1887:* Only 5 quartz mines are being worked in the district at present.
- March 1887:* The Yow Yow Reef has been re-discovered.
- March 1887:* The Muddy Creek Reef, Upper Yarra, is still being worked. The crushing power is worked by a water-wheel, fed by a race from McMahon's Creek, 3 miles distance.
- June 1887:* The One-Tree-Hill Co. has been prospecting the mine.
- June 1887:* The Yow Yow claim known as the Never-Can-Tell is on an old reef formerly known as Clayton's Reef.
- June 1887:* A new Co. is erecting a battery of 12 stampers and a 16 horse power engine on the Old Pioneer Reef Diamond Creek, the plant having been brought from Whittlesea and will sink a new shaft to 300 ft. (120 ft. deeper than any former workings on the line).
- September 1887:* A new lead has been discovered which starts at a point about 1.5 miles south of the Morong bridge on the west side of the Plenty River and about 30 ft. above the waters of the same.
- September 1887:* The City of Melbourne Co., Hoddle's Creek, has abandoned the alluvial workings and is sinking a winze in the tunnel.
- September 1887:* The Yarra Tunnelling Co., Warrandyte has had the battery flooded due to the rising river.
- September 1887:* The John Wallace Co., Kinglake, has driven the tunnel to 900 ft.
- September 1887:* One-Tree-Hill Co., Queenstown, is sinking on the Swedish Reef.
- December 1887:* The Yarra Tunnelling Co., Warrandyte, has completed the erection of winding gear.
- December 1887:* The public crushing machine at Warrandyte is run by water power.

**March 1888:** The Never-Can-Tell Co., Queenstown, is about to erect a battery at the entrance to the tunnel.

**March 1888:** The Nulla Secunda Co. has abandoned its claim.

**March 1888:** Reefton: a small party has recently re-opened the abandoned Central Co. mine.

**March 1888:** A good prospect has been found in No. 3 Creek, Kinglake.

**June 1888:** The Young Colonial Co., Warrandyte, is forming a co. with increased capital in order to erect machinery and extend operations.

**June 1888:** A prospecting claim has been registered at Yow Yow on the Crown Prince line of reef.

**June 1888:** A small co. intends erecting the pumping plant to work the No. 3 Creek Kinglake.

**December 1888:** The Prince of Wales Co., Yow Yow, is driving a tunnel and intends erecting a battery upon a dam formed for the necessary water supply.

**December 1888:** The Old Queenstown Reef is being worked by a small Co.

**December 1888:** The Young Colonial Co., Warrandyte, has erected a small engine for the drawing of water from the shaft.

**March 1889:** The Melbourne Co's. mine has not resumed work.

**March 1889:** A co. known as the Prince William Syndicate, Queenstown, has recently commenced tunnelling to cut the Eureka, Comet and Antimony Reefs.

**March 1889:** The Young Colonial Co. has erected a small 3.5 horse power engine for winding.

**June 1889:** Hoddle's Creek, four reefs have been discovered. 1st. Sunday Reef. 2nd. the Hidden Treasure line. The other 2 discoveries are being carried down on the underlay.

**June 1889:** The Prince of Wales Co. has a 600 ft. tunnel. They are also about to erect a 12 head stamper.

**June 1889:** Queenstown, a new reef has been discovered called the Young Colonial Reef.

**June 1889:** Prospecting is being carried out on One-Tree-Hill.

**June 1889:** (alluvial) Hoddle's Creek, the City of Melbourne Co's. mine is about to be re-opened by them after 18 months of closure.

**June 1889:** (alluvial) Hoddle's Creek, a group known as the Weldens have driven a tunnel 2400 ft. to drain and work a lead known as Branden's Lead, the depth being 80 ft.

**June 1889:** Kinglake, the Gladstone Co. has driven a tunnel 570 ft.

**September 1889:** The Columbian G.M. Co. has not yet finished the erection of the engine and battery.



- September 1889:*** The Prince of Wales Co. Yow Yow has erected 7 head of stampers and will also soon have the engine ready for work.
- September 1889:*** A new auriferous dyke has been discovered at the head of Scotchman's Creek Warburton.
- September 1889:*** The continuation of the Buck line of reef has been discovered on One-Tree-Hill, near Queenstown.
- December 1889:*** Wenden and Co., Hoddle's Creek, has driven his tunnel 4000 ft.
- December 1889:*** A small co. has been floated to test the Sunday Creek at Green Hill, Hoddle's Creek.
- December 1889:*** Warburton East, a co has been floated to develop the recently discovered auriferous dyke.
- June 1891:*** Gembrook, the discovery of gold has prompted a number of claims being taken up.
- June 1891:*** Warburton, the Lady Hopetoun Co. is erecting a battery.
- September 1891:*** Gembrook, work is suspended due to rain.
- September 1891:*** Warburton, the Lady Hopetoun plant is complete.
- 1903:*** The general conditions of gold mining within district No. 5 are those of declension and decay.
- 1903:*** The class of machinery in use is of the most primitive type, and no effort is being made to modernise it.
- 1907:*** At Mt. Wilson the Abel's Reef Co. has sunk a shaft to 100 feet and erected a winding plant thereon. A 5-head battery is in course of erection.

## **SWIFT'S CREEK-CASSILIS-BROOKVILLE NOTES**

- 1854-7:** Swift's Creek opened - 12 men worked 3 claims - other parties followed, 1855-7 - first diggers' camp started at later-named Tongio West, at junction of Swift's and Gray's [later named Long Gully] creeks. (Flett, p. 172)
- mid-1850s:** Brookville originally known as Sheepstation - alluvial creek beds worked in early gold rushes.<sup>1</sup>
- c.1858:** Rush to Swift's Creek - gullies running into Long Gully from N (locality later named Cassilis) opened by Chinese. (Flett, p. 172)
- 1858:** Omeo quartz reefs discovered near town (later named Township Reef) – prospecting association formed. (Flett, p. 171)
- 1858:** Rush to (later-named) Gum Forest - large, white trees, in contrast to the gnarled vegetation at Swift's Creek. (Flett, p. 172)
- 1858:** William Power discovered first quartz reef in Gippsland, near junction of Power's and Swift's creeks, on south side - his claim named Morning Light - on site of later Hepburn and King Cassilis mines. (Flett, pp. 172-3)
- early 1860s:** Major discoveries at Crooked River, Jordan and Kiandra caused virtual desertion of Swift's Creek - drifted back and small settlement grew up at Swift's Creek.<sup>2</sup>
- October 1863:** (Omeo Central Subdivision) Party of miners prospecting for quartz at Swift's Creek.
- June 1864:** 20 miners at Tambo River and Swift's Creek.
- December 1864:** Three quartz prospecting claims opened in Omeo Division: one was Star at Swift's Creek.
- June 1865:** March 1866: Seven miners at New Rush Creek, Upper Livingstone. Large Chinese parties have worked out their claims on Livingstone Creek and shifted to Swift's Creek – shepherding a great length of creek, awaiting rain.
- March 1866:** Large Chinese parties have worked out their claims on Livingstone Creek and shifted to Swift's Creek - shepherding a great length of creek, awaiting rain.
- 1866:** Reefs discovered near head of Swift's Creek, at place called Black Springs or Eureka (after main reef there) - others opened at Gum Forest - attracted about 250 miners. (Flett, p. 173)
- June 1866:** Swift's Creek 'the great point of attraction' in subdivision - 21 quartz leases applied for – creek itself extensively occupied, mainly by Chinese, for alluvial mining.
- September 1866:** Seven more quartz leases applied for at Swift's Creek. Crushing machinery (15-head battery) delayed because of 'uncertain state of the entrance of the Gipps Land Lakes' – two more machines to follow.
- December 1866:** Tambo River alluvial diggings gradually extending downward from mouth of Swift's Creek. Development of Swift's Creek reefs retarded by delay in completing Omeo Quartz Crushing Co. battery. 150 miners at Swift's Creek).
- March 1867:** Omeo Quartz Crushing Co. machine, Swift's Creek, changed hands.
- September 1867:** Swift's Creek Quartz Crushing Co. mill completed - 15-head, Cornish boiler and engine--ex-Clunes - located at foot of Charlotte Spur - ore brought down from Eureka, Black Prince, Montcalm, Himalaya and other mines in bullock wagons,

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<sup>1</sup> Fairweather (2), p. 175

<sup>2</sup> Christie, p. 37

which travelled along the main divide between Riley's and Swift's Creek and then down the spur to the battery.<sup>3</sup>

- December 1867:** Claims crushing at Swift's Creek: Eldorado, Eureka, Sebastopol, All Nations, Star, Alma, Hand-in-Hand, Midas.
- 1867-9:** Crushings at Omeo Quartz Crushing Co., Swift's Creek, realised less than 1 oz/ton – unprofitable.<sup>4</sup>
- June 1868:** Many Chinese miners, ex-Swift's Creek, and some from the Buckland, working river claims on the Tambo, from Swift's Creek downwards. Extensive tunnel and tail-race just completed by New Adventure Co., by cutting through high rocky bluff known as Frenchman's Hill, on Livingstone Creek opposite Omeo township.
- September 1868:** Dispute between quartz miners and only crushing mill in Swift's Creek district as to price of crushing - company now arranging terms favourable to miners. Tambo River, for some miles below mouth of Swift's Creek, being vigorously worked by many Chinese and a few Europeans - river generally contains too much water to work its bed - water-level now low.
- 1868+:** Gum Forest (lower part of later Brookville) was cradle of reef mining in Omeo Shire, with mines working from 1868.<sup>5</sup>
- 1868:** Rush to Gray's Swamp [Gray Creek = Long Gully] on Swift's Creek - lead struck. (Flett, p. 173)
- March 1869:** Chinese struck promising lead near Swift's Creek Swamp.
- September 1869:** Some trial crushings from Swift's Creek reefs unsatisfactory - some claims abandoned.
- December 1869:** Eureka Co. - only co. on Swift's Creek reefs not to have forfeited lease.
- December 1869:** First mention of Hepburn Reef - opened up by Smart Boys claim - battery set up, but not a success.<sup>6</sup>
- 1869-83:** Reefing in Swift's Creek area almost ceased in 1869 - revived in 1872 - kept alive until 1883 mainly by enterprising battery owner, Peter Forsyth. (Flett, p. 173)
- 1870:** Peter Forsyth discovered Rob Roy Reef, Gum Forest.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Mining Surveyors' Reports (Omeo Division), September 1867; Fairweather (2), p. 37

<sup>4</sup> Christie, p. 37

<sup>5</sup> Fairweather (2), p. 175

<sup>6</sup> Christie, p. 43

<sup>7</sup> Fairweather (2), p. 195

- March 1870:** Quartz mining on Swift's Creek, which for some time past has been in a languishing condition, has been brought to a premature close by the only mill in the district raising the price of crushing from 15s to 30s per ton. In consequence every reef is deserted, and no quartz has been crushed during the last quarter, although one company alone has over a hundred tons of good stone ... and the quartz miners themselves have been compelled to take to alluvial digging, or find employment in other pursuits. Alluvial mining on Swift's Creek suspended during dry weather - claimholders (mainly Chinese) took up new claims on Livingstone Creek, where water is always available - claims turned out well - doubtful whether miners will return to Swift's Creek.
- 1871:** Black Prince Co. purchased and made improvements to old Omeo Quartz Crushing Co. battery - crushing for own mine and other parties - realised over 1 oz/ton for first time.<sup>8</sup>
- March 1871:** 'Quartz reefing has again been resumed on a small scale at Swift's Creek, in the expectation that the Swift's Creek Company's crushing machine will be shortly set to work again, at lower rates than those that prevailed when all the miners struck work on account of the high price demanded for crushing.'
- September 1871:** Purchasers of Swift's Creek steam crushing mill have taken up 28 men's ground on site formerly held under lease by Eureka and Himalaya Cos. (at Gum Forest) - have put mill in thorough working order, with improved appliances. Chinese mining population increased by immigrants direct from China, for whom their countrymen had sent. European population also increased, chiefly by quartz miners.
- December 1871:** Black Prince Co.'s lease includes Eureka, Renovator, Eliza Kate and Black Prince reefs. Only crushing machine in district (Black Prince?) is at work night and day.
- June 1872:** Black Prince GM & C Co. formed new company to take their present engine and 2 nearest reefs, Snowstorm and Montcalm - old company now applying for lease of 50 acres on Black Prince and Eureka line of reef and has registered a machine site in vicinity to erect new engine.
- September 1872:** Two small water-powered batteries (1 x 3-head (Iron Duke), 1 x 5-head) erected on Swift's Creek to test various reefs. Reefs previously would not pay, due to cost of carriage to only steam mill in district (Black Prince) and to high charge for crushing - mill now closed, awaiting removed to Eureka Spur.
- March 1873:** Black Prince battery removed to a more central locality (old Eureka mine) at Swift's Creek and new Eureka Co. formed - the only mill in the district that has the requisite appliance for treating minerals other than gold with which the quartz at Swift's Creek abounds, and which cannot be properly separated from the gold by simple crushing and the use of quicksilver only.<sup>9</sup>
- December 1873:** Eureka Tunnelling and Quartz Crushing Co., Swift's Creek - renewed steam mill. In alluvial mining, all hands fully employed.
- March 1874:** Swift's Creek reefs may be unpayable - high gold content per ton of stone, but narrow leads in very hard ground - most work stopped. Eureka Co., with greater capital than others, still at work on main tunnel.
- September 1874:** Three quartz claims near old Charlotte Lease, Upper Swift's Creek (Eureka is one). Also 3 quartz claims opened on lower part of Swift's Creek - new and very extensive line of reef.
- 1874:** Marion mine, one of the earliest at Long Gully, opened - later named Chance mine.<sup>10</sup>

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8 Christie, p. 37

9 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Omeo Division), March 1873; Christie, p. 38

10 Fairweather (2), p. 78

- 1874:** P. Forsyth operating water-powered battery at head of Swift's Creek.<sup>11</sup>
- March 1875:** Eureka Co., Swift's Creek, abandoned lease - ground through which they were tunnelling proved too hard.
- mid-1870s:** Settlement at junction of Swift's and Gray's creeks named Tongio West by mid-1870s – butcher, store, mines registrar, two pubs.<sup>12</sup>
- March 1877:** Eureka battery, Swift's Creek, being shifted to a better site in the midst of the principal reefs - Duke of Cornwall Co. formed to work a reef discovered in 1874.<sup>13</sup>
- 1877:** Duke of Cornwall mine situated about midway between Swift's Creek and Tongio West – battery site on Swift's Creek, became known as White Sands.<sup>14</sup>
- June 1877:** Independent Quartz Crushing Co., Swift's Creek, began crushing. Duke of Cornwall to begin crushing shortly (mine and machine let on tribute by Dec 1878).
- 1880s:** Quartz mining at Swift's Creek continued spasmodically - numerous sites tried, machinery moved, but field seen mostly as a failure.<sup>15</sup>
- March 1880:** Duke of Cornwall Co., Swift's Creek - ground forfeited by June 1880 and taken up under miners' rights.
- June 1883:** Peter Forsyth erected (new) water-powered (26 ft wheel) battery at Swift's Creek, in connection with his Lady McGregor Reef - cost about £700.
- 1883:** Lady McGregor mine situated over top of Charlotte Spur, on fall of Riley's Creek - Peter Forsyth's batter was supplied with water by race from Sheepstation Creek and further race connecting into Riley's Creek.<sup>16</sup>
- December 1883:** Federal Australian Co., Dry Gully (Omeo) March 1884: Surprise Prospecting Association discovered what appears to be a payable reef at Gum Forest.
- March 1884:** Surprise Prospecting Association discovered what appears to be a payable reef at Gum Forest.
- September 1884:** Great scarcity of water. Slight revival in quartz mining at Gum Forest, Upper Swift's Creek. Several small parcels waiting for crushing at Jorgensen's Union battery. Mountain Maid battery just completed.
- December 1884:** Forsyth replaced (supplemented?) his waterwheel with 8-hp oil engine (25 ft 3 in waterwheel still attached to plant, Dec 1885).<sup>17</sup>
- mid-1880s:** Forsyth's Lady Macgregor was main producer on field.<sup>18</sup>
- March 1885:** Good quartz obtained at Swift's Creek, in a new place known as Long Gully (Lone Hand Mine, McLaren's Gully) - stone carried 7 miles to Forsyth's mill.<sup>19</sup>
- December 1885:** (James Stirling appointed Mining Registrar) Drought - 'Swift's Creek is now dry'.

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11 Fairweather (2), p. 195

12 Christie, p. 38

13 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Omeo Division), March 1877; Christie, p. 38

14 Fairweather (2), p. 106

15 Christie, p. 38

16 Fairweather (2), p. 195

17 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Omeo Division); Fairweather (2), p. 195

18 Christie, p. 38

19 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Omeo Division), March 1885; Fairweather (2), pp. 31,107

- March 1886:** Power and Son working reef in the Gum forest, Swift's Creek. Just-in-Time Reef discovered on divide between Bald Hill Creek and Long Gully. Forsyth's battery idle, pending rainfall.
- September 1886:** Swift's Creek - 'Mr Power, a very old miner who has recently had a good crushing from his reef, informs me that he was the first to discover quartz gold in Gippsland, at Swift's Creek, 28 years ago.' Peter Forsyth - 'had, in spite of great difficulties established a good plant, and has been the genuine friend of the miners'. Dow and Reynolds' working reef on Riley's Creek, between Swift's Creek and Haunted Stream.
- December 1886:** Increased activity at Swift's Creek.
- March 1887:** Renewed mining activity at Swift's Creek area in Tambo Valley - 14 quartz prospecting claims registered at Long Gully.
- April 1887:** First reef opened at Bald Hill Creek - Cornstalk Reef - second reef named Change Reef. (Flett, pp. 174-5)
- June 1887:** Best yields of gold from Swift's Creek reefing area - crushed by Forsyth's battery, Gum Forest. 'A great desideratum in this district is the erection of a mill for the treatment of pyrites' - quartz highly charged with pyrites below the water line.
- July 1887:** Peter Forsyth found a reef on what was to become the famous Markey line - Lone Hand mine.<sup>20</sup>
- September 1887:** About 80 miners at work at Bald Hill Creek and Long Gully - 40 claims, also applications for 8 leases. Angora Co. battery awaited. Lady McGregor mine, Gum Forest, crushed 100 tons for 206 oz - best-developed reef in division. MS advised that a large area of auriferous country between Bald Hill Creek, Long Gully, and Swift's Creek Junction be withdrawn from land selection - 'otherwise future mining operations in these localities will be vexatiously impeded.'
- September 1887:** Alluvial workings in Tambo valley hitherto confined to western watershed - Swift's Creek, Haunted Stream, Shady Creek. Gold found in Tambo Flats near Bindi, but not opened up. Payable returns from terraces below Doctor's Flat. (Stirling, J., 'Notes on the Geological Structure of the Tambo Valley', Appendix G to MSR, Sept 1887, pp. 80-85, plus map)
- November 1887:** Bald Hills Creek - tributary of Tambo River, rising at Mt Gingermunjie on Main Dividing Range, about 6 miles south of Omeo - about 30 miners at work. Long Gully - most westerly tributary of Swift's Creek - enters Swift's Creek at Government surveyed township of Tongio West (now inhabited by a few resident Chinese miners\*) - about 30 miners at work. (Stirling, J., 'Preliminary Notes on the Geology of Bald Hills Creek and Long Gully, Omeo', Appendix G to MSR, Dec 1887)\*A Chinese community had developed at what became known as Chinaman's Crossing (now Ben's Crossing) at Swift's Creek during the 1860s - by the 1890s only 20 or so Chinese remained.<sup>21</sup>
- 1887:** Cornstalk mine sold to Bald Hill Co.<sup>22</sup>
- December 1887:** Bald Hill Creek Co. (Ball) erecting battery, constructing dams, &c. Shamrock, Lord of the Hills, and Chance quartz claims at Long Gully purchased by G. Smart of Melbourne for £2,000 - intends to erect 10-head battery on Swift's Creek, about 2 miles below claims. Stone from Long Gully presently crushed at Forsyth's Lady Macgregor battery – unprofitable because of distance.

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20 Fairweather (2), p. 38

21 Fairweather (2), p. 118

22 Fairweather (2), p. 159

- 1888:** King of the Forest Reef discovered on divide between heads of Odell's and New Rush creeks (Gum Forest area) - followed by discovery of Pheasant Reef. (Flett, p. 176)
- March 1888:** Bald Hill Creek Co. battery started crushing - christened the 'Pioneer'. Initially 5-head; further 15 head added later in year - steam powered. Battery situated on banks of Bald Hill Creek, just below junction with Jasper Creek - water obtained from a well near mouth of Jasper Creek. Ore was brought from the mine by combination of sleigh and dray - one section of the dray track was corduroy.<sup>23</sup>
- March 1888:** About 160 miners at Bald Hill Creek and Long Gully. Shamrock Co., Long Gully, will soon erect machinery - now on ground. Albion claim about to be sold. Bald Hill Creek Co.'s first crushing gave 2\_ oz/ton.
- April 1888:** Telegram from Geo. W. Forsyth of Gum Forest, Swift's Creek, Omeo, Gipps Land, stating that his father, Peter, wanted me to erect Denny and Watson's pans for treating quartz tailings for gold.<sup>24</sup>
- May 1888:** Only surface shows crushed so far from Bald Hill Creek and Long Gully claims - yields averaged between 8 and 30 oz to the ton.<sup>25</sup>
- May 1888:** Forsyth's tailing works - John Gail building waterwheel to work the pan - 40 ft diam - Henry Morgan secured wheel pit - found that, according to plan, the Muller in pan would revolve the wrong way, so made alterations - have stand of pan in position and pans secured, shafts and pulleys in place and plumer [sic] blocks bolted down - mill completed and posts of shed up - work took about three weeks.<sup>26</sup>
- June 1888:** At Bald Hill Creek, Long Gully, and Swift's Creek - little work done - most claimholders shepherding, hoping to sell. Ball and Smart (Shamrock) battery, Swift's Creek, nearly complete - 'altogether a new invention': 'what is termed a pulveriser' - no stampers, but a stone breaker, Chilian mill, and revolving discs, together with Denny's pans. Best claims in Long Gully: Never Can Tell, Red Jacket (north of Shamrock), and Rose of Australia. Forsyth's battery recently added 2 Denny's pans to treat about 2,000 tons of tailings.
- June 1888:** Henry Morgan erected pulveriser at Tongio West/Long Gully for Messrs Ball and Smart - Lloyd and Shelton building in boiler - HM & L&S living in old Chinese hut belonging to company - got Denny and Watson's pans in pit.<sup>27</sup>
- July 1888:** Ball & Smart's works - building up engine bed and foundation for stone cracker.<sup>28</sup>
- August 1888:** Ball & Smart's works - got steam up in one boiler and worked engine - engine does not seem strong enough to drive machinery - head of piston broke, damaging cylinder - engineers patched up machinery - came to see if engine capable of driving machinery, stone cracker, disks, and four pans.<sup>29</sup>
- August 1888:** Ball and Smart took out Mt Hepburn lease - carted stone to Ryan's Brave George battery at Tongio West.<sup>30</sup>
- 1888:** Brave George battery erected just below road at Tongio West, at the lower end of the (now?) sports ground - 5-head, perhaps later increased to 10-head.<sup>31</sup>

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23 Christie, p. 39; Fairweather (2), p. 159  
 24 Morgan  
 25 *Omeo Telegraph*, 24 May 1888  
 26 Morgan  
 27 Morgan  
 28 Morgan  
 29 Morgan  
 30 Christie, p. 43

- September 1888:** Ball & Smart's works - started crushing, with power only to run one pan and rest of machinery.<sup>32</sup>
- September 1888:** Bald Hill Creek Co., Lady McGregor (Forsyth), and Ball and Smart (Hepburn Co.) of Long Gully - 'the only companies that have done anything like work'. Ball and Smart suspended operations - patent pulverising machinery proved unworkable. Bald Hill Creek Co. to erect another 15-head battery with three Denny's pans.
- October 1888:** Ball and Smart's machinery is a failure and abandoned - men off work except a few in mines - partnership likely to be dissolved between Smart and Ball, as the former accuses latter of dragging him into a test of a worthless patent (Dr Cox's) in which Ball was interested - whole enterprise carried on with Smart's money.<sup>33</sup>
- December 1888:** Bald Hill Creek Co. - found new lode at depth of 110 feet - 'The theory hitherto promulgated by scientists and experts, that the reefs in this locality would not continue to any depth, has, by this discovery, been exploded'. Mining in Long Gully languishing for want of machinery. Several parcels of stone crushed at Lady McGregor battery (Gum Forest).
- February 1889:** Smart & Ball, Long Gully dissolved partnership - both erecting separate batteries - Henry Morgan engaged by Smart.<sup>34</sup>
- March 1889:** Martin's new battery at Bald Hill Creek is a failure - can only get power to work 15 head of stamps and one pan out of 20 head and two pans - Martin not likely to last long there.<sup>35</sup>
- March 1889:** Absence of machinery and lack of capital has caused depression in mining in the district. Now 3 batteries under construction in Long Gully - will 'make things lively in the gully' - and one at Bald Hill Creek. Shamrock GMC, Long Gully - 600-600 tons of stone awaiting battery. Never-can-tell GMC - 2 leases on Dandenong (Dundee) Spur, Long Gully - tunnel - battery site and water right in Springs Gully, 1,250 yards from tunnel - reservoir near battery site - tramroad from tunnel to battery.
- 1889:** Never Can Tell GMC battery - ex-Rob Roy mine, Haunted Stream - battery foundations high up Chance Gully (1975) may be site of NCT battery,<sup>36</sup>
- April 1889:** Rose Syndicate, Bald Hill Creek, erecting plant. Smart's battery, Long Gully, started - 10-head and two pans - quite a gathering of local residents - battery erected at junction of Swift's Creek and Long Gully, the site of former (unsuccessful) Ball and Smart battery - new battery ex-Mt Birregun.<sup>37</sup>
- 1889:** Hope battery on Rose of Australia claim - 10-head battery - later sold to Eckberg and McCulloch, and finally became the Warden Co. battery.<sup>38</sup>
- 1889:** Rose battery at the Enterprise mine, upper reaches of Bald Hill Creek, owned by Lawrence brothers - 12-head, steam-powered - boiler removed to Ezard's sawmill during WWI.<sup>39</sup>

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31 Fairweather (2), p. 40  
 32 Morgan  
 33 Morgan  
 34 Morgan  
 35 Morgan  
 36 Fairweather (2), p. 39  
 37 Morgan; Christie, p. 40  
 38 Fairweather (2), p. 40  
 39 Fairweather (2), p. 166



- May 1889:** Geo. Smart died - 'He went to his mines this morning in company with Mr Pearse, a mining speculator, and in a mistake, took a drink out of a bottle at the mouth of a tunnel which he supposed to contain tea, but which proved to be rackerock oil or oil of almonds. This was at noon, and at 5 o'clock, he was a corpse.'<sup>40</sup>
- May 1889:** Blanket tables laid at Smart's battery - shed erected over same.<sup>41</sup>
- May-June 1889:** Henry Morgan assisted in erection of Pegler's battery, Rose of Australia Reef.<sup>42</sup>
- June 1889:** Henry Morgan laying 480 yards of incline tramway for Rose Syndicate, Bald Hill Creek.<sup>43</sup>
- June 1889:** Tongio West goldfield (whole area of Cassilis, Tongio West and Bald Hill Creek) lies about 10 miles SE of Omeo - begins on summit of main dividing range and runs S to junction of Swift's Creek with Long Gully, where Tongio West township is situated. Reefs south of Swift's Creek - Hepburn, Smart Boys, and Corduroy - worked more than 20 years ago with good results - evidence on ground of a large amount of work having been done - crushing machinery removed years ago and field abandoned. Reefs now under lease - machinery about to be erected and mines reworked. Main reef is Smart Boys - 45 feet wide - battery to be erected beside creek. Goldfield north of Swift's Creek discovered 4 years ago - large no. of leases taken up about 2 years ago. High yielding reefs - eg. Black Pup, Wallaby, Never-can-Tell, Dargo. Country too steep for vehicles - stone packed on horses for about 15 miles to Forsyth's (Lady McGregor) mill, at head of Swift's Creek - stone promising to yield less than 2 oz/ton was left untouched. Now 3 working batteries on field - 2 more under construction. Long Gully reefs: Lord of the Hills and Shamrock reefs - battery on Swift's Creek. Never-can-Tell Reef, on Dundee Spur - N-c-T Co. erecting battery (ex Rob Roy Co., Haunted Stream). Golden Wattle Reef, on N side of Long Gully - discovered 18 mths ago - likely to be one of most permanent reefs on field - traced for over \_ mile - battery nearly completed. A number of leases lately applied for in Long Gully - to be placed on English market. Bald Hill Creek reefs - lie to N of Long Gully reefs. Angora Reef - discovered 4 years ago - battery combines stampers with Watson and Denny pans. Rose Reef, W of Angora battery under construction close to claim (Rose Syndicate - different from Rose of Australia Syndicate). Centenary and Change reefs - very close together - surface workings only so far - tunnel now being cut. (Robinson, H., 'Report on the Tongio West Gold-field', in MSR, June 1889, pp. 30-31)
- 1889+:** Quartz at Cassilis proved very intractable - the sulphide ore, though valuable, was very difficult to treat, despite numerous different methods being tried - 'The oxidised surface portions of the many lodes in the district generally assayed several ounces of gold, but only a small proportion of this was recoverable by stamp milling ... At comparatively shallow depths, though, assays of one ounce or over were very common, the free gold disappeared and recoveries by stamp milling and amalgamation become unpayable.'<sup>44</sup>
- June 1889:** Long Gully promises to be largest mining centre in district. Two batteries at work there. Rose of Australia Syndicate and late G. Smart's (Lord of the Hills and Shamrock reefs). Rose of Aust crushing for public at 10s per ton - first opportunity for claimholders in Long Gully to get stone crushed at a reasonable rate. Bald Hill Creek United suspended operations, pending reorganisation of company.

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40 Morgan

41 Morgan

42 Morgan

43 Morgan

44 Christie, p. 43; Rose, W.j., *Report upon the Cassilis Properties of the National Gold Mining and Milling Co. Pty Ltd*, 1932

- 1889:** Long Gully township named Cassilis, after the station of the same name - most people still referred to the area as Long Gully. Mining township at Bald Hill Creek named Nugong - smaller than Cassilis.<sup>45</sup>
- September 1889:** Henry Morgan contracted by Rose Syndicate for 200 yards of flat tramway and one hopper of 25-ton capacity. Peter Forsyth altering Denny pan so as to have it work like a Wheeler pan. Rose Syndicate unable to pay for work done.<sup>46</sup>
- September 1889:** Mining in healthier condition than for years. Bald Hill Creek Co. crushed 40 tons of **roasted** stone for 94 oz - proves that a great deal of gold has hitherto been lost for want of proper treatment. Never-can-Tell Co., Long Gully - plant erected. Lady McGregor (Forsyth) mine - battery operating. Rich silver lode discovered at Riley's Creek, near Gum Forest - 640-acre lease applied for - ore also contains payable gold. Unable to ascertain crushing results from Brave George battery, the property of the late Geo Smart.
- December 1889:** Good wages being made at Long Gully, Bald Hill Creek, and O'Dell's Creek.
- 1889:** Hundred of the leases at Long Gully and Bald Creek lapsed in 1889. (Flett, p. 175)
- 1889:** Just before discovery of Markey's line of reef, mining took a down turn because oxidised zone had been passed in most mines and there was no satisfactory way of treating the mineralised ores found in the sulphide zone. Some mines closed down, to reopen later when more adequate plant was available.<sup>47</sup>
- 1890-91:** James Markey discovered Markey's line of reef on steep dividing range between Bald Hill Creek and Long Gully, on the Long Gully fall. First crushing of 77 tons gave 408 oz. Leases pegged along reef - all found to be payable - richest claim was Ryan brothers'. Discovery of Markey's Reef was the catalyst for the major developments at Cassilis during the 1890s.<sup>48</sup>
- 1890:** Cassilis mine discovered by Howard & McLaren on high ridge above town - initially gave poor yields, due to primitive gold-saving techniques.<sup>49</sup>
- 1890:** Cassilis ground originally held by a co-operative party, who worked a small amount of the upper portion of the reef for the free gold it obtained.<sup>50</sup>
- 1890:** All Nations installed battery (ex-Mountain Maid, Omeo) to Upper Swift's Creek.<sup>51</sup>
- 1890-93:** Eight parties working Gum Forest reefs area in 1890. John Forsyth (son of Peter?) had battery on Lady McGregor Reef near Riley's Creek. Odells's Creek (named after former mining registrar) reefs busy in 1892. Highland Chief Reef discovered. Dead Bird (ex Golden King) mine re-opened. New road built to area from Boggy Creek along 'Bowman's Track' - Omeo railway mooted. New reefs discovered in 1893 - Woolybutt, Crisps, Monte Cristo, and one at Marthadale. (Flett, p. 176)
- 1890s:** Old Stop mine (Hayward) installed battery near O'Dell's/Swifts Creek junction - later known as Dyson's battery.<sup>52</sup>
- 1892:** Good alluvial gold re-discovered in Long Gully by Dolan and party. (Flett, p. 176)

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45 Flett, p. 175; Christie, p. 42

46 Morgan

47 Fairweather (2), p. 36

48 Christie, p. 43; Flett, pp. 175-6

49 Christie, p. 48

50 Clark

51 Fairweather (2), p. 203

52 Fairweather (2), p. 203

- 1892:** Warden GMC (formed 1887) purchased Never Can Tell claim - battery (10-head) removed to Bingo.<sup>53</sup>
- 1893:** Rich reefs found at head of Sheepstation Creek (Brookville) - until 1893, Brookville area commonly called Scotch Hollow because of large number of Scotsmen there - reflected in mine names: Highland Chief, Highland Creek, Rob Roy, Aberdeen, Scotchman, & Lady McGregor.<sup>54</sup>
- 1893:** Mt Hepburn GMC financed by English capital - installed Otis rotary crusher driven by 16-hp engine.<sup>55</sup>
- 1893:** Henry Morgan engaged to erect Otis ore crusher for Mt Hepburn GMC - tramway 18ft high (trestles) for 57 yards at mill - steam-powered plant.<sup>56</sup>
- 1893:** McCulloch & Eckberg purchased the Hope battery and installed first chlorination plant at Cassilis.<sup>57</sup>
- 1894-1900:** Mt Hepburn mine - Otis ball crushing mill (one of first in Victoria) with amalgamating plates and blanket tables - 5,000 tons were fine-ground for 1,675 oz, a better return than would have been achieved by a normal stamp battery - however, the tailings were found to contain 6 dwt/ton, due to heavy mineralisation - in 1896, new company installed a traditional 20-head stamp battery to replace the Otis mill - achieved poorer returns than the Otis mill and simple amalgamation - only 207 oz were produced from 2,893 tons of ore crushed -company also installed a large boiler, engine, and 60-ft brick chimney stack, all of which were found redundant and not used - in 1897, a small (25 ton/week capacity) cyanide plant was installed and worked with moderate success - in 1898, a larger (180 ton/week) cyanide plant was constructed by the Australian Gold Recovery Co., using the Siemens-Halske electrolytic precipitation method - cost £7,000 - managed by Alsop brothers - treated about 8,000 tons of tailings from Mt Hepburn and other mines for 3,200 oz - plant failed - the stone-walled foundations of cyanide vats can still be seen today - company ceased work and sold battery in 1900.<sup>58</sup>
- 1894:** Cassilis mines include: Rose mine, working by tunnel - 12-head battery, blanket tables, two Halley's percussion tables, Berdan, tailings pit. Bald Hill Creek United, tributers working by tunnel - steam-powered 20-head battery, Denny and Watson's pan. Mount Hepburn, Long Gully (Mr Ball) - crushing by large-size Otis ball Crusher (Kugelmühle) - Mt Hepburn ore averaging 8 dwt/ton. Ryan's/Brave George battery, Long Gully - 10-head battery, 5 head crushing stone from Mt Hepburn mine, 5 head crushing from Ralston's Evening Star claim - Denny and Watson's pan, blanket table - charging 17s 6d per ton for crushing and treating with D & W pan - Evening Star claim paid a further 10s/ton for packing stone to mill. McCulloch and Ekberg's treatment plant, Long Gully: 10-head battery, hydraulic separator, Fruevanners, large settling pit - intend to treat tailings from pit by the Cyanogen process. The predominant peculiarity of the mines of the Tongio West Gold-fields, Bald Hill creek, and at Long Gully District is that the quartz vein-stone contains even at shallow depths a large percentage of mineral sulphides of different metals...Of late a number of claims that had been abandoned have been taken up, their value having become known from the returns obtained at the batteries and the extra amount paid for the concentrates by Messrs Parkes, McCulloch, and Ekberg, and others. Hence the erection of reduction plants in this district on the plan of Messrs McCulloch and Ekberg for the purpose of treating the dressed ores by chlorination, and the tailings therefrom by the Cyanogen process already described, or by smelting (should in depth the ore become more plumbiferous) is of great importance and should be encouraged... Mr Ball has made at Cassilis a new departure in the reduction of the

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53 Fairweather (2), pp. 93, 108  
 54 Fairweather (2), p. 175  
 55 Fairweather (2), p. 81  
 56 Morgan  
 57 Fairweather (2), p. 79  
 58 Christie, pp. 43-6; Griffiths, p. 28

quartz gangue by introducing at the Mount Hepburn Mill a large-sized Otis Ore Crusher... The stamping mill establishment of Messrs McCulloch and Ekberg is at present the best fitted plant to treat the sulphide ores as regards dressing, and will probably shortly be furnished also with the necessary furnaces, apparatus, &c., to work them on metallurgical principles...<sup>59</sup>

**1894-1900:** Ground purchased by Cassilis GMC - erected small five-head battery only yards from mouth of tunnel - blanket tables and tyers were judged sufficient for concentrating purposes - the pyritic minerals caught in these crude appliances were roasted in a reverberatory furnace, then treated by the Muncktell process of chlorination, with the exception that a saturated, and not a dilute, solution of chlorine was used - subsequently 2 Halley tables were erected with more satisfactory results - mine is specially rich in heavy metallic minerals ('probably one of the most refractory ores in the world') - company not only able to carry on development work, but paid dividends - 'Considering that not one colour of gold is to be seen in the lower levels of the mine, and not one particle becomes visible by panning off, such a record is without parallel in the history of the State.'<sup>60</sup>

**mid 1890s:** Mines Department took hundreds of men to Tambo area - rebuilt old huts of Tongio West. (Flett, p. 176)

**1895:** Golden King or Dead Bird mine, Brookville, made news in Melbourne papers and helped spark rush to Brookville - located 5 miles along track running from Reynolds' battery on Riley's Creek to Stirling, and right beside the track - a crushing at Forsyth's battery in October 1895 gave 304 oz/12\_ tons.<sup>61</sup>

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59 Rosales, pp. 7-10; Fairweather (2), p. 40

60 Clark; Fairweather (2), p. 43

61 Fairweather (2), pp. 187-8

- 1895:** Mount Hepburn is most remarkable mine on the field - the old stopes form a huge open chasm, extending from tunnel level to surface, and it is stated that 6,000 tons treated averaged 7 dwt per ton, an equal or even greater amount being lost. The appliances consist of a ball mill and short tables, without any concentrating plant, so it is no wonder that gold is lost.<sup>62</sup>
- 1895:** Johnston's Sunbeam battery erected at Brookville.<sup>63</sup>
- 1895+:** Character of Brookville area was that it had many good-yielding small mines, rather than one or two big mines - mines included Conservative, Richmond, Cripple's Reward (very rich), Grand United (Riley's Creek), Pheasant, Kangaroo, Federation, Doubtful.<sup>64</sup>
- 1895:** Bald Hill Creek Co. wound up and sold to Australian Ore Reduction Co. who treated the tailings at a site near the mouth of Dip Creek - Siemens Halske precipitation chlorination process was used - furnace built at battery, bricks made by Highland and Wigg - their kiln was at Swift's Creek - bricks from the furnace were gradually removed and used elsewhere - tailings sand was later worked by Snellgrove (he also built furnace) and also cyanided. The only relic at Cornstalk/Bald Hill Creek Co. mine in 1975 was a vertical boiler, which once provided power for winding gear.<sup>65</sup>
- 1895-6:** Rich reefs discovered between old Eureka Reef at Black Spring and Notch Hill. Brookville township formed on Sheep Station Creek, 1896. (Flett, p. 176)
- 1895-1900:** Highland Chief Reef discovered by G. Forsyth at Brookville - company floated in 1896, attracted considerable English capital - 10-head battery, steam-powered (Thompson's of Castlemaine) - cyanide plant (two 80-ton sand vats, one 14\_-ft solution sump, one 6\_-ft reservoir vat, 15 charcoal filters, and one 14\_-ft mixer - battery house (28 ft high) and engine room, assay house of 4 rooms, with smelting room and 4 furnaces, poppet-head and brace 60 ft high, tramline - all added 1897 - plant sold to Brunswick Syndicate, 1900.<sup>66</sup>
- 1896:** Brunswick Syndicate (English) purchased Chance mine.<sup>67</sup>
- 1896-7:** Warden GMC purchased Eckberg & McCulloch 10-head battery, on bank of Gray's Creek - plant comprised five Frue and Triumph vanners, two Watson & Denny grinding pan, flue and chimney stack, also chlorination and cyanide plants - purchased Otis rotary mill from Mt Hepburn Co. - electric light put into battery and mine. The company's great disadvantage was that the mine was on a high ridge to the east of Cassilis, whilst battery was at mouth of a gully which headed on the opposite side of the ridge. Ore was sleighed up the hill, tipped down a chute to the head of the gully, then carted by drays to the battery. Most mines on the Markey line of reef crushed ore at Warden battery.<sup>68</sup>

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62 Murray, p. 3  
 63 Fairweather (2), p. 186  
 64 Fairweather (2), p. 190  
 65 Fairweather (2), p. 161  
 66 Fairweather (2), p. pp. 181-5  
 67 Fairweather (2), p. 79  
 68 Fairweather (2), pp. 40, 94-5, 103

- 1896-1900:** 'The Mount Hepburn Company Limited was floated on the premise of huge ore reserves and simple metallurgy, neither of which were investigated properly at the time, and both of which were quickly found to be incorrect.' The company was formed in England with a capital of £200,000, of which only £50,000 was available initially for working capital – shareholders lost some £180,000.<sup>69</sup>
- 1898:** Cassilis is a field, which produces a fair amount of gold. The stone, however, is refractory, and up to the present cannot be said to have been dealt with successfully locally.<sup>70</sup>
- 1898:** Jan Mayen mine, Brookville - at head of Perseverance Creek, on ridge between the creek and Bullocky Gully - erected battery 1898, ex-Mt Taylor, Bulumwaal district - battery manufactured by Anderson & Son of Richmond (installed at Mt Taylor in 1896), locomotive-type boiler, 10-hp Hornsby engine.<sup>71</sup>
- 1898:** Parnell battery (Rebecchi bros) erected on Perseverance Creek, Brookville, 1898 – below Perseverance mine.<sup>72</sup>
- 1898-9:** Cassilis GMC took over Cassilis North Co. which included Shamrock and Sons of Freedom leases - in 1899, got 1000 oz from 350 tons - paid dividends.<sup>73</sup>
- 1898-9:** Highland Chief (Dawson) Co. installed battery, Pelton wheel, and cable tramway - mine located on the fall into the easterly branch of New Rush Creek - later known as Australian Alps mine. Around same time, Scotchman mine, also owned by Dawson, was on ridge between the two branches of New Rush Creek - steam-driven battery - engine said to still be on site in 1975.<sup>74</sup>
- 1898-1902:** Perseverance mine worked for longer than any other Brookville mine - located on Perseverance Creek, tributary of Sheepstation - 1902 yielded £8,000 worth of gold – 5-head battery.<sup>75</sup>
- 1899:** Only signs of once-flourishing Swift's Creek field are decaying huts, now inhabited by a few Chinese.<sup>76</sup>

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69 Griffiths, p. 31

70 *Australian Mining Standard*, 5 May 1898

71 Fairweather (2), pp. 185-6; Fairweather (3), p. 59

72 Fairweather (2), p. 186

73 Christie, pp. 48-9

74 Fairweather (2), p. 203

75 Fairweather (2), p. 191

76 *Australian Mining Standard*, 1 June 1899, p. 75

- 1899:** Cassilis - 'This place as a goldfield will last for generations, the drawbacks to working giving it a longer life. Nearly all the creeks and spurs surrounding these places are auriferous, and one could not travel for more than a few miles without either seeing a battery or deserted shaft.' 'If the same amount of capital and energy were expended under similar conditions on the Cassilis that have been expended on the Bendigo Reefs, the former soon would be more famous than the latter.' Four batteries on the field, two crushing for public - also chlorination and cyanide works - best developed mines are Cassilis, Chance, Warden, and Mt Markey - Mt Markey the richest in district - Warden Co. works consist of 10-head battery driven by steam power, two Halley tables, and 4 Frue vanners, also a chlorination plant (ex-Cassilis Co.?) - Ryan Brothers (working Mt Markey & Oversight mines) have 10-head battery (Brave George) on the creek - other mines include the Just in Time, Evening Star, Glengarry, Grassmere (eastern side of Long Gully, on Markey line), and Rough and Ready. Ryan brothers' Oversight mine, adjoining the Warden and working from the same tunnel, has produced over £50,000 worth of gold - one crushing of 250 tons yielded 1,000 oz.<sup>77</sup>
- 1899-1905:** Jirnkee Sluicing Co. (English co.) formed to work alluvial bed of Long Gully and Swift's Creek - lease of 185 acres comprised four mile of creeks from Warden battery at Cassilis to Chinaman's Crossing below Tongio West - alluvial deposits had been worked since 1851 (estimated 75,000 oz obtained, to 1890), but water supply had always been a problem - water race from Wentworth River commenced in 1899 - longest privately constructed water race in Victoria - total length of race reserve was 58 miles 38 chains, including one mile 37 chains of pipeline at Tongio West - completed in 1900 - cost £14,000, rather than the £4,000 originally estimated - operated by dredge, commencing in 1901 - race provided insufficient supply of water and dredge was unsuitable and inadequate for the type of deposit worked - instead of the treating a projected 500,000 cubic yards per year for a return of 25,000 oz, the operation had treated only 118,000 cubic yards for a total of 756 oz after five years - closed in 1905 - net loss on the venture estimated at around £40,000.<sup>78</sup>
- 1900-03:** Chance mine equipped with plant ex-Highland Chief, Brookville - 10-head battery, steam engine and boiler, rock breaker, Wilfley tables, Edwards mechanical furnace, and chlorination plant - battery commenced crushing in 1901, using water from Jirnkee water-race - problems with chlorination process in 1902, changed to new process - after Jirnkee race closed down, sank water shaft and pumped to battery - mine closed in 1903.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> *Australian Mining Standard*, 1 June 1899, pp. 66, 76-7; Fairweather (2), p. 103

<sup>78</sup> Christie, pp. 53-5; Griffiths, p. 24

<sup>79</sup> Fairweather (2), p. 80

- 1900-05:** Cassilis GMC replaced 5-head battery with 20-head (ex Mt Hepburn mine), with concentrating appliances and extensive chlorination works - installed at new site at foot of range in Power's Gully - water race from Swift's Creek being cut, to ensure larger supply in summer - sulphide concentrates from blanket tables contained as much as 25 oz/ton - sent to Germany for treatment - grinding pans later added - 1901: cyanide plant enlarged and modernised, with vats as large as 100 tons capacity - 1902: installed new air compressor, constructed foundry, and purchased Ryan's Brave George battery (10-head) which enabling them to secure water rights on Swift's Creek - converted Ryan's battery into foundry furnace - then added dynamo to supply electricity to mine - one engine operated the foundry, mechanical furnaces, dynamo and workshop - another engine worked amalgamating barrel and cyanide plant - concentrates were roasted in a reverberatory furnace and treated by chlorination - after conversion to electricity, the chlorination process was changed from the barrel type to the open vat system - seven lead-lined vats, in which chloride of lime and sulphuric acid was used - tailings and slimes were stored for treatment.<sup>80</sup>
- 1900:** Custom treatment works constructed by Alsop brothers at Mt Hepburn mine - purchased existing plant and installed a large desulphurising roasting furnace with long ground flue connected to the 60-ft chimney - trap doors at intervals along side of flue, for removal of arsenic - reverted part of cyanide works to original cyaniding (zinc shavings) process - mineral tailings were roasted, cyanided, then drained and filtered - treated tailings from as far away as Sunnyside and Glen Wills (Alsops had other works at those places) - also treated sand from Ryan's Brave George battery, which was just across creek from Mt Hepburn mine - 2,500 tons of concentrates and tailings yielded about 5,000.<sup>81</sup>
- 1900s:** Cassilis treatment works supplied by limeworks at Bindi.<sup>82</sup>
- 1902:** Warden mine had so far produced 2,096 oz from 2,181 tons.<sup>83</sup>
- 1902:** Scots Perseverance Co. purchased Perseverance mine, Brookville - added further 5-heads to battery (total of 10) & cyanide plant.<sup>84</sup>
- 1903:** Mining at Cassilis less prosperous than previous year owing to falling off in Cassilis Co. yields, Warden mine not striking payable stone in lower levels, and suspension of operations at the Chance mine. Main mines are Cassilis, Warden, King Cassilis, Lone Hand, and Grassmere. Cassilis Co. plant includes classifiers, Wilfley tables, furnaces, chlorination and cyanide works, capable of treating 480 tons per week, also twelve rock drill plant.<sup>85</sup>
- 1903:** Formation of Mt Cassilis GMC - lease on south side of King Cassilis, on fall into Riley's Creek - mine formerly known as Snowstorm or Himalaya.<sup>86</sup>
- 1904:** Lady McGregor mine, Gum Forest, re-opened and new battery erected by Avery bros - 5-head and Pelton wheel (later government battery, moved in 1930s - now private land?)<sup>87</sup>
- 1904:** Much improved performance from Cassilis mines. Principal mines: Cassilis, King Cassilis, Warden, Lady McGregor, Jirnkee Hydraulic Sluicing Co. - also great number of co-operative and small parties. Cassilis mine situated on Mt Cassilis, about 1 mile from battery and about 1,200 ft above it - ore very refractory and difficult to treat, containing no fewer than six different minerals associated with the

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80 Christie p. 48-9; Clark; Fairweather (2), p. 50  
 81 Griffiths, p. 29; Fairweather (2), p. 87  
 82 Fairweather (2), p. 52  
 83 Fairweather (2), p. 97  
 84 Fairweather (2), p. 191  
 85 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1903  
 86 Fairweather (2), p. 90  
 87 Fairweather (2), p. 196



gold - about 140 men employed - output is about 1,100 tons/month, average yield 1,000 oz/month - ten rock drills going continuously - stone taken from mine by horse tram about half a mile to a gravity tram-hopper, from there dropped by gravity tram to mill - galena taken from Wilfley tables and sent to Dapto Smelting works - concentrates put through Edwards' furnace - chlorination works comprises seven x 11-ton leaching vats, seven precipitating vats, and six other accessory vats - Munktell process in operation - each vat of ore takes from 10 to 12 days to treat - cyanide plant consists of five 80-ton vats - three boilers run plant - two Cornish, 26 x 6 ft 6 in, and one under-fired multitubular, 14 ft x 5 ft 6 in - whole plant and offices lit with electricity generated from a Parker continuous-current dynamo running at 110 volts. King Cassilis mine - small plant, only capable of treating 20 tons/week - 28 men employed. Warden Co. situated on Mt Markey, about 1 mile from Cassilis township - working by shaft. Lady McGregor mine, on Charlotte Spur, about 4 miles from Tongio West - worked some years ago with good results, but ore became heavily mineralised and refractory and mine deserted - Avery bros now opening up mine - plant nearly completed: 5-head battery, classifiers, and cyanide works - plant driven by 40-ft overshot water wheel, 2 ft 6 in breast. Jirnkee Hydraulic Sluicing Co. extended water race to Wentworth River, distance of 57 miles - plant consists of hydraulic jet elevator and two 2\_-inch Giant nozzles.<sup>34</sup> co-operative and small parties on Cassilis field at various depths to 250 ft - about 600 tons treated during year for return of about 700 oz.<sup>88</sup>

- 1904:** Nugong (Bald Hill Creek) - only mine of importance is that of Cornstalk Co-operative party - shaft down 210 ft - 10-head battery, reverberatory furnace and cyanide works - new boiler now being built in and preparations for small winding plant to replace whip - also Wilfley table - present concentrating appliances are old round buddle and blanket tables. Gippsland Gold Extracting Co. treating sand in creek, sent down years ago by parties working in locality - still large quantities of sand to treat - paying well - method of treating is roasting and cyaniding.<sup>89</sup>
- 1904:** Brookville - Scot's Perseverance mine - worked by tunnel - 10-head battery and cyanide works.<sup>90</sup>
- 1904:** Mullock heap of Lone Hand mine was crushed - hand-picked ore gave 3 oz/ton, bulk of heap gave 5 dwt - other early mullock heaps were probably also crushed at this time.<sup>91</sup>
- 1904-6:** King Cassilis GMC leased Mt Hepburn mine and treatment works - modified plant to incorporate a Victorian-developed Merton furnace, Dodge rock breaker, Niagara pulveriser and Krup ball mill - treated 1,890 tons of ore from Mt Hepburn mine for 1,379 oz.<sup>92</sup>
- 1905:** Mt Hepburn/King Cassilis mine had yielded 1852 oz from 4,172 tons since 1888.<sup>93</sup>

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88 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1904  
 89 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1904  
 90 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1904  
 91 Fairweather (2), p. 35  
 92 Griffiths, p. 29  
 93 Fairweather (2), p. 88

- 1905:** Cassilis mine treated 13,450 tons for 12,032 oz gold - 130 men employed. Additions to plant: new gravity tram, 2,450 ft long, for lowering ore to battery - small engine for driving concentrators and pans - one Hornsby oil-engine for driving furnaces, conveyors, elevators, machines in shop, dynamo, and blowers (cheaper and more efficient than coke) - foundry, testing-room, and cupola furnace, enabling company to 'work up all the old iron and steel obtainable in the district, making a great saving in the manufacturing of numerous parts of the plant' - telephone system. King Cassilis Co. made little progress, due to small reducing plant and constant breakdown of dry crusher, which does not appear to be suitable or strong enough for treating such hard, dense mineral ore as exists in this mine - new Merton's furnace and Krupp mill about to be installed - better results should follow - large bodies of ore in sight. Warden Co. worked on tribute, after co. made big outlay then were unable to raise capital to sink main shaft and further prospect. Chance mine, formerly worked by English co., which spent large amount of capital with poor results, recently taken up by two men who have found payable stone. Also Welcome and Grassmere mines and fourteen other small parties, from two to six men, working in locality. Jirnee GMC unsatisfactory - water shortages and poor ground - work stopped while co. being reconstructed.<sup>94</sup>
- 1905:** New winding plant being erected at Cornstalk mine, Nugong - card concentrator added to battery. Large quantity of sand treated at Gippsland Gold Extracting Co. cyanide works.<sup>95</sup>
- 1905:** King Cassilis mine working on a small scale - lower adit being driven. Cassilis mine - treatment works in valley, 'quite a model plant' - mine on top of range, connected to treatment works by self-acting tramway - classified concentrates sent to Dapto, NSW, but transport and other charges very heavy - even so, a handsome profit is obtained - pioneer mine of district 'and if it succeeds as it promises, the result will be the opening up of many lodes that on the surface yielded well, but which could not be worked in the sulphide zone.'<sup>96</sup>
- 1905-16:** Cassilis mine averaging 22 dwt 14 gr per ton - shortage of timber and water was a problem - constructed hydro-electric scheme, with power station on Victoria River, completed in 1907 - by 1909, all old engines replaced with electric motors - ore becoming increasingly refractory, requiring additional modification of plant - now had 20-head battery, amalgamating plant, Wilfley table and Edwards furnaces - Wilfley table tailings were reground and cyanided - galena concentrates collected and sold - holding dam for hydro scheme was never completed, so water ran out during 1910 drought - slime treatment plant installed in 1911, but not successful - by 1912, only six men were employed at the mine - concentrates could not be sent to Germany during WWI - government grant to develop mine in 1914 - little work done - mine closed in 1916 - between 1898-1916, 114,044 tons yielded 93,385 oz, average 16.4 dwt/ton - mine was worked by adit and internal shaft to a maximum depth of 1,300 ft.<sup>97</sup>

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94 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1905

95 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1905

96 Dunn (1907/2)

97 Christie, pp. 49-50

- 1906:** Cassilis Co. - 170 men employed - in all 2,362 ft of ground opened up, 14,190 tons of ore treated for 12,641 oz - reverberatory furnace added to plant, for roasting galena concentrates before shipment to Cockle Creek - hydro-electric power plant being installed at Cobungra River - will mean a big saving in firewood. King Cassilis mine - results have not been satisfactory - ore treatment difficulties - mine closed down - taken over by some of the late shareholders. Warden mine - tributers got 245 oz from 178 tons from shallow levels. Cassilis Consols Co. erected 10-head battery - operating on stone in lower tunnel level.<sup>98</sup>
- 1906:** Cassilis Consols (Dundee) battery on point of Dundee Spur, near creek crossing below Winter's Store, at head of Cemetery Gully.<sup>99</sup>
- 1906:** Perseverance mine, Brookville, changed hands - stone hauled to battery by Hornsby Ackroyd engine.<sup>100</sup>
- 1907:** Cassilis Co. employing over 200 men (including those constructing power plant?). King Cassilis Co. closed down. New Warden Co. developing mine with a Government loan.<sup>101</sup>
- 1907:** Eureka mine, Brookville, installed 3-head battery, driven by oil engine.<sup>102</sup>
- 1907-8:** Cassilis hydro-electric power scheme was significant - its output of 400 kw was not exceeded until 1928, when the Rubicon-Royston group of plants totalled about 12 MW.<sup>103</sup>
- 1908:** Cassilis Co. has 'one of the most up-to-date mining plants in the State' - employs close to 200 men. New Warden Co. failed to find anything payable in lower level. Cassilis Consols Co. operating on a small-scale. King Cassilis operations confined to cyaniding residues.<sup>104</sup>
- 1908:** F. Cherry working a mine at head of Swifts Creek - 4-head battery.<sup>105</sup>
- 1909:** Cassilis Co. crushed 16,620 tons for 3,615 oz from battery; 532 tons of battery concentrates yielded 3,341 oz; chlorination of 1,787 tons gave 3,483 oz; cyaniding 7,600 tons produced 399 oz - new rotary air compressor, electrically driven - plant is one of the most extensive and complete in the State.<sup>106</sup>
- 1910:** Cassilis Co. - insufficient water to work hydro-electric plant - installed slimes treatment plant (vacuum filter process) for treatment of accumulated slimes - treated 7,215 tons of slimes for 1,046 oz. New Warden Co. installed small oil engine in tunnel level - ceased operations.<sup>107</sup>
- 1910:** Cassilis Co. slimes plant was a failure.<sup>108</sup>
- 1910:** Perseverance Co., Brookville - main shaft sunk to 300 ft below tunnel level - 20 men continuously employed. Other parties working Brookville mines include: Lucas and party (Riley's Creek), Reynolds Bros. (Gum Forest), Heighway and party (near head

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98 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1906

99 Fairweather (2), p. 92

100 Fairweather (2), p. 192

101 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1907

102 Fairweather (2), p. 199

103 Cecil & King, p. 6

104 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1907

105 Fairweather (2), p. 204

106 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1909

107 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1910

108 Fairweather (2), p. 59

of Swift's Creek), Dawson Bros (same locality), Alexander and party (lower down Swift's Creek).<sup>109</sup>

- 1911:** Cassilis Co. continued treating slimes and erected tube mill for re-treatment of residues from roasting furnaces by cyanide process - reduced output from mine. King Cassilis - 6 men prospecting.<sup>110</sup>
- 1912:** Cassilis mine 850 ft deep - water shortages affected power plant and working of mine. King Cassilis operations confined to stoping Beehive shoot of stone, with profitable returns. Tongio Dredging Co. commenced operations (just below Chinaman's Crossing) - working ground averaging 12 ft deep, with payable results. Brookville - Perseverance Syndicate mine operating, also some seven claims being worked by co-operative parties - four making good wages, others a subsistence.<sup>111</sup>
- 1913:** Cassilis Co. 'is successfully overcoming the metallurgical difficulties presented by a more refractory product from the lower levels of the mine.' Assistance granted under Mining Development Act to further develop mine at depth. 'In this portion of the Gippsland reef workings have in the past resulted in a zone of poorer ores being encountered at a depth of about 500 feet, and, with the exception of the Cassilis Company, no serious attempt has been made by deeper sinking to prove a possible recurrence of richer ore at a depth. Albion Gold Mining Syndicate and Good-enough Syndicate also at work. Beehive, Warden, and King Cassilis mines defunct.<sup>112</sup>
- 1914:** Drought. Cassilis Co., through failure of hydro-electric power plant, unable to continue scheme for development of mine, for which government assistance had been granted – operations confined to the Ceresa lode.<sup>113</sup>
- 1915:** Drought. Cassilis mine - underground work carried on only intermittently - storage reservoir to enable continuous water supply to operate electrical power plant is now in course of construction. (Dam wall then washed out and had to be repaired.<sup>114</sup>) Tongio dredge idles, due to water shortage. Brookville - 'Of the several mines in the locality of Brookville provided with milling plants, only one, the Perseverance syndicate... has had sufficient water to crush the stone.'<sup>115</sup>
- 1916:** Brookville - only two parties at work. Cassilis mine closed down - Ceresa lode system too thin and poor in quality. Tongio dredge resumed operations after long period of idleness.<sup>116</sup>
- 1916:** Perseverance mine, Brookville, closed.<sup>117</sup>
- 1916:** Cassilis mine - total of 124,607 tons of ore treated for return of 93,572 oz, valued at £383,645.<sup>118</sup>
- 1916+:** Cassilis township faded after closure of Cassilis mine - partially destroyed by 1939 fires and the hotel closed in 1940.<sup>119</sup>
- 1917:** Tongio dredge running continuously.<sup>120</sup>

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109 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1910  
110 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1911  
111 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1912  
112 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1913  
113 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1914  
114 Fairweather (2), pp. 61-2  
115 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1915  
116 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1916  
117 Fairweather (2), p. 192  
118 Fairweather (2), p. 63  
119 Christie, p. 55  
120 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1917

- 1918:** Tongio Dredging Co. cleaned out and repaired Jirnkee water race that taps headwaters of Wentworth River - allows continuous dredging throughout year.<sup>121</sup>
- 1920s:** Tongio West dredge stopped work sometime in 1920s.<sup>122</sup>
- 1925:** King Cassilis lease taken up, but no work done - no plant on mine.<sup>123</sup>
- 1930-31:** King Cassilis lease taken up by National Gold Mining and Milling Co. – installed small gravity concentration plant, consisting of 5-head battery and two concentrating tables - treated only 220 tons of ore for 114 oz.<sup>124</sup>
- 1930:** As late as 1930, Bill Lucas worked a battery on Riley's Creek, Brookville, crushing mullock.<sup>125</sup>
- 1930s:** Tongio West dredge broken up for scrap.<sup>126</sup>
- 1937:** Arizona mine (Martin & son) - last mine worked in Brookville area - used Cherry's 1908 4-head battery (said to still be on site, collapsed, in 1975.<sup>127</sup>
- 1938:** Profitable reefing work being carried out at Brookville.<sup>128</sup>
- March 1949:** Encouraging results are being obtained at the Cassilis mine, Tongio West, where ore is being treated by a furnace plant installed at the mine.<sup>129</sup>
- September 1949:** Smelting plant (Avery's) treating refractory ore at the Cassilis mine, Tongio West, closed due to 'present-day shortages'. Expected to reopen shortly.<sup>130</sup>
- 1960s:** Attempt to re-open Perseverance mine, Brookville.<sup>131</sup>
- 1967:** Diamond drilling operations at Cassilis - expectation that the discovery of off-shore gas in Bass Strait might provide power for a smelting plant to treat the mineralised Cassilis ore - in earlier times, concentrates were sent to SA, NSW, or even Germany for smelting.<sup>132</sup>
- 1979:** Cassilis Historic Area recommended by LCC.<sup>133</sup>
- 1966-82:** Cassilis and Queen Cassilis (small mine at head of Powers Gully) held under mining lease at various time by DW & ML Hamilton - allowed various mining companies to explore leases. Planet Mining Co. surveyed and drilled between 1966-9 - Tanganyika Holdings Ltd, 1971-4 - in 1982, the renewal of the Hamilton's lease and its transfer to Apollo International Minerals NL for a 'concerted exploration effort' was under review by DME.<sup>134</sup>

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121 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1918  
 122 Fairweather (2), p. 174  
 123 Christie, p. 48  
 124 Griffiths, p. 30  
 125 Fairweather (2), p. 199  
 126 Fairweather (2), p. 174  
 127 Fairweather (2) p. 204  
 128 *Mining and Geological Journal*, January 1938  
 129 *Mining and Geological Journal*, March 1949  
 130 *Mining and Geological Journal*, September 1949  
 131 Fairweather (2), p. 192  
 132 Pearson, pp. 394-5  
 133 Cecil & King, pp 2-3  
 134 Cecil & King, pp. 6-7

**1975:** All that remains at Nugong/Bald Hill Creek are overgrown battery sites, two fruit trees, mullock heaps, and the vertical boiler associated with the winding gear of the Bald Hill Co./Cornstalk mine.<sup>135</sup>

**1982:** Many tons of brightly coloured sands still visible on the floor of Powers Gully, downstream of Cassilis Co. processing plant.<sup>136</sup>

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135 Fairweather (2), p. 169

136 Cecil & King, p. 5

## **TANJIL HISTORICAL NOTES**

*Tanjil was generally spelt 'Tangil', throughout the period of mine surveyors' reports.*

*Gold found in Tanjil deep leads were very coarse, pieces of half an ounce and more being common.<sup>1</sup>*

**early 1850s:** Vague reports of prospecting in Tanjil area - eg. John Buntine found traces of gold in the Shady Creek in 1851, and Hugh Massey Stewart found gold in Bull Beef Creek in 1856.<sup>2</sup>

**1859:** Baw Baw diggings (later Russell's Creek field), on Tanjil River, between Walhalla and Neerim, discovered by Edward Gladman at Good Hope Creek - reward of £250 - first payable gold in area, although much prospecting had taken place.<sup>3</sup>

**1860-63:** Good Hope rush gave impetus to prospectors - a government prospecting party from Shady Creek, across Latrobe River, and into Hawthorn Creek, later found gold at Icy Creek and Pheasant Creek (west of Fumina) - another party discovered Camp Creek West (now Hill End; Camp Creek was then called Bowley or Middle Creek) - Russell's Creek opened up in late 1860 by John Russell - other creeks worked included Stony, Wombat, Hardup, Ross's, Kenny's, and Charity creeks.<sup>4</sup>

**1860s:** Main auriferous creeks were: Hawthorn, Boggy, Wild Bull, Camp, Stony, Snake, Specimen, Doyle's, Pheasant, Kenny's, and Icy. Bed of Tanjil River extensively and profitably worked in many places - also a number of small gullies falling into the river between Icy and Russell's creeks. The shallow alluvial gold in the Tanjil district was plentiful, easily obtained, 'and, in consequence, quickly worked out'.<sup>5</sup>

**September 1860:** Recent discoveries near Mt. Baw Baw. The route to the Mt. Baw Baw goldfields is along the Gipps Land Road until the Tarwin is passed, beyond which by about 2 miles the road to the goldfields is to be found. Hawthorn Creek (the first gold bearing country known on Mt. Baw Baw) is located approximately 8 miles SW of Mt. Baw Baw. Pheasant or Salt Damper Creek situated approximately 5 miles S 80° W from Mt. Baw Baw. Pheasant Creek is of a nuggetty character and not at all water worn.<sup>6</sup>

**November 1860:** Approximately 300 miners at Mt Baw Baw goldfield.<sup>7</sup>

**1861:** Principal mining locality on the Baw Baw gold field was the Tanjil River, 16 km south of Russell's Creek - first gold found at California Gully in 1861.<sup>8</sup>

**1860s:** Early alluvial miners dug a cutting across the river end of Long Point (site of Tanjil township), to divert the Tanjil River - cutting now submerged by flooding of Blue Rock Lake.<sup>9</sup>

**1861:** Fulton's Reef opened up on Russell's Creek - named for same prospector as Fulton's Creek on the Aberfeldy.<sup>10</sup>

**May 1863:** Alluvial miners at Russell's Creek and Tanjil ('Yanyit') River getting £4-£9 per week - mining population about 200.<sup>11</sup>

**June 1863:** Payable gold found on tributary of 'Gangil' River, known as Kenny's Creek - fine gold.<sup>12</sup>

**1864:** A party of Chinese visited Russell's Creek and believed the prospects were good so they proposed to bring up a large number of Chinese - did not stay because there was no Chinese Reserve and therefore no protection.<sup>13</sup>

**1864:** Geraghty, Stewart, Ellis and Hopwood worked their claim on the Tanjil river bed by diverting the stream with dams.<sup>14</sup>

**1865:** Cement Hill, a prominent hill near Tanjil township, was found to contain gold.<sup>15</sup>

- 1866:** Miners prospecting Overland, Gumsucker and Pheasant Creek reefs - gold obtained, but not sufficient to warrant erection of machinery.<sup>16</sup>
- 1867:** Rush to Tanjil River - most miners on the Baw Baw diggings were occupied in alluvial mining on the Tanjil.<sup>17</sup>
- March 1867:** Mining population of district was 230 (no Chinese) and steadily increasing - included Neerim goldfield. Only machinery in district was eight waterwheels for working Californian pumps. No quartz reefs at work. 'Although 5 distinct quartz reefs have been proved to be auriferous, and several cement hills, it is generally thought they could not at present be profitably worked.'<sup>18</sup>
- June 1867:** Find on supposed new creek - Lady Manners Sutton Creek - actually head of Charity Creek. Alluvial workings on 'Jangil River' being developed.<sup>19</sup>
- 1867-9:** Empire Reef discovered on west bank of Tanjil River, about 3 km south of Russell's Creek - Kenyon and party erected puddling machine, then, as Gippsland Empire Co., installed a 5-head water-powered battery at end of 1868 - co. collapsed in 1869, when dam broke.<sup>20</sup>
- 1867:** Three companies at work on New Year Reef.<sup>21</sup>
- 1868:** Pheasant Creek Reef opened late in 1868 - a company erected small battery and got good returns for some years.<sup>22</sup>
- 1869:** Reef prospected near Camp Creek.<sup>23</sup>
- June 1869:** At Cement Hill, miners were averaging £3 per week by sluicing the cement and quartz wash - this mode of extraction is not profitable, as the gold is plainly visible in it and the cement requires crushing. The cement is traced for a distance of 7 or 8 miles, averaging in thickness from 1 to 5 feet, and generally about 3 feet of wash underneath.<sup>24</sup>
- June 1869:** Pheasant Creek Co. erecting plant. New Year's Reef Co. plans to erect small battery.<sup>25</sup>
- 1869:** Several companies formed to prospect and work Cement Hill - leading co. was Tanjil Cement GMC - capital of £46,600, with shares selling at up to £400 each by early 1870 - erected 40-head battery (commenced crushing early 1870) and constructed 10km-long water race - companies adjoining Tanjil Cement lease were Bulgine, Jumping Sailors, About Ship - soon amalgamated as Tanjil Golden Cement Co. - further north was Young Ballarat Co.<sup>26</sup>
- September 1869:** Sixteen leased pegged out, besides 40 ordinary claims, on Tangil cement. No. 1 Tangil Cement GMC commenced operations - excavating for 40-head battery, to be powered by water, 'an unlimited supply of which can always be obtained' - water race under construction.<sup>27</sup>
- December 1869:** No. 1 Tangil Cement GMC awaiting first crushing. No. 2 Tangil Cement GMC (Young Ballarat) erecting battery. Jumping Sailor (or Golden Cement GMC) erecting 5-head battery.<sup>28</sup>
- 1869-70:** Tanjil quickly developed into a township - the first real urban community in the present Shire of Narracan - growth of access roads followed: dray road to Moe upgraded, trade developed between Shady Creek and Tanjil, track cut between Tanjil and Stringer's Creek.<sup>29</sup>
- March 1870:** Results of cement crushings was disappointing - mines might pay on tribute. More attention now paid to quartz mining. New Year Co., Russell's Creek, erecting steam-powered battery, also whim for haulage.<sup>30</sup>
- June 1870:** All cement claims, except Tangil Golden Cement, either suspended or abandoned.<sup>31</sup>



- 1870:** By mid-1870 the 'golden cement' had proved incapable of rendering a quick return for the expensive effort involved in prospecting and mining - miners began to leave for fields with easier prospects, particularly the newly opened Stockyard Creek (Foster) - crushing plants were dismantled and removed, buildings likewise - by end of 1870, less than 60 people remained in area.<sup>32</sup>
- March 1871:** 'The fine plants erected some time ago to reduce the cement have been taken down, and are now being carted to Melbourne.' Bridle track opened, connecting Russell's Creek with the Yarra, via Pheasant and Hawthorne creeks and the heads of the Latrobe River.<sup>33</sup>
- 1872:** Great Extended Co. (Tanjil?) erected puddling machine - expect to keep about 20 men employed.<sup>34</sup>
- 1872-3:** United Co-operative Co., on Columbia Reef, erected steam-powered battery in 1872 - quartz proved to be moderately rich (1 oz/ton) but full of pyrites - crushing 'fair average stone' late in 1873 - suspended work for lack of funds in 1874.<sup>35</sup>
- 1872-5:** Pheasant Creek quartz prospectors sold their claim, plant, &c., to Cross Reef Co. - drove a tunnel 200 ft below existing workings, for a distance of over 600 ft - first crushing was so poor that mining ceased and company wound up - reef abandoned.<sup>36</sup>
- 1873:** Party working Barker's Reef, on the Tangil River - sinking shaft.<sup>37</sup>
- 1874-5:** Pioneer Co., Lower Tangil, erected puddling machine and whim - 'this company's ground ... [is] the only mine in the district in which payable prospects have been obtained by sinking through bluestone' - stone not payable and insufficient funds to adequately prospect ground - company wound up.<sup>38</sup>
- 1874-8:** Pioneer Blue Rock Co. formed to prospect the Lower Tanjil deep leads - changed name to Perseverance Co. in 1875, then to Lady Bowen Co. in 1878 - stopped work in 1878, in preparation for working on a large scale, but nothing more was heard of the plan.<sup>39</sup>
- 1875:** Free and Easy Amalgamated (late Hungarian United Co., late Jumping Sailor) working Cement Hill - proved unpayable.<sup>40</sup>
- 1875-6:** Bates and Randall constructed water race a distance of one mile from the eastern branch of Tangil River to Wombat Creek, for sluicing purposes, in 1875 - sluicers making from 50s to 60s per week - rich ground worked out by mid-1876: 'The ground sluicers are not doing so well as expected; in fact the most of them are at present off gold.'<sup>41</sup>
- 1875-:** Traralgon Co. began work again in Cement Hill - drove tunnels deep into hillside - name changed to Tanjil GMC, 1877.<sup>42</sup>
- 1875:** 'From ignorance of the true nature of the lead on the part of most of the residents in the locality the ground intervening [Bailey's] claim and the abandoned workings near the township was unworked' until Traralgon Co. prospected to find new run of gold.<sup>43</sup>
- 1876:** Sluicers on Pheasant Creek making as much as £6 per week - ground worked out within a few months. Hawthorn Creek ('the old creek') being sluiced - paying men average £2 per week.<sup>44</sup>
- 1876:** 'Work in this division has been about the same as usual during the quarter; the most of the mining may be put under the head of fossicking.'<sup>45</sup>
- 1877:** Party of four cutting a race to bring water from western branch of Tangil to Buckley's Flat, for sluicing.<sup>46</sup>
- 1877:** Old Columbia quartz claim (Buckley's Flat) taken up by Columbia GMC - drove a tunnel 600 ft through very hard country - renamed Standard QMC, 1879.<sup>47</sup>

- 1878:** Baw Baw Sluicing Co. formed to bring water to head of Russell's Creek from Icy Creek - promises to open up a large tract of unworked country for hydraulic sluicing - six miles of race completed by 1881 - planned to extend for a further six miles or more, but stopped work by June 1881.<sup>48</sup>
- 1878:** 'The present population is too poor to undertake anything that does not promise immediate return. The district is so far unnoticed by mining capitalists...' 'Its isolation from centres of civilisation, its mountainous character, and the dense growth of scrub and timber, have kept it from the notice of capitalists. Those who won the gold in the palmy days of the district dispensed it as freely as it was found, and left when the shallow workings were exhausted. A small number still remain, earning a livelihood and discovering occasional patches by fossicking the old gullies.' 'With the exception of the cement lead at Tangil, and a few small quartz workings, the diggings were all confined to the beds of the rivers and tributary creeks, or gullies. No source or sources from which so large an amount of alluvial gold could have been derived were discovered, or even sought for...'<sup>49</sup>
- 1879:** Enterprise Co. formed to work old Empire lease (Western Branch Reef) and Long Tunnel GMC took up old Tanjil Cement Co. lease - latter erected large battery (the Pioneer) and build a race some miles long - heralded new rush to Tanjil - several more companies formed, including Southern Cross Co. (near Tanjil), Overland Co. (Russell's Creek), Standard Co. (8km from Tanjil - had large waterwheel, fed by long race), Barker's Reef Co. (junction of Tanjil River and Russell's Creek), Jolimont Co., and Hudson Co. (Camp Creek).<sup>50</sup>
- 1880:** Reefs so far worked in the district: Doyle's Reef at Pleasant Creek, Columbia Reef near Russell's Creek, Empire Reef near Tangil River, New Year's Reef on Russell's Creek, and at head of California Gully near Tangil (Southern Cross Reef?). None were very rich or substantial. 'It does not therefore appear that the known auriferous quartz veins are the sources whence the great amount of alluvial gold in the Russell's Creek District was obtained.'<sup>51</sup>
- 1881:** Queens Birthday Co., on western branch of Tangil River, tunnelling in claim worked some years ago.<sup>52</sup>
- 1881:** Tanjil Long Tunnel Co., 'Western Branch', Tanjil - struck good gold in their tunnel, erected small water-powered battery and race, 1881<sup>53</sup>
- 1881:** Peter McLaren erected water-powered battery to work his claim in California Gully - also Kelly & Co., in a small gully adjoining California Gully.<sup>54</sup>
- 1882:** Standard QMC, Buckley's Flat, erected water-powered battery - disappointing result.<sup>55</sup>
- 1882-3:** Quartz mining companies/parties prospecting: Wellesley Co. (north of Tanjil Long Tunnel Co.), Hudson's Reef Co. (Camp Creek), Tanjil GMC (dam on Tanjil River, battery?), Southern Cross Co.<sup>56</sup>
- 1882-3:** Moondarra Co., working cement - 5-head battery and water-race.<sup>57</sup>
- 1882-3:** By late 1882, further companies were prospecting the flat, basaltic country further south from Tanjil, particularly at Well Hole Flat where the Basaltic Tunnel and Hydraulic Sluicing Co. began operating in early 1883 - other companies were Tanjil Deep Lead Co., Blue Rock Co., Sporting Boys Co., Ballarat and Tanjil Co., Moondarra Co., Murray's Lead GMC.<sup>58</sup>
- December 1883:** Most of the claims proving too poor to pay expenses, work has been suspended.<sup>59</sup>
- 1884:** Tangil Deep Leads GMC sunk new shaft started near old Blue Rock workings - 8 x 3 ft 6 in.<sup>60</sup>
- 1884:** Mines Dept cutting prospecting track from Tanjil to Matlock.<sup>61</sup>

- September 1884:** 'All the registered companies have suspended work here for the present, for want of funds.'<sup>62</sup>
- 1884:** By 1884, nearly all the mines had closed down, due to lack of gold and water (for operating plant), too much water in deep lead mines, and lack of finance and experience.<sup>63</sup>
- 1884:** Standard Co.'s race was ruined by land crabs and wombats - water wheel and plant removed.<sup>64</sup>
- 1884-6:** Mining in a depressed state.<sup>65</sup>
- 1885:** Baw Baw water race taken up by a party of miners (sluicers?).<sup>66</sup>
- 1885-9:** Quartz mining activity picked up: Revival Co. (ex Southern Cross Co. ground, shifted ex Moondarra battery to near Southern Cross tunnel, on bank of Tanjil), Western Branch (or Long Tunnel) QMC, Try Again claim (New Year's Reef, Russell's Creek - taken up after 14 years - 'one that was left in the early days') - little progressive mining, negligible returns - Try Again and Revival cos. ceased work in 1888, with a view to reorganising - Long Tunnel Co. suspended work in 1889.<sup>67</sup>
- 1887:** Party of miners running a race with intention of sluicing off river flats below township.<sup>68</sup>
- 1888:** Paul and party prospected deep lead at Camp Creek - other leases taken up.<sup>69</sup>
- 1889:** LaTrobe Valley Alluvial GMC took up old Blue Rock deep lead claim at Tanjil - working by old shaft - portable steam engine powered pumping and winding machinery - ceased work by end of 1889, the ground proving unpayable.<sup>70</sup>
- 1889:** Mining in all its branches in a very depressed state - 'The amount of gold obtained from the several gullies around her is very little, and scarcely covers expenses.'<sup>71</sup>
- early 1890s:** Tanjil mining began to revive, boosted by influx of unemployed men from 1893.<sup>72</sup>
- 1894:** Mines operating included: Pheasant Creek Co., Robinson Crusoe Co. (Russell's Creek), Australian Natives Co (Barker's Reef - worked profitably for a few years), Thorpdale & Childers (worked a mine at the Blue Rock and set up a battery, which also crushed for other mines).<sup>73</sup>
- 1895:** Lord Minto mine worked the old Hudson's Reef at Camp Creek.<sup>74</sup>
- 1896:** Mines operating included: Two Brothers claim, Broken Hill Pioneer Co. (near junction of Tanjil & Russell's creeks), Golden Key or Crown (Tanjil), Enterprise Co. (old Long Tunnel claim), Moonlight Deep Lead Co. (Moonlight Gully).<sup>75</sup>
- 1890s:** The township of Tanjil itself was a maze of huts and mine holes and tunnels, with the simplest tools and equipment in use. Nearly every claim had its own forge and a substantial bark dwelling (one of which was later removed from the bush near Tanjil to the Gippsland Folk Museum at Moe) with an enclosed garden - 'to use a camp phrase, the miners are making tucker.'<sup>76</sup>
- 1890s:** The district was constrained by a shortage of batteries - Townsend's Evening star Co. erected a 5-head battery - Great Tanjil Consolidated Co. had a small plant - Government battery erected in 1897.<sup>77</sup>
- 1897:** The use of oxide of manganese for the generation of chlorine gas at the numerous chlorination works in the colony has given birth to another profitable branch of mining. Hart & Carr working a manganese deposit at Spotted Dog Creek near Tanjil. A Ballarat pyrites works was willing to purchase all that could be supplied.<sup>78</sup>

- 1897:** About 100 men making a living by fossicking around Tanjil township. A few men also making a living by crushing the cemented wash with 'a primitive form of battery'.<sup>79</sup>
- 1897:** Numerous small parties working reef claims, but not a single stamp-head at work on quartz - no money for plant, the present claimholders being nearly all poor men - very thin quartz veins, but if available water-power were utilised, a couple of dwts per ton should pay. Golden Crown claim, on top of spur about 2\_ miles (north?) from Tanjil - shaft down 50 ft - sample crushing at Footscray - plans to erect 20-head battery and race of 63 chains long to provide water-power. Two reefs (one called McNear's) being worked on private property (Bynon's farm), about 10 miles north-east of Tanjil - on spur between Pitman's Creek and the Tyers, and about half a mile apart - plans to erect batteries on both claims.<sup>80</sup>
- 1897:** Moonlight Lead Co. found a good run of coarse alluvial gold in Moonlight Gully, about 1\_ miles ESE from township - working by tunnel - 50-chain-long tramline conveyed washdirt from tunnel to sluiceboxes at river.<sup>81</sup>
- 1899:** Quartz prospecting on Camp Creek, midway between Tanjil goldfield and Frenchman's Gully in the Neerim district - reef runs parallel with creek course for 2 miles. Lord Minto lease - 2 shafts - 3-head battery ('very compact'), 4-hp engine & Moody's patent rollers erected in small gully near No. 2 shaft. Hudson's tunnel - about 50 chains up creek from battery site. Paul's tunnel - 70 chains from Hudson's tunnel.<sup>82</sup>
- 1899:** Tanjil mining in the doldrums once more.<sup>83</sup>
- c.1899-1914:** Rowland Colton began dredging in Rock Gully with a party of men from Latrobe Hydraulic Sluicing Syndicate - several others followed, using bucket dredges and centrifugal pump sluicing methods - efforts were shortlived - dredging muddied waters of Latrobe River, causing much complaint.<sup>84</sup>
- 1900:** Better Luck battery erected - subsequently taken over by Victory QMC.<sup>85</sup>
- 1902:** Battery erected at Stewart's mine at Bull Beef Creek.<sup>86</sup>
- 1903:** Ford's battery (Ford's mine) crushing stone and cyaniding tailings, with generally poor results. Good deal of prospecting work in district.<sup>87</sup>
- 1905:** Eureka Dykes - two parallel dykes, 9 feet apart, 1\_ miles N of Tanjil on western bank of Tanjil River - tunnels driven from near river bank - several crushings taken out - bed of a little crushing plant still remains on the site - nearer the river is a shaft - rich returns from old workings close to shaft. Across the river, opposite shaft, is Barker's Reef - so far no gold got from this reef. Victory Reef about \_ mile W of Tanjil - shaft close to northern side of Moe road - 105 ft deep - mine presently being worked - considerable quantity of quartz taken from old shaft, 60 ft deep. Klondyke Gully, Hill End (tributary of Russell's Creek) - about 5 miles by road, NW of Tanjil - alluvial workings - coarse gold, very sharp and not at all waterworn, much with quartz attached - gold appears to be derived from western side of gully - about £1,200 worth of gold reputed to have come from workings, averaging 6 to 10 ft deep - gully worked for about 5 chains, and about 3 chains further on it joins Baker's Gully, which was very rich lower down its course (plan on file). Rolfe's Flat - \_ mile south of Tanjil - Tanjil River loops around Rolfe's Flat, leaving a narrow neck less than a chain across - through this neck a channel has been cut which diverts the bulk of the water in winter, while in summer the whole of the water takes the short cut, leaving the bed of the river around the loop dry. It is proposed to dredge the river drifts at this site. Right opposite Rolfe's Flat, on southern side of river and about 100 feet higher up hillside, Cement Lead being worked by Morrith and Peterson - they skim off the bottom 3 inches of cemented gravel and get gold of great purity. Most of the work now being done on the alluvial ground consists of searching for and working the odd patches that have escaped the earlier miners, and it speaks well for the field that even now, after more than forty years' work, the men so employed can earn a living. Although a neglected gold-field, Tanjil is by no means an exhausted one.<sup>88</sup>

- 1906:** Quartz mining at a standstill. Dredging leases applied for.<sup>89</sup>
- 1907:** Tanjil River Hydraulic Sluicing Co. started work - barge with centrifugal pump - worked only a short time before stopping to improve machinery.<sup>90</sup>
- 1908:** Two dredging companies started operations on Tanjil River - Tanjil Giant Co. and Blue Rock Co. - very fair results. Efforts being made to develop an alluvial mine about 4 miles from Willow Grove - working by tunnel - ground to be bored.<sup>91</sup>
- 1908:** Baker and Co. prospecting quartz reef at Hawthorn Creek - said to be payable.<sup>92</sup>
- 1910:** Machinery of Blue Rock Dredging Co. (the last) removed to Tasmania.<sup>93</sup>
- 1913-14:** Ford and party prospecting deep lead at Moonlight Gully by tunnel, with government grant - seeking extension, at lower level, of lead that was payably worked in earlier years until swamped out.<sup>94</sup>
- 1927:** Camp Creek mine, Hillend - mine located on southern side of Camp Creek, near bank of creek - shallow workings along a line of dyke carried down to an adit some 400 ft long - one sample tested at Mines Dept laboratory gave yield equivalent to 156 oz/ton.<sup>95</sup>
- 1932:** Hampton's Reef, Fumina - situated on Snake Creek in upper watershed of Tanjil River - only two small trial crushings made - worked by incline drive and shaft - work stopped by inflow of water - mine now held by syndicate of working miners - shaft sunk to 95 ft, also adit of approx. 500 ft.<sup>96</sup>
- 1934:** Last Fu mine, Bull Beef Creek, about 3 miles east of Tanjil - discovered by prospector named Stewart, who erected battery on the creek (1902) - original yields were reputedly high (up to 10 oz/ton) until reef cut off by slide - old workings (shaft and adit) now opened up - prospecting.<sup>97</sup>
- 1934:** Moonlight Lead is unworked for greater part of its length - near head of Moonlight Gully, several tunnels were driven. Syndicate now working mine - tunnel driven 949 feet. (Plan of workings on file.<sup>98</sup>
- 1934:** Syndicate now at work in Klondyke Gully, Hill End - tunnel driven 83 ft. Gully previously prospected a good deal by trenching and shaft sinking, searching for source of alluvial gold, without success.<sup>99</sup>

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## **UPPER YARRA GOLDFIELD NOTES**

- 1859:** Upper Yarra and Britannia goldfields opened. By end of November, 200 diggers occupied a mile of Britannia Creek. Township of Britannia established near bridge built by diggers at junction of Britannia Creek and Little Yarra. Gold discovered on Scotchmen's Creek (richest place on goldfield), Hoddle's Creek, and Sheep Station Creek late in 1859.<sup>1</sup>
- 1860:** About 500 diggers worked Upper Yarra goldfield. Big Pat's Creek opened (named after discoverer, Patrick O'Hannigan).<sup>2</sup>
- January 1860:** Auriferous ground has been discovered at what is probably the upper part of the creek that joins the Woori Yallock near its junction with McCrea's Creek. On the Britannia goldfield the trend is toward prospecting new ground rather than working old ground.<sup>3</sup>
- February 1860:** Rush to Yankee Jim's Creek, later site of first Warburton township (now Old or West Warburton).<sup>4</sup>
- April 1860:** Hoddle's Creek worked by at least 60 men. About 60 men are scattered between Britannia, Yankee Jim, and Scotchman's Creeks.<sup>5</sup>
- June 1860:** At the Britannia goldfields, Yankee Jim's Creek, some heavy finds have been made.<sup>6</sup>
- July 1860:** Quartz reef discovered in vicinity of Britannia Creek.<sup>7</sup>
- October 1860:** Good gold was found in tributaries of Starvation Creek, after the creek itself had been tried unsuccessfully. Payable gold also found in Wombat Creek, a south tributary of Yarra, just west of Alderman's Creek, where the 'country was rough, tracks dangerous and the scrub dense'—this was McMahon's (Creek).<sup>8</sup>
- February 1861:** The greater proportion of mining population on Britannia goldfield moved to Starvation Creek and its tributaries, the rest scattered about between the Little Yarra and Yankee Jim's Creek.<sup>9</sup>
- October 1861:** Britannia goldfield is rather dull.<sup>10</sup>
- November 1861:** Rush to upper part of Hoddle's Creek—extensive sluicing operations.<sup>11</sup>

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- 1862:** Prospecting on the north side of the Yarra became successful, coinciding with the first attempts to find a route via the Upper Yarra to the Woods Point and Jordan goldfields. Gold found in the area in September 1862 at Walsh's Creek, and in October Donovan's Creek was opened, a Yarra tributary coming down from the north-east. Near Walsh's Creek, Bear and Damper creeks were also opened, and Cumberland Gully at the head of Armstrong's Creek (Melola), running south from Mt Arnold.<sup>12</sup>
- October 1863:** Two narrow leads struck in alluvial on right bank of Yankee Jim's Creek, Warburton. Confederate Lead doing little owing to influx of water.<sup>13</sup>
- 1863:** Alluvial lead discovered at Yankee Jim's Creek—became the main mining place in the area and was called Warburton, after Warburton Carr (gold commissioner)—now Old or West Warburton.<sup>14</sup>
- 1863:** Darling goldfield opened, with discovery of quartz reefs at Wombat Creek, the highest point of gold digging on the Yarra. First reef was the Xmas Reef.<sup>15</sup>
- June 1864:** On Upper Yarra Reefs, Darling goldfield, very little is showing due to severity of weather.<sup>16</sup>
- September 1864:** On Darling goldfield, new reef discovered called 'Excelsior'. Darling's Reef is highest point being worked on left bank of Yarra. Applicants for lease No. 28, of portion of the great Peninsula, Upper Yarra, have just completed their tunnel and successfully turned the river.<sup>17</sup>
- March 1865:** Several Yarra River claims where the river is diverted are paying wages but nothing more at present. At Big Bill's Creek alluvial mining is at very low ebb. Marston has sold his claim on Christmas Reef, Darling goldfield, to a substantial company.<sup>18</sup>
- June 1865:** Work suspended on Darling reefs due to litigation. The several Yarra River claims where the river has been diverted continue to pay wages, except the Big Bill's Creek Co., which has been very successful.<sup>19</sup>
- March 1866:** Small rush on bed of Yarra, about 3 miles above McMahon's Creek. Gold-bearing leader struck on right bank of Hoddle's Creek (about 3 miles from MS's office) on a range called Rich Hill.<sup>20</sup>
- June 1866:** Mitchell erecting crushing-mill with a view to thoroughly prospecting the ranges forming the catchment basis for Hoddle's Creek.<sup>21</sup>
- September 1866:** At Rich Hill, the owner of the steam quartz mill has substituted water power for steam-power. Two small rushes have taken place, near McMahon's Creek and Hoddle's Creek.<sup>22</sup>

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12 Flett, p. 60  
 13 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), October 1863  
 14 Flett, p. 59  
 15 Flett, p. 60  
 16 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1864  
 17 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1864  
 18 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1864  
 19 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1865  
 20 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1866  
 21 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1866  
 22 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1866

- December 1866:** At McMahon's Creek, the modus operandi is to divert stream and sluice loose shale on the bottom of creek. At Hoddle's Creek developers have erected a very powerful overshot water-wheel for crushing—stone will be delivered from the pit's mouth with the greatest economy by means of a self-acting incline.<sup>23</sup>
- March 1867:** A small rush has occurred at Cronin's Creek (Darling goldfield) situated on the S.E. slope of the dividing range on the Upper Yarra. Starvation Creek is being worked by a small party of men.<sup>24</sup>
- June 1867:** In the Upper Yarra district several parties are now constructing dams and erecting puddling machines. Miners doing remarkably well at Starvation Creek.<sup>25</sup>
- December 1867:** Two prospecting leases applied for near east side of Donovan's Creek, Upper Yarra, off the Wood's Point track—the more easterly of the two reefs is the New Star and the westerly is the Golden Bower.<sup>26</sup>
- 1867-70s:** Golden Bower mine situated near head of Donovan's Creek, tributary of Yarra River from the north—access is from 'Yarra track', the Marysville to Woods Point road—turn-off to the mine is 17 miles from Marysville, with mine about 1 mile from road and 600 or 700 ft below it. Two parallel lodes, 300 ft apart, have been worked—Golden Bower is most easterly, with Star lode to the west. Golden Bower was the first discovered—prospectors erected battery on the creek near it—drove an adit 60 ft below reef outcrop—but stone became unpayable 12 ft below adit level—company ceased operations in 1870. Star lode worked by adits and stope up to surface.<sup>27</sup>
- March 1868:** Two new reefs have been discovered three miles east of Golden Bower Reef, Donovan's Creek—Great Britain Reef is the eastern one, with Sarah Jane Reef to the west, situated near Bear's Creek. A Yarra tributary called Big Pat's Creek has been prospected showing  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz per man over 3 days.<sup>28</sup>
- June 1868:** Slight rush towards McMahon's Creek on Upper Yarra track, 9 miles from Warburton. Golden Bower Co. awaiting erection of their machinery. Coultard's Lead, Hoddle's Creek has been re-discovered.<sup>29</sup>
- December 1868:** Golden Bower and New Star Quartz Co., Donovan's Creek, have erected crushing machinery. A1 Golden Bower Reef Co. have a tunnel of 225 feet.<sup>30</sup>
- March 1869:** Machine owned by Golden Bower QMC is only one in subdivision at present.<sup>31</sup>
- June 1869:** Alluvial ground discovered 2 miles east of Hoddle's Creek on eastern margin of swamp known as Big Pat's Swamp.<sup>32</sup>

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23 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1866  
 24 Flett, p. 60; Mining Surveyors' Reports, March 1867  
 25 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1867  
 26 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1867  
 27 Kenny, p. 269  
 28 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1868  
 29 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1868  
 30 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1868  
 31 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1869  
 32 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1869

- March 1870:** At Warburton, better known as Yankee Jim's, Upper Yarra is being prospected for lost deep lead.<sup>33</sup>
- September 1870:** Golden Bower, Donovan's Creek suspended work. Rush to old Go-ahead Lead, Warburton.<sup>34</sup>
- June 1871:** Races being cut to work claims in Starvation Creek.<sup>35</sup>
- June 1872:** A company at Hoddle's Creek has set to drain the bottom water by means of a tunnel in order to work the deep leads.<sup>36</sup>
- September 1872:** Prospectors considering sluicing the Yarra on west side of Yankee Jim's Creek.<sup>37</sup>
- December 1872:** Warburton Sluicing Co. has almost completed arrangements to carry out their scheme at Yankee Jim's.<sup>38</sup>
- March 1873:** Very extensive hydraulic sluicing operations being initiated at Warburton by the Warburton Hydraulic GMC—race marked for about 7 miles, to an elevation of about 320 feet above the claim—machinery and piping coming from Melbourne.<sup>39</sup>
- September 1873:** Warburton Sluicing Co. has nearly completed their race. Defiance Co., Warburton, has not yet struck the reef.<sup>40</sup>
- June 1874:** Three alluvial claims in McMahon's Creek.<sup>41</sup>
- Winter 1874:** Rich reefs discovered at junction of McMahon's Creek and the Yarra. Town of Reefton began near Lee and Carroll's Reef, the first one discovered there, which yielded 20 oz/ton over a long period.<sup>42</sup>
- September 1874:** New reef at Reefton, about 3 miles from McMahon's Creek. Warburton Hydraulic Sluicing Co. doing well. At Hoddle's Creek, rich lead discovered, called Dry Lead.<sup>43</sup>
- December 1874:** Reef at Reefton has proved rich and machinery is to be erected. Gold discovered in Big Pat's River, near junction with Yarra.<sup>44</sup>
- March 1875:** Crushing machinery being erected at Reefton.<sup>45</sup>
- June 1875:** Hydraulic sluicing companies at Warburton and Starvation Creek getting very satisfactory results. Prospecting claim taken out for new reef at Muddy Creek, near McMahon's creek. Three companies are tunnelling at Reefton—one is erecting a water-powered battery on the Yarra.<sup>46</sup>

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33 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1870  
 34 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1870  
 35 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1871  
 36 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1872  
 37 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1872  
 38 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1873  
 39 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1873  
 40 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1873  
 41 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1874  
 42 Flett, p. 60  
 43 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1874  
 44 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1874  
 45 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1875  
 46 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1875

- September 1875:** Old ground in Upper Yarra being extensively re-worked with hydraulic hoses. Water-wheel, race, and battery at Reefton are complete—only awaits tramway. All tunnels at Reefton (with one exception) are being driven from western slope of hill—from north to south, Reefton Co., All Nations Co., Great Northern Co., and Aurora Co. (Talbot & Co.).<sup>47</sup>
- 1876:** Yarra Yarra GMC reworking areas at Yankee Jims Creek on large scale by hydraulic sluicing—built water-race about 5 miles from Big Pat's Creek, north-east of the claim—worked slope of a hill falling towards Yankee Jim's Creek, using about 2,300 litres/minute during sluicing, with water pressure sufficient to sent jets about 30 ft in the air—sluicing through old workings including shafts about 30 ft deep and old timbered drives—bed of creek was about 20 ft lower than the general level of washdirt, so surplus dirt was sluiced into the creek and washed downstream. Hydraulic sluicing also in progress at Starvation Creek.<sup>48</sup>
- June 1876:** Reef at Muddy Creek is called New Reef. Warburton Hydraulic Sluicing Co. has found old lost lead—will soon complete water conduit by erecting flume 50 ft high across Warburton saddle—total length will be 1000 ft.<sup>49</sup>
- September 1876:** Reefton presently has six companies tunnelling. Payable lead discovered at Hoddle's Creek on McCrae Hill.<sup>50</sup>
- June 1877:** Central Co., Reefton, struck a reef at 500ft. Warburton Hydraulic Sluicing Co. suspended work.<sup>51</sup>
- September 1877:** Defiance Co. erected battery with pumping and winding gear. A Melbourne company is about to take over operations at McCrae's Hill, Hoddle's Creek. Only two companies are working at Reefton. Battery is being erected at Muddy Creek.<sup>52</sup>
- December 1877:** The hydraulic works at Warburton are about to be resumed. Ewart and Co., Hoddle's Creek, has formed a company to work their leases.<sup>53</sup>
- March 1878:** Union Lead Hydraulic Mining Co., Hoddle's Creek, now in full progress.<sup>54</sup>
- June 1878:** New quartz reef discovered at Hoddle's Creek.<sup>55</sup>
- September 1878:** Machinery will shortly be erected at Hoddle's Creek—New Pigtail Co. erecting battery and pumping and winding gear. At Muddy Creek, work has been suspended while a 6-mile water race is being cut to supply battery.<sup>56</sup>
- December 1878:** Water-powered battery under construction at Hoddle's Creek. Reefton Co. plans to drive a tunnel. Pig Tail machine has recently started. Big Pat's Valley, Upper Yarra, shows signs of a lead on west side of stream.<sup>57</sup>

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47 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1875  
 48 Carroll, p. 13  
 49 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1876  
 50 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1876  
 51 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1877  
 52 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1877  
 53 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1877  
 54 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1878  
 55 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1878  
 56 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1878  
 57 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1878

- March 1879:** New prospecting claim at Bear's Creek, near Great Britain Reef, Donovan's Creek.<sup>58</sup>
- June 1879:** Bear's Creek abandoned.<sup>59</sup>
- December 1879:** Central Co., Reefton, will erect improved apparatus to operate upon pyrites. Near junction of Wombat and Hoddle's Creeks a prospecting claim has been applied for on new reef called the Bonanza. United Co., Hoddle's Creek, is to sink a shaft. Warburton Hydraulic Sluicing Co. revived again and in full operation.<sup>60</sup>
- March 1880:** Reef re-worked at Muddy Creek. All work suspended at Hoddle's Creek, except on Bonanza Reef. A company is about to erect a small pumping machine—probably the Central Co. Victoria Hydraulic workings at Warburton about to be extended.<sup>61</sup>
- June 1880:** No reefs working at Hoddle's Creek—pumping appliances are being erected due to increase in water. Victoria Hydraulic Sluicing Co. is about to extend race and also new tail race. Reefton Co. erecting engine and extending tunnel. Muddy Creek Co. (McMahon's) is about to extend tunnel.<sup>62</sup>
- September 1881:** Central Co. has dug the shaft to 280 ft.<sup>63</sup>
- March 1882:** Reefton QMC mine on tribute.<sup>64</sup>
- June 1882:** Sluicing at Reefton unpractical during quarter. Britannia Hydraulic Sluicing Co., Warburton, cutting deep tail-race for extensive sluicing operations on Britannia Creek. Warburton Hydraulic Sluicing Co. let the mine on tribute and intends cutting down tail-race, which runs through solid granite boulders.<sup>65</sup>
- September 1882:** Hydraulic Sluicing Co. mine, Warburton, on tribute to a party of Chinese.<sup>66</sup>
- December 1882:** New water-powered battery of 5-head of stampers to be erected at Hoddle's Creek.<sup>67</sup>
- June 1883:** Yarra Co. formed to work Muddy Creek, Reefton. Company formed to work Bluenoses Reef, Warburton. Water-powered battery erected by Ewart at Hoddle's Creek is ready for work.<sup>68</sup>
- September 1883:** City of Melbourne Quartz and Alluvial GMC, Hoddle's Creek has taken over ground of Ewart & Co. on Green Hill. Present company has erected engine and pumping machinery and is sinking a shaft. Hydraulic sluicing claim at Warburton abandoned by Chinese tributers—another party about to work the ground by tunnelling, instead of removing such large masses of earth with the hose, for small leads of wash.<sup>69</sup>
- December 1883:** Kong Meng and Co., Hoddle's Creek, has 30 tons of stone for crushing. Several small sluicing parties at work in Hoddle's Creek. Prospecting party operating on

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58 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1879  
 59 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1879  
 60 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1879  
 61 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1880  
 62 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1880  
 63 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1881  
 64 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1882  
 65 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1882  
 66 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1882  
 67 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1882  
 68 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1883  
 69 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1883

Yankee Jim's Creek, opposite the Central Mining Co. lease at Reefton. Hydraulic sluicing is still working at Warburton, but is slow.<sup>70</sup>

**March 1884:** Hydraulic Co. at Warburton suspended operations on old ground and intends recommencing work on new ground once water race is extended and repaired.<sup>71</sup>

**June 1884:** London Co., Hoddle's Creek, sank shaft to depth of gutter. Reefton claims being worked very quietly.<sup>72</sup>

**December 1884:** Central Co., Reefton, suspended operations. Muddy Creek lessees have secured small crushing plant and race from former owners.<sup>73</sup>

**March 1885:** Melbourne Deep Lead Co., Hoddle's Creek, now erecting puddling machine.<sup>74</sup>

**June 1885:** Lessees of Muddy Creek Reef, Upper Yarra, repairing the water-race to mill.<sup>75</sup>

**December 1885:** Melbourne Co. Hoddle's Creek, commenced tunnelling—found water hard to cope with by horse and whim.<sup>76</sup>

**March 1886:** Pioneer Co. started operations at Hoddle's Creek.<sup>77</sup>

**June 1886:** Lessee of Muddy Creek claim forming an inclined road from mine to battery. Pioneer Co. at Hoddle's Creek is actually the Enterprise Co.<sup>78</sup>

**September 1886:** A prospector found scaly gold on the north side of the Yarra, between Warburton and Reefton, but the precise locality is as yet unknown.<sup>79</sup>

**March 1887:** Muddy Creek Reef, Upper Yarra, still being worked—battery worked by water-wheel, fed by a race from McMahon's Creek, 3 miles distant.<sup>80</sup>

**September 1887:** City of Melbourne Co., Hoddle's Creek, abandoned its alluvial workings and is sinking a winze in the tunnel.<sup>81</sup>

**March 1888:** Small party recently re-opened the abandoned Central Co. mine at Reefton.<sup>82</sup>

**March 1889:** Melbourne Co's. mine has not resumed work.<sup>83</sup>

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70 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1883  
71 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1884  
72 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1884  
73 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1884  
74 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1885  
75 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1885  
76 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1885  
77 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1886  
78 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1886  
79 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1886  
80 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1887  
81 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1887  
82 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1888  
83 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), March 1889

- June 1889:** Four reefs discovered at Hoddle's Creek: Sunday Reef, Hidden Treasure line, and two others carried down on the underlay. City of Melbourne Co. mine, Hoddle's Creek, about to be re-opened after 18 months' closure. Welden's party, Hoddle's Creek, have driven a tunnel 2400 ft to drain and work a lead known as Branden's Lead, the depth being 80 ft.<sup>84</sup>
- September 1889:** New auriferous dyke discovered at head of Scotchman's Creek, Warburton.<sup>85</sup>
- December 1889:** Wenden & Co., Hoddle's Creek, has driven a tunnel 4000 ft. Small company floated to test Sunday Creek at Green Hill, Hoddle's Creek. Company floated to develop recently discovered auriferous dyke at Warburton East.<sup>86</sup>
- mid 1891:** Lady Hopetoun Co., Warburton, erected a battery.<sup>87</sup>
- 1903:** Small parties prospecting at Reefton. Two co-operative parties at work at Bear's Creek and Chesterville, with little success.<sup>88</sup>
- 1904:** Mines at Bear's and Donovan's Creek closed down.<sup>89</sup>
- c.1904:** Quartz reef discovered by Massey and party near the junction of the Dry lead with Hoddle's Creek, about 2\_ miles above Launching Place. Reef is surrounded by alluvial workings. Shaft sunk to depth of 80 ft. Gold assayed at up to 4 oz/ton. Other quartz mines in Hoddle's Creek area include Pioneer Reef (south of Massey's) and Trinity, United and South United mines on a reef to the south-east.<sup>90</sup>
- 1905:** At Reefton Pooley and party has erected a miniature pumping plant, operated by an oil engine. Hoddle's Creek Co. let its mine on tribute. Strike Co. mine, McMahon's Creek, let on tribute. Golden Bower Syndicate, Donovan's Creek, cleaned out and repaired old Golden Bower tunnel—will install a pumping plant, to be driven by Pelton wheel water-power.<sup>91</sup>
- 1905-7:** Golden Bower mine taken up by a Melbourne syndicate, and a start was made to sink a winze below the lower adit-level. Water proved troublesome, and the syndicate abandoned the mine. Soon after Kirwin and party started work—sank winze, put in levels, and stoped out a block 250 ft long to a depth of 135 ft below adit—439 tons yielded 514 oz—mine abandoned as water could not be kept down by hand labour.<sup>92</sup>
- 1906:** Operations ceased at Hoddle's Creek Co. mine, and practically nothing has been done at the parent, the Pioneer. Strike Co., McMahon's Creek, working in a small way. Grieves & Mortimer are conducting hydraulic sluicing operations at McMahon's Creek, with payable results. At Donovan's Creek, Kirwan and party have cut a race to provide water for Pelton-wheel motive power for mine drainage purposes—crushing plant is driven by similar means. At Contention Creek, Bromley's Reef Co. has erected a battery, driven by water-power.<sup>93</sup>

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84 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June 1889  
 85 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), September 1889  
 86 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), December 1889  
 87 Mining Surveyors' Reports (St Andrews Division), June & September 1891  
 88 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1903  
 89 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1904  
 90 Whitelaw, p. 248  
 91 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1905  
 92 Kenny, p. 269  
 93 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1906

- 1907:** Hoddle's Creek operations confined to alluvial. Crescent Co. is the only company at work at McMahon's Creek. Golden Bower mine, Donovan's Creek, is shut down. Bromley's Reef Co., Contention Creek, has not yet yielded a sufficient profit to provide a dividend. South Bromley's Co. is working in the southerly extension of the same lode channel as that of the No. 2 lode worked by the parent mine, but so far, the stone is hardly payable.<sup>94</sup>
- 1908:** At McMahon's Creek, Strike Syndicate is extending the tunnel. Bromley's Reef and South Bromley's mines at Contention Creek, shut down. Work resumed by Kirman and party on Golden Bower Mine at head of Donovan's Creek.<sup>95</sup>
- 1909:** A strong new company took over adjoining Massey's and Pioneer mines, Hoddle's Creek—pumping plant installed.<sup>96</sup>
- 1909:** Mountain Queen Co., Hoddle's Creek, preparing for erection of battery.<sup>97</sup>
- 1911:** Mountain Queen Co., Hoddle's Creek, discontinued prospecting alluvial wash deposits in favour of quartz.<sup>98</sup>
- 1912:** Mountain Queen Co., Hoddle's Creek, closed down.<sup>99</sup>
- 1913:** On Pioneer lode system at Hoddle's Creek, Massey & party are erecting a water-powered pumping plant at one of the old main shafts. Golden Bower mine, Donovan's Creek, again resuscitated. New alluvial discovery at Beenak, on James' private holding, in a gully some 6 chains from junction with McCrae's Creek.<sup>100</sup>
- 1913-17:** Golden Bower Co. formed to further develop mine—10-mile race cut from Cumberland Creek—water under pressure was carried into adit and used to drive a Pelton wheel at the winze—winch and pumps installed, also powered by Pelton wheel—'novel arrangement' proved a success—average yield 26.3 dwt/ton—eventually water troubles and the south pitch of the shoot made further sinking with the existing appliances impractical and the company ceased work on the Star lode.<sup>101</sup>
- 1914:** On the Pioneer lode system at Hoddle's Creek, Massey & party have erected a pumping plant. At Donovan's Creek, the Golden Bower Syndicate has completed sinking its shaft.<sup>102</sup>
- c.1918:** Golden Bower Co. now prospecting Golden Bower lode—original (1867) Golden Bower adit now collapsed.<sup>103</sup>
- July 1939:** Small gold mines, such as Chester's and the Cumberland Falls, located in the vicinity of the Yarra track, have not resumed production since the bushfires.<sup>104</sup>

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94 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1907  
 95 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1908  
 96 Carroll, p. 15  
 97 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1909  
 98 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1911  
 99 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1912  
 100 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1913  
 101 Kenny, p. 269-70  
 102 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1914  
 103 Kenny, pp. 269-70  
 104 *Mining & Geological Journal*, July 1939



**September 1948:** New machinery being installed at Hoddle's Creek, near Launching Place, at Gem Prospecting Co.'s antimony mine, where production is expected to commence at an early date.<sup>105</sup>

**September 1949:** Gem Prospecting mine, Hoddle's Creek, now in production and good results being obtained.<sup>106</sup>

**March 1950:** Small tonnage of antimony concentrates now being obtained by the Gem Prospecting Syndicate at Hoddle's Creek.<sup>107</sup>

## SOURCES

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Kenny, J.P.L., 'The Golden Bower Mine, Upper Yarra', in *Records*, vol 4, part 3, Geological Survey of Victoria, Department of Mines, 1921 (report dated c.1918), pp. 269-72.

Whitelaw, O.A.L., 'Brief Report on the Mining Features of the Hoddle's Creek District, with Plan', in *Records*, vol. 1, part 4, Geological Survey of Victoria, Department of Mines, 1906 (report dated c.1904), pp. 247-9.

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105 *Mining & Geological Journal*, September 1948

106 *Mining & Geological Journal*, September 1949

107 *Mining & Geological Journal*, March 1950

## **WALHALLA GOLDFIELD NOTES**

*Mines not supposed to be on Cohen's line of reef were locally referred to as 'outside' mines and, because of their isolation, were generally hampered by high cartage and crushing costs.<sup>1</sup>*

- Early 1860s:** Bald Hill (Seaton) became centre for storekeepers and prospectors on McEvoy Track (route from South Gippsland to the Jordan).<sup>2</sup>
- May 1863:** Reefs lately discovered at Stringer's Creek look promising - from their position and nearness to water can be worked to great advantage. Alluvial miners getting about 18 oz of coarse gold to the paddock - taking popn from Donnelly's and Fulton's Creeks.
- 1863:** Bald Hill storekeepers encouraged the cutting of a dray track to Stringers Creek diggings - country between the Thomson River and the new rush was of a 'most fearfully precipitous character' and 'utterly impassable for horse traffic'.<sup>3</sup>
- 1863:** Port Albert Co. formed to erect first battery at Stringers Creek - arrived in 1864. Alpine Co. battery followed soon after.<sup>4</sup>
- late 1863+:** Happy-Go-Lucky Reef discovered about 3 km from Stringers Creek - 10-head, 20-hp steam-powered battery installed - township of Happy-Go-Lucky (later named Pearsontown) emerged. Another significant reef discovered at junction of Cooper's Creek and Thomson River.<sup>5</sup>
- 1863-81:** Walhalla Co. on Cohen's Reef was for many years the most successful and productive company on the field - first crushing in 1865 - declared several dividends, 1867-9 - erected furnaces and Chilean mill to profitably treat tailings - during 1870s, dominated the local mining scene, along with Long Tunnel cos. - absorbed by Long Tunnel Co., 1881.<sup>6</sup>
- 1863-81:** Walhalla Co. - first crushing 1865 - in following 16 years 123,873 tons yielded 144,000 oz - paid £228,478 in dividends - £285 11s 9d per share (only 800 shares) - shaft not sunk below 800 feet - sold to Long Tunnel Co. in 1881.<sup>7</sup>
- 1864:** In March 1864, there were 29 claims north of the prospecting claim on Cohens Reef and 16 south of it; by end of 1864, claims were beginning to amalgamate.<sup>8</sup>
- 1864-5:** New reefs discovered in Stringers Creek area - Shamrock, Tubal Cain, Longfellows - all north of Walhalla.<sup>9</sup>
- mid 1860s:** Alluvial mining (mainly bank & bed sluicing) gave way to quartz reefing - speculation, shepherding and lack of funds stalled the development of reefs - moves towards amalgamation (more funds, more men) and systematic mining in mid 1860s. Early quartz mining companies included Squatters Junction, Walhalla Co.\*, Alpine QMC, Stringers Creek QMC, South Gippsland Co., Golden Fleece Co., North Gippsland Co.\*, Wellesley Co., Long Tunnel Co.\*, Empress Co.\*, Emperor Co. (\*indicates company with substantial plant).<sup>10</sup>
- 1865-72:** Empress Co., south along Cohens Reef, erected extensive crushing plant, buildings, etc. - ceased work in 1872.<sup>11</sup>
- 1865-76:** North Gippsland Co. - rich crushings in 1865 - erected 10-head battery in 1866, increased to 15-head in 1867 - values declined by mid-1870s - mine ceased work in 1876 - absorbed by Golden Fleece and Molesworth cos. to the south.<sup>12</sup>

- 1865-70s:** Long Tunnel Co. (Nos. 9 & 10 North Cohens) spent three unproductive years developing extensive works before starting to crush ore - 'While all this work was in progress, preparations were made at the surface for the erection of the machinery, a task surrounded by many difficulties. The hill into which the tunnel is driven rises abruptly, and almost perpendicularly, from the bed of the creek, and the flat ground was so limited in extent that a large amount of excavation was necessary to obtain room for the necessary buildings.' - first crushing, 1868 (at North Gippsland Co. battery) - bought out Wellesley Co., 1869 - paid first dividend in November 1869 - installed 20-head battery 'a few yards from the main street' in 1870 - soon began to take leading place among Victorian gold mines - installed roasting furnaces and Chilean mill for pyrites treatment, 1871 - new winding machinery, 1875 - further battery installed, 1877.<sup>13</sup>
- 1866:** Tramway constructed to convey firewood (for engines and domestic use) a distance of one mile, from the upper part of Stringer's Creek, 'as timber is becoming scarce in the immediate vicinity of the township'.<sup>14</sup>
- 1866:** Stringer's Creek and Happy-go-Lucky townships surveyed.<sup>15</sup>
- mid-late 1860s:** Boom years - rush of mining companies established on newly discovered reefs north and west of Stringers Creek - Britannia Reef (shortlived, battery), Longfellows Reef (10-head battery), Shamrock Reef (nearer Aberfeldy River - cos. included Perseverance, Wealth of Nations, Homeward Bound - shortlived), Scrat-a-bit Reef (near Shamrock - battery installed 1867, ex-Golden Wall, Fulton's Creek) - Happy-go-lucky Reef. Boom at an end by 1869.<sup>16</sup>
- 1868:** Walhalla Co. installed new engine (cost £810) and erected 'the necessary appliances for the extraction of gold from iron and arsenical pyrites' - ie. buddle, Chilian mill, and roasting furnace - only mine at Stringer's Creek operating on pyrites.<sup>17</sup>
- late 1860s+:** The name Walhalla was applied to the town from the late 1860s - originally it was only the name of the Walhalla Co. mine.<sup>18</sup>
- 1870+:** Long Tunnel Extended Co. formed to work mine to the north of Long Tunnel Co. mine - lease earlier worked by Hercules Co. - tunnel extended to 295 metres - spent £5,000 with no returns before striking rich reef.<sup>19</sup>
- 1871:** Alluvial claims on the Thomson River increasing - good returns - 'At Cooper's Creek a party are engaged in tunnelling in the bed-rock, to form a tail-race for the purpose of draining the flat, which is supposed to be the old bed of the Thomson River.'<sup>20</sup>
- 1870s-80s:** Unlike the townships to the north, Walhalla did not suffer during the mining recession of the 1870s and 1880s. In fact the 1880s have been described as the heyday of Walhalla.<sup>21</sup>
- 1870s:** Thomson River, near Coopers Creek, still attracted attention of alluvial miners - Coopers Creek Sluicing Co. cut diversion tunnel through Wild Dog Spur, 1871 - tunnel about 200-400 m long - still diverts the river today.<sup>22</sup>
- 1870s-80s:** Long Tunnel Extended excavated extensive underground chamber for winding machinery, pumps, and boiler.<sup>23</sup>
- 1870s-80s:** Several companies worked with little success in vicinity of Walhalla - Great Extended Walhalla, Little Joe, South Cohen, Longfellows, Eureka, Fear Not Reef, and Happy-go-lucky.<sup>24</sup>
- 1877:** Fear Not Reef opened north of Walhalla.<sup>25</sup>
- 1879:** Alluvial - party driving tunnel for 600-700 ft, in attempt to prospect supposed deep lead below basalt on ranges between Thomson River and Jacob's Creek - shaft previously sunk to over 100 ft - abandoned due to excessive water.<sup>26</sup>

- 1880:** Alluvial mining consists wholly of creek and river sluicing.<sup>27</sup>
- 1880:** Walhalla was second largest township in Gippsland - only Sale was larger - Walhalla population in 1881 was 1,681.<sup>28</sup>
- 1880s-90s:** Extensive sluicing on Stringers Creek and Thomson River - large waterwheels used.<sup>29</sup>
- 1881-1900:** Long Tunnel Extended Co. - mine came on good quality stone in July 1881 - declared first dividend in 1882 - from 1888-92 was Walhalla's premier mine and one of leading mines in Victoria - in 1892 declared 100th dividend - 1892-6 was a low period - 1897 was the mine's peak year, £62,400 paid in dividends - total dividends paid by 1900 were £559,680. The company had no battery of its own - ore was transported to the old Walhalla Co. 30-head battery, where it was crushed for a price by the Long Tunnel Co.<sup>30</sup>
- 1882:** Alluvial mining seems to be gradually declining, if not dying out, in this division' - 'considering that the beds and banks of the various rivers and creeks have generally been so often turned over, the wonder is that they continue at all remunerative. And, up to the present time, alluvial mining in the division has been confined almost wholly to such workings. A few miles west of Walhalla there is a large basaltic flow, beneath which it is supposed is to be found the ancient bed of the Thomson River' - untried, and likely to remain so unless outside capital can be found.<sup>31</sup>
- 1884:** New Tubal Cain Co. erected battery (Tubal Cain Reef is two miles eastward of Cohen's line) - tunnel driven on lower level - good yields were once obtained from upper workings.<sup>32</sup>
- 1885-98:** Rush to deep lead at Moondarra - many leases taken up, several companies formed (some of them by local landowners) - little work done - Walhalla and Gippsland Deep Lead cos. installed expensive steam-powered pumping machinery in late 1880s - work ceased by 1892 - brief revival of Walhalla Deep Lead Co. from 1893-6 - 1898 bushfires destroyed mine buildings and plant.<sup>33</sup>
- 1885-6:** Very coarse gold found in John's Creek at Moondarra, about 7 miles west of Walhalla - great rush for miners' rights - 100 issued in about three weeks - many claims marked out, but only four, in the narrow bed of the creek, found to be payable - some leases on private property - unless auriferous wash can be traced to a deep lead below the basalt at head of creek, field unlikely to be of much extent - three weeks later, good gold found by diamond drill under basalt near Cooper's Creek (Milner's Gully, and later at Mark's Gully), about 3 miles south of Moondarra find - rush for leases - gold found soon after in another creek at Moondarra, a tributary of Jacob's Creek, near the Moe road, about 3 miles from John's Creek - at end of 1886 'the unaccountable neglect of the auriferous alluvial deposits which the diamond drill has proved to exist below the basalt at Moondarra.'<sup>34</sup>
- mid-late 1880s:** Brief mining boom - mines active in Walhalla vicinity: North Long Tunnel (active for 25 years, lots of expenditure for little return), Rising Sun Co. (used Longfellow Co. battery), South Long Tunnel Co. (crushing plant), Great South Long Tunnel Co. (ex Empress Co. - 30-head battery). Substantial mining also took place on Tubal Cain, Scrat-a-bit, and Happy go Lucky reefs.<sup>35</sup>
- 1880s-90s:** Innovations introduced to Long Tunnel mines included electric lighting at Long Tunnel battery and mine in 1884, chlorination works in 1888 (old Empress Co. battery was modified for the purpose), and telephone system in Long Tunnel mine, 1891.<sup>36</sup>
- 1886:** Long Tunnel Co. leased 1190 metres on line of Cohen's Reef = some 15 of the original claims.<sup>37</sup>
- 1886:** Alluvial mining in the true sense is completely at a stand still, a few creek and river sluicers being at present the only winners of free gold, and as nearly all the beds in

this division (which, by-the-by, were never rich) have at some time or other been passed through the sluice-box, not much can be expected from this source.<sup>38</sup>

- 1887:** Long Tunnel mine hailed as premier mine in colony - paid its 200th dividend in Sept 1887 - total dividends had reached £1,032,000 or £430 per share - by end of 1888, however, the mine failed to declare a dividend, for the first time in 19 years - in 1887, Walhalla field was second only to Bendigo in production.<sup>39</sup>
- 1887:** New Tubal Cain - erected a whim to aid in sinking their shaft below 150 ft - 'This is, I think, the first whim that has been erected in the division.' - erected steam pumping machinery when water proved too much for whim.<sup>40</sup>
- 1888:** Bushfire at Walhalla.<sup>41</sup>
- 1888:** Long Tunnel Co. erected small plant for treating pyrites by the Newbery-Vautin chlorination process.<sup>42</sup>
- 1888-9:** Gippsland Deep Lead Co. and Walhalla Deep Lead Co. formed to develop deep lead at Moondarra - Gippsland Co. initially erected a whim, but overcome by water - both companies erected 'powerful' steam machinery for pumping and winding.<sup>43</sup>
- late 1880s:** New reef discoveries 'made by the newly adopted system of prospecting called "loaming", which is becoming very popular'.<sup>44</sup>
- 1888-92:** Long Tunnel Extended Co. was Victoria's premier gold mine.<sup>45</sup>
- 1888-1901:** Long Tunnel mine began sinking a shaft at the northern end of the 9th level - levels from this shaft began to be profitable in 1891 - by 1894, co. had 40-head battery and used old Walhalla Co. 30-head battery to crush for Long Tunnel Extended - in 1898, dividends had reached £1,201,800 - in 1900, increasing costs of production exceeded declining value of stone raised - mine closed down in 1901, pending reconstruction.<sup>46</sup>
- 1891:** Flood scoured out creekbed and caused banks and hillsides to collapse - carried away buildings, bridges and roadway - masses of waterborne debris caused destruction of Long Tunnel mine works.<sup>47</sup>
- re. 1891 flood:** Walhalla is peculiarly situated, lying, as it does, in a gulch between two precipitous mountains, as our sketch shows. The creek winds through the town, and when the snow melts in the spring the rush of water down the stream is often greater than the carrying capacity of the waterway.<sup>48</sup>
- late 1890s to early 1900s:** Brief revival of other mines in the district, and last hurrah of the Long Tunnel Extended mine - success of reorganised Long Tunnel Co. and its incline shaft.<sup>49</sup>
- 1899-1900:** Heavy and continued demand for timber - in 1899, Long Tunnel mine used 19,254 tonnes of firewood and 1142 tonnes of mine timber - in 1900, Long Tunnel mine extended tramways to the south and erected a steel bridge across the Thomson River.<sup>50</sup>
- 1900:** Walhalla population reached peak of 2,800 - over 600 men employed in mines.<sup>51</sup>
- 1901-14:** Long Tunnel Co. re-formed - sank new incline shaft - new period of prosperity from 1906 - new plant installed, including new 30-head battery (1908) - company ceased work in 1914 - total dividends = £1,283,400 - mine had a vertical depth equal to 3,675 ft, and worked its lowest level at 3,625 ft.<sup>52</sup>
- 1902-09:** Only dividend-paying mine at Walhalla between 1900-14, other than two Long Tunnel mines, was the Coronation Co., Tubal Cain Reef - small battery installed in 1904 - first dividend declared in 1905 - ceased production 1909.<sup>53</sup>
- 1903-4:** Long Tunnel Extended Co. installed new plant, including their own 20-head battery - in 1904, purchased lease, plant and timber rights of North Long Tunnel Co.<sup>54</sup>

- 1907:** Long Tunnel mine employed 170 men and Long Tunnel Extended employed 150 men - most of the mining population of the district.<sup>55</sup>
- 1910:** Several gold recovery plants at work in bed of Stringer's Creek, treating, by grinding, the battery tailings - payable returns.<sup>56</sup>
- 1910:** Moe-Walhalla railway line completed 1910 - okayed by Parliament ten years earlier - first petitioned for thirty years earlier.<sup>57</sup>
- 1911-12:** Lengthy tunnel extended under Moondarra deep lead systems, to further test deposits prospected by shafts some 20 years ago - abandoned 1912, in favour of prospecting by shaft.<sup>58</sup>
- 1911-12:** By 1911, Long Tunnel Extended Co. had exhausted known resources on its lease and was only continuing to operate by acquiring other leases, like the Consols - company wound up 1912 - total dividends = £788,640 - was the fifth-richest of all Victorian gold mines - plant sold off<sup>59</sup> - drought and inability to collect calls, due to war, were partly responsible for closure.<sup>60</sup>
- 1915:** Last working ceased on Happy-Go-Lucky Reef - ore won during latest operations was sold to smelting works at nearby copper mine for fluxing purposes.<sup>61</sup>
- 1916:** Clancy's Reef, about four miles from the township, erected battery - mine closed down in 1917, as stone proved unpayable.<sup>62</sup>
- 1920:** Government battery erected at northern end of Walhalla, to serve several small prospecting/ mining shows - operated until?<sup>63</sup>
- 1927-38:** New Long Tunnel Co. operated successfully on unworked ground in vicinity of old Long Tunnel Extended and North Long Tunnel mines (prospected 1922) - 10-head battery erected 1929 on old Long Tunnel Extended site, near school.<sup>64</sup>
- 1939-40:** Good returns from small crushings at Walhalla - increased activity.<sup>65</sup>
- 1940:** Syndicate opened up old Shamrock mine workings - installing plant to test and treat old dumps.<sup>66</sup>
- 1941:** Small payable crushings from Walhalla Central mine.<sup>67</sup>
- 1942:** Railway line closed.<sup>68</sup>
- 1945:** Bushfires at Walhalla.<sup>69</sup>
- 1951:** Bushfires at Walhalla.<sup>70</sup>
- 1970s:** Long Tunnel Extended mine reopened for tourism - Harbinger battery (from Dry Creek, on the Jordan) moved to Walhalla - machinery, gear and sheds of Thomson River copper mine re-erected.<sup>71</sup>
- 1978:** Flood at Walhalla.<sup>72</sup>

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## **WOMBAT CREEK-GLEN WILLS NOTES**

- 1860:** Diggers working on Big River in summer of 1860 - banks and terraces worked continuously by small parties for next 30 years. (Flett, p. 161)
- 1861:** Gold discovered on lower Wombat Creek - treacherous country. (Flett, pp. 158-9)
- March 1866:** Wombat Creek gets plenty of rain - very elevated locality. Some rich ground opened in Peg-Leg Gully, Upper Wombat.
- June 1866:** Two more payable gullies opened at Wombat Creek. (Gullies included Gill's, Barber's and La Fontaine's - Flett, p. 159)
- December 1866:** Largest mining population in Omeo Subdivision at Wombat Creek (175).
- June 1867:** New alluvial ground opened on Wombat Creek.
- September 1867:** Wombat Creek population increasing.
- December 1867:** Several claims on Wombat Creek new rush abandoned - not payable - population decreased.
- December 1883:** Surprise prospecting party found apparently payable reef at junction of Wombat and Peg-leg creeks - sinking.
- March 1887:** Wombat Creek - Ralston and Sons working lead - believe there to be rich tin lode at head of creek - MS suggested examination of country around 'Mount Wells' for possible tin lodes.
- June 1887:** Gold workings in the Big River Valley, south of Mt Wills - small parties on Terraces near Mt Wills Creek, below Emu Creek, on Wild Horse Creek and prospecting for quartz below Middle Creek. Flats and terraces have been worked for past 25 years. Further prospecting encouraged. (Stirling, J., 'Geological Notes on Portion of Big River Valley', Appendix E to MSR, June 1887, pp.83-4, plus map)
- September 1887:** Some terraces and flats have been worked to west of Gills' selections (W & NW of Mt Fraser. West of Lewington's selection (SW of above) Chinese party now paddocking. Also a small area of alluvial flats being worked by Chinese party near Lewington's. (Stirling, J., 'Second Progress Report on Preliminary Geological Traverse of the Western Boundary of County of Benambra', Appendix D to MSR, Dec 1887, pp. 75-9, plus map).
- June 1888:** Silver lode discovered at Wombat Creek.
- September 1888:** 'The latest and greatest sensation in mining has been caused by the recent discovery of large tin deposits at Wombat Creek by the Government prospecting party' - traced for several miles from head of Wombat Creek - 'it is believed to be the largest tin deposit that has yet been found in any of the colonies; in fact, I have heard some experienced Cornish tin miners say they believe it is the largest in the world' - 30 leases already applied for and company being formed - stone assayed at 19-35% tin. (MSR)
- 1888:** Reefs discovered on Big River - among first was Mt Alfred Reef.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Flett, p. 161

- November 1888:** Gold-bearing reef at Mt Alfred - Henry Morgan engaged to construct tramline, fluming and race - crusher is 'Huntington' kind, patented in California and worked by the 'Piton' wheel - erected two large tents for company management, both with board floors and one with chimney.<sup>2</sup>
- December 1888:** Discovery of tin lodes at Wombat Creek - 'the most important yet made in this division, if not in the whole of the colonies.' Mt Wills Tin Proprietary Co. suspended prospecting operations due to objections being lodged against the granting of some of the leases applied for - 'The action of a small section of malcontents in this matter is generally condemned throughout the district, as the grounds of objection are considered frivolous, and legitimate enterprise and the influx of capital have, for the time, been retarded.' (MSR)
- March 1889:** Upper tributaries of Wombat Creek - such as Mopoke, Christmas, and lower portions of Gill's Creek - have been worked for gold in creek, flats and terraces for many years - terraces in some places 100 ft above creek level. Above junction with Gill's Creek, Wombat Creek worked for almost entire distance up to Christmas Creek. 'Any remaining terrace deposits at present unworked are only so in consequence of the expense of getting water at a sufficiently high level, which generally means the cutting of long races and the construction of flumes beyond the power of the individual miner or small party of prospectors.' Tin and bismuth occurred with gold. Tin lodes and auriferous quartz veins discovered recently (including at Mt Wills) by government prospecting party. Plenty of water available from Wombat or Gill's creeks for motive power. (Stirling, J., 'Report on the Tin Lodes at Wombat Creek', Appendix A to MSR, March 1889, pp. 65-6)
- June 1889:** Mt Wills Co. (tin mining) prospecting - to erect machinery in the spring - 'within the next twelve months it is expected that at least 1,000 miners will be employed on what is reported to be the largest tin deposit in the colony.' Mt Alfred Co., Big River, has erected plant and will soon start crushing. (MSR)
- September 1889:** Mt Wills Tin Mining Co. - 'It is fully expected that the most sanguine expectations with regard to this discovery will be fully realised, and that it will be the means of bringing this district into prominence as a mining centre.' Mt Alfred Co., Big River - operations suspended - poor crushings. 'The failure of this company will, I am afraid, be prejudicial to the district; but it may be said that none of the old and experienced miners in the district expected that the enterprise would be a success.' (MSR)
- December 1889:** Little or no work on tin mines - Mt Wills Co. stopped work pending sale of property - co. formed nearly 12 mths ago with £30,000 capital to work 10 x 50-acre leases. (MSR)
- 1891-3:** Sunnyside township began in 1891 - popn of 300 by 1893.<sup>3</sup>
- 1893-4:** Henry Morgan erecting 4-head battery and 18-ft waterwheel at Big River (lower down than Mt Alfred mine) for William Taylor - waterwheel an old one, formerly owned by Alf Abraham and Co. at Cobungra - timbering drain from wheel pit to river - work completed in January 1894 - battery not yet in working order - worked on dam at head of water-race.<sup>4</sup>
- 1893-5:** Big River became a busy reefing and sluicing area, alongside Mt Wills goldfield.<sup>5</sup>

### **Glen Wills Creek**

Around 1870 there was sporadic gold working of alluvial deposits around the Wombat Creek area. Both tin and bismuth were associated with the gold. In 1888, the Department of Mines undertook the

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2 Morgan  
 3 Flett, p. 162  
 4 Morgan  
 5 Flett, p. 161

search for the source lodes of the tin. Their discoveries led to tin-mining leases being taken out over some 1,500 acres around the Glen Wills Creek. Two major companies were formed, the Mount Wills Proprietary and Mount Wills South, followed in 1890 by the Gippsland Proprietary Company. A tin boom was under way, and by 1891 there were 73 leases granted and 116 under consideration. By mid-1892 however, it was observed that on the Glen Wills tinfield there was too much machinery and not enough tin (*Australian Mining Standard*, 18 July 1892).

The tin boom had diverted attention from the presence of gold, although by 1889 gold-mining was also taking place in the area, and by January 1894 practically all of the Sunnyside-Glen Wills area had been taken up on gold leases. After 1896 there were no new gold discoveries.

The Mount Wills goldfield operated from 1893 to 1924, and again from 1931 until 1968, producing a total output of 225,000 ounces of gold. In the first period, most of the production came from the northern, Sunnyside area, with a peak production in 1897 followed by a sharp decline. In 1927 there was a small tin rush, but the field was finished.

When interest in gold mining arose again, it was directed to the southern part of the field, the old Maude and Yellow Girl reefs at Glen Wills. From 1931 onwards, the Maude and Yellow Girl Company produced most of the gold on the field. The original company closed in 1952, but work by other parties continued until 1967. There is still [1980?] a current lease for the Maude and Yellow Girl mine.

The Mount Wills goldfield, throughout its long history, saw a large and varied assortment of machinery. At one time there were 40 gold batteries in operation, together with four cyanide plants and a whole range of other mining machinery.<sup>6</sup>

### ***Tin mining***

Although Wombat Creek another other tributaries of the Mitta were worked for alluvial gold from 1859, and tin was noticed in the wash, it was not until 1887 that the stanniferous lodes were located. James Stirling had formed the opinion that tin-bearing formations would be found in the Wombat Creek watershed on the southern slopes of Mt Wills. At the time a Government prospecting party was about to explore the Wombat Creek Valley for auriferous quartz reefs. On Stirling's recommendation, they began searching for tin lodes as well. S. Dejarlais, described by Stirling as 'an energetic young miner reared in the Australian Alps, inured to the climate and accustomed to mountain climbing' was the first to discover a tin lode. As the lodes were well situated for economic development, with plenty of timber and water, great hopes were held for the district and at least a dozen prospecting leases were taken out.

In 1890, when Murray visited the field, several companies had begun work. Extravagant claims about the area were being made in the press and a boom had commenced. Murray visited all the workings and attempted to ascertain whether a major tin-mining field had been discovered. At this stage only the leases held by the Mt Wills Proprietary Co. had been extensively opened up. Their workings, on three lodes, are situated on the range that extends north from the Pinnacle, between Wombat and Scrubby creeks. The workings on No. 1 lode consisted of two tunnels and two shafts.

The workings on the second lode consisted of four tunnels and three shafts. The third lode was a huge outcrop 60 ft in diameter. It was opened up by a shaft to 70 ft, and a drive in the bottom.

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<sup>6</sup> Anon, p. 6

The Mt Wills South Tin Mining Co. also opened up three lodes. The Hard lode and the Soft lode, worked in a later revival by the Soft Lode Tin Mining Co., were on the southern side of the creek near Glen Wills township. The formations were worked from three tunnels and a shaft sunk by the original company. Later the Soft Lode Co. drove another two adits on the Soft lode. Although work on all the other dykes was only superficial Murray was convinced that a large, viable tin mining area had been discovered. His enthusiasm was so great as to allow him to make the following prediction: 'The colony possesses a large and valuable tin field likely to become the centre of a great mining population and to afford employment for perhaps centuries to come.' Murray attached great significance to the assays done by two English tin experts sent out to assess the field for English investors. At this time the great Cornish tin mines were in decline and several Cornish companies showed great interest in the Mt Wills field. Promising assay figures, combined with the advantages of abundant timber for fuel and water for power, led experts to believe the tin could be mined at a cost of no more than £1 per ton, which would leave a profit even with a grade of 2% tin. However, Murray sounded a note of caution about the treatment of the ore. Some of the companies were already erecting stamper batteries. He warned that because of the large quantity of micaceous material in the lodes reducing the ore to slimes would result in a considerable loss of tin in the tailings. He suggested that roller mills would be a safer method of breaking down the ore. With admirable foresight he also recommended against smelting the tin on the field, thus saving the magnificent forest. He recommended that the ore be transported to Gippsland where the huge deposits of brown coal could be utilised for smelting fuel.

Murray's positive report encouraged investment - a year later thirteen companies were at work. By 1893 when Henry Rosales reported on the field the picture had changed drastically. Many companies had abandoned their leases and the results obtained in treating the ore were so below expectations as to render further work futile. He stated that the field was a failure and doubted if the lodes could ever be worked profitably. He cited the failure of the Mt Wills Proprietary Co. to win more than a few tons of concentrates from thousands of tons of ore. He also saw the absence of stream tin in large quantities as a proof of the poverty of the lodes.

Along with the low price of tin at the time, another crucial factor in the failure of the tin ventures was the discovery of rich quartz reefs in the immediate vicinity. Skilled mining labour was scarce in the area and those men available were quickly engaged by the gold mining companies. In 1906 and 1907 a little work was done on some of the tin lodes by small local syndicates, but little ore was treated. Another revival in 1911 by the Hopeful Tin Mining Co., prompted by a rise in the price of tin and the increasing accessibility of the district, was on a larger scale. They erected a battery north of Sunnyside near the head of Lightning Creek and planned to crush 100 tons per week. The Gwendoline Syndicate and the Soft Lode Co. also erected small plants. The ventures failed in 1914 because the price had dropped and the treatment plants failed again and large quantities of tin were lost in the tailings. Some of these tailings were profitably sluiced by later miners.

The failure of the Mt Wills tin field brought losses of thousands of pounds to the public companies involved. The area acquired a bad name with investors and tin has never been profitably worked on the field since.<sup>7</sup>

## ***Gold mining***

The first working gold mine in the Mt Wills area was probably the Mt Alfred mine which was in operation around 1888. In 1891 the Speers brothers worked the auriferous quartz spurs of the Alpine lode south west of the Glen Wills township. This mine was later worked by the Big River Quartz Company. In 1894 J. Speers discovered the Emily Reef. A rush had commenced and scores of gold-bearing reefs were opened up on all sides of Mt Wills. When Rosales visited in 1893, £1,703 worth of gold had already been won from the field, three times the value of tin concentrates mined during the tin boom of the late 1880s. Lidgely surveyed the goldfield in 1895, identifying 37 mines then in operation.

A large number of batteries and treatment plants were in use during the early years of the field but in the twilight days of mining in the early 1950s only three batteries were operating. The largest was the 20-head battery of the Maude and Yellow Girl GMC, the district's major mine. Battery tailings were passed over Wilfley tables and the residue from these through a cone classifier. The oversize particles were re-ground and returned to the classifier while the undersized particles, after the addition of re-agents in a conditioning tank, were passed to a series of flotation cells. The tailings from these were discharged at a dump on the Big River flats. Concentrates from the tables and flotation cells were transported to Port Kembla for smelting. A Government battery situated at the junction of Four Brothers Gully and Glen Wills Creek was used by prospectors and small companies. Cecil Cooper, then living at Sunnyside, was also crushing hand-picked ore from the mullock heaps of the old Sunnyside mines with his ten-head battery [at Glen Wills - still there (on private property) in 1980].

The reefs can be put into five categories:

- (a) the scattered reefs in the southern part of the field, including the Crossover, Yellow Girl, Yellow Boy, and Colleen Bawn mines.
- (b) the reefs worked by the Maude and Yellow Girl GMC, including the former Shamrock, Victory, Templeton's and Ryan's workings.
- (c) the reefs in the central part of the area, including Stewart's, the Cumberland, and Wombat mines.
- (d) the reefs of the Sunnyside field, including the following mines: Mt Moran, Golden Fleece, and Smile of Fortune.
- (e) the remaining group of mines is the ore bodies outside the main belt, such as the Alpine, Havelock, Snowy Heights, and Anaconda lodes.

The most productive mines at Glen Wills-Sunnyside were the following:

United Brothers Mine was the largest at Sunnyside and was worked from two major adits and several smaller tunnels and stopes to the surface. Produced 23,214 oz between 1894-1918. Good Samaritan Mine consisted of tunnels, shafts and cuts - now caved in. Total of 1157 oz recovered.

Meerschaum Mine was on the same line as the Good Samaritan and was worked by adits and shafts. There were some extremely rich recoveries of silver from isolated pockets in the reef. Produced 10,987 oz between 1896-1915.

Gentle Annie Mine was situated north of the Meerschaum and on the same line. It was very rich in sulphides and had an average grade of 4 oz/ton. Over 7,000 oz was produced.

Mount Moran Mine was worked by adits and stopes. The bottom tunnel, which is right on the Omeo Highway, is the lowest on the whole Sunnyside field. Produced 7,557 oz between 1894-1915.

Yellow Girl Reef was first opened up by an adit on the west bank of Glen Wills Creek. Altogether, the group of workings constituting the later Maude and Yellow Girl mine yielded 103,556 oz.

The goldfield was serviced by three settlements at different periods. All that now remains of the township of Sunnyside is a few fruit trees, old rubbish dumps opened up by bottle collectors, and a few foundations. Its site is one of isolation and grandeur, nestling on the southern slopes of Mt Wills beneath the spectacular granite masses near the summit. Glen Wills is now just a deserted clearing with only a cemetery and a few crumbling foundations remaining from the former boom town. Glen Valley is now a ghost town with a handful of inhabitants, abandoned school, and mining machinery in various stages of dereliction.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Convey, pp. 27-31

## YEA HISTORICAL NOTES

- 1851:** Gold discovered at Yea—in December, 100 cradles working on Muddy Creek (Yea River), but the diggers were disappointed.<sup>1</sup>
- 1859:** Alluvial workings near Yea and on Muddy Creek and tributaries. Reefs opened at Junction Hill at the head of Tea Tree Creek, and the Carriers and Providence lines of reef were opened just north of Yea.<sup>2</sup>
- August 1859:** Quartz mining operations still being carried on at the Junction. Gold still being obtained from many claims at Muddy Creek. Tea-tree reefs still showing well, as high as 10 oz/ton—crushing machinery in course of erection.<sup>3</sup>
- December 1859:** New quartz veins opened at Muddy Creek. Williamson and Co. preparing to erect powerful machinery near Junction Reef—stampers and Chilian wheels, 25-hp engine, and capacious dam.<sup>4</sup>
- January 1860:** Mining population: Yea, 100 quartz miners; Junction and Tea-tree Creek, 300 quartz miners, 20 alluvial. Crushing from Yea reefs formerly at Reedy Creek, but powerful crushing machinery now being erected by Langtree and Co., on purchased land on bank of Muddy Creek, about a mile below township. Mining at the Junction much retarded by stoppage of Williamson and Brunstine's crushing mill, owing to want of water. At Tea-tree Creek, considerable activity prevails, but more crushing machinery needed—plant of McKay, Joiner, and Co. is fully employed from their own reef (Welcome). Alluvial ground opened on Tea-tree Creek—prospecting party working bed of creek—other parties sinking on the flat adjoining the creek. Alluvial gold found in Muddy Creek, about 9 miles above Yea, on McLeishe's station—prospecting claim taken up and the party intend turning the creek; an undertaking of considerable expense. New reef found about six miles east of Tea-tree diggings, near Junction on the Newchum and Muddy creeks.<sup>5</sup>
- February 1860:** Mining population: Yea, 220 quartz miners; Junction and Tea-tree, 380 quartz miners, 38 alluvial. At Yea a very decided improvement has taken place in the reefs which are situate immediately opposite the junction of Boundary and Muddy Creeks—Carrier's Reef has yielded 6 oz/ton—Providence Reef, situate about 4 chains north from Carrier's and on same spur—as a general rule the gold in these reefs is the coarsest I have seen in the district—claims on Ready Money Reef all suspended—machinery erected by Langtree will be shortly at work, and Sloan, from Strath Creek, has brought his machine on to Muddy Creek, immediately adjoining the reefs. Williamson and Bruntine's battery will shortly be at work at the Junction—alluvial gold has been found on the flat, at a depth of between 30 and 40 ft. Crushing machinery wanted at Tea-tree, the machine at work there being fully occupied crushing for proprietors—alluvial miners on this creek still doing pretty well, the best yield being about 2 dwt to the tub, with three feet stripping, and a good thickness of wash-dirt. The sluicing party lately at work in Muddy Creek, near McLeishe's have been compelled to abandon their claim, owing to rain—were working bed of creek by means of a wing dam [not Chinese miners].<sup>6</sup>

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1 Flett, p. 116

2 Flett, p. 116

3 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), August 1859

4 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1859

5 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), January 1860

6 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), February 1860

- April 1860:** Two lines of reef still giving handsome returns at Muddy Creek—third line further east, on the same hill, has been opened—several claim-holders on this hill have amalgamated, and are putting a tunnel through the hill at a depth of 90 ft from summit. Scarcity of crushing machinery at Tea-tree—Mr Hart, from Reedy Creek, is erecting powerful machinery to be worked by water power. A few parties still working alluvial ground on Tea-tree Creek—piling wash-dirt, and intend erecting puddling machine.<sup>7</sup>
- June 1860:** Three distinct veins being worked on one hill at Muddy Creek, Yea—on Carrier's Reef, one claim yielded 500 oz/49 ton, and 17\_ oz/ton in another claim—Providence Reef has averaged 2\_ oz/ton—Thrupp's Reef has averaged 3 oz/ton. New reef struck near the flat leaders, about 3 miles SW of township of Yea, and specimens obtained from it equal to any found in the district. At Tea-tree, Hart's water-power machine now at work. One or two parties still working the alluvial but barely making a living.<sup>8</sup>
- August 1860:** New quartz vein struck on spurs running easterly from Boundary Range. Providence Reef, Yea, under new management and shareholders—likely to receive thorough trial.<sup>9</sup>
- September 1860:** At Muddy Creek (Yea), crushing from Providence Reef yielded over 1 oz/ton. On Carrier's Reef water is still great hindrance—stone from this reef has averaged over 10 oz/ton. Rough, water-worn gold has been found on Boundary Creek, a tributary of Muddy Creek, as well as at the Junction, both of which places lie in the same watershed. Principal reefs at Tea-tree are Joiners, Enniskillen, Dunrobin, and German Jack's—Hart's water-power battery now has steam attached.<sup>10</sup>
- March 1864:** Twelve abandoned prospecting claims, which formerly paid well, now abandoned—only one, the Welcome Reef, taken up by Soraghan and Co., from which they have taken more than 250 oz during last three months. Claims expected to be taken up again when the Jordan rush is over.<sup>11</sup>
- September 1864:** Soraghan and Co., Welcome Reef, Tea-tree, did no crushing during quarter—distance between claim and machine is over two miles, a deep swamp in between. Parties at Flat Lead Reef and Yea cannot crush until Providence (Webster) Co.'s machine is ready. Providence Mining Association, near Yea—J.D. Webster and Co. have applied for lease of part of this field—have removed their steam crushing machinery and fixtures from the former site to the reef, for the purpose of pumping water out of flooded shafts, winding, and crushing also—erecting machinery, sinking main shaft to get under old works, and making necessary sheds, huts and buildings. Alluvial ground on Tea-tree and Boundary creeks abandoned.<sup>12</sup>
- December 1864:** Party of 12 took up quartz claim on Flat Lead, called Canadian Reef. Soraghan and Co. on Welcome Reef, Tea-tree, crushed 26 tons for over 98 oz—they crush a little for the public, at £1/ton. Also at Tea-tree, Harrops line of reef.<sup>13</sup>

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7 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), April 1860  
 8 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1860  
 9 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), August 1860  
 10 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1860  
 11 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1864  
 12 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1864  
 13 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1864



- March 1865:** Providence Mining Assn have main shaft 146 ft deep. Soraghan & Co. crushed 15 tons for 72 oz. Machinery at work: Providence Co., 8-head battery, 20-hp engine; McKay's (ex-Soraghan) Welcome Co., 6 head battery, 10-hp engine; plus two idle 8-head batteries with 10-hp engines at Tea-tree.<sup>14</sup>
- September 1865:** It is very likely that all the ground that has been hitherto in occupation and opened, and for some time abandoned will shortly be taken up and worked again (on Tea-tree Creek Ranges). Enniskillen Co. driving a tunnel a great distance—have not yet found reef. Dunrobin Co. also driving a tunnel. Welcome Reef, near the Junction—\_ of claim sold, with engine and plant, for sum of £1,370. Providence Mining Association (J.D. Webster and Co.), Muddy Creek, near Yea, crushed 60 tons for average return of 6 oz/ton—a large quantity of mineral in the stone prevents amalgamation of gold—engine and pumps now in perfect order—30 men employed. Several claims taken up on Flat Lead, near Yea—parties there intend to unite and set up an engine for themselves, as the engines at Tea-tree and Muddy Creek are too remote. Coachman's Reef Co. now in full work. Shallow workings in this locality from 10 ft to 20 & 30 ft deep. One of the Tea-tree batteries moved to Strath Creek.<sup>15</sup>
- 1866:** Rich reefs discovered at New Chum, up the Murrundindi River about 10 miles from Yea—settlement changed its name to Higginbotham in 1868.<sup>16</sup>
- March 1866:** Providence Mining Association (Webster & Co.), Muddy Creek, near Yea, got 200 oz from 40 tons—26 men employed. Eleven new quartz claims taken up at Murrendendie Creek, on Miller's Creek, called the New Chum.<sup>17</sup>
- June 1866:** Providence Co. got an average 4 oz/ton from 160 tons. Ten good quartz claims all in work on Flat Lead, near Yea—no stone crushed yet, as all have been waiting for Farrar & Co's new crushing machine, now erected—6-head, steam-powered—company has also tunnel 225 ft long under the shaft, constructed a shoot and tramway, and sunk their shaft 65 ft deep. Between 40-50 men employed in reefing on Tea-tree Creek Ranges, Miller's Run.<sup>18</sup>
- September 1866:** At Flat Lead, the principal works (on Sons of Freedom, Staffordshire, and Coachman's reefs) have been suspended, pending working on a larger scale—engine and plant now in perfect working order. Providence Co. raising and crushing quartz (120 tons gave 300 oz) and conglomerate sandstone (500 tons gave 125 oz)—the quartz is taken out of a shaft on the hill 25 ft deep, the sandstone reef from the surface—intend to install better pumps on shaft. Rising Sun mine adjoins—not worked at present, shaft being full of water.<sup>19</sup>
- December 1866:** Mining population: 46 at Muddy Creek, Yea; 16 at Flat Lead; 60 at Tea-tree Creek Ranges and Junction; 22 at Golden Crown. Freemason's GMC shaft (at Junction, Tea-Tree Creek Ranges) driven 370 ft into hill—main reef not yet found. Enniskillen GMC, Tea-tree Creek Ranges, driving tunnel—three old shafts in this ground.<sup>20</sup>
- 1867:** Discovery of rich alluvial gold and reefs at Ghin Ghin (or Palestine Creek), near Yea, 1867 - alluvial nearly 'worked out' in 1868.<sup>21</sup>
- June 1867:** Reefs at Flat Lead, Yea, and Golden Crown, Murrundindi Creek now at work and paying dividends—also Halfway Reef, near Flat Lead. Brunswick GMC have taken

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14 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1865  
 15 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1865  
 16 Flett, p. 116  
 17 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1866  
 18 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1866  
 19 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1866  
 20 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1866  
 21 Flett, p. 116; Mining Surveyors' Reports (Jamieson North Subdivision), June 1868

up old Dunrobin claim at Tea-Tree. Good alluvial prospects at Yorkey's Gully Junction—four claims at work. Also alluvial claim on Boundary Creek, near Yea.<sup>22</sup>

**September 1867:** Battery at Flat Lead, near Yea, crushing stone for Halfway Reef and others. Claims on Golden Crown Reef, Murrundindi Creek, still being worked, but nearest battery is at Yea, 17 miles distant, and 'it is impossible to cart with any prospect of profit, especially in the winter months'. Many Tea-tree Creek claims (eg., Freemason's, Dunrobin, Perseverance, Catherine) have ceased working, the miners having left for Ghin-Ghin or Alexandra. Welcome Co., Tea-Tree, has finished water-shaft, 226 ft, and will commence raising quartz—battery has just been thoroughly overhauled. Band of Hope Co. still driving tunnel to catch Welcome line of reef—in about 450 ft. Enniskillen Co., Tea-tree Creek, has connected their tunnel (800 ft) and main shaft (210 ft)—8 men employed—battery may be erected.<sup>23</sup>

**March 1868:** Quartz prospecting claim taken up on Murrundindi Creek, about 15 miles from Yea, called Galatea Reef—three claims north and five south taken up and worked on the same line.<sup>24</sup>

**June 1868:** Providence claim let on tribute—tributers putting in new lift of pumps. Several new quartz reefs opened on Murrundindi Creek, about 12 miles from Yea.<sup>25</sup>

**September 1868:** Providence Mining Association tributers, Yea, have main shaft down 200 ft and 150 ft below water-level—tunnel being put in on eastern side of hill—in 100 ft so far. Flat Lead battery still employed crushing small lots of stone from various reefs or leaders in its vicinity, which seem to be periodically taken up and abandoned—general character of reefs around here seems to be that they are rich but patchy. At Tea-tree Creek, Welcome Co. is only claim at work—still putting down main shaft. Rush to Newchum, or Murrundindi, Creek—150-200 miners congregated there, several attracted by report of rich quartz reefs in vicinity—most did not stop long enough to thoroughly prospect the field—men can make wages at alluvial there, but most left for Godfrey's Creek rush. Newchum (later Higinbotham) quartz mining is lively—machine and plant, ex-Enniskillen Co., Tea-tree Creek, has been erected there.<sup>26</sup>

**December 1868:** Miners left for rush to Spring Creek (Alexandra). Only four quartz reefs now worked at Higinbotham. Providence Co., Yea, has just begun crushing—very heavy water in deep ground. Welcome Co., Tea-tree Creek, getting good yields.<sup>27</sup>

**March 1869:** Young & party registered an alluvial prospecting claim at McClellan's Creek, between Whittlesea and Yea. Providence and Rising Sun Cos., Yea, had good crushings. McLeish and party's claim on George Higinbotham Reef averages 3 oz/ton. A few parties of alluvial miners on Murrundindi Creek, but barely make wages.<sup>28</sup>

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22 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1867

23 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1867

24 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1868

25 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1868

26 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1868

27 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1868

28 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1869

- June 1869:** Quartz claims at Tea-tree Creek abandoned. Higinbotham, about 12 miles SE of Yea, keeps a small battery going—Balaclava, George Higinbotham, and Galatea are main reefs. Three claims on a reef, said to be rich in antimony, situated on east side of Dongarook Range.<sup>29</sup>
- September 1869:** Alluvial gold is still obtained at Higinbotham, on the Murrindindi, down the same flat—occasional small rush—'I think this will eventually become a good lead'. A few miners at work on Tea Tree Creek and Gum Tree Creek. Providence Co., Italian Reef Co., and Tunnel Claim at work at Yea. Auld's machine, Flat Lead, has been almost idle. George Higinbotham and Balaclava Reefs at work at Higinbotham—a few payable claims on each line—G. Higinbotham Reef opened for at least one mile—crushing costs 15s-20s per ton, plus cartage, which prohibits many a trial being made—'It is astonishing, with the splendid water privilege existing here, that a powerful water-wheel has not been erected, which would reduce expenses to a minimum.' On the Welcome Reef and Enniskillen Reef at Tea Tree, leases of 30 acres have been applied for on each line. Slight rush to Gum Creek, near McClellan's, on the Whittlesea road—principal attraction was a quartz reef.<sup>30</sup>
- December 1869:** Higinbotham can boast of some payable quartz reefs, but, on visiting it, I found the returns of quartz crushed would give no idea of the district, as the machinery is so diminutive and inferior that the miners only crush what will keep them in rations. Two tons per diem is the utmost it can crush, and 26s per ton was ruling for carting and crushing. There is any amount of stuff at the Higinbotham Reef that will average 1 oz to the ton.<sup>31</sup>
- March 1870:** At Higinbotham about 20 men find employment at New-chum Creek and Murrindindi Creek. Also at Higinbotham, claims on Balaclava line of reef are looking well.<sup>32</sup>
- December 1870:** Providence Reef, Yea, will soon be again in work, as a new company have obtained a lease and intend extending operations. About 30 alluvial miners at Higinbotham, doing poorly. At the Higinbotham quartz mines 'perseverance is still the motto', and with fair results—in an abandoned reef, 38 tons yielded 1 oz/ton.<sup>33</sup>
- June 1872:** A few Chinese and European alluvial miners still employed at Yea.<sup>34</sup>
- September 1872:** Alluvial rush to Flat Lead Creek, near Yea—nothing payable found.<sup>35</sup>
- 1873:** Murchison and Co. obtained fine samples of antimony from their claim about 5 miles west of Yea.<sup>36</sup>
- mid-1870s:** Prospecting for gold and antimony on Murchison Reef, Doogalook, 1874 - small battery taken away in 1876, then another re-erected.<sup>37</sup>
- 1875:** Some alluvial mining (surfacing) still underway at Tea-tree Creek.<sup>38</sup>
- 1877-89:** Welcome Co., Tea Tree Creek, Yea, 1877-1889+ - worked by Chinese tributers (Ah Mouy, of Melbourne) - in 1882, the Mining Registrar complained of having trouble

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29 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1869  
 30 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1869  
 31 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1869  
 32 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), March 1870  
 33 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), December 1870  
 34 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1872  
 35 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), September 1872  
 36 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Kilmore Division), June 1873  
 37 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Alexandra Subdivision), March 1874, June & December 1876  
 38 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Alexandra Subdivision), September 1875

ascertaining yields from mine - blamed it on the Chinese proprietor, who sold gold direct in Melbourne - next quarter, he proclaimed the yield 'excellent'.<sup>39</sup>

- 1877:** Providence Co., Yea, drained their mine with a view to re-working.<sup>40</sup>
- 1878:** Sluicing claim on bank of Murrindindi Creek, south of Yea, 1878 - tail-race.<sup>41</sup>
- 1880-85:** Providence Reef mine under tribute, employing a larger number of men than for several years past. In the March 1881 quarter, the Providence tributers contributed the main yield to the quartz crushing returns of the Alexandra subdivision. In mid-1881 there was 'quite a stir' at Yea and Tea-tree, following the success of mines at Reedy Creek. During 1882, the old reefs around Yea, Tea-tree and the Junction were again being prospected, but with no great results. The Providence Co. added good pumping engines to their plant in 1883-4, but progress stalled at that point. Only the Welcome Co. at Tea-tree continued payable.<sup>42</sup>
- 1885:** Welcome Co., Tea Tree - machinery installed (including air compressor and rock drill), 1885 - ceased work c.1890s - shaft 800 ft deep, total production £30,000 worth of gold.<sup>43</sup>
- 1886-9:** Yea GMC on Providence Reef erected battery, pumping plant, etc., and returned initial crushing of nearly 1 oz/ton. Undertook much developmental work, with only occasional crushings, until one shaft partially collapsed in 1888, after which the mine was abandoned and machinery removed. Prospecting again underway, by a new party, late in 1889.<sup>44</sup>
- 1887:** Unsuccessful bores sunk for deep leads on the flat at Yea.<sup>45</sup>
- 1903:** Yea.—Providence Co. crushed 20 tons for 10\_ oz. Canadian mine and Ready Money mine not payable. Homewood.—Vulcan Co. tunnelling, but no gold. Iron Blow mine, no gold. Squib Co. got 7\_ oz from 30 tons. Old Men's Hope mine very poor. Kerrisdale.—Triangle mine and Hewer's mine at work.<sup>46</sup>
- 1904:** Mining and cyaniding at Welcome mine, Tea Tree, with poor results—operations suspended.<sup>47</sup>
- 1905:** Kerrisdale Syndicate, Alexandra (?), 1905-6—4-head battery.<sup>48</sup>
- 1937:** Prospecting at Ghin Ghin, 1937.<sup>49</sup>
- 1946-8:** Providence Co., Yea, dewatering mine (very heavy water), 1946-8—commenced mining as New Providence GMNL, 1948 - poor results? (no further reports).<sup>50</sup>

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- 40 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Alexandra Subdivision), June 1877
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- 42 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Alexandra Subdivision), March 1880, March & June 1881, June 1882, March 1883, December 1884, March 1885
- 43 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Alexandra Subdivision), March & June 1885; *Australian Mining Standard*, p. 103
- 44 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Alexandra Subdivision), March 1886, March & September 1887, March 1888-September 1889
- 45 Mining Surveyors' Reports (Alexandra Subdivision), December 1887
- 46 Department of Mines Annual Report, 1903
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