

THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS



THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS of Victoria are the final southwesterly kick of the Great Dividing Range of eastern Australia. Eroded to a moderate height, the range runs east to west, separating but containing large slices of the western basalt and northern alluvial plains. To the south the rainfall is higher and the soil richer, particularly in the east where the original Bullarook and Wombat forests between Buninyong, Trentham and Daylesford held some of Victoria's finest timber. Divided into separate habitats north and south, Aboriginal occupation was strong, with special emphasis on the border between forest and plain and the occurrence of *myrmong*, the native tuber. Fish, possum, wild fowl and kangaroo were abundant.

The highlands roughly bisected the two streams of pastoral exploration by settlers from Van Diemen's Land and overlanders from New South Wales in the late 1830s. The south was settled slightly earlier and with more confidence than the drier north. Sheep predominated, except in the forests. Before the 1850s gold rush, about seventy squatters, owning perhaps a million sheep and ten thousand cattle, began to superimpose placenames such as **Clunes**, **Smeaton** and **Avoca** on top of Aboriginal derivations such as **Ballarat**, Carngham and Buninyong. Buninyong village was Victoria's largest inland settlement in the 1840s.

When gold was discovered in 1851 at **Clunes**, **Buninyong**, **Ballarat**, **Castlemaine** and **Bendigo** and thereafter at more than twenty other significant fields, the region was transformed. It dominated Victoria's world-famous gold production, containing eleven of the twelve major fields, including the giants of Ballarat and Bendigo. Gold drew people in massive numbers; four out of five of the entries in this section of the gazetteer were once goldfields involved in a large and permanent up-country migration rare in Australian history. In 1891 eighteen of the thirty-seven incorporated Victorian country towns were in this region.

The extraordinary surface riches of Forest Creek (**Castlemaine**) and **Bendigo** and the buried streams of **Ballarat** sparked the migration of a large, energetic, talented and cosmopolitan overseas population and led to further discoveries. In general the region can be divided into northern and southern diggings, the former drier and the latter, buried by great lava flows, requiring distinctive and wetter operations at fields such as Allendale, Ballarat, **Beaufort**, Carngham, **Creswick** and Smythesdale. Very large nuggets (unusual in the world) were unearthed at **Wedderburn**, Moliagul (see **Dunolly**), **Dunolly** and Ballarat. Quartz operations, with Bendigo outstanding, became strong during the 1860s and 1870s and in the extension of mining, within and beyond the region, considerable capital, expertise and machinery came from the large fields, especially Ballarat and Bendigo where schools of mines were founded in the 1870s.

Manufacturing and rural production were stimulated because roads were rudimentary and railways non-existent until 1862, thus meaning that urgent repairs to mining machinery had to be made on the spot. First smithies, then foundries were built. At **Ballarat**, the number of foundries grew from one in 1856 to ten by 1860, producing most of the machinery for the rapidly capitalising industry. **Bendigo** was also strong in this field and Thompson's foundry at **Castlemaine** became famous. This metal industry strengthened and diversified over time and has remained significant.

Except for those overrun by mining, squatters made fortunes supplying the diggings. Along with many businessmen they amassed the capital to purchase freeholds when land

sales began in 1854. Fencing and an astonishing mechanisation of agriculture proceeded rapidly. Ripon Shire between **Ballarat** and **Beaufort** became the leading agricultural area of the colony in the later 1850s. Rural profits came first from stock, then from grain and the fodder needed for thousands of horses required for mining and transport. Flour mills proliferated. The region was also the cradle of smallholding. Following forest subdivisions in 1858, hundreds of families settled under the 1860 Land Act and many hundreds more used section 42 of the 1865 act to secure farms within thirty-two kilometres of the numerous goldfields. The availability of part-time work greatly assisted them. Potatoes (and the Irish) dominated the high rainfall volcanic area, but orchards, market gardens and vineyards were common. From that start, assisted by the Ballarat Bank that, outside normal practice, had lent £1 million to selectors by 1870, many farmers were able to move to larger holdings elsewhere.

The major towns became centres for processing rural products. From tanning, felling, mongering and meat preserving **Ballarat** developed very large bootmaking establishments and woollen mills. It also drew the famous Western District sheep show from **Skipton**. Ballarat and its hinterland demonstrated the difference between the north and south of the region. The **Bendigo** district was not as diversified or as rich in pastoral, agricultural, timber and water resources. Cheap timber from the Bullarook forest for fuel, mining structures and housing helped to keep costs down at Ballarat and was also responsible for an attempt to exploit local iron ore deposits by means of a blast furnace at **Lal Lal**.

As an agricultural and manufacturing base, the goldfields provided a large proportion of the men and machines by which the Wimmera, Mallee and North Central wheat areas were opened up in the 1870s and 1880s. Railways, which had extended through **Ballarat** to **Creswick** and **Beaufort** in 1874, reached **Maryborough** and **Ararat** in 1875, **St Arnaud** in 1878 and **Stawell** and **Horsham** in 1879. **Echuca** had been connected via **Bendigo** in 1864, but further extensions to the north were slow. As a result Ballarat became the main country centre for manufacturing agricultural implements. It attracted the Bendigo inventor, H. V.



The buildings that line Williamson Street, Bendigo, are evidence of the prosperity that followed the rich gold finds in the central highlands of Victoria in the 1850s.

Photograph, c1880.

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McKay, whose Sunshine harvester revolutionised Australian wheatfarming. But interstate and overseas demand led McKay to move his works to **Melbourne** early in the twentieth century. With the same centralist pressure, government workshops forced the closure of the Phoenix Foundry at Ballarat which had made most of the locomotives for the Victorian railways between 1870 and 1890.

Much could be written about the contribution of this region to Victorian and Australian politics. Protests at the inappropriateness of the goldfields administration boiled at **Bendigo** in 1853 and culminated in the Eureka rebellion at **Ballarat** in 1854, after which the remarkably democratic local courts of mines were established. Common pioneering experience helped the region to become a stronghold of the radical-liberal cause in Victoria. The great issues of the 1860s and 1870s — land reform, constitutional reform, tariff protection and payment of parliamentarians — were more strongly espoused on the goldfields than anywhere else. As country influence declined in favour of **Melbourne** in the 1880s, a decentralisation league centred on Bendigo spearheaded country protest. Earlier, the **Creswick** style of co-operative unionism had triumphed over a more militant Bendigo approach in the Amalgamated Miners' Association whose secretary, W.G. Spence, also helped to found the Shearers' Union from the ex-miner smallholders and itinerant labourers of the region. This became the base of the 'New Unionism' exported to New South Wales and Queensland through the Shearers' Union and the Australian Workers' Union. With the exception of Ballarat and Bendigo where Labor has always been strong, the region has continued its anti-metropolitan spirit with support for the Country party (National party) whose beginnings in the Farmers' Union of 1914 can be found around **Kyneton** and later in Bendigo.

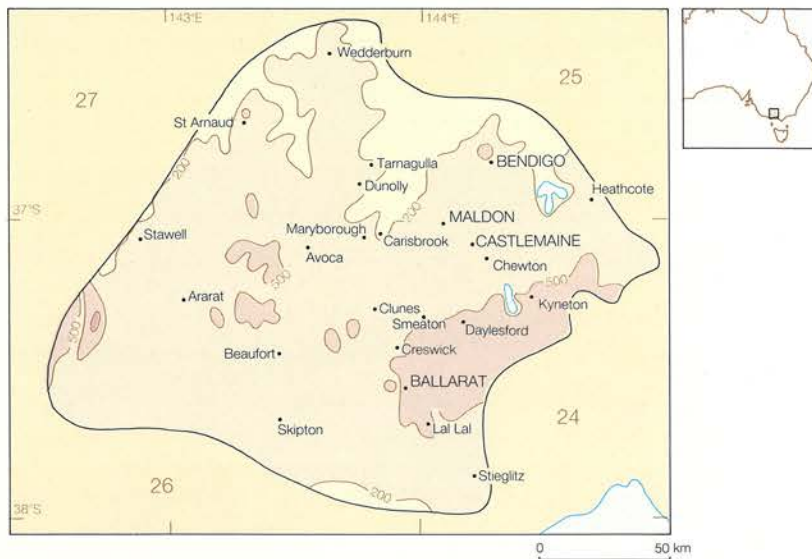
Centralising tendencies, especially motor transport, have affected town growth in the twentieth century. Only **Ararat**, **Avoca**, **Ballarat**, **Bendigo**, **Castlemaine**, **Maryborough** and **Stawell** have grown, either by attracting more industry or through the location of educational, health, retailing, recreational and other service facilities. Smaller communities have tended to decline unless they have become suburban, as have Buninyong and **Creswick** in relation to Ballarat, or have specialised in tourism, as has **Maldon**.

Because of its past, the region has profited from tourists seeking the charm of former gold towns or visiting **Ballarat's** historical reconstruction at Sovereign Hill, the spa near **Daylesford**, **Castlemaine** market, the Chinese precinct at **Bendigo** or the excellent art galleries at Ballarat and Bendigo. **Stawell** attracts huge crowds at Easter for an athletics meeting inaugurated in 1878. Revived vineyards from **Avoca** to **Kyneton** have flourished because of a new interest in Victoria's cool climate wines. Even goldmining has returned, with the application of large-scale modern techniques to old workings at Stawell and the use of metal detectors, especially around nuggetty **Wedderburn**.

The region exemplifies Victoria's difference in Australian history with its rich interaction of urban and rural traditions and the great human resources of the gold generation. Besides Spence, **Creswick** was home to the future prime minister John Curtin and the extraordinary literary and artistic Lindsay family. The Central Highlands was also a cradle of federation (Alfred Deakin represented **Ballarat** in federal parliament) and through its imperial loyalty suffered severely at a time of depression in mining by heavy enlistments and casualties in World War I.

SUGGESTED READING

- L.L. Banfield, *Green pastures and gold: a history of Ararat*, Canterbury 1974.
 W. Bate, *Lucky city: the first generation at Ballarat 1851–1901*, Melbourne 1978.
 F. Cusack, *Bendigo: a history*, Melbourne 1973.
 R. Murray and K. White, *Golden years at Stawell*, Melbourne 1984.
 Y.S. Palmer, *Track of the years: the story of St Arnaud*, Melbourne 1955.

**ARARAT**

[37°16'S 142°57'E]

Popn: 1476 (1861), 2740 (1881), 5402 (1911), 4914 (1933), 7419 (1954), 8336 (1981). Mt Ararat named after biblical mountain. Thomas Mitchell explored area in 1836. Area settled by Europeans in 1839. Gold discov at Cathcart to west in 1854, in immediate area in 1857. Party of 700 Chinese from SA discov richest shallow alluvial deposits in district in 1857, called Canton Lead: white miners drove many off and extracted gold. Once had popn of over 20 000 in tents and shanties, but gold short-lived and town became centre for sheep raising district. First town newspaper published in 1857. Town site surveyed in 1858. Borough from 1858, town from 1934, city from 1950. Hospital and mechanics institute estab in 1859. Gaol (RNE, now psychiatric hospital) and post office built in 1861. Public school opened in 1867. Rlwy opened in 1875. Water supply piped from Mt Langhi-Ghiran from 1876. Developed as regional administrative centre in 20th cent. Moyston goldfield, 16 km west, also important from 1857 to the mid-1870s; and Mafeking goldfield once had about 10 000 people. First vines in district planted by French settlers in 1863 near Great Western.

AVOCA

[37°04'S 143°29'E]

Popn: 2577 (1854), 768 (1871), 1232 (1911), 1032 (1981). River named after Ovoca R in County Wicklow, Ireland, by Thomas Mitchell in 1836. First squatter in area in 1846. Alluvial gold discov 3.2 km east of town in 1852. Rlwy from Maryborough opened in 1876. Mining revival c1901 after slump late last cent. Bluestone chemist shop, estab in 1854, is oldest in Vic. Wood and canvas school opened in 1856, national school buildings (RNE) begun in 1857. Courthouse (RNE, built in 1859) with bluestone gaol (1867, RNE) once base for the 50 mounted constables who patrolled district. Alluvial gold found in Avoca R at Amphitheatre to southwest in 1853: large dredge

worked this gold from the late 1940s until it capsized in 1957.

BALLARAT

[37°33'S 143°52'E]

Popn: 1303 (1854, 16 684 including diggings), 22 104 (1861), 40 705 (1871), 37 260 (1881), 40 849 (1891), 37 411 (1933), 62 641 (1981). Name: Aborig *balaarat* = 'camping or resting place'. Early name was Yuille's Swamp.

Early pastoral history Thomas Learmouth and Scottish squatters were first Europeans in area. William Yuille took up Ballarat run on Black Swamp (Lake Wendouree) in 1838.

Gold rush Gold discov in 1851 by John Dunlop and James Regan, but area almost deserted by end of yr. Second rush in 1852 with skilled miners from Britain



The popularity of Sovereign Hill, a reconstructed goldmining town, reflects public interest in the gold-rush era. Photograph, c1983.

AUSTRALIAN INFORMATION SERVICE



Sturt Street, Ballarat, a broad thoroughfare, complete with central gardens, electric trams and impressively sturdy buildings. Photograph, c1900.

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and sinking of shafts following discov of Eureka and Canadian leads. By end of the 1850s, local mines had won £82m worth of gold. In 1853 there were over 20 000 miners on Ballarat field and 9.9m g of gold were taken to Melbourne under escort. Settlement in 1854 comprised mainly tents stretching for about 5 km, but more substantial buildings along newly macadamised road from Geelong built from that date. First gold battery in Aust estab in 1854. Eureka Stockade incident of 1854 saw armed clash between miners and police and soldiers over miners' licensing issue: 22 miners and 6 soldiers killed. Leader of miners Peter Lalor later became Vic MP. Foundries and iron-works estab in the 1850s. Christ Church Anglican cathedral (RNE) begun in 1854. Hospital and mining court estab in 1855. Montrose Cottage (Nat T, RNE) built in 1856 is oldest masonry building. Sebastapol developed after Frenchman's Lead discov in 1856. Richest lead on field, the Band of Hope, discov in 1857, but only reached peak production in 1867–68 after No.2 extension discov. Welcome Nugget of 68 956 g found at Bakery Hill in 1858. Gas street lamps introduced in 1858. One-sixth of popn Chinese, but forced into 6 separate protectorates or villages after 1855. Royal Hotel (RNE) built in 1859 on site of first hotel. Demand from miners led to opening up of rich agric area to west in the late 1860s. Shallow deposits dwindled in the 1860s and companies were formed to mine deeper lodes. Peak reached in 1868 with 64 000 people and about 300 mining companies. Recession in mining in 1870 leading to 40 per cent fall in popn in short term. Big mines of Ballarat West and Sebastapol closed from c1875, last alluvial mine on field closed in

1884. Last mine closed in 1918, by which time total production of field had reached £230m. Some retreatment of tailings dumps in the 1930s. Ballarat and Sebastapol Miners' Union founded in 1870 was first in Vic.

Municipal history Ballarat West township surveyed in 1851, proclaimed in 1852, became a municipality in 1857, a borough in 1863, a city in 1870. Ballarat East became a municipality in 1857, a borough in 1863, a town in 1872. City of Ballarat and town of Ballarat East amalgamated in 1921. Sebastapol created a borough in 1864.

Consolidation Prosperous town grew on demand for goods, services and mining machinery. Serious fire in 1861. Rlwy from Melbourne opened in 1862, those to Maryborough and Ararat in 1875: town became important rlwy centre. Gaol (RNE) built 1859–62, present post office in 1863–64, present town hall (RNE) in 1870. Stock exchange estab in the 1860s. Black or Yuille's Swamp cleaned and dammed to become Lake Wendouree in 1864; botanical and zoological gardens developed nearby. Woollen mills opened in 1872. School of mines founded in 1870. By 1870, Ballarat had a popn of about 40 000, 56 churches, 477 hotels, 3 town halls (see above). Phoenix Foundry estab in the 1850s, turned to locomotive production for rlwys in the 1880s. Vic's first provincial art gallery opened in 1884. New stock exchange (RNE) built in 1888. Historical Records Soc founded in 1896, probably first historical society in Aust.

Twentieth century Became established as prosper-

ous provincial administrative, service and manufacturing city. Ballarat Freezing Co estab in 1920. Sewerage treatment works built in 1925, half city sewered by 1930. Lucas clothing factory founded in the 1880s produced first nylon tricot fabric in Aust in 1949; taken over by Courtaulds in 1969. Annual Begonia Festival first held in 1953. Olympic Games rowing held on Lake Wendouree in 1956. Sovereign Hill recreation of early gold-rush town opened in 1970. Tramways replaced by buses in 1971–72. Over 60 structures in the city are listed by Nat T, while much of the central area is listed on the RNE.

BEAUFORT [37°26'S 143°23'E]

Popn: 1216 (1861), 881 (1891), 1372 (1911), 1049 (1947), 1214 (1981). Named after village in Monmouthshire, Wales, or after Rear-Admiral F. Beaufort. Formerly known as Fiery Creek Diggings. Thomas Mitchell passed through district in 1836. Land taken up in 1840 on squatting frontier in northwestern Vic and village founded. Initial gold rush at Yam Holes Creek in 1854, others from 1856 to 1862. Important field for a short time: thousands of diggers came from Alma and **Maryborough**, many left later for **Avoca** field. Four townships on Fiery Creek field in the 1850s: View Point, Yam Holes Creek, Southern Cross and Beaufort. Field had short term peak popn approaching 100 000 in the late 1850s. Beaufort surveyed in 1857 and town lots sold in 1858. First Methodist service in 1861, first Roman Catholic church built in 1863–64. Inaugural shire council meeting held in 1864. Land in district selected, in part by ex-miners, after 1865 act. Flour mill estab in 1865. Rlwy opened in 1874. Only 200 miners left in district by 1912; last important mine flooded in 1913 and closed; deep alluvial mining ended in 1914.

BENDIGO [36°45'S 144°17'E]

Popn: 5276 (1854, 15 480 including diggings), 13 020 (1861), 28 153 (1881), 17 883 (1911), 30 779 (1947), 52 741 (1981). Named after local prizefighter who was nicknamed after British boxer Abednego Thompson, well known at time of 1852 rush. Officially known as Sandhurst until popular name restored in 1891.

Early days and gold rush Squatters with sheep in area in the 1840s: first run taken up in 1840. Discovery of payable gold in 1851 led to town development, although station hands might have found gold earlier. Eaglehawk field worked from 1852. Battery estab in 1854. From 1854 horsedrawn puddling machines caused such environmental problems along Bendigo Creek that a royal commission was set up. Alluvial gold declining by 1855, but discov of reefs and switch to company mining led to renewed prosperity. Peak production in 1856 when 20.5m g produced: Vic's greatest field. Bendigo Pottery at Epsom dates from 1858 and is Aust's oldest, although it has not worked continuously. Further development of quartz reef mining from 1870, leading to general city growth. Mining ceased in 1954, by which time 690m g produced. For a long time Bendigo had world's deepest gold mine at 1400 m.

Town development Became a municipality in 1855, a borough in 1863, a city in 1871. First chapel built in 1852; Beehive Stores in 1855; Roman Catholic church and Specimen Cottage (RNE) in 1856; lands office (RNE) in 1858; old police barracks (RNE) in 1859; gaol (RNE) in 1860. Chinese joss house (Nat T, RNE) built in 1860. Borough of Eaglehawk created in 1862. Royal Princess Theatre opened in 1874. Fuse factory estab in 1876 to supply mining industry. Present post office (RNE) built 1882–87, town hall (RNE) in 1885. Tramway opened in 1890, temporarily closed and reopened with better service in 1892; electrified 1897–1903 (first in Vic); closed in 1972 except for one short tourist line. Sacred Heart Cathedral built from 1897, finished in the 1970s. Electricity supply from 1892.

Provincial city Various industries estab themselves here early this century: 'Digger' brand jam factory in 1902 with other jam and fruit preserving concerns following; meat freezing works in 1922; Hanro knitting mills in 1926. Pioneer tomato growing by Spanish immigrants led to start of Leggo company here. Many buildings listed by Nat T, including former Union Bank built in 1876–77 and joss house. Central conservation area and Victoria Hill mining area listed on RNE.

CARISBROOK [37°03'S 143°49'E]

Popn: 103 (1854), 1135 (1891), 358 (1981). Named by squatter after daughter Caroline. Simson brothers took up runs in area, amassed fortune by collecting tolls from diggers on road from **Castlemaine** to **Maryborough**. Settlement also prospered from passing trade. Borough from 1857 to 1915. Gold discov at Majorca to south in 1863, leading to rush by about 15 000 diggers.

CASTLEMAINE [37°03'S 144°14'E]

Popn: 1854 (1854, 12 129 including diggings), 9683 (1861), 4770 (1891), 7741 (1971), 7583 (1981). Named after Viscount Castlemaine by his nephew, chief goldfields commissioner. Early mining settlement and goldfield known as Forest Creek or Mount Alexander. Thomas Mitchell crossed area in 1836. Mount Alexander run held from 1841. Gold disc by shepherd in 1851. Rush followed and over 31 000 people on Mount Alexander goldfield by 1857. Many Chinese miners: 5 joss houses at main Chinese camp at Guildford in 1854. Powder magazine (RNE) built for field in 1856. Duke of Cornwall mine operated 1865–80; the Madame Garfield 1866–1911. Gold still mined on small scale in 1982. Town site gazetted in 1851, surveyed in 1852; became a borough in 1855, a town in 1950, a city in 1965. Town grew around commissioner's camp as supply centre for goldfields: camp estab in 1851–52, was briefly administrative centre for all Central Vic fields. Castlemaine rock (confectionery) first made in tent in 1853, still manufactured locally by Barnes family. Christ Church (RNE) built in 1854 on Agitation Hill, site of airing of grievances by miners. Ferndale Manor (RNE) built for George Isaacs (Vic judge) in 1856. Large flour mill estab in 1857, later

became rlwy workshop. Imperial Hotel opened and gaol built in 1861 (both RNE). Markets (Nat T, RNE) built in 1861–62, restored as museum in 1974. Rlwy opened in 1862. Flagstone and slate quarries for local and **Melbourne** use operated from the 1860s. Court house (RNE) built in 1862, post office 1873–75. Castlemaine Woollen Co and Thompsons Foundry estab in 1874. Popn declined despite growing importance of industry as miners left from c1886. Town hall built in 1898. Prison farm estab in district in 1915. Central conservation area included on RNE.

CHEWTON [37°05'S 144°17'E]

Popn: 3353 (1861), 1212 (1891), 454 (1933), 495 (1966). At heart of Forest Creek diggings (see Castlemaine) — peak of rush in 1851–52. Town hall built in 1860, Methodist church in 1861, court office and warden's office in 1864. Dramatic loss of popn from 1861 to 1891. Large alluvial field, but quartz mining by only a dozen companies by c1870. Wattle Gully mine worked on major scale from 1876 to 1969 when virtually closed due to dangerous state of shaft: still operating on small scale in 1983, one of few in Vic and oldest in Aust. Six children and teacher kidnapped from Faraday school to northeast in 1974 for \$1m ransom, the captives escaping and kidnappers being arrested.

CLUNES [37°16'S 143°47'E]

Popn: 1809 (1861), 6068 (1871), 3486 (1891), 1830 (1911), 691 (1971), 761 (1981). Named after farm in Inverness-shire, Scotland, by Donald Cameron who took up station in 1839. First Vic gold find leading to rush here in 1851, although gold probably found since 1849 or earlier. Created a borough in 1860, became part of Shire of Talbot–Clunes in 1965. Disturbance in 1873 when mine owners tried to use Chinese as strikebreakers. Diggers found reefs too deep for simple, small-scale mining and production was at its peak between 1857 and 1881 when deep leads mined very efficiently with modern equipment manned largely by Cornish miners and run on company basis. Conservation area in centre of town is listed on RNE.

CRESWICK [37°25'S 143°54'E]

Popn: 4714 (1861), 2665 (1911), 1403 (1947), 2036 (1981). Name of station first taken up in 1842. First European settlers in district in the late 1830s. Gold discov in 1851, led to rush in 1852, main rush in 1854. Rich alluvial field with goldfield popn of about 6000 at its peak. Town surveyed in 1854. Slate mined in the 1860s. Deeper leads discov in 1872, but only had short life and popn declined from c1880. Miners' Union formed here in 1878 with W.G. Spence as secretary. Australian mine flooded in 1882 killing 22 men. Future prime minister John Curtin born here in 1885. Lindsay family of artists and writers lived here in the late 19th cent: setting for Norman Lindsay's novel *Redheap* published in 1930 but banned in Aust until 1959. Vic School of Forestry, first in Aust, estab in 1910, partly in town's first hospital built in 1863; Forestry Commission nursery and extensive pine plantations developed in association with school. Borough incorporated in 1934.

DAYLESFORD [37°20'S 144°11'E]

Popn: 1919 (1861), 4696 (1871), 2619 (1933), 3216 (1954), 2913 (1981). Named after parish in Worcestershire, England. Known in 1852 as Jim Crow Diggings from Aborig Jumcra, name of early run. District settled by Europeans c1837. Gold discov in 1851 and town grew as result. Large Swiss-Italian popn in the 1850s–60s. Became a borough in 1859, a town in 1861. Flour mill (RNE) opened in 1863. Courthouse built in 1863, post office in 1867, town hall in 1882. School of mines opened in 1890. Gas works estab in 1891. District claims 85 per cent of natural spa waters in Aust, including Hepburn Springs where mineral water has been bottled since 1850. Macaroni factory (RNE) built at Hepburn Springs in 1859. Borough ceased in 1966.

DUNOLLY [36°50'S 143°45'E]

Popn: 1173 (1861), 1553 (1871), 621 (1981). In 1846 Archibald McDougall named run after seat of Clan McDougall, Dunolly Castle. Earlier called Moliagul Field. Dunolly Gold Winery, estab in 1845, has oldest licence in state. District settled by Europeans in 1849. Gold discov in 1852–53, leading to influx of Europeans and Chinese and popn on field (including Moliagul) of more than 45 000 after major rush in 1856. Town hall built in 1862. 'Welcome Stranger' nugget, largest ever found, discov to north in 1869, weighed 78 831 g. Rlwy from **Maryborough** opened in 1874. Nugget of 5600 g found in 1976.

HEATHCOTE [36°54'S 144°44'E]

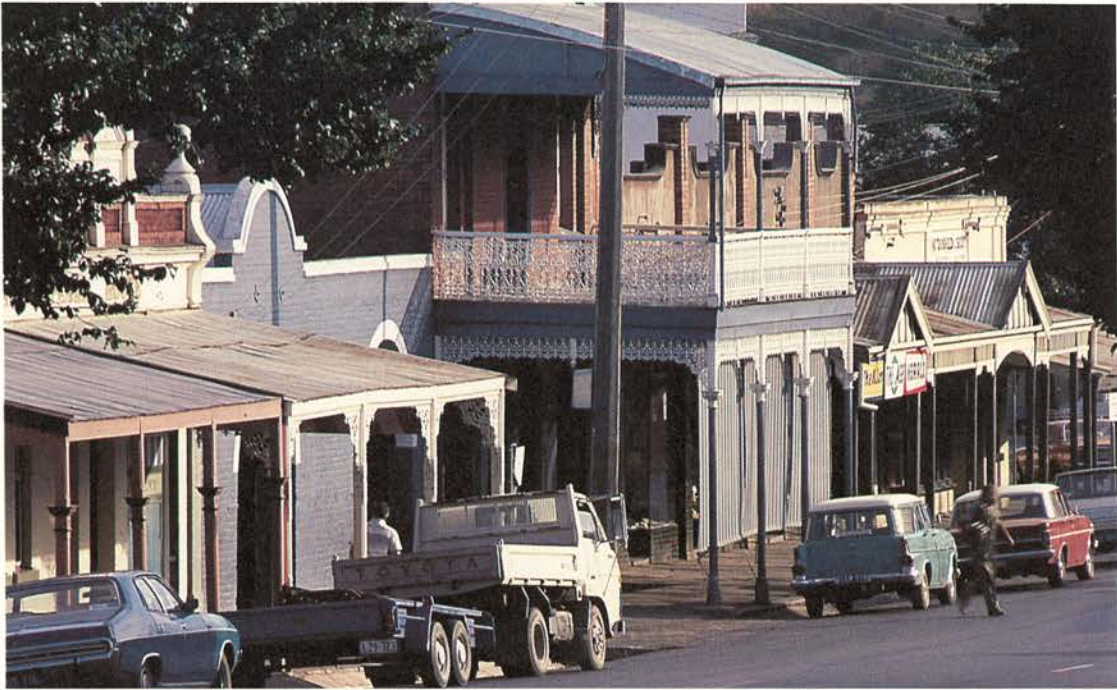
Popn: 1997 (1854), 1090 (1891), 1287 (1961), 1076 (1976), 1213 (1981). Named in the 1850s after local flora. Goldfield known as McIvor's Diggings. Gold discov in 1852, in payable quantities in late 1853. Rush led to about 16 000 tents and shanties on field. Some 3000 Chinese trekked here from **Robe**, SA. Town emerged, grew again in minor rush in the 1860s but declined by the 1870s. Hospital (Nat T) built in 1859. Powder magazine (RNE) dates from 1864. Costerfield antimony mine in district significant 1905–25. In 1910 the Duigan bros designed, built and flew first Aust-made aeroplane at Mia Mia to southwest.

KYNETON [37°14'S 144°28'E]

Popn: 1168 (1854), 3371 (1891), 3070 (1947), 3815 (1981). Named after village of Kineton (now Kingtown) in Warwickshire, England. District settled by Europeans in 1836. Township surveyed and named in 1849. Town grew as on route to Central Vic goldfields from **Melbourne**. Stone tower windmill built in 1854, only one remaining in Vic. Bluestone hospital (RNE) built in 1854–56; courthouse built in 1857, enlarged in 1861. Four flour mills estab by 1857. Over 30 buildings classified by Nat T and central conservation area listed in RNE.

LAL LAL [37°41'S 144°01'E]

Popn: 161 (1871), 104 (1961). Name: Aborig = 'dashing of waters' (i.e., waterfalls). Very significant industrial archaeological site. Phoenix Foundry of **Ballarat** developed iron deposits from 1873, first



In 1965, a century after its heyday as a goldmining centre, Maldon was declared a 'notable town' in response to its claim to be Australia's best-preserved gold-era town. Photograph by Ray Joyce, 1982.

WELDON TRANNIES

experimental furnace made pig iron in 1874. Blast furnace of 1880–81 only surviving example from colonial times in Aust and one of best examples of its type in world. Horse tramway built in 1874. Production ceased in 1885 as product too expensive. Remains on site are listed in RNE.

MALDON [37°00'S 144°18'E]
 Popn: 5220 (1854), 3334 (1861), 3817 (1871), 1692 (1891), 3077 (1911), 723 (1933), 1009 (1981). Named in 1856 after town in Essex, England. Earlier known as Tarrengower, Tallerman's Township, Porcupine Flat. Runs taken up in 1840. Aborig station operated near Mt Tarrengower 1841–49. Gold discov in 1853, important reefs for deep mining in 1854–56. Popn of about 3000 at Tarrengower immediately to southwest in 1854 and at one stage nearly 20 000 men worked field. Town site selected by govt in 1854 but rejected by locals and their preferred site surveyed and named in 1856. Carriers' Arms hotel and existing building (Nat T) built in 1862. Land in district opened for selection by 1865 act. Post office built in 1869–70 was childhood home of Henry Handel Richardson 1880–86. About one-third of popn suffered from typhoid in 1883. Rlwy opened in 1884, closed post-1960. Maldon saw revival as quartz mining centre in the late 1880s and 1890s: Grand and Maldon hotels date from this period. In 1886, 40 batteries were operating and 80 reefs were being worked. Much of popn left and half of the buildings were dismantled in the 1920s–30s after deep-reef mining ceased. Declared a 'notable

town' by Nat T in 1965 as claimed to be the best preserved gold-era town in Aust: no demolition allowed from 1970, but only really developed as tourist town in the 1980s with help of Vic govt. Much of town also on RNE.

MARYBOROUGH [37°02'S 143°46'E]
 Popn: 2495 (1861), 5804 (1911), 7858 (1981). Named after Irish birthplace of gold commissioner. First known as Simson's after squatters of 1839. Gold discov in 1853 and rush in 1854. The *Advertiser*, one of Vic's oldest newspapers, first issued in 1854. Settlement surveyed, police camp formed and Methodist church and canvas hospital estab in 1854. Series of clashes between Irish and others on Alma field to northwest in 1855 were termed the Tipperary Riots and led to formation of Maryborough Mutual Protection Soc. Nugget of 32 162 g found in 1855. Became a borough in 1857 when about 30 000 diggers in area. Rlwy opened in 1874. Wheat depot built in 1918. Tullaroo Reservoir built in 1959 for town and irrigation supply. Declared a city in 1961. Civic Square conservation area (RNE) covers site of original govt camp.

SKIPTON [37°40'S 143°23'E]
 Popn: 25 (1854), 590 (1911), 400 (1947), 505 (1981). Named after town in Yorkshire, England: old English *scip-tun* = 'sheep town'. Bamganie station taken up in 1839. Carraballoch homestead (built in the mid-1860s) and earlier cottages and outbuildings from 1843–47 are RNE: grounds landscaped by Ferdinand von

Mueller and hydro-electric scheme installed in the 1920s. Village surveyed and land sale took place in 1852: sited at crossing of Mt Emu Creek where tracks from Geelong and Melbourne met. Main centre for pure wool industry and scene of Agric Soc sheep show in mid-19th cent. Henry Bolte, Vic premier 1955–72, born here in 1908. Rlwy opened in 1916.

SMEATON [37°20'S 143°57'E]

Popn: 502 (1891), 170 (1933), 191 (1954). Named by overlander John Hepburn in 1838 after estate in Scotland. Agric area by the 1840s. Smeaton House (RNE) built in 1849–50 by Hepburn — one of Vic's oldest country homes. Some gold found in area, but prosperity mainly came from supplying Central Highlands miners with produce. Anderson's oatmeal mill (RNE) built in 1861, possibly largest of Vic's 19th-cent mills and best preserved: operated by Anderson family for nearly 100 yrs, has waterwheel 8.5 m in diameter.

ST ARNAUD [36°39'S 142°53'E]

Popn: 1101 (1871), 3045 (1891), 4096 (1911), 2900 (1947), 3150 (1961), 2721 (1981). Creek named after Maréchal de St Arnaud, French Crimean war commander. Area earlier called New Bendigo when gold discov in 1855; first European settlement known as White Patch. Town site of St Arnaud surveyed and named in 1856 to southeast of village of New Bendigo, but unsuitable and new site chosen in 1858. Pastoral settlement of district from 1838 when slab woolshed (RNE) on Tottington run built. Gold rush to Carapooee Creek in 1858. Borough proclaimed in 1863. First local newspaper estab in 1864. Agric areas opened in 1865–66, but particularly after 1869 land act. Popn trebled 1872–76 when town acted as gateway to northern agric frontier. Hospital founded in 1874, several flour mills built in the 1870s. Rlwy opened in 1878. Initial gold rush short-lived and popn soon dropped, but deep quartz reef mining in area 1885–1926. Lord Nelson mine closed in 1915. One of cyanide works operated until the 1950s. Became a town in 1950. Many buildings classified by Nat T, and area along Napier St listed on RNE.

STAWELL [37°02'S 142°48'E]

Popn: 195 (1861), 5166 (1871), 7348 (1881), 4747 (1933), 6160 (1981). Named after the attorney-general William Stawell when town proclaimed in 1858. Earlier known as the Reefs and Pleasant Creek. Thomas Mitchell passed town site in 1836. Gold first discov in 1853, major find in 1854. Village founded in 1853. When town surveyed and proclaimed in 1858 there were about 20 000 people on goldfield. Became borough in 1869, town in 1957. Town hall built in 1872, gas supply from 1873. Rlwy opened in 1876. Piped water supply from 1881, electricity from 1923, sewerage from 1948. Alluvial mining short-lived, but deep quartz mining began c1880 and still in progress with reopening of Magdala mine in 1981. Stawell Athletic Club formed and first Stawell Gift run in 1878 — oldest professional foot race in Aust.



Most country towns that developed in the latter decades of the nineteenth century erected a rotunda as a sign of culture and sophistication. This one is at Stawell. Postcard, c1900.

IN PRIVATE POSSESSION

STEIGLITZ [37°53'S 144°11'E]

Popn: 1058 (1871), 275 (1881), 54 (1947). Named after Charles and Robert von Steiglitz, squatters in district from 1847. Gold found on their land in 1853. Rich reef discov in 1855 and district eventually had 75 quartz reefs spread over 130 sq km. In 1856 three crushing machines operated and there was also alluvial mining. Popn fell in the late 1850s, but new prosperity came with mechanised mining in the 1860s: 445 mines in 1875. Courthouse opened in 1875, reopened 1895–99 during renewed prosperity following slump. Some 2000 miners worked reefs in 1894, but by 1896 shops were advertised for removal after second surge of activity spent. Last mine closed in 1941. Now virtually a ghost town in a historic park (RNE) adjoining Brisbane Ranges Nat Pk.

TARNAGULLA [36°46'S 143°50'E]

Popn: 1359 (1871), 172 (1966). Name: Aborig *tangulla* = 'part of river' or *tarna-gulla* = 'swift and low'. Tarnagulla station taken up in the 1840s. Gold discov near Sandy Creek and diggings named Tarnagulla in 1859; township name changed from Sandy Creek in following yr. Became a borough in 1864, absorbed into Bet Bet Shire in 1915. Poseidon nugget weighing 29 650 g found in 1906.

WEDDERBURN [36°24'S 143°37'E]

Popn: 862 (1871), 705 (1891), 1204 (1911), 868 (1981). Name from Scottish *wedder* = 'wethers' and *burn* = 'stream', or after William Wedderburn, goldfields mounted policeman. Gold discov in 1852 leading to rush and proclamation of Korong goldfield. Store opened in 1864 closed in 1969, now restored as 1910 general store and museum. Village was having problems surviving after gold dwindled, but agric settlement in district after 1869 Land Settlement Act brought new life to township. Nuggets worth £10 000 found in backyard in the 1950s and Beggary Lump of 2650 g, worth about \$50 000, found in 1979. Govt ore crushing battery still in use in the early 1980s.