

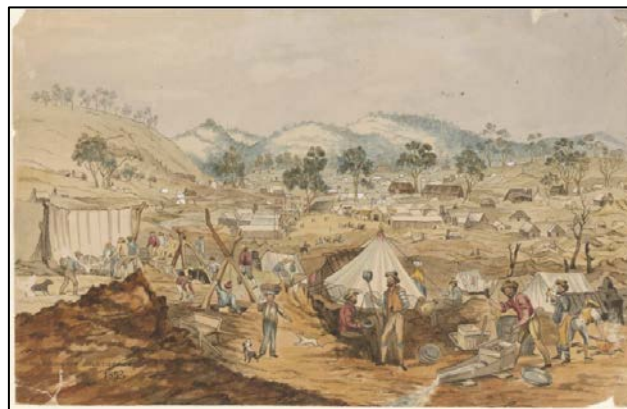
GOLD, THE GOVERNMENT CAMP & CASTLEMAINE

The Colony and its Goldrush

The NSW colony in 1850, which incorporated Victoria known then as the Port Phillip District, had a European population of 75,000, an indigenous population of 2000, and sheep numbering 5,000,000. The Port Phillip District had 23,000 Europeans of that 75,000. Separation from NSW in 1851 coincided with gold finds in Victoria. This phenomenal quantity of Victorian gold cleared the British national debt in 2 years, upended orderly immigration, left Melbourne empty of men for some time, a harbour of ghost ships at anchor¹ funded a lavish building boom, and set in train an Australian democratic movement. By 1854 the population was 237,000 and Victoria was transformed in its demographics, culture, politics, and wealth.

Recollection of an 'Old Pioneer'

'In looking over some old statistics the other day, I came across the interesting fact that during the period of nine months in the year 1852 Forest Creek alone exported three million pounds' sterling worth of gold. Here is an item which says more than volumes of written matter could convey of the extraordinary richness of the Castlemaine goldfield, for what was done at Forest Creek was repeated at Fryer's Creek and many other portions of the district. It requires no great stretch of imagination to picture the prosperity which the disbursement of a considerable portion of this sum diffused in Castlemaine' Henry Britton 17 June 1887²

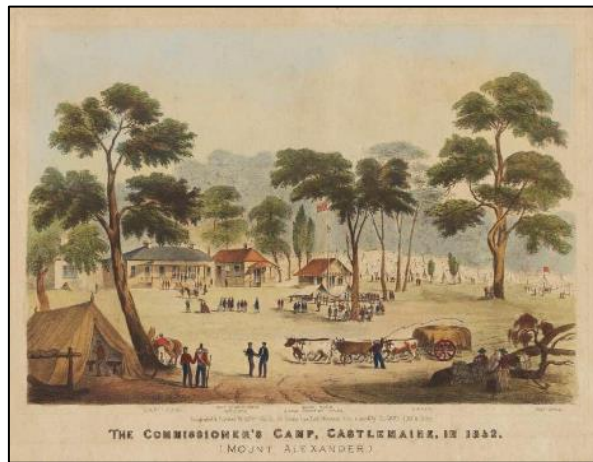


'Mt. Alexander gold diggings, 1853' [William Bentley, NLA]

Old World New World

Castlemaine's birthplace as a settled, ordered society, commenced at the 1851 Government Camp under an archaic military colonial system that was always resented by the civilians outside that system. Within five years a civilian society was established in parallel, on surveyor William Urquhart's³ town grid to the east. A creek separated the two worlds. Newspaper and literature searches describe a growing town that defined itself against the Government Camp. Frank McKillop, an editor of the Mount Alexander Mail in 1908 ran articles of pioneer accounts of the early council, documenting the first representative electorate of the early 1850s, and the establishment of the Municipal Council.⁴ These accounts reflect civilian novice Councillors wrangling amongst themselves, united against the Camp and committed to building a fine township. The press often agitated against Camp

customs, and protocols. This is perceptible in many newspaper articles (Mount Alexander Mail and the Argus) and speaks to the divisiveness of this form of colonial rule. Towards the end of this rule, the press started referring ironically to the 'Sacred Camp'.



'The Commissioner's Camp, Castlemaine, in 1852' [Edward Gilks, lithograph, SLV]

By 1854 the Government Camp system of ranked soldiers, British regiments, police corps, courts, ledgers, licenses, and disproportional punishment and petty corruption, culminated in the devastating events known as the Eureka stockade fifty miles away in Ballarat. Eureka sparked a Government Inquiry heralding the end of the Government Camp system on all goldfields, and for Castlemaine, marked a brighter future for the new civilian township over the creek.⁵

Following Eureka, a group of townsmen formed a municipal Council and embarked on an ambitious plan of civic works, which grew exponentially. Within a few short years a gracious wide streetscape was cut into challenging topography, hill tops were removed with pick and shovel, handsome civic buildings were built including, banks, a post office a telegraph office, a gaol, a town hall, a surveyor's office, a police station, bridges, a railway, a mill, churches, and a market building complex (two wings of which were demolished in 1917). Most of these early buildings remain today, and the Market building (1861-2) by the architect William Beynon Downe, is regarded as one of Australia's finest neo-classical buildings.⁶ This intrepid early council even rerouted Barkers Creek which traversed the Government Camp, putting both it, and Forest Creek into stone channels. These early Councillors also laid out a fine Botanical Gardens.⁷ The vision was large and fuelled by gold.

The civilian society always disliked the exclusive Government Camp over the creek. It represented the worst of the 'old world' that they had left behind. It was archaic. Yet this Government Camp of about 0.2 kilometres square and 300-500 inhabitants, and of only 5 short years (officially), was the centre of an extraordinary and formative period in the nation's history.

This place was a focus of cultural and social tension, with a dynamic and volatile interface between Camp and Town marked so distinctly by the boundary creeks. To cross the ford, (later replaced with Governor Bridge), was to move between two worlds.

Lieutenant-Governor Charles La Trobe (governed between July 1851 to Jun 1854)

Lieutenant-Governor Charles La Trobe, only recently appointed, was apprehensive about the discovery of gold in Victoria on 20th July 1851 at Dr Barker's run. Ironically, given La Trobe's ambivalence towards the goldrush, a government reward of 200 pounds had been offered for the discovery of gold within 200 miles of Melbourne. This was an incentive to stem a population exodus to NSW gold finds, and to the recent Californian rush. A 'Gold Discovery Committee'⁸ sent out prospecting teams and eventually numerous small gold finds were made at Clunes, Anderson's Creek (Warrandyte), Buninyong and Golden Point Ballarat. All, even Ballarat's goldfields, were eclipsed by the finds at Mount Alexander and Bendigo.⁹ On the 8th of October 1851 'Mount Alexander and its vicinity' was officially sanctioned as a goldfield.¹⁰

Order

The lawlessness of the 1847 Californian goldrush was fresh in La Trobe's mind. For the Governor, in a young colony without an army or an organized police force, the spectre of chaos, social disruption and uncontrolled mass immigration must have been daunting. His aim was order, and his solution was to turn the Commissioners of Crown Lands of the pastoral lease system, into Gold Commissioners, with the additional authority of magistrate¹¹, and to give those men control over military regiments brought from England. All to establish order on the goldfields. This problematic quasi martial law model, it is argued by many historians, progressively culminated in the Eureka Rebellion and the evolution of Australian democracy.

Local historian George Milford contextualizes the harsh governance of the Government Camp from another viewpoint; one of colonies, empire, and trade.

*'The Governor was bound to behave in accordance with the Governor's Instructions issued by the Colonial Office in London. This permitted no flexibility. The Colonial Office, just two generations removed from the loss of the American colonies, feared the spectre of republicanism more than anything else. To yield to democratic, self-governing colonies would be to set a precedent among a wide range of Britain's offshore possessions. And, no doubt, loss of colonies would be loss of colonial markets for British-made goods. Despatch after despatch from the Victorian Governor was responded to with advice coloured by those primal concerns, (1) fear of republicanism and (2) potential loss of markets.'*¹²

Earliest Camps

Fabulous gold was coming out of the 14 km Forest Creek goldfield at Golden Point Chewton (then known as Forest Creek).

Commissioner Powlett was briefly first Commissioner at the first Camp in Chewton (Golden Point Road), followed by Commissioner Doveton, a young man with a wife and child. Doveton was moved back and forth from Ballarat to Golden Point Chewton. While acting as Assistant Commissioner at Chewton, his wife and child died of dysentery within days of each other leaving Doveton, by all accounts, a broken man. This first camp is documented in Ken James' history of Chewton.¹³

The Government Camp, which administered all functions of government, was, in these earliest weeks, a fluid arrangement. As the miners moved, leaving spent or disappointing fields for new finds, Government Camps picked up and followed them. Mount Alexander's first Camp was briefly at Golden Point, and then at Forest Creek at a disputed point, most likely near to the current day Red Hill Hotel site. It was only a matter of weeks between the establishment of this sequence of camps. The larger Castlemaine Camp selected by La Trobe was always intended to be an anchor.

Castlemaine and the Government Camp

In late 1851 and under instruction from La Trobe, Commissioner Powlett declared the Castlemaine Government Camp, at the junction of Barkers and Forest Creeks, to be the overarching, and permanent Camp. A fresh water source and gentle topography likely contributed to this choice of location. Early newspaper articles refer to a deep waterhole at the Government Camp, that was never known to go dry.¹⁴ Another reason may have been the lack of an auriferous reef, making the land a less viable mining prospect. Interestingly this exact site was noted by pastoral overlander John Hepburn of Smeaton Hill, in 1838.

*'On the brink of a waterhole at the junction of the creeks known as Barker's and Forest Creeks I buried the skull of a prisoner of the Crown, who was murdered by his mates after absconding from the service of Mr Ebdon. It was dug up by the natives twice and the third time I buried it in the dry deposit in the waterhole, which was dry at the time, but on my next visit full, from a thunderstorm. If I had been unfortunate enough to have found gold then, I should most certainly have never acquired my present position.'*¹⁵

This Government Camp, known variously as the Gold Commissioner's Camp, Central Camp or the Commissioner's Camp became an administrative centre for the whole of the Central Victorian goldfields at one point. The correct name for the site is the Government Camp, and the Gold Commissioner was a component of the Camp.

In the first week of November (1851) official operations commence at the Central Camp in Castlemaine'.¹⁶ To declare this permanent Camp required 'an amendment to the original gazetting of the place for holding Petty Sessions, and on 20 January 1852 the location was changed from Forest Creek to the junction of Barkers and Forest.'¹⁷ Officially it lasted from late 1851-1855 but was not disbanded until the 1860s. This Camp quickly followed a canvas, to wood, to brick evolution of settlement, a marker of this Camp's substance and permanence.¹⁸

Small government camps were activated and dismantled with the ebb and flow of rushes following the gold finds. Golden Point Chewton Camp was set up, downsized, then reactivated, but the Castlemaine Camp oversaw these subsidiary camps, providing an orderly, if overbearing, centre of administration.

On 8 July 1854 Commissioner Bull wrote.

*'The decrease in the population at Golden Point has induced me to withdraw the gold and cash on deposit at the station and to abolish it as an office for receiving gold and cash. This arrangement has permitted a decrease to be made to the police force and enabled the District Inspector to strengthen other stations that stood much in need of it.'*¹⁹

In November 1855 Commissioner Bull has the Golden Point Camp dismantled and orders that transportable buildings be brought across to the Castlemaine Camp as kitchens and servants' rooms for the Officers' Quarters and for Warden Smith the Gold Receiver. The Police had already removed a building which had been erected in Castlemaine as a kitchen for three officers. Bull directed that the remaining of the Camp that could not be sold, be thrown open for use by miners.²⁰ 'Breaking-up' of camps and police stations happened frequently.

The Government Camp in Castlemaine was free from mining, and trees were largely retained for shade at a time when all natural features in the fields were subordinated in the pursuit of gold.

There was a Postal and Roads Board, Crown Lands, Petty Sessions, County and Supreme Courts and Mining Courts and a Treasury. Here the Gold Commissioner and military regiments, police, accountants, military surgeon, postmaster, surveyors, magistrates, and their servants resided and worked from 1851-1855.

Glass' Almanac, a Castlemaine directory published locally and for a time, annually, by a local American publisher Charles Glass, listed the inhabitants of the Camp and of the new township to the east. The addresses of the Camp dwellers are given as 'Camp'.

Many 'Campites' remained at the site long after the Castlemaine township moved to the Urquhart surveyed grid to the east of Barkers Creek. Approximately 300 officials (plus their households approximately a total of 500) resided at the Camp in its heyday. Later, when control shifted to a local council, 'Campites' were (to their displeasure) included in the rate base.

From an Old Pioneer at the Inquiry post Eureka;

*'Let every Australian fervently hope and pray that never again in this country will a military stable caste or military domination exist'*²¹

Attribution of Places

'Forest Creek', 'Castlemaine' and 'Mount Alexander' (and less often Barkers and Campbells Creek) were regularly used interchangeably in relation to the Camp and to the fields.²² Many paintings and writings from these early days cannot, with certainty, be accurately located. Some paintings with clear geographical forms are confidently identified by their known landmarks, usually the surrounding hill forms. The extensively altered landform and water courses resulting from mining processes on a huge scale adds to uncertainty of location. As does the scarcity of formal roads and streets and loss of trees. Geographical cartography predominates in early mapping.

The Camp Layout²³

Government camps had a typology of buildings and components. They also had a typical layout. From the pivotal water source, the chosen site typically had a gentle rising landform which accommodated horse paddocks, then tents and quite rapidly these were superseded by more substantial structures.

In 1852 most officers were housed in tents and there was, as documented by Theobald, a strict hierarchy. Officers in the front row, clerks and civil administrative officers in the

second row, servants and tent keepers in the third row, and the ordinary non-commissioned police and military behind them in the final row.²⁴

The built infrastructure included barracks, a military parade ground²⁵, a quarter master store, a gold wardens office, a surveyor's office, a post office, a court, a police inspector's residence, a commissioner's residence, a powder magazine on the periphery, a surgeon's quarters, a gaol, a Chinese Translators office plus/minus a Chinese Protector's office.

The Government Camp at Castlemaine has more infrastructure retained than any other Victorian goldfields Government Camp. Beechworth's later Government Camp retains a lovely compact enclave of gracious buildings, but Castlemaine's Camp has a breadth of infrastructure and scope of command that far eclipsed the Ovens fields.



Extract of: *Plan of the Township of Castlemaine, 1853*. PRO

Indigenous History

The site noted as an ideal Government Camp was, of course, the land of the Djadjawurrung people which was comprised of 16 clans.²⁶ The subject land had already been appropriated two decades earlier by the squatters in the pastoral lease system overseen by the Commissioners of Crown Lands. In '*Tanderrum*' Cahir and Clark write that the Djadjawurrung were dispossessed in two waves: in the south from late 1839 and in the north from 1845. Thirteen reported killings and massacres occurred between 1838-1846.²⁷ However Fred Cahir suggests in '*Black Gold*' that by the time of the goldrush, there was a general absence of hostilities.²⁸ Europeans were dependant on the good will of indigenous guides to get them around the goldfields, and squatters were dependant on indigenous labour where European labour had deserted for gold.

Indigenous people were on the goldfields, participated in gold exploration, and some were employed as police. Cahir cites Bain Attwood's research suggesting that many moved north to the lower Loddon to avoid the devastation of their lands caused by mining.²⁹ People were

moved onto the Protectorate of Protector Edward Stone Parker, and many succumbed to introduced disease and starvation caused by the squatter land use and appropriation commenced in the 1830s.

James and Dry quote population statistics for the Djadjawurrung pre-contact as 900-1800. By 1841 the number was 282, in 1852 it was 142 and by 1863 just 38. In 1863 the remaining population was moved to the Caranderrk Reserve in Healesville.³⁰

*'At least twelve of the twenty-three Aboriginal site types recognized for Victoria are found on Dja Dja Wurrung lands; mounds, artefact scatter, scarred trees, rock shelter, isolated artefact, quarry, burial, fish trap, grinding rock, hearth, shell, midden, rock arrangement and rock well' Many Aboriginal sites were destroyed following the goldrush in the area from the 1850s*³¹

The Government Camp site must have been valued by the indigenous owners. A confluence of creeks, fertile creek flats, a natural 'basin; or amphitheatre topography. It likely would have been a food bowl to local peoples based in the area or transiting through. Few written records remain of the people of this very place. This creek line now falls under a cultural overlay for its significance to the first nations people. A circular meeting and commemorative place has recently been established at the junction of the Barkers, Forest, and Campbells Creeks. Extensive work is in progress to re-establish indigenous grasses, and to restore the riparian verges of this creek line that wraps around and forms the boundaries of the southeastern portions of the 1851 colonial Government Camp. Today this creek line holds a wild beauty, with its grasses, pre-European redgums and waters that swirl in heavy rain as the creeks merge and flood.

Captain Bull's extensive record keeping makes little of this displaced people who must have remained a presence, not only as the Native Police Corps. His police magistrate who resided at the 4 Camp St Military Quarters had something to say on the matter;

Ken James and Allan Dry write that;

*'The police magistrate at Castlemaine George Harrison told a Victorian Government Select Committee established in 1858 to enquire into the condition of the Aborigines, that there existed no tribe in the Castlemaine district. 'Some few natives hang about the diggings and are employed by dairymen and slaughtermen, and occasionally a straggler comes in from beyond the Loddon'*³²

Women and Children

Records of the life and presence of women and children in this Government enclave are remarkably absent. The Government Camp is extensively documented with endless public service ledgers and reports. Women appear rarely, as servants, or in relation to their perceived character. Theobald quotes figures of women and children comprising 25% of the Castlemaine population in the full swing of the goldrush. Accounts of women and children in the general community are found, but at the Government Camp itself there is scant material. It was, in those earliest of days, predominantly a male domain. Having said that, Captain Bull had his wife and family in residence with him at Camp House.

Chinese ('Celestials')

James Ah Coy was the most prominent Chinese associated with the Camp. Educated and part European, he was a good friend of Captain Bull. He was the Chinese Translator and lived at a house on the western hill of the Camp, on what is now Bowden St. This Chinese interpreter and headman collected a racially directed tax from within the Chinese community and was tried and jailed in Ararat over alleged fraud and protection rackets. Captain Bull also fell under a cloud for warning Ah Coy that he was at risk of legal prosecution.³³ The two lived a stone's throw from each other, and Captain Bull's inter-racial friendship was viewed with lasting suspicion.

A Chinatown developed near the corner of Mostyn and Union Street (current site of the Albion Hotel) which included as many as five Joss Houses and a Chinese Mission Chapel. Around the Forest St, Bruce St area near Cusack's garage many Chinese also had businesses and opium dens. The Chinese were a huge component of the Castlemaine goldfields, with a market garden presence continuing long after the gold petered out. Reeves' article includes an etching of the Chinese community leading a procession through Castlemaine's town and under a huge archway for the HRH Prince of Wales' visit in 1868.

Glass' Almanac 1857 lists the following two Chinese in the directory of about 360 addresses for town and camp. Chuk-a-luk, Chinese Missionary, Templeton St and Ho-a-low, Chinese Missionary, Templeton St. Clearly that is no representation of their presence within the community. Commissioner Bull sent frequent reports to Melbourne regarding the Chinese population on the goldfields. Chinese in the Castlemaine Mining District 20 December 1856 - there were 1500 at Forest Creek, 600 at Golden Point, 200 at Barkers Creek, 1000 at Campbells Creek, 800 at Fryers Creek (their headman was James Ah Coy) 200 at Mt Franklin and 200 at Tarrengower. Total 4500. The figures for Chinese to European population seemed to be a third Chinese to two thirds European.³⁴ Reports were filed as to their orderly behaviour, and for the urgent need for Chinese translators to assist with mediating disputes.³⁵ November 1854 it was reported that 'A translation of the Gold Mining Act into the Chinese language would be most useful and prove a great boon to this class of the mining population.'³⁶

*'In June 1858 Resident Warden Bull reported on a fraudulent practice being carried out on Chinese miners at Golden Point, Campbells Creek and Forest Creek. 'The Chinese are still engaged in extensive operations on Campbells Creek and also on the upper end of Forest Creek and Golden Point. A custom has lately arisen of the Europeans selling claims to the Chinese and I am led to believe that unprincipled persons are making a profit by selling land they have no legal right to. I have issued instructions that all future sales effected under the Goldfields Act shall be registered in this office.'*³⁷

In July 1857 there was an attempt to drive the Chinese out of their camp referred to in the Argus as 'The Attempted Expulsion of the Chinese from Golden Point'. The Europeans made spurious claims against the Chinese re encroachment on their patch. Captain Harrison at the Government Camp in Castlemaine fined two 'Lascars' (Indians) and an English lad 5 pounds each for their role in the violence.

*'In inflicting this penalty Captain Harrison strongly cautioned the offenders against interfering with the legal mining rights of any man, no matter what his country or his colour; and declared his determination of visiting the severest penalties of the law on all persons so offending. If men were to be at liberty to act according to their own ideas of right in matters of this kind, anarchy would speedily ensue.'*³⁸

While racism and hostility was always simmering, Castlemaine did not experience the extremes of the Lambing Flats riots seen in NSW, and this may well be attributable to the leadership of Captain Bull and his officers.

The Military Parade Ground

The former military parade ground, now known as Camp Reserve, was gazetted as a parade ground at the petitioning of Commissioner Bull after Eureka. The parade ground was essential to the Camp for 'close order manoeuvring' known as drilling and marching of soldiers. This parade ground would have been used as a mustering point and for parades for propaganda purposes, and for festivals and formal events. Importantly, it was used as a place for soldiers and police, to present for 'inspection'.

Historically a parade ground marks the place of fallen soldiers recognizing their sacrifice and is one of the most sacred places of the military.³⁹ 'The parade ground is used specifically for ceremonial purposes such as parades and other special events.'⁴⁰ Numerous newspaper articles discuss 'trooping of the colours' ceremonies on Camp Reserve and tournaments. Military parades are common events into the 20th century, and 'trove' searches result in multiple newspaper reports of these.

'They Served Here'⁴¹ Police 1851-54

British colonies were not permitted to build their own armies, unless in a time of war. To raise an army required permission from the Crown. Regiments were sent from England but paid for by the colony. The goldfields Government Camps stationed the Somerset 40th Regiment of Foot and this same 40th regiment fought the miners at Eureka in 1854 in one of the very few incidents in the colony of British fire upon its European population.

Security in Victoria was problematic in the absence of an organized police force. Prior to the goldrush Port Phillip had a small contingent of police. There were seven independent policing bodies, 'including the City Police, Geelong Police, Gold Fields Police, Water Police, Rural Bench Constabulary, Mounted Police and Gold Escort'⁴² and it was not until 1859 that these were consolidated into the Victorian Police Force'. With the discovery of gold, most of these police succumbed to gold fever and deserted for the diggings. Supposedly only two police were left in Melbourne at one point.

Crime and disorderly conduct were widespread, although many of the reports that were sent to La Trobe suggested that the Castlemaine goldfields were very orderly. It is likely that glowing reports of order were exaggerated to accommodate La Trobe. Sectarianism was an ongoing issue, unsurprising given the large numbers of Irish and English. There was violence towards Chinese, and fights between Irish and Italians.⁴³ There were disputes over claims, jumping of claims, gold theft, and unlawful killings. Given the number of hotels and 'sly grog' outlets, drunkenness was, of course, commonplace fuelling violence.

*'It is desirable to state that the want of police is obvious, only two in number whom your correspondents observed actively engaged drunken diggers from fighting. The roads are in better order and between the British and American Hotel and the Northumberland Arms, upwards of twenty grog shops can be visited which by no means can be designated as 'sly'".*⁴⁴

By 1851 only seven of the various ‘independent’ police forces existed. The following were stationed in the central Camp at Castlemaine. The Goldfields Police - foot and mounted. These were formed from drafts of police from existing forces with the addition of newly raised recruits. There were the Mounted Police, the Government Escort, and the South Australian Mounted Police – Gold Escort (1851-53).

The Government Camp was a distinct compound of enforcement bodies -military and police. Police and military barracks and houses predominate in the Camp. The 1852 Former Military Quarters at 4a Camp St is ‘a rare surviving example of the buildings constructed in the early 1850s in the Government Camps which were set up to maintain law and order on the Victorian goldfields.’⁴⁵ Early maps and paintings depict multiple barracks, some crossing where Forest St is now, near Gingell St and Bowden St.

Due to the lack of professional police in the colony, military forces were sent to the goldfields to support the small police forces. The ‘military’ stationed at the ‘Central Camp’ were:

- 11th Regiment of Foot (North Devonshire). First troops stationed in tents at central camp. They were relieved by military pensioners in 1852. The 11th Regiment of Foot left Melbourne in 1857.
- The Military Pensioners: These were old veterans, retired from service in Van Diemen’s land, but recalled to duty to guard the camp and maintain order. 130 ‘Pensioners’ were sent from Melbourne by La Trobe to respond to the Monster Meeting rebellion.⁴⁶ The Pensioners were lampooned by cartoonists and media, often characterized as workshy, unfit, and conflict averse. They were commanded by Captain Blamire (99th Regt) and Lieutenant Finch (11th Regt). These old soldiers were a troublesome lot, many were drunk and disorderly, failed to carry out orders, and showed disrespect to police and officials. Besides guarding the camp, they also performed gold escort and Pensioner escort duties. They returned to Melbourne in January 1853 and were relieved by the 40th Regiment.



'Pensioners on Guard' [ST Gill (internet)]

40th Regiment of Foot (2nd Somersetshire). Arrived in Australia 1852. In January 1853, 170 men were sent to central camp under Captain White. These men were rotated in service with troops sent from Melbourne. A small detachment was also mounted and equipped as 'Dragoons' for gold escort duty. The 40th Regiment returned to Melbourne in 1858.



99th Regiment (Lancashire). It did not serve as a unit at the Castlemaine camp, but individual officers did serve on various staffs in the camp, as did some of the 11th regiment. Commissioner Bull had served with the 99th.



Shako Plate, 40th (2nd Somerset Regiment c 1855)

With the formation of the 'Victorian Constabulary' in 1853, the independent police forces on the goldfields were disbanded by 1854 to 1855. The police duties were now performed under a central command and in a professional manner. In 1858 the Camp closed and troops returned to Melbourne. Police now operated from the police station in town.

To put Captain Bull's military career in Castlemaine into an international and national perspective, the Crimean War of 1853-56 between Britain and Russia led to volunteer corps and formation of rifle clubs. In 1859, with the threat of Napoleon III engaging in a war with

Britain, volunteer units, usually a rifle corps, were a part of most Australian suburbs and towns⁴⁷ The militias, corps and rifle units provided the nation's security, and they were highly depended on. Bull's insistence on maintaining the Camp for military purposes stemmed from his judgement that the capacity to practice close to home, would result in superior skills. This was reflected in favourable reports on Castlemaine's performance in the Melbourne newspapers.

Staff of the Government Camp

The Resident Commissioner (Chief)
Assistant Commissioners
Clerks for Commissioners
Servants for the above
Gold Receiving Officer
Officer in Charge of Foot Police
Officer in Charge of Mounted Police
Officers of Troops (including Pensioners)
Medical Officer/s (Surgeon/s)
Farrier/Blacksmith and Wheelwright
Foot Police – including watchhouse guards
Mounted Police and Grooms
Gold Escort Troopers and Grooms
Postmaster and Assistants
South Australian Gold Receivers and Staff
South Australian Police
Superintendent of Works

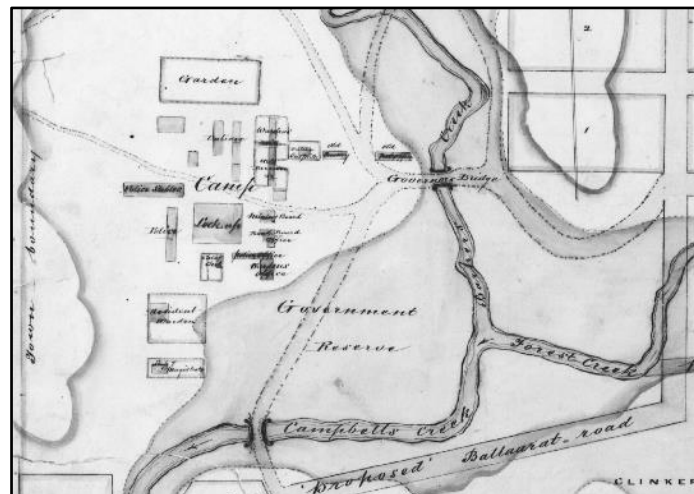
Accommodations for the officials of the camp ranged from tents of various shapes and sizes, permanent houses, and prefabricated huts. This included barracks for police and troops, including mess huts (which included kitchens) for the men.



'Govt Camp Castlemaine' [ST Gill]

Stables were also constructed for the horses used by officers, officials, mounted police and gold escorts. Stables were constructed on high ground to provide suitable drainage. Two huts (ironclad) were built as 'bullion rooms' for the storing of gold. A police station, turned courthouse, was also constructed.

The 'colours' of the British Regiments were handmade from costly fabrics with golden thread. These now hang from the ceiling of Christ Church on Agitation Hill at the corner of Mostyn and Kennedy Streets. These textiles are rare, fragile and are highly important in military regimental history.

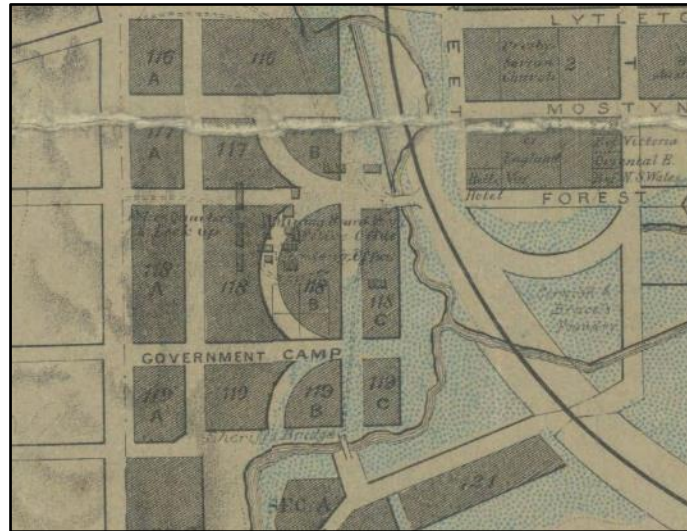


Extract from TL Brown G13256. 1860.

The Roads

The Government Camp is characterized by the two unmade curved roads of Goldsmith Crescent and Camp St (also known as Camp Crescent). These roads reflect that organic early camp, where there was no formal road structure. The streets that we see today were superimposed on the Camp later. Hence, the Court House faces towards the creek, and backs on to Goldsmith. The Gold Commissioner's House at 5 Yandell St 'Camp House' similarly is offset to the Yandell St frontage, as the house was built pre-roads and was positioned for Commissioner Bull to oversee the workings of his Camp. Standing from the verandas of the Court House, Camp House, and the former Military Quarters in Camp St, is to allow an

excellent reimagining of those early Camp scenes. The early paintings of the Camp predated Forest St, and clearly record an open, pleasant organic constellation of government buildings and tents without the predominance of puddling, windlasses and the treeless moonscape that characterized the wonder and devastation of the diggings.



Extract from 'Mining Map of Castlemaine, Compiled and Drawn by R. Hicksh from surveys of Mining Surveyor Brown', 1861 [PRO]

Canvas, Timber, Brick and Stone

Initially a tent city, the canvas was quickly replaced by timber buildings. Many buildings were brought in by dray, prefabricated in Melbourne at considerable expense. Some of these buildings were subsequently replaced by bricks and mortar. Early church services were held in the open air at the Commissioner's camp, then in a large tent lined with 'green baize' which was shared by different denominations. Some services were held in a timber store. Brick and stone churches replaced canvas and timber. Materials and labour were in short supply and expensive.

There was a rudimentary hospital at the Camp, so basic and shocking that there was an urgency to building a substantial 'fit for purpose' hospital. The 'County and Castlemaine Hospital' was built on Gingell St 'in 1853 from fund raising and was demolished in the 20th century. Photographs remain.

Following is an account of an Old Pioneer.

"In January 1855...at the close of one very hot day I filled a puddling-tub with cold water and unwisely immersed my head in it to get a "cooler", the serious effects of which were very soon manifest. Dr McGrath was called in and said I was suffering from brain fever. I gradually got worse, and was secured in a "straight jacket", and taken to what was then the hospital- a wooden building on the Camp- by Mr Honey...At the hospital I was attended by Dr Howlett, who said that my case was very serious. Although I was unable to speak or move I still retained my senses of sight and hearing, for on one occasion I heard my attendant say: -: That poor fellow has turned up his toes.: I then dreaded that I would be buried alive.
Memoir of Richard Thimbleby (October 1904)⁴⁸

Bishop Charles Perry, the first Anglican Bishop of Melbourne, preached 'en plein air' at this camp from its early days and visited on several occasions.⁴⁹ He laid the foundation stone of

Christ Church on Agitation Hill in 1854, the year following a civilian and miners' uprising on the same hill in opposition to the Gold Commissioner's rule.

A Post Office was built at the ford, and this primitive creek crossing was soon replaced by Governor Hotham's bridge (now Fitzgerald Bridge). The table tennis pavilion today sits on Camp Reserve where the Post Office was (Gill watercolour) and near to where a treasury building sat. The street layout slowly evolved, a most striking difference with today being the insertion of Forest St (east to west axis), which bisects the Government Camp. Comparison with the early artists' impressions - see the S.T Gill watercolour, and today's maps, show long military barracks spanning the rise where Forest St now crosses Bowden St.

The Camp

'Who does not remember the old Post Office on the Camp? Many an exciting scene was witnessed there when the English mail came in. Some of the letters would be three months old when they arrived. How eagerly they were asked for, and there was many a tear to be seen rolling down the brawny cheeks of the diggers as they read perhaps of the loss of their dear ones at home.' Recollection of an Old Pioneer William Ottey 25 March 1887⁵⁰

The Camp by 1853 had a population of 416 men, many private residences, barracks, offices, a courthouse, a gaol, a gold office, a hospital commissariat stores, stables, a treasury, and a post office. The gaol was still a log jail near to the Court House, and infamous for its filth and squalid conditions.

In 1855 Camp House was built for Commissioner Bull and a first-hand account remains.

'As the term of my digging licence was expired, and as I was suffering from "Sandy Blight" I made up my mind to go to Melbourne, but was baulked for a time, I heard the warning cry of "Joe!" and a stampede followed, and I got down a shaft, but a trooper followed me, saying:- :Come out of that young fellow!" As my licence was out of date I was escorted to the police station or camp and fined seven pounds or seven days and I accepted the alternative...Under a promise not to try to escape I was allowed to work for some plasterers at a newly-erected Commissioner's residence, the contractor for which I subsequently ascertained was our late Founder and President of the Pioneers and Old Residents Association (Mr A.C. Yandell).

Memoir from an Old Pioneer, Richard Thimbleby (October 1904) ⁵¹

Barkers Creek, the Channel, the Floods

Another significant change, with ongoing ramifications, was the course of Barker's Creek. The natural course ran through Camp Reserve until it was channelized by the early council in the 1860s to run parallel to the new railway line. Prison labour was used in construction of deep stone channels, in an ambitious and expensive Council works scheme. The mile of stone channel periodically fails in heavy rain events and the creek breaches its channel, returning to its natural course causing flooding to Camp Reserve, Gingell and Bruce streets. Historical floods have resulted in loss of life and extensive infrastructure damage, particularly to bridges, and flooding remains a major problem for the Camp Reserve.



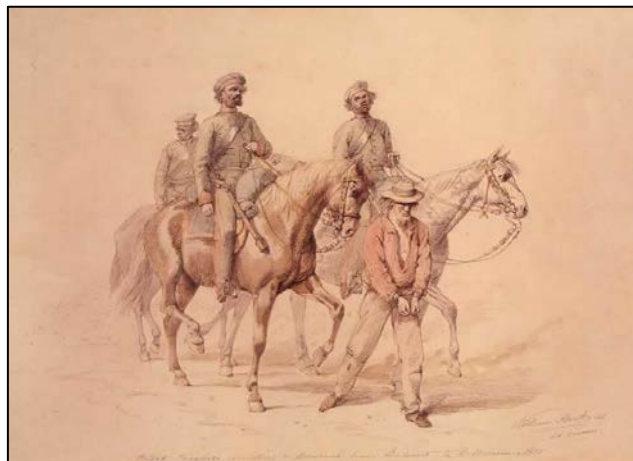
Gingell St, 'Flood of 1889, New Years Day' [A. Verey & Co, CAM].

Government Departments

A wide range of government functions were contained at the Camp. Inefficiencies were commonplace and caused friction for the civilian townspeople and trades. The departments included the Gold Commission Department, the Commissariat Department, the Police and Escort Departments, Crown Lands, the Stipendiary Magistrates Departments, Civil Registrations, licences -gold, storekeepers and auctioneers, the Public Works and Survey Departments, the Penal Department, and the Medical and Military departments.⁵²

Native Police Corps

This is one of the more confronting episodes in the story of colonization. Effectively this indigenous force was manipulated to inflict genocide on their own people. In the goldfields they were employed for policing of miners, rather than of their own people. This force was prominent on the goldfields. Captain Henry Dana commanded the force from 1842 and died in 1852 at the age of 32. Dana developed pneumonia due to exposure while hunting bushrangers.⁵³ The Native Police regularly transited through the Government Camp in Castlemaine. This police corps was disbanded in 1853. Images in the form of photographs and paintings remain. The painter William Strutt left some detailed paintings.

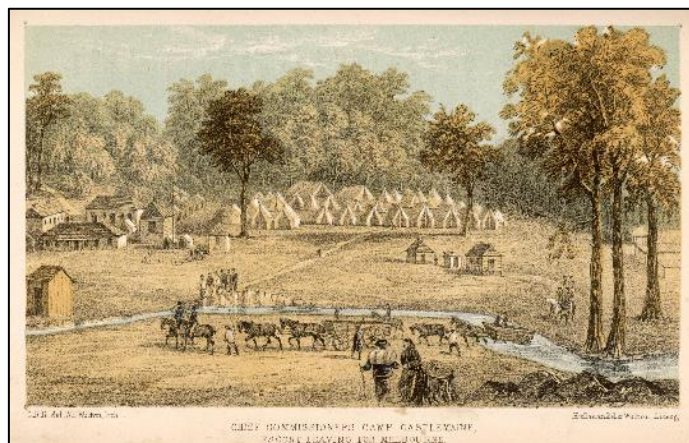


'Black troopers escorting prisoner from Ballarat to Melbourne' [William Strutt, 1851. PLV]

The Gold Escort

Gold was collated at the Government Camp at the Gold Office, and miners were given receipts for their weighed gold. The gold was bagged and put into small trunks and transported under guard to Melbourne, and for a time, to South Australia. The South Australian Gold Escort had an office at the Government Camp.

Between March 1852 and December 1853 'several hundred thousand ounces of gold' were taken to South Australia in eighteen police escorts the first of which was led by Commissioner Alexander Tolmer. In 1852 a private gold escort service 'Melbourne and Mount Alexander Escort Company' was established with the attraction of insuring the miner's gold against loss.⁵⁴ Most were government escorts. There were remarkably few attempts of robbery of the escort. The escort carried so much gold to Melbourne that the Treasury was forced to build a new store. Many paintings exist of the gold escort which, to this day have an exhilarating quality, as seen in William Strutt's painting. Horses, speed, clouds of dust and soldiers in their finery.



'Chief Commissioners Camp Castlemaine. Escort Leaving for Melbourne' 1853 [Hullmandel & Walton, Litho]

Canvas Town

Traders, merchants, businesspeople, and sly groggers set up slab huts and tents on the periphery of the camp, around Forest St east of the bridge and the Bruce St, Kennedy St areas. This area around the base of Agitation Hill was also referred to as Circular Road, and the roads were altered in the early years of the first Council. This vibrant merchant area generated no revenue for Crown or land merchants, and it was a place of friction. It was also an area known for Chinese opium dens. The push to remove this trading belt housed in tents and slab huts, was aimed at forcing the purchase of township allotments. The razing of property without compensation alienated the townsfolk and deepened the divide between Camp and Town.

Campites and Townites

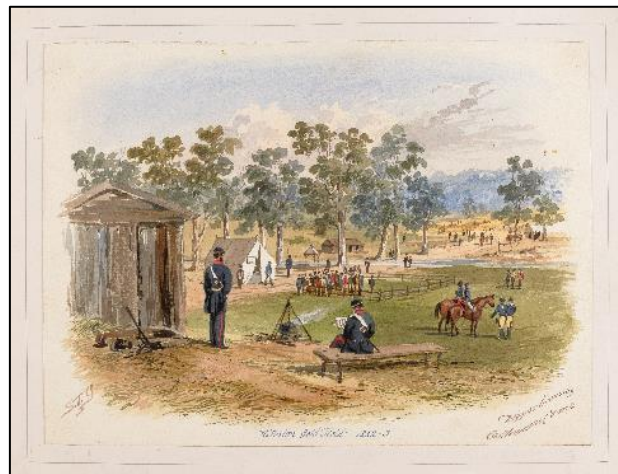
Newspaper archives and early Council records, reveal a constant resentment of the Government Camp. It was referred to as the 'Sublime Porte' referencing the Turkish Ottoman Empire. The Castlemaine Historical Society brochure explains the origin of the term. 'The

Argus newspaper ironically used the term ‘Sublime Porte’ in reports about the Camp. This was the official name for the Turkish government, derived from the high gate giving access to the offices of the principal state department in Constantinople.⁵⁵

Camp dwellers were ‘Campites’ and civilians were ‘Townites’. Campites, it was reported, would walk across Barkers Creek and into town and attend church services, sitting in reserved premier seats! Resentment translated into calls from the newly formed local Council, to sell the Camp off as real estate, subdivide the parade ground, and miners called repeatedly for the right to mine the camp, on principle, rather than the belief in auriferous finds.

Gold Licences

After the discovery of gold, Commissioner Powlett issued licences at the fee of 30 shillings per month, charged to all men on the goldfields regardless of their occupation. The Government had the right to all gold found on Crown Land, therefore it had to be sold back to the government, and for this a licence was necessary. La Trobe was the author of the licence, which was intended to achieve many things; repay a debt to England, finance an expensive public service, pay for a costly building agenda for Melbourne, and to act as a deterrent to agricultural workers from leaving the employ of the squattocracy. It was never efficiently collected, it was harshly punished if a man was without a licence, and it was inequitable, as a digger with a non-viable claim paid the same as the digger with a lucrative claim. Geoff Hocking recounts Governor La Trobe on a field trip witnessing the retrieval of a vast quantity of gold in little time, colouring a notion of widespread easily gained wealth.



'Diggers licensing Castlemaine Camp' [ST Gill, Victorian Goldfields 1852-53]

A Rebellion Movement in Four Parts

The Monster Meeting 11th December 1851 the first rebellion against the goldfields governance occurred at an event at the ‘Old Shepherd’s Hut near Chewton. Anger erupted at the rise of the licence fee from 30 shillings a month to 3 pounds a month. 14000 diggers at 200:1 against the Governor’s 130 army pensioners led to a reversion to the original 30 shillings. The foment and spirit of rebellion never fully resolves and periodically reemerges. Some historians regard Governor La Trobe’s progressively over-bearing rule as a reaction to his glimpse of rebellion at the Monster Meeting.

Agitation Hill

In May 1853, under orders from the Government Camp. The Canvas Town on its eastern periphery was brutally raided overnight on the pretence of illegal sly-grogging. In fact, the real intention seemed to be to force a profitable trading township onto purchased rather than Crown Land.⁵⁶ Under the guise of quashing illegal trade, businesses were torn apart and tents burnt. This done by an enforcement regime known for taking bribes, cuts, and generally disreputable behaviour.

Local activist businessmen – some of whom were to continue to become major players in the formation of the township, were outraged at the heavy handed over reach of the Camp rule. The met at Agitation Hill in a large body, railing against the Camp, directly opposite the military parade ground (now Camp Reserve), where the Camp soldiers and official could observe their outrage at close quarters. A select group of ‘peoples’ commissioners’ marched on Governor La Trobe for a hearing. Fast talking, smooth negotiation, appeasing reassurances were given, and blood shed was avoided. This uprising of town vs camp was the second chapter in a four-part movement, and Commissioner Bull was credited for its peaceful resolution which is contrasted with the bloodshed of Eureka, under the command of Rede and Hotham.

‘At this time the discontent of the diggers began to take shape, and meetings were held on the hill opposite Circular Road, which the (sic) called ‘Agitation Hill’ but Captain Bull and the other Commissioners called it ‘Confusion Hill’. It is now “Church Hill”. I went to Bendigo to attend the great meeting of diggers there, which was held on December 7th, 1853, to oppose the 3 pound licence-fee; I was also present at a similar meeting held at Castlemaine on December 18th, and, looking back at those troublesome times, I think the tact and good nature of Captain Bull averted a serious riot’ Old Pioneer W.H.Wilson (26 September, 1890)

Red Ribbon Rebellion ⁵⁷

The Red Ribbon Rebellion in Bendigo (Sandhurst) followed in August 1853 protesting the license increase from 30 shillings per month to 3 pounds per month. A doubling. Captain J.E.N. Bull was asked by Commissioner Panton of Bendigo to send troops from the Castlemaine Government Camp to maintain order.

Eureka December 1854

The Eureka Stockade was the culmination of unrest and unity amongst miners regarding the military rule, brutal policing, gouging licence fees and voting rights. Six dead soldiers and as many as sixty dead miners later, and the total, official dissolution of the Gold Commissioner system resulted. A ‘Commission of Enquiry’ 1854-5 that visited the major goldfields, including Castlemaine, taking testimonies, led to the abolition of gold licences, creation of the ‘Miner’s Right’ at one pound a year, granting of voting rights and the end of Gold Commissioners. The 1855 Act for the Better Management of the Goldfields’ was passed. The first electoral rolls for the Colony of Victoria were printed in 1855.

Records of this Commission of Enquiry build a picture of the politics of Townites and Campites in Castlemaine. Yet it is these accounts that reflect well on the enduring figure of Commissioner Bull.

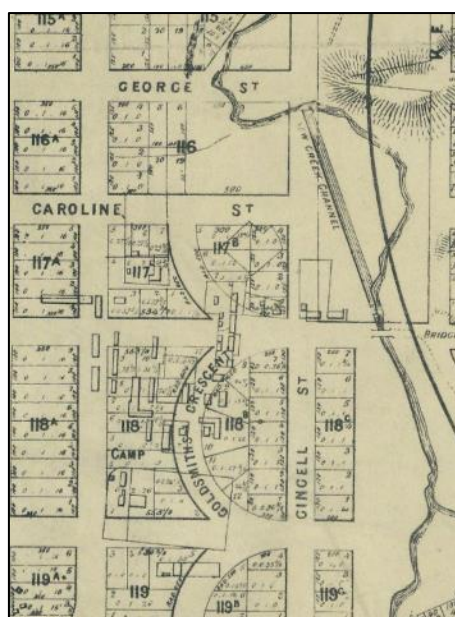
The Gold Commission Inquiry and the Camp. The recollection of an Old Pioneer William Ottey
'I cannot remember all the members of the Commission, but John O'Shannassy and Johnny Falkner were two. I happened to be in the room when a young storekeeper was giving his evidence. He said he was riding on horseback through the Commissioner's camp on business when he saw the Gold Commissioner (these were officials in charge of a gold district) sitting in an easy chair under a gum-tree in his shirt sleeves reading a paper. The storekeeper had not gone far before a trooper overtook him and said the Commissioner wanted him. On going back to where the official was still sitting, that dignitary asked why he did not remove his hat when passing through the camp. Johnny Faulkner would hear no more, but jumped up and said;- "Well, Well: we'll have to stick an old woman's bonnet up on a pole and make everyone bow down to it" ... This will partly show how those who were pitch-forked into office in those days tyrannised over the diggers. The pay that those arrogant officials got was £1200 a year, and at that time the annual revenue of the goldfields alone was some six millions, so that to collect this amount it cost the country one million and a quarter annually'.
P64 William Ottey 25 March 1887⁵⁸

Dismantling of the Gold Commissioner System

Sale of the Camp

The Camp buildings were mostly sold off on 15 September 1863. Some of these had been on the reserve. Some buildings were transported by dray to new sites. Others were fully recycled for their building materials. As many buildings had been rolled in from other places of manufacture, they rolled out in a similar way.

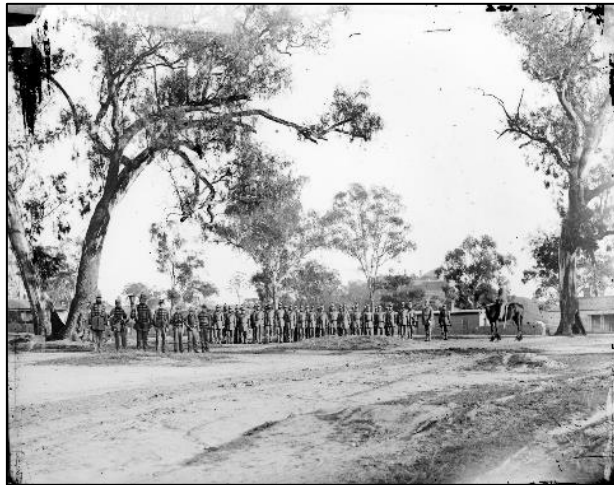
One of these prefabricated buildings is now in Fryerstown, another is said to form a part of the Drill Hall in Lyttleton St. These buildings were sold for far less than they cost, reflecting fluctuating cost and availability of labour and materials over the course of the decade. Government gazettes list the sales. Lists exist of the prices that these buildings sold for.



Subdivision of the Camp. Extract from 'Plan of the Town of Castlemaine', [Office of Lands & Survey, 1863]

Bull and Gazettal of the Former Military Parade Ground

An early influential Councillor Gingell loathed the Camp and what it represented, and extensive material exists documenting this. Camp Reserve was a hotly contested topic. Many of the officers 'stayed on' enjoying their enclave, creating irritation over the creek. Gingell mooted the Reserve as an option for a Botanical Gardens. This plan was rejected in favour of a much larger site to the north. There was a subdivision and land sales of the majority of the Camp. Commissioner Bull, now a Gold Warden rather than a commissioner, argued for the reversal of subdivision of the Camp Reserve. 'In 1860, he applied for the military parade ground identified as Section 117 & Section 117B within the government camp to be gazetted as a Reserve for public use. He then applied for the Volunteer Rifle Corps to use the oval as an official parade ground'.⁵⁹



Captain John Bull and the Castlemaine Volunteer Rifle Corp, 1861 [Richard Daintree]

The Football & Sports History

It is relatively recently that Castlemaine's football origins entered the race for 'the second oldest club'. In 1855 a game with a ball was played between men of the camp and men of the town. Two theories exist as to why these communities met in this way. One is that the match was intended as an olive branch to a civilian community that was devastated by the recent events at Eureka. In 'A Day at the Camp' Darren Lewis suggests it was to 'create some common ground, and smooth some of that ill-feeling caused by the aggressive dismantling of commercial and residential properties on and at the boundaries of the Camp'.⁶⁰

'After kicking some two hours with no advantage on either side the ball burst, and so the match terminated.'

It was a game much closer to soccer, rugby, or Gaelic football.

Lewis quotes the Mail.

'We cannot refrain from expressing our gratification at the good feeling evidently subsisting on this gold field between two parties lately so antagonistic on others... during the whole afternoon we did not hear one hasty or angry word on either side, and a parting glass 'all round' testified the continuation of the evidently predominating feeling.'

On June 15, 1859 the 'Castlemaine Foot Ball Club was formed, less than a month after the first Melbourne Football Club was formed⁶¹. However, it was 1871 before a formal game went ahead, and 1877 before regular games were played against other towns. Rocky times ensued, with achieving players and money, and these issues persist to the current day. Approximately 20 years ago, netball joined the football at Camp Reserve, bringing a wider slice of community and greater robustness for the combined sports.



Final of District Football Championship

Camp Reserve was also the place for other sporting activities in the late 1800s. The Melbourne Argus, in November 1883, reported on the sports meeting held at Camp Reserve by the Castlemaine Bicycle Club, the fourth scheduled for that year⁶². The strength of interest in cycling in that period led to, following the gazetting of Camp Reserve for public recreation in 1895, the construction of substantial facilities for competitive cycling, including a banked velodrome and grandstand oriented toward the finishing line. Football games were played on the field within cycling track and, although the interest in cycling declined and the track was dismantled in the early 1900s, its history lives on in the flat-sided shape of the current sports oval.



Cycling track, Camp Reserve, 1890s [Adolphus Verey]



Aerial image of Camp Reserve, July 2023.

The Castlemaine Gift is another sport with its origins at Camp Reserve in the late 19th century. Although the first year that the Gift at Camp Reserve was officially promoted by the Victorian Athletic League, professional running in the Castlemaine area dates to at least the mid-1800s⁶³. On Easter Monday in 1894, three running races and two bicycle races were held as part of the Grand Annual Sports at Camp Reserve.

The Agricultural Show

Records exist of the earliest Castlemaine and Muckleford Agricultural Show being at a site in Muckleford owned by a Mr Wrigley. The towns people and men of the Camp rode out to enjoy a day of entertainment and to view animals and the products of an agricultural life that was to overtake mining. The Show then moved to the Market buildings (a more extensive town square of long buildings now mostly demolished). Newspapers far and wide reported the Castlemaine Agricultural Show, the winners of events, and the entertainments on offer. Processions, whatever the event, usually progressed through the Camp, some right past the veranda of Captain Bull at Camp House. In the 1890s the Show came to Camp Reserve and is extensively reported on. Much comment is recorded about the merits and disadvantages of the Camp Reserve site.

Major Figures

Gold Commissioner Captain John Edward Newell Bull (1806-1901)

Commissioner Wright initially took control of the Castlemaine Camp but was recalled to Melbourne in December 1852 by Governor La Trobe to be the Chief Gold Commissioner. To replace himself, Wright contacted his old Sandhurst friend and colleague, the Anglo-Irishman, John Edward Newell Bull. This appointment marks the commencement of a long and productive period of government service given by J.E.N. Bull to the evolving township.

Arguably Bull was a person ahead of the times in both his attitudes and vision. He came from a notable military lineage, with a father who was a hero of Waterloo. Bull had postings in Ceylon prior to accepting charge of a transportation of convicts from England to Tasmania. Ever adaptable, he then had a distinguished career supervising road building through the Blue Mountains followed by valuable service working on the remarkable breakwater construction in Newcastle. J.E.N. Bull proved to be a highly intelligent, capable officer, with an extraordinary first-hand knowledge of the mining laws, claims, and the emerging industry across vast terrain. Second to none expertise. He managed fields as distant as 75 miles from Castlemaine. He would ride throughout the countryside, taking extensive notes, making rulings, reporting on populations, their behaviour, the gold takings, and law and order. These detailed reports would be sent each week to Melbourne.⁶⁴

Bull had a long active life in Castlemaine and was a founding member of most of its civilian institutions after the dismantling of the commissioner system. He was widely (though not universally) respected and was one of the very few who emerged unscathed by the post Eureka rebellion inquiry into conditions on the goldfields.

Bull's dislike of the gold license system and his sympathy for the miners is on record. He was respected for calling the miner's licence 'this unfortunate tax'. He is lauded as being unusually humane in his approach to convicts, and he enjoyed a friendship with the Castlemaine Chinese Translator James Ah Coy when mixed race relationships were most uncommon.

J.E.N. Bull was vocal in his vision for Camp Reserve. He successfully campaigned to have the subdivision for sale of the Camp's military parade ground reversed, and to have the land reserved by gazette for public use into the future. He wrote to the papers and went on record imploring people to think to the future when such places of green, open land for enjoyment and recreation would be rare and treasured.

Bull remained in Castlemaine contributing to the fledgling society until 1897. He was passionate about Castlemaine and was a pivotal leader in the district until 1897, the year his house 'Glenn Cairn' at Rifle Butts -on the outskirts of town, burnt down, with the loss of all his belongings. Bull's contribution to Castlemaine was over a period of 44 years.

His significance stretched well beyond his stellar career in Castlemaine and places him as an exceptional military figure in the colonial British Army.

There were mining disputes in the by-gone days of a hot and warlike character. The diggers had to stand by their rights in earnest. I remember the Camp being rushed by a thousand miners while it was guarded by the police. The mining population consistently backed up by the local Press, eventually had their way, and without bloodshed. The leading Camp officials, Colonel Bull and Captain A.J. Smith, were fair men who were respected by the community, and they exercised a pacific influence on the miners. Had such officers been in power at Ballarat in 1854, the unfortunate business of the Eureka Stockade would, in all probability, never have happened. Memory of an 'Old Pioneer' Henry Britton (17 June 1887)⁶⁵

Government Positions held by J.E.N. Bull in Castlemaine⁶⁶

Commissioner of Crown Lands (Gold Fields) 1852-1855

Warden of the Gold Fields 1855-1864

Commissioner of Crown Lands 1858

Chinese Protector 1858-1863

Police Magistrate 1860-1868

Colonel



Captain John Bull {painting by Jennifer Barnett, 2023}

Judge Redmond Barry

An Anglo-Irish judge of prodigious energy, intellect and appetites, Sir Redmond Barry was famous for his prominent role in the Port Phillip District, then Victoria. He presided over the Castlemaine Court for decades, until his death at the age of 67 from complications caused by uncontrolled diabetes. His scandalous reputation closed many doors to him in respectable

circles.⁶⁷ Despite that, Barry was pivotal in the development of all cultural institutions in Melbourne and was known to have some allegiance with the aboriginal population, acting as defence in several cases.

On the eight of December 1852 Judge Barry ‘accompanied by the Attorney-General and other officials, arrived to open the first Criminal Court held in the district’⁶⁸. He swore in the first two Justices of the Peace. He empaneled a jury then proceeded to preside over 40 court cases in 4 days.⁶⁹

Barry had a reputation as a ‘hanging judge’ although his judgements are now regarded as commensurate with those of his colleagues at the time.

‘So convinced is he of the hideousness of having the land overridden with fugitive convicts that he doles out to every bondman (ex-convict) that comes under his lash nearly one-half more punishment than he awards to those who, having come to the country free, have deserted the path of virtue’. – The Argus, 15 February 1853

Robert O’Hara Burke

Robert O’Hara Burke was another Anglo-Irishman from a genteel background, and with a military pedigree. ‘Burke’s Cottage’ at 31 Gingell St, also known as ‘Broadoaks’ or the ‘Police Inspector’s Residence’, was home to Robert O’Hara Burke for the last two years of his short life. Prior to Castlemaine he was based in Beechworth, at the Ovens goldfields. From Broadoaks, Burke could look down over the military parade ground and supervise the police corps.

Burke had a close friendship with Sheriff Colles and with Bruce the railway builder. His connections appear to have played a role in his appointment to the Burke and Wills Expedition which ended so badly. A public subscription was enthusiastically supported by Castlemaine to finance the mission. A subscription also paid for the impressive monument erected in his memory at the top of Mostyn St.

‘Burke was impulsive, quick-tempered, arbitrary, generous, tender-hearted and charming, and those who did not quarrel with him loved him. He was recklessly brave, a daredevil with a thirst for distinction as yet unsatisfied. His career seemed likely to peter out in humdrum police duties in Castlemaine. Although ‘a well-bred gentleman and quite at home among people of the best class’, at 39 he was slipping downhill into slovenly, eccentric habits.’⁷⁰

Burke died on June 28, 1861, at Cooper’s Creek, a sad end to a much-feted expedition. The official funeral was held in Castlemaine because of his prior connection. On January 20, 1863, the Castlemaine Rifle Corps, the Light Dragoons, and the volunteer band all accompanied the funeral through the town, and it was a grand military spectacle. Thousands lined the streets as the cortege passed through. At Burke’s testimonial dinner in 1860 prior to his outset on the Royal Society expedition, he was told that;

‘the tidings of his progress through the pathless wilds, and of his success in penetrating them, would be anticipated by none more eagerly than by his friends in Castlemaine.’⁷¹

¹ Crews abandoned their vessels for the goldfields. Captains were unable to hire men.

² *Record of the Castlemaine Pioneers*, Graffiti Publications, Castlemaine, 1992, p65-66.

³ William Swan Urquhart 1845-1864, district surveyor under the then Superintendent La Trobe, laid out many districts in Victoria. He and the staff he commanded organized surveying of Government Reserves, roads, and lands. <https://prov.vic.gov.au/explore-collection/provenance-journal/provenance-2009/surveying-career-william-swam-urquhart-1845>

⁴ Frank McKillop's articles were collated by both James Martin in 1950, and by Geoff Hocking in 1997, in *Early Castlemaine: a glance at the stirring fifties; the Municipal Council 1851-1863*, and a further volume in 2013, *Early Castlemaine the Municipal Council 1855-1863*

⁵ Goldfields Commission of Enquiry. The first meeting was held 7/12/1854 in Melbourne. It then proceeded around the major goldfields including Castlemaine.

⁶ The fight to protect the Market building from demolition was the first organized heritage campaign in Castlemaine, and this was the National Trust's first activist campaign.

⁷ Frank McKillop, *Early Castlemaine: a glance at the stirring fifties; the Municipal Council 1851-1863*, p 92. McKillop was editor of the Mt Alexander Mail 1898-1921.

⁸ <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/stories/eureka-rush-gold/rush-victoria> The Gold Discovery Committee, 9th June 1851.

⁹ Geoff Hocking, *Early Castlemaine the Municipal Council 1855-1863*, New Chum Press, Castlemaine, 2014, pp 14-17.

¹⁰ Marjorie Theobald, *The Accidental Town Castlemaine, 1851-1861*, Australian Scholarly Publishing, North Melbourne, 2020, p. 1.

¹¹ Marjorie Theobald, *The Accidental Town Castlemaine, 1851-1861*, Australian Scholarly Publishing, North Melbourne, 2020, p.9.

¹² Agitation Hill, Castlemaine - Where is it? by George Milford online entry <http://eurekapedia.org>

¹³ Ken James and Allan Dry, *A History of Golden Point Chewton*, p.120

¹⁴ Wilson Bunton President of the 'Old Pioneers and Settlers Society' believes this waterhole is in Barkers Creek near Camp Reserve and the north side of Fitzgerald Bridge. Initially, this was just a ford causing many problems.

¹⁵ Thomas Francis Bride, *Letters from Victorian Pioneers*, Currey O'Neil, Victoria, 1983, p. 71.

¹⁶ Geoff Hocking, *Castlemaine from Camp to City 1835-1900*, Five Mile Press, Victoria, 1994, p.71.

¹⁷ Marjorie Theobald, *The Accidental Town Castlemaine, 1851-1861*, Australian Scholarly Publishing, North Melbourne, 2020, p. 1.

¹⁸ Many buildings were transported into the Camps prefabricated and were intended to be relocatable into the future. Some of this building was conducted on the Police Paddocks in Richmond.

¹⁹ PROV, VPRS 1189/P/O, Unit 93, File G54/7927 cited in Ken James and Allan Dry, *A History of Golden Point Chewton*, Chewton Domain Society, Chewton, 2013, p.39

²⁰ PROV, VPRS 1189/P/O, Unit 105, File 55/R13338 in Ken James and Allan Dry, *A History of Golden Point Chewton*, Chewton Domain Society, Chewton, 2013, p147.

²¹ Geoff Hocking, *Castlemaine from Camp to City 1835-1900*, Five Mile Press, Victoria, 1994. P. 55 (quoting Mt Alexander Mail article 1909).

²² *Castlemaine Gold Commissioner's Camp (Sublime Porte)*, Castlemaine Historical Society Brochure, 2022.

²³ Ken James, Ken and Allan Dry, *A History of Golden Point Chewton*, Chewton Domain Society, Chewton, 2013, p313. (PROV, VPRS 1189P/), Unit 491, File H58/5882, Castlemaine Resident Warden weekly report ending 5 June 1858.

²⁴ Marjorie Theobald, *Mount Alexander Mountain of Gold 1851-1861*, Chewton Domain Society 2021, p.32.

²⁵ This is the proposed development site for the Mount Alexander Shire Council Masterplan

²⁶ 'In 2013 the Djadjawurrung and the Victorian Government reached a landmark native title settlement that formally recognises the Djadjawurrung as the traditional owners of their Country.' Government Media Release, Historic Settlement of Dja Dja Wuurrung Native Title Claim, 28/03/2013. (as quoted from *Mount Alexander Shire Thematic Study* p. 9.)

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- ²⁷ Ian Clark, and David Cahir, *Tanderrum Freedom of the Bush the Dadjawurrung presence on the goldfields of Central Victoria*, Friends of Mount Alexander Diggings (FOMAD), Castlemaine 2004, p.7.
- ²⁸ Fred Cahir, *Black Gold Aboriginal people on the goldfields of Victoria 1850-1870*, ANU E Press 2012, p.11.
- ²⁹ Fred Cahir, *Black Gold Aboriginal people on the goldfields of Victoria 1850-1870*, ANU E Press 2012, p.9.
- ³⁰ Ken James and Allan Dry, *A History of Golden Point Chewton*, Chewton Domain Society, Chewton, 2013, p.11.
- ³¹ *Mount Alexander Shire Thematic Heritage Study*, RBA Architects, St Kilda, Victoria, 2016 p15.
- ³² Ken James and Allan Dry, *A History of Golden Point Chewton*, Chewton Domain Society, Chewton, 2013, p.11.
- ³³ Keir Reeves, Keir, *Goldfields settler or frontier rogue?: the trial of James Acoy and the Chinese on the Mount Alexander Goldfields*, September 2006, Public Records Office of Victoria. <https://prov.vic.gov.au/explore-collection/provenance-journal/provenance-2006/goldfields-settler-or-frontier-rogue>
- ³⁴ Ken James, and Allan Dry, *A History of Golden Point Chewton*, Chewton Domain Society, Chewton, 2013, p.311.
- ³⁵ Ken James, and Allan Dry, *A History of Golden Point Chewton*, Chewton Domain Society, Chewton, 2013, p.311.
- ³⁶ Ken, James, and Allan Dry *A History of Golden Point Chewton*, Chewton Domain Society, Chewton, 2013, p.312. (PROV, VPRS 1189/P/O, Unit 94, File J54/13023.)
- ³⁷ Ken James, Ken and Allan Dry, *A History of Golden Point Chewton*, Chewton Domain Society, Chewton, 2013, p. 313.
- ³⁸ Ken James, Ken and Allan Dry, *A History of Golden Point Chewton*, Chewton Domain Society, Chewton, 2013, p. 321. (The Argus, 28 July 1857)
- ³⁹ Many of the military at the Camp would have seen active combat, in the Crimean war, some in the Napoleonic Wars and some in India. The 40th Somerset Regiment of Foot attended the second wave of the Anglo-Māori wars, after the time of the Government Camp. Those who changed regiments may have been in the first NZ wars.
- ⁴⁰ <https://www.army.gov.au/our-heritage/traditions/parade-ground>
- ⁴¹ 'They Served Here' information provided by Owen Clarke, military historian.
- ⁴² *Mount Alexander Shire Thematic Heritage Study*, RBA Architects, St Kilda, Victoria, 2016 p119
- ⁴³ Ken James, and Allan Dry, *A History of Golden Point Chewton*, Chewton Domain Society, Chewton, 2013, pp. 147-9.
- ⁴⁴ Mount Alexander Mail , 6 April 1857 (Quoted in James and Dry: A History of Golden Point, p 147'.)
- ⁴⁵ Victorian Heritage Database, 'Former Military Quarters 4-4a Camp Crescent Castlemaine Mount Alexander Shire, 'Statement of Significance'. VHR H2162
- ⁴⁶ The military 'pensioners' from Van Diemens Land were recalled to service on a contractual clause, which was unwelcome and unforeseen.
- ⁴⁷ Australian War Memorial Website <https://awm.gov.au/articles/atwar/colonial>
- ⁴⁸ *Record of the Castlemaine Pioneers*, Graffiti Publications, Castlemaine, 1992, p.198.
- ⁴⁹ Pictures exist of Bishop Perry preaching, but these are likely at the Forest Creek Camp. See Ken McKimmie, *Chewton Then and Now*, Chewton, 2013, p.98. This image is analysed closely.
- ⁵⁰ *Record of the Castlemaine Pioneers*, Graffiti Publications, Castlemaine, 1992, p.58.
- ⁵¹ *Record of the Castlemaine Pioneers*, Graffiti Publications, Castlemaine, 1992, p.197.
- ⁵² *Castlemaine Gold Commissioner's Camp (Sublime Porte)*, Castlemaine Historical Society Brochure, 2022.
- ⁵³ Australian Dictionary of Biography <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/dana-henry-edward-pulteney-1952>
- ⁵⁴ Laura Donati, website *Gold Escorts*, <https://www.egold.net.au/biogs/EG00143b.htm>
- ⁵⁵ *Castlemaine Gold Commissioner's Camp (Sublime Porte)*, Castlemaine Historical Society Brochure, 2022.
- ⁵⁶ Marjorie Theobald, *The Accidental Town Castlemaine, 1851-1861*, Australian Scholarly Publishing, North Melbourne, 2020, p. 45.
- ⁵⁷ *Record of the Castlemaine Pioneers*, Graffiti Publications, Castlemaine, 1992, pp158-159.
- ⁵⁸ *Record of the Castlemaine Pioneers*, Graffiti Publications, Castlemaine, 1992, pp63-64.
- ⁵⁹ Mandy Jean, Heritage Impact Statement for the Camp Recreation Reserve, Draft Master Plan 2019, Guildford, 2020
- ⁶⁰ Darren Lewis, *A Day at the Camp 150 Years with the Castlemaine Football Netball Club*, Graffiti Publications, Castlemaine 2009, pp 9-12.
- ⁶¹ Darren Lewis, *A Day at the Camp*, Castlemaine Football Netball Club Inc., 2009, pp. 11-13.

⁶² Argus, Saturday 10 November 1881, page 12 (Trove, NLA).

⁶³ Castlemaine Gift – History of the Castlemaine Gift. <https://castlemainegift.org.au/hisotry-of-the-castlemainegift/>

⁶⁴ Marjorie Theobald, *Mount Alexander Mountain of Gold 1851-1861*, Chewton Domain Society, 2021, pp.43-44.

⁶⁵ *Record of the Castlemaine Pioneers*, Graffiti Publications, Castlemaine, 1992, p. 68.

⁶⁶ Website: *The Golden Colony Administration of the Victorian Gold Fields 1851-1951* by Mark Hillyer https://www.thegoldencolony.au/p1_bull_jen/

⁶⁷ Ann Galbally, *Redmond Barry an Anglo-Irish Australian*, Melbourne University Press, 1995.

⁶⁸ Geoff Hocking, *Early Castlemaine the Municipal Council 1855-1863*, New Chum Press, Castlemaine, 2014, p.82.

⁶⁹ Geoff Hocking, *Early Castlemaine a glance at the stirring fifties*, New Chum Press, 1998 p.41.

⁷⁰ Kathleen Fitzpatrick, The Australian Dictionary of Biography, online. <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/burke-robert-ohara-3116>

⁷¹ Marjorie Theobald, *The Accidental Town Castlemaine, 1851-1861*, Australian Scholarly Publishing, North Melbourne, 2020, p. 165.

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