

# **CITY OF YARRA HERITAGE REVIEW**

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## **THEMATIC HISTORY**

### **VOLUME 1**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 Present Location And Boundaries

The City of Yarra (approx. 22 km<sup>2</sup> in area) is located to the north-east of the City of Melbourne. Its northern boundary runs along May Street, North Fitzroy; Park Street, North Carlton; and Heidelberg Road, Alphington. The southern boundary is the Yarra River in Burnley and Victoria Parade, Collingwood. The western boundary runs along Hoddle and Nicholson Streets to Yarra Bend Park and the Darebin Creek, Alphington in the east (Fig. 1). It comprises in full the former Cities of Fitzroy, Collingwood and Richmond, together with portions of the former Cities of Melbourne (North Carlton) and Northcote (Alphington, Fairfield and Yarra Bend Park). It shares borders with the new Cities of Boroondara to the east, Stonnington to the south, Melbourne to the west and Moreland and Darebin to the north. There are three watercourses: the Yarra River and the Darebin and Merri Creeks. Major roads on the north-south axis of the City of Yarra include Hoddle Street/Punt Road, Nicholson, Brunswick, Wellington and Smith Streets. Major roads on the east-west axis are Heidelberg Road, the Eastern Freeway, Bridge Road, the South Eastern Freeway, and Victoria, Swan, Johnston and Gertrude Streets. Some of these principal roads are also major tram or bus routes.

### 1.2 Former Boundaries

Melbourne officially became a municipality in 1842, at which time it encompassed Newtown (now South Fitzroy), which was separated to become the Fitzroy Ward in 1850. Collingwood and Richmond both split from the City of Melbourne to become separate municipal councils in 1855 and 1856 respectively. Fitzroy became a separate Borough in 1858, annexing North Fitzroy in 1860. North Carlton was originally on the outskirts of the Gipps Ward of the City of Melbourne, then within the Smith Ward, established in 1856. Alphington, Fairfield and Yarra Bend were governed by the Heidelberg District Road Board, established in the early 1840s, then the Shire of Heidelberg (1871) and the City of Heidelberg (1934); until they were annexed by the City of Northcote in 1960.

### 1.3 Extent and Sources

Those areas which now combine to form the City of Yarra have developed historically as separate local government areas and communities, with different patterns of economic and social development, particularly those of Collingwood and Abbotsford as compared to Fitzroy, Richmond, North Carlton and Alphington. To a large degree these differences are reflected in patterns in the built environment and landscape, while simultaneously, there are themes of historical development which were broadly similar across large areas of Yarra, and these are also evident in the urban environment.

This history describes the broad patterns of development across the City of Yarra after European settlement, and illustrates the way in which they are reflected in today's municipal-urban character and heritage. To a large extent it relies upon the work undertaken by O'Connor, Coleman & Wright in their *Richmond Conservation Study* (1985) and Andrew Ward & Associates in *Collingwood Conservation Study* (1989), as well as previous work undertaken by Allom Lovell & Associates in the former City of Fitzroy. North Carlton was included in Nigel Lewis & Associates' *Carlton, North Carlton and Princes Hill Conservation Study* (1984), while Alphington, Fairfield and Yarra Bend were part of the *City of Northcote Urban Conservation Study* prepared by Graeme Butler (1982).

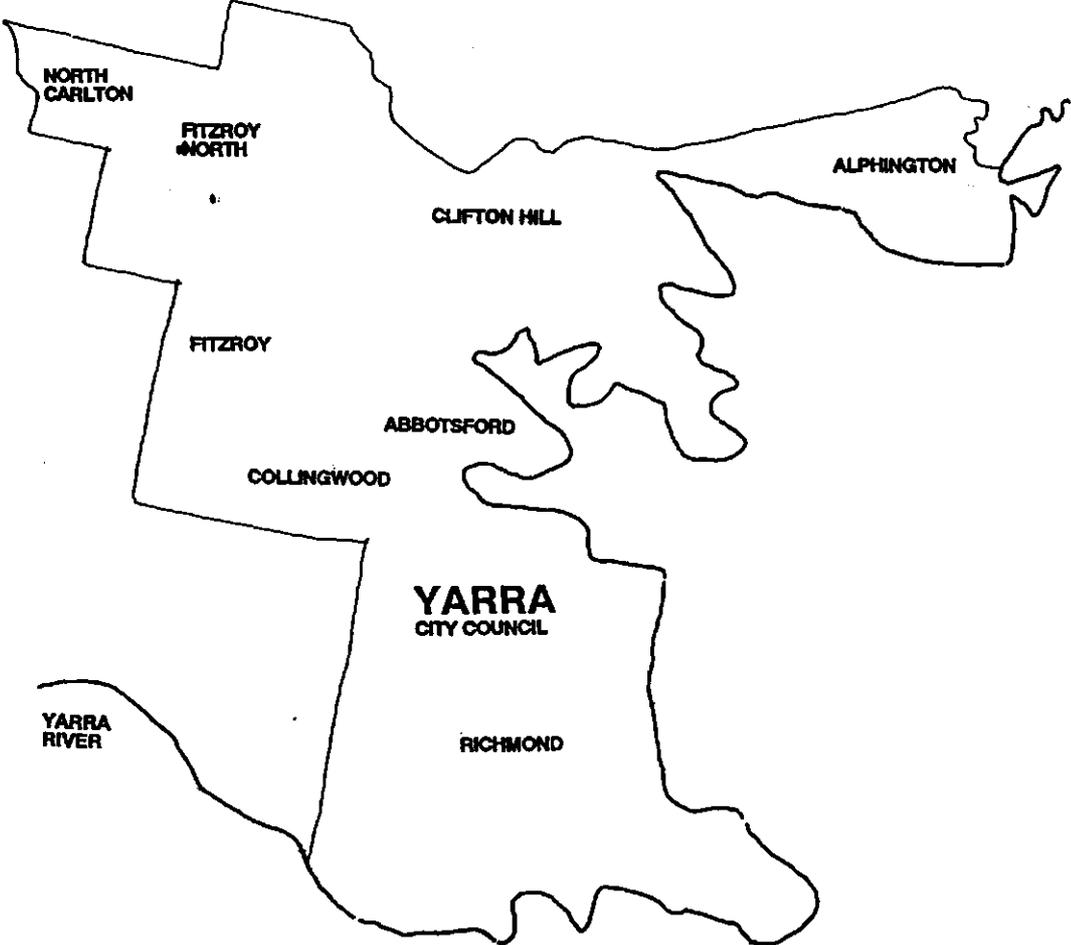


Figure 1 Study area, showing the location of the Yarra River

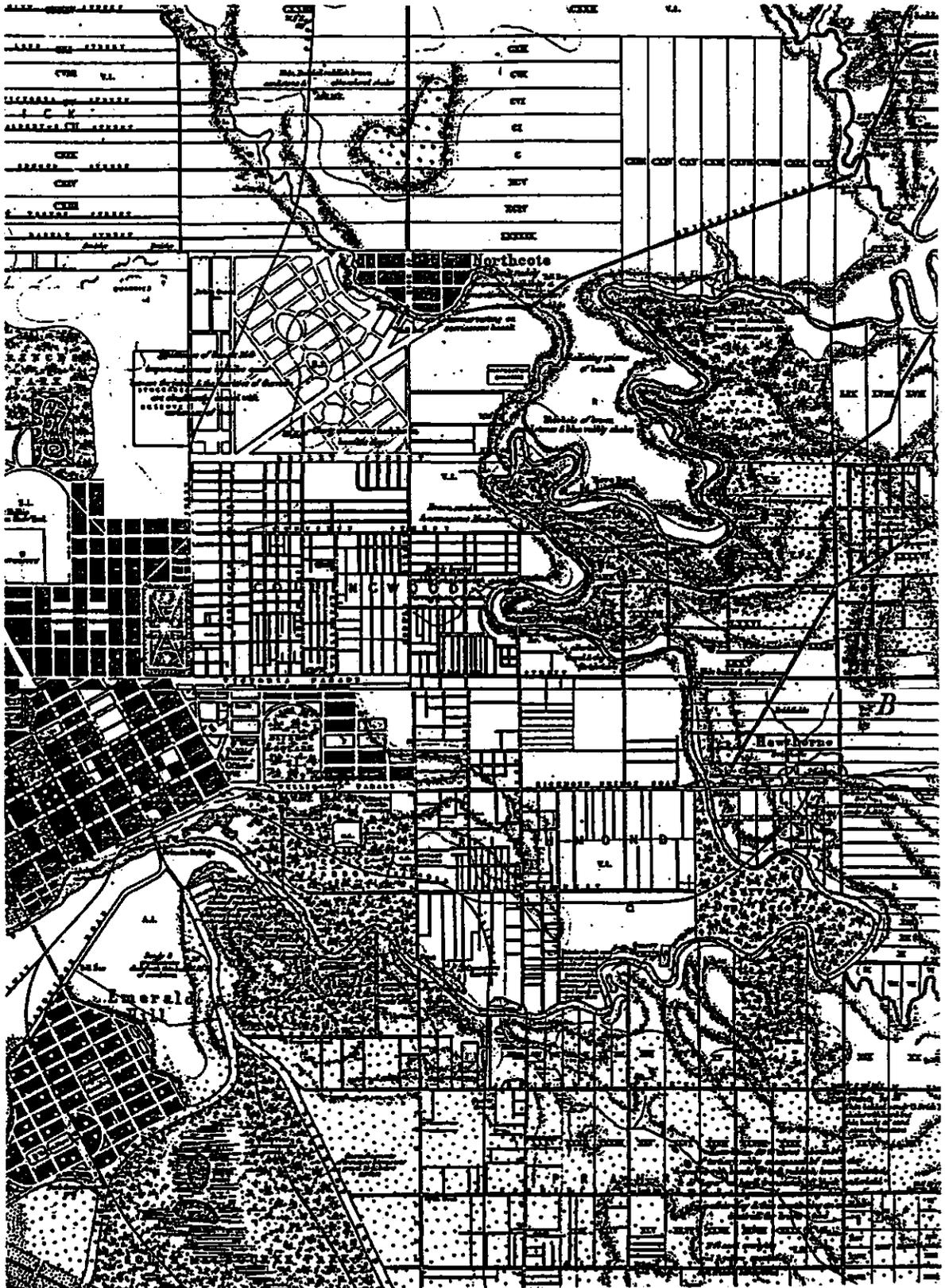


Figure 2 Geological Survey, including the present City of Yarra, 1860. Source: State Library of Victoria (Map Room)



## 1.4 Geology

The basic geological features of the municipality are shown on the 1959 *Geological Survey of Victoria* (Melbourne and Suburbs, scale 1:31,680), prepared by the Department of Lands and Survey (Fig. 3). The geological foundation of the City of Yarra is predominantly basalt plains, formed during the Quaternary period; i.e. the last 2,000,000 years. There are two small areas of mudstone, siltstone and sandstone in Fitzroy, east of the Edinburgh Gardens, and in central Richmond, which were formed in the Silurian period; over 430,000,000 years ago. Along the Yarra River are Quaternary period alluvial flats, mud flats, beach and estuarine deposits, with Silurian period mudstone, siltstone and sandstone banks on the east side. There is a cluster of quarry sites in North Carlton and some individual quarry sites in Richmond/Burnley from which bluestone was obtained. Along the Yarra River are a number of sand pit deposits.

## 1.5 Australian Heritage Commission: Historic Themes

In writing the thematic history of the City of Yarra, the following principal themes, compiled by the Australian Heritage Commission, have been used as underlying framework. Those which are italicised are considered to be particularly relevant within the context of the City of Yarra.

### 1.0 Tracing the evolution of a continents special environments

- 1.1 Tracing climatic and topographical change
- 1.2 *Tracing the emergence of and development of Australian plants and animals*
- 1.3 Assessing scientifically diverse environments
- 1.4 Appreciating the natural wonders of Australia

### 2.0 Peopling the continent

- 2.1 Recovering the experience of Australia's earliest inhabitants
- 2.2 Appreciating how Aboriginal people adapted themselves to diverse regions before regular contact with other parts of the world
- 2.3 Coming to Australia as a punishment
- 2.4 *Migrating*
- 2.5 *Promoting settlement on the land through selection and group settlement*
- 2.6 Fighting for the land

### 3.0 Developing local, regional and national economies

- 3.1 Exploring the coastline
- 3.2 Surveying the continent and assessing its potential
- 3.3 Exploiting natural resources
- 3.4 *Developing primary production*
- 3.5 *Recruiting labour*
- 3.6 *Establishing lines and networks of communication*
- 3.7 *Moving goods and people*
- 3.8 Farming for export under Australian conditions
- 3.9 Integrating Aboriginal people into the cash economy
- 3.10 Altering the environment for economic development
- 3.11 Feeding people
- 3.12 *Developing an Australian manufacturing capacity*
- 3.13 Developing an Australian engineering and construction industry
- 3.14 Developing economic links outside Australia
- 3.15 Struggling with remoteness, hardship and failure
- 3.16 Inventing devices to cope with special Australian problems
- 3.17 Financing Australia

- 3.18 *Marketing and retailing*
- 3.19 *Informing Australians*
- 3.20 *Entertaining for profit*
- 3.21 *Lodging people*
- 3.22 *Catering for tourists*
- 3.23 *Selling companionship and sexual services*
- 3.24 *Adorning Australians*
- 3.25 *Treating what ails Australians*
  
- 4.0 Buildings, settlements, towns and cities**
- 4.1 *Planning urban settlement*
- 4.2 *Supplying urban services (power, transport, fire prevention, roads, water, lights & sewerage)*
- 4.3 *Developing urban institutions*
- 4.4 *Living with slums, outcasts and homelessness*
- 4.5 *Making towns to serve rural Australia*
- 4.6 *Remembering significant phases in the development of towns and suburbs*
  
- 5.0 Working**
- 5.1 *Working in harsh conditions*
- 5.2 *Organising workers and works places*
- 5.3 *Caring for workers dependent children*
- 5.4 *Working in offices*
- 5.5 *Trying to make crime pay*
- 5.6 *Working in the home*
- 5.7 *Surviving as Aboriginal people in a white dominated economy*
  
- 6.0 Educating**
- 6.1 *Forming associations, libraries and institutes for self-education*
- 6.2 *Establishing schools*
- 6.3 *Training people for workplace skills*
- 6.4 *Building a system of higher education*
- 6.5 *Educating people in remote places*
- 6.6 *Educating people in two cultures*
  
- 7.0 Governing**
- 7.1 *Governing Australia as a province of the British Empire*
- 7.2 *Developing institutions of self-government and democracy*
- 7.3 *Federating Australia*
- 7.4 *Governing Australia's colonial possessions*
- 7.5 *Developing administrative structures and authorities*
  
- 8.0 Developing cultural institutions and ways of life**
- 8.1 *Organising recreation*
- 8.2 *Going to the beach*
- 8.3 *Going on holiday*
- 8.4 *Eating and drinking*
- 8.5 *Forming associations*
- 8.6 *Worshipping*
- 8.7 *Honouring achievement*
- 8.8 *Remembering the fallen*
- 8.9 *Commemorating significant events and people*
- 8.10 *Pursuing excellence in the arts and sciences*

- 8.11 *Making Australian folklore*
- 8.12 *Living in and around Australian homes*
  
- 9.0    **Marking the phases of life****
- 9.1 *Bringing the babies into the world*
- 9.2 *Bringing up the children*
- 9.3 *Growing up*
- 9.4 *Forming families and partnerships*
- 9.5 *Growing old*
- 9.6 *Mourning the dead*
- 9.7 *Disposing of dead bodies*



## 2.0 THE SUBURBAN EXTENSION OF MELBOURNE

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### 2.1 Settlement, Land Sales and Subdivision

In 1838 the Sydney government offered for sale 88 portions adjoining Melbourne; the first 'suburban' land allotments to be sold outside the town reserve. Portions 1 to 47 to the east became Richmond, while portions 48 to 88 to the north became the 'district of Collingwood' and Newtown (now Fitzroy).<sup>1</sup> The original allotments were of varying sizes, most falling between about 12 acres (5 hectares) and 28 acres (11.5 hectares). The land around western Richmond and Fitzroy was elevated, had good drainage and was therefore considered 'healthy'. The flats of Collingwood and eastern Richmond were originally two of the wettest areas in Melbourne, and soon became notoriously diseased.<sup>2</sup> These differences were reflected in the land value; in Richmond the original twelve 25 acre (5 hectare) blocks cost on average three times as much as land in Collingwood.<sup>3</sup>

Richmond was considered to be, 'a splendid section of green, undulating, well-timbered bush, ... a favourite walk and drive with the citizens'.<sup>4</sup> William Westgarth, MLC, described his first day in Melbourne in 1840, aged 25, in his '50 years memoirs' (probably *Personal Recollections of Early Melbourne & Victoria*, Melbourne 1888):

I had engaged to accompany a young friend that evening to spend the next day, Sunday, at his 'country seat' on Richmond Flat, where he had constructed, mostly with his own hands, a sort of hut or wigwam, under an unchallenged squattage. We wandered about in the pouring rain for the rest of the night ... A beautiful [sic] sunny morning broke upon us, near the Yarra. Solitude and quiet reigned upon us, excepting the unchanging 'ting-tong' of the bell-birds.<sup>5</sup>



Figure 4 'Approach to Richmond, from North Banks of Yarra Yarra.' Published by Sands & Kenny, Melbourne and Sydney, 1857. Source: Victoria Illustrated

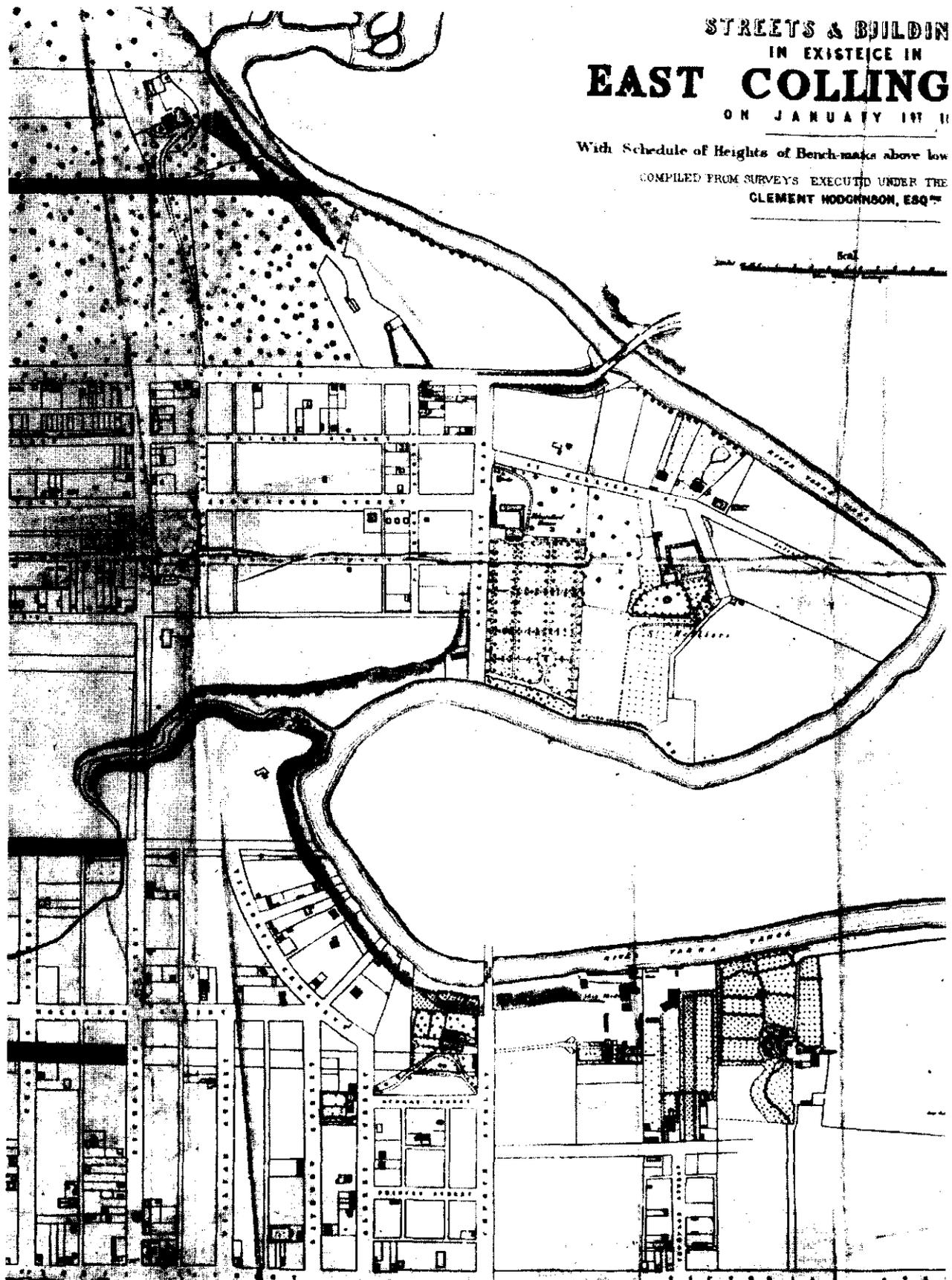


Figure 5 1858 Map of East Collingwood, showing houses on the Yarra River, including Mayfield, Campbellfield, Yarra House, Abbotsford House and St Helliers. Source: A Short History of Collingwood

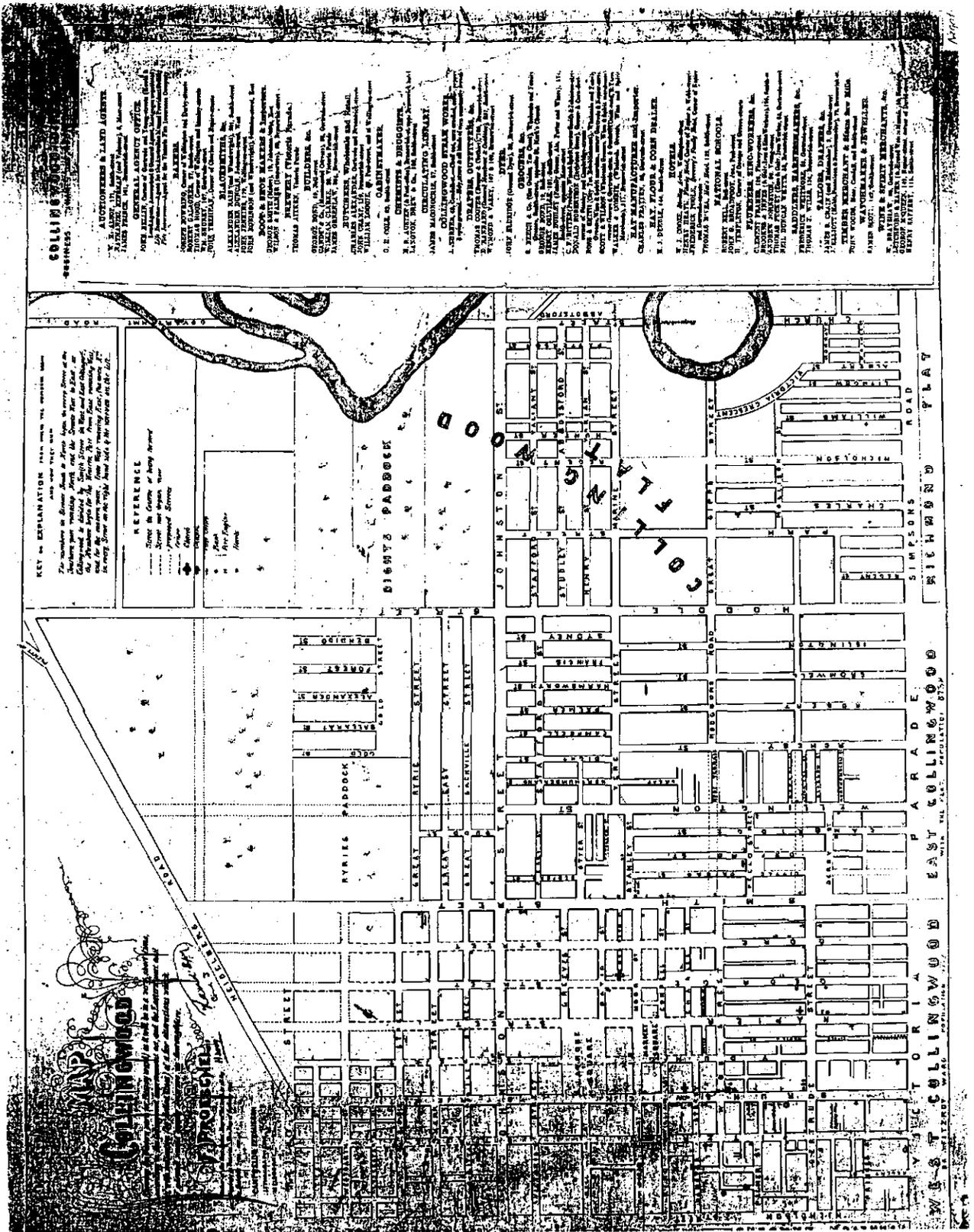


Figure 6 The 1854 Proeschel 'Map of Collingwood'. Source: State Library of Victoria (Map Room)

Newtown was similarly described by R D Murray; it was

the chosen resort of the principal inhabitants, whose residences are dispersed throughout the many lovely spots with which it abounds. Certainly nothing can be more romantic and secluded than the sites of many of their villas.<sup>6</sup>

According to Miles Lewis, this contrasted with Edmund Finn (pseud. Garryowen), who noted a half-a-dozen 'tidyish cottages' in Brunswick Street between Victoria Parade and Palmer Street.<sup>7</sup> Neighbouring Collingwood, however, soon became home to the majority of Melbourne's working class.

Riverfront allotments were generally retained for rural and domestic purposes. At what is now Alphington Thomas Wills' Lucerne Farm was established in the 1840s. The land was subdivided in 1885 into the Lucerne Estate by renowned Heidelberg developer, A D Hodgson.<sup>8</sup> Early houses in what is now Abbotsford, on the Yarra River, were erected for Melbourne's upper classes. Andrew and Georgiana McCrae built Mayfield (1841), John Orr occupied Abbotsford and Edward Curr erected St Hellier's in 1843 (Fig. 5). J D L Campbell built Campbellfield House adjoining John Dight's allotment on the Merri Creek junction, where Dight established his mill and home Yarra Park (Fig. 7).

Most land was bought by speculators for immediate resale, as illustrated in Richmond, where

few persons seemed to have any idea of retaining permanently any property purchased, as it was no sooner acquired than the new owner seemed to set himself to calculate what it would fetch when put more advantageously on the market and sold at the expiration of a week or two.<sup>9</sup>

Rather than urban blocks, allotments were generally divided into a size considered suitable for large estates and small-scale rural or semi-industrial pursuits such as dairy farms, market gardens, and brickyards.<sup>10</sup> However, there were no controls imposed upon the purchasers of land in terms of the way they could subdivide and resell the land. Clifton Hill was an exception—a professionally laid out suburb. Prior to 1855 it was crown land but was incorporated, amid controversy, into the new municipality of East Collingwood. Not surprisingly, it was declared by Henry Groom, a City of Melbourne Councillor, that:

The freeholders of Clifton Hill have no desire to depreciate the value of their property by suffering it to be annexed to a swamp which to drain itself would drain our resources.<sup>11</sup>

Undeterred, East Collingwood pursued the acquisition of Clifton Hill as it enabled the Council to extend its major streets northwards to take advantage of the country trade from the Heidelberg area, provided access to the Clifton Hill quarry for building stone and gave the municipality a portion of crown land which could then be developed in a more orderly manner than had the rest of Collingwood up to that time. Grand designs on Studley Park were thwarted by the government<sup>12</sup> and East Collingwood had to remain content with Clifton Hill. As a result, Smith and Hoddle Streets were extended north to connect with Heidelberg Road (now Queens Parade), land was reserved for public recreation purposes and according to Ward 'planning of Clifton Hill was to proceed on a more organised basis than that of the municipality south of Alexandra Parade'.<sup>13</sup> The Proeschel 'Map of Collingwood' c.1855 (Fig. 6) shows the area of Clifton Hill north of Great Ryrie Street (now Keele Street) largely as open paddocks, or land, and with Gold, Ballarat, Alexander, Forest and Bendigo Streets having already been formed and obviously named after the principal goldfields. At this time it was proposed to extend Wellington Street north to Heidelberg Road and to construct a major road



*Figure 7* View of the Falls of the Yarra at Dight's Mill, 1855. Source: Victoria Illustrated, 1834-1984



*Figure 8* Studley Park, looking towards Yarra Bend, 1875. Source: Victoria Illustrated, 1834-1984

running east from the corner of Heidelberg Road and Smith Streets—had it been constructed, it would have bisected the Darling Gardens which had not yet been reserved.

During the next years controversy ensued as different factions proposed one route or another as a major thoroughfare and different sites for bridges across the Yarra were put forward. The north was again the south and the 'Flat' again the 'Slope' as issues of drainage, street construction and a commercial centre were all seen to benefit one faction to the detriment of another.

## 2.2 A Street Layout Emerges

The only pre-existing road prior to subdivision was a track through to Lower Heidelberg Road, a major route to the country east of Melbourne. Then after the sales of the 1840s, as land changed hands and was progressively subdivided, a peculiar street layout emerged. Government roads provided a framework for a regular pattern which made it easy for speculators to proceed with subdivisions. However, the lack of controls on the size and orientation of subdivision allotments and the width of roads, together with a general lack of co-operation or co-ordination between landowners, led to the emergence of an *ad hoc* street pattern and allotment layout.<sup>14</sup> Landowners laid out the first major streets in Fitzroy—Brunswick and Gertrude Streets—while in Richmond the first major roads were Government roads; (later) Bridge Road, Swan Street and Church Street. Only Clifton Hill and North Carlton were laid out with any order; the latter surveyed on Robert Hoddle's Melbourne grid, which limited the possibilities for erratic subdivision and therefore the street layout remained more uniform.<sup>15</sup>

The subsequent layout and extension of these streets involved a degree of co-ordination between early landowners. For example, in Fitzroy, Benjamin Baxter, the owner of Allotment 49 (approx. bounded by Victoria Pde, Hanover St, Napier St & Fitzroy St) was responsible for the creation of the earliest sections of both Gertrude and Brunswick Street. His neighbour R S Webb, who owned Allotment 70 (located to the north of Allotment 49 and extending up to about St David Street) continued the original line of Brunswick Street when he subdivided this land. The first portion of Gertrude Street was also continued to the west and to the east from Brunswick Street in the late 1840s and early 1850s.<sup>16</sup> These two streets became the most important non-Government streets in South Fitzroy, mainly due to the fact that their original line was continued for a considerable distance by a number of landowners. This contrasted strongly with the pattern of subdivision and street layout which developed elsewhere in the district. Historian Bernard Barrett has noted that,

the district [East Collingwood and Fitzroy] is really a mosaic of several dozen different bits of amateur urban design. The original subdivider of each Crown portion would draw up a street plan with little, if any, reference to the layout being adopted in neighbouring portions ... The speculator was credited with the immediate profits resulting from his operations; the long-term losses accrued to the public purse.<sup>17</sup>

Initially Collingwood was cleared only of fallen timber, and few roads were formed before 1855. Early roads included Darlington (now Wellington) Street, Richmond (now Hoddle) Street, Punt Road and Johnston Street.<sup>18</sup> In the 1850s and 1860s, local politics in Fitzroy was concerned largely with the realignment of the worst of these *ad hoc* streets and with the removal of bottlenecks, such as the one at the eastern end of Gertrude Street. The owner and subdivider of the land on the east of Smith Street, Charles Hutton, had chosen not to continue the existing line of Gertrude Street, but to place the east-west aligned streets in his allotments in a position where they did not meet the eastern end of Gertrude Street. Derby and Peel Streets, in Collingwood, were the streets laid out by Hutton, leaving Gertrude Street to run into a dead end at Smith Street. This cul-de-sac

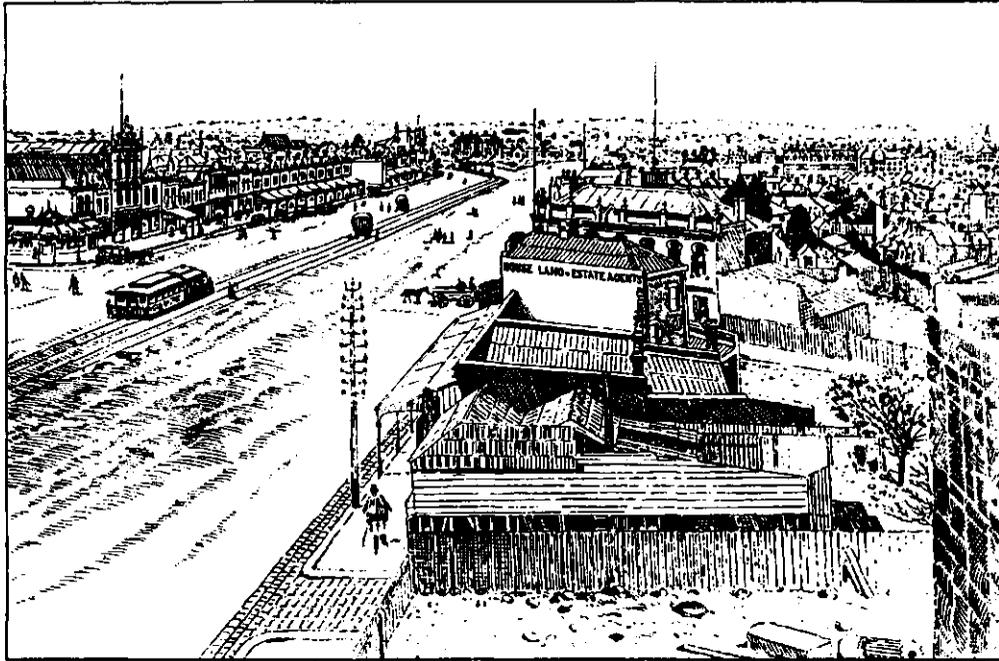


Figure 9 Queen's Parade, Clifton Hill. The area now in the City of Yarra is to the right. Source: *The Inner Suburbs*

was removed some years later with the creation of Langridge Street which today forms the extension to Gertrude Street.

Looking back on the chaos from the 1880s, Edmund Finn (Garryowen) observed that:

The streets ... were a tangled skein of topography, which taxed the power of the Public Works Committee to unravel. They set to work, however, and submitted a comprehensive report, declaring that "scarcely one of the streets is continuous; nearly everyone is a mere cul-de-sac, and the whole arrangement proves a very intricate labyrinth ..."<sup>19</sup>

According to Michael Cannon, Richmond was not developed as haphazardly as Collingwood and Fitzroy; however, 'even today it remains a patchwork of crowded little streets, divided by narrow main roads incapable of carrying modern traffic'.<sup>20</sup> The street names, according to Garryowen, were as 'tangled' as the layout: 'here again is the usual ill-assorted agglomeration of street names, some perpetuating well-deserved public benefactors and others the veriest ciphers'.<sup>21</sup>

Streets names had all manner of origins; foreign and local cities (Berlin, Hamburg, Edinburgh, Bendigo), country emblems (Rose, Shamrock), buildings (churches), Old Colonists (Sir William Stawell, Sir J Palmer, W Hull, W Highett, W B Burnley), peers of the realm (the Duke of Wellington, Lords Brougham and Lyndhurst, Lady Rowena) and local identities (Town Clerk Fitzgibbon and entrepreneur George Coppin).<sup>22</sup> In Collingwood, Clifton Hill and Abbotsford, the derivations are similar. Abbotsford, Mayfield and St Hellier's Streets were named after local houses; Alexander Street and Abbot Street after local identities; Gipps Street after Sir George Gipps, Governor of New South Wales; Waterloo Road, after the site of Napoleon's defeat; Stanley and Derby Streets, after the Earl of Derby, and his family name Stanley; Victoria and Albert Streets after Queen and Consort.<sup>23</sup> In Fitzroy, many of the streets were named for mayors and aldermen and councillors, including: Condell, Moor, Palmer, Bell and Nicholson Streets

(all mayors) and Smith, Reilly, Young, Kerr and Johnston Streets (aldermen and councillors).<sup>24</sup>

### 2.3 The Effect of the 1849-50 Melbourne Building Act

The *Melbourne Building Act* was passed in 1849 and came into effect from the beginning of 1850,<sup>25</sup> enforcing fireproof construction and minimum street widths in the city of Melbourne. The Act, formally *An Act for regulating buildings and party walls and for preventing mischiefs by fire in the City of Melbourne* (12 October 1849), applied to two areas:

- That portion of land bounded on the north side by Victoria Street and Victoria Parade, on the east by Hoddle Street and by the Punt Road, on the south by the river Yarra, and on the west by a line one mile of Batman's Hill, running north from the river Yarra to the intersection of the continuation of Victoria Street westward; and
- Fitzroy, being that part of Collingwood bounded on the south by Victoria Parade, on the east by Smith Street, on the north by Reilly Street, and on the west by Nicholson Street.<sup>26</sup>

Under the provisions of the Act wooden buildings could only be constructed with a prescribed set-back from the adjacent buildings. After a short time iron buildings were outlawed as well. Wooden eaves and balconies were also prohibited.<sup>27</sup> Miles Lewis noted that 1850s buildings were typically 'cement finished bluestone or brick, exposed rough-face bluestone, or exposed brick'.<sup>28</sup> They are generally of a more substantial size than some of the smaller wood or iron buildings which appear to date from the 1840s. Many groups of smaller structures appear on the plan, some in Fitzroy around the north-east corner of the suburb (near Smith & St David Sts), but many more in Collingwood. Because of the materials used and their methods of construction, however, they usually had a short life. Gradually, as they became dilapidated and fell into disrepair, they were replaced by brick or stone buildings.

At this time, the influx of goldrush immigrants increased the demand for housing in the fledgling metropolis. Despite the possibility that there were anomalies in the enforcement of the *Melbourne Building Act* and that some Fitzroy houses were constructed in contravention of its provisions, the introduction of the Act considerably slowed the rate at which new houses could be built, with the result that supply fell far short of demand.<sup>29</sup> This in turn served to encourage the construction of smaller and less permanent houses into areas outside the jurisdiction of the Act, such as Collingwood and Richmond, where a range of small wooden buildings were constructed in the early 1850s. In response to the housing shortage the *Argus* argued that 'the only alternative appears to be the immediate erection of wooden buildings ... just outside the boundaries indicated by the Building Act.'<sup>30</sup> Some new arrivals did not bother to build anything even this substantial, and merely erected tents in areas like East Collingwood, 'where the Crown Lands Commissioner dare not molest them'.<sup>31</sup> Census information on the building materials of Collingwood and Fitzroy dwellings shows the contrast between the two suburbs. In 1861, 64% of dwellings in Fitzroy were constructed of brick or stone, while only 24% of those in Collingwood were similarly built. An enormous 74% of Collingwood dwellings were constructed of wood or iron. In Fitzroy, this figure was only 28%. The proportion of houses which were constructed of brick or stone increased steadily in both suburbs right up until the turn of the century. Still, by 1891, only 51% of Collingwood's houses were brick or stone while in Fitzroy, the figure had risen to 83%.<sup>32</sup> A visitor to the colony in 1852, William Howitt, described the view east from Eastern Hill as

an extraordinary spectacle ... an immense suburb stretching parallel with the town ... all covered with thousands of little tenements, chiefly of wood ... a wilderness of wooden huts.<sup>33</sup>

The result of this has been the survival of an extraordinary amount of 1850s building stock in Fitzroy, when compared to neighbouring inner suburbs such as Collingwood or Richmond, or the City of Melbourne generally. The former Devonshire Arms Hotel, however, is the only building known to pre-date the *Melbourne Building Act* in Fitzroy,<sup>34</sup> while a terrace in Napier Street is believed to also have been erected prior to 1850.<sup>35</sup> Osborne House and the Convent of Mercy both retain building fabric dating from 1850, at the time the *Act* was enforced. In Richmond, outside the boundaries of the *Act*, there is one building pre-dating the *Act*—Orwell Cottage, Lennox Street—while St Stephen's Church was constructed in 1850-51.<sup>36</sup> The pressure on the inner suburbs to develop to increase the available housing, meant that many of the earliest buildings have either been demolished or substantially altered and large proportion of the 1850s buildings in Collingwood and Richmond which were built of timber or iron have not survived.<sup>37</sup>

#### 2.4 Clement Hodgkinson's 1853 Plan of Collingwood & East Melbourne

Clement Hodgkinson's 1853 plan of Collingwood and East Melbourne documents the development and location of the building stock in South Fitzroy to c.1851 (Fig. 10). It also shows the effect of the introduction of the controls on building construction which were imposed by the *Melbourne Building Act*. It is known that building activity in Fitzroy virtually stopped for a full year between March 1852 and March 1853,<sup>38</sup> The plan illustrates development before the gold rush. Some of these building still remain.

The area was home to a range of people and dwellings in the 1840s and 1850s. Some of the subdivided allotments were of a size which were suitable for the comfortably-sized single storey villas at the southern end of Brunswick Street shown in Sara Susannah Bunbury's watercolour 'Brunswick Street—Newtown, from the front of our house, June 1841' (Fig. 11).<sup>39</sup> Particularly after 1850, a number of blocks of land underwent more intensive private subdivision. At each level of subdivision the land was sold to someone worse off than the previous owner, and the size of each block was therefore reduced. Depending on how far the process went and how small the allotments were, the buildings constructed on much of this land were smaller than those built on the hill where gentlemen had built their villas. However, eventually the land attached to many of these early villas in many cases was also subdivided.<sup>40</sup> For example, the house known as Mononia (21 Brunswick Street) was designed by the architect Charles Laing and constructed in 1851 for John Mickle.<sup>41</sup> Mononia's considerable setbacks, both from Brunswick street and from adjacent properties, clearly contrast with the line of tiny dwellings shown on Hodgkinson's map on the south-west corner of Young and Moor Streets.

Like subdivision and allotment sizes, the building industry in the 1840s was also unregulated, and a range of temporary shanties and primitive huts were constructed in the lower-lying areas of Fitzroy and Collingwood, amidst the 'maze of muddy alleys'<sup>42</sup> which had resulted from the subdivision carve up. Even at the corner of Moor and Brunswick Streets, there were 'seven or eight cabins "in which pigs ... would hardly condescend to wallow".'<sup>43</sup> The 1853 plan shows much of the block bounded by Smith, Webb, St David and Brunswick Streets taken up with higgledy-piggledy groups of small buildings. Circumstances later developed which reinforced the existing topographic advantages held by Fitzroy over the lower-lying Collingwood and to some extent

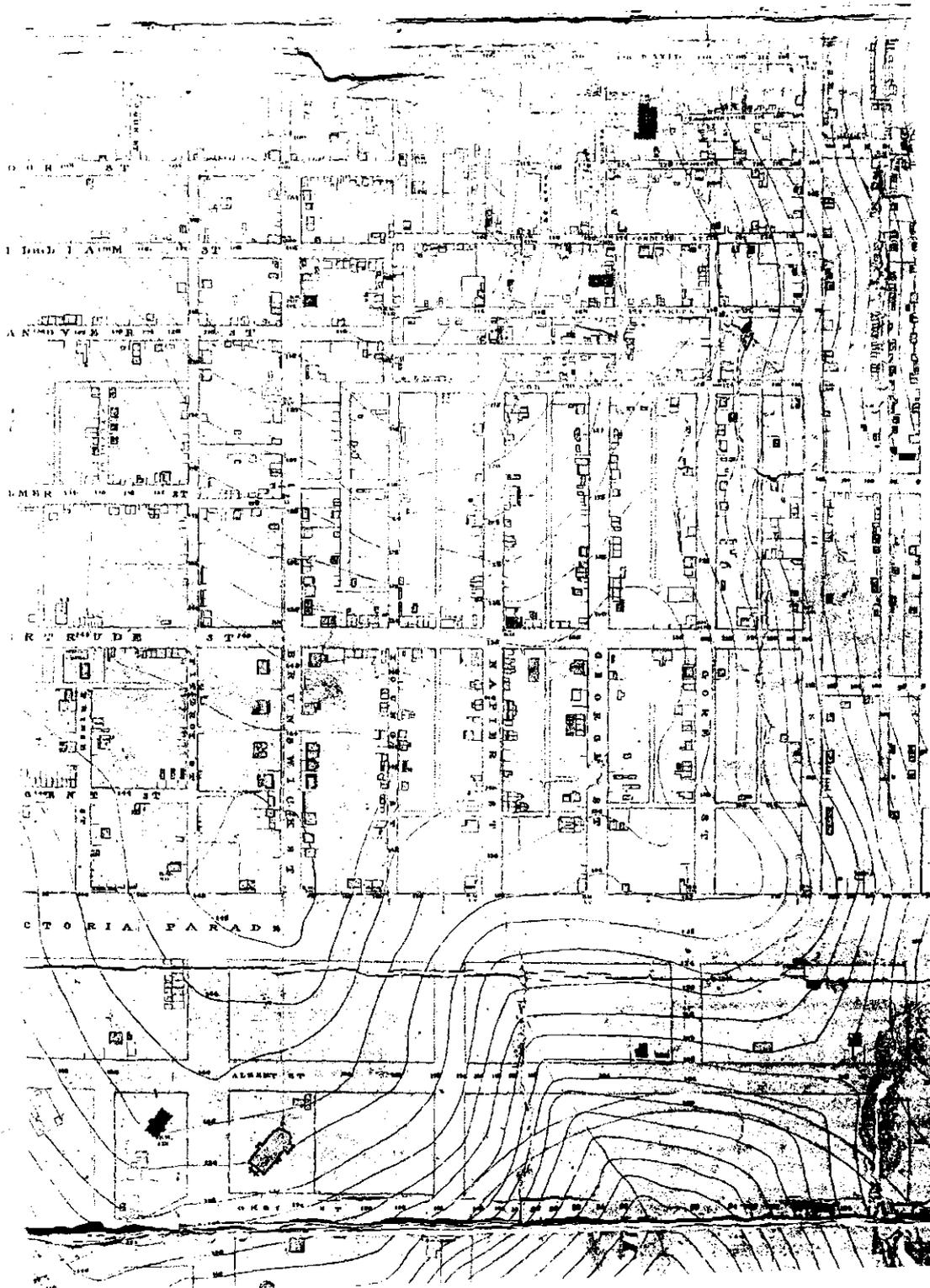


Figure 10 A portion of Clement Hodgkinson's 1853 Map of Collingwood and East Melbourne



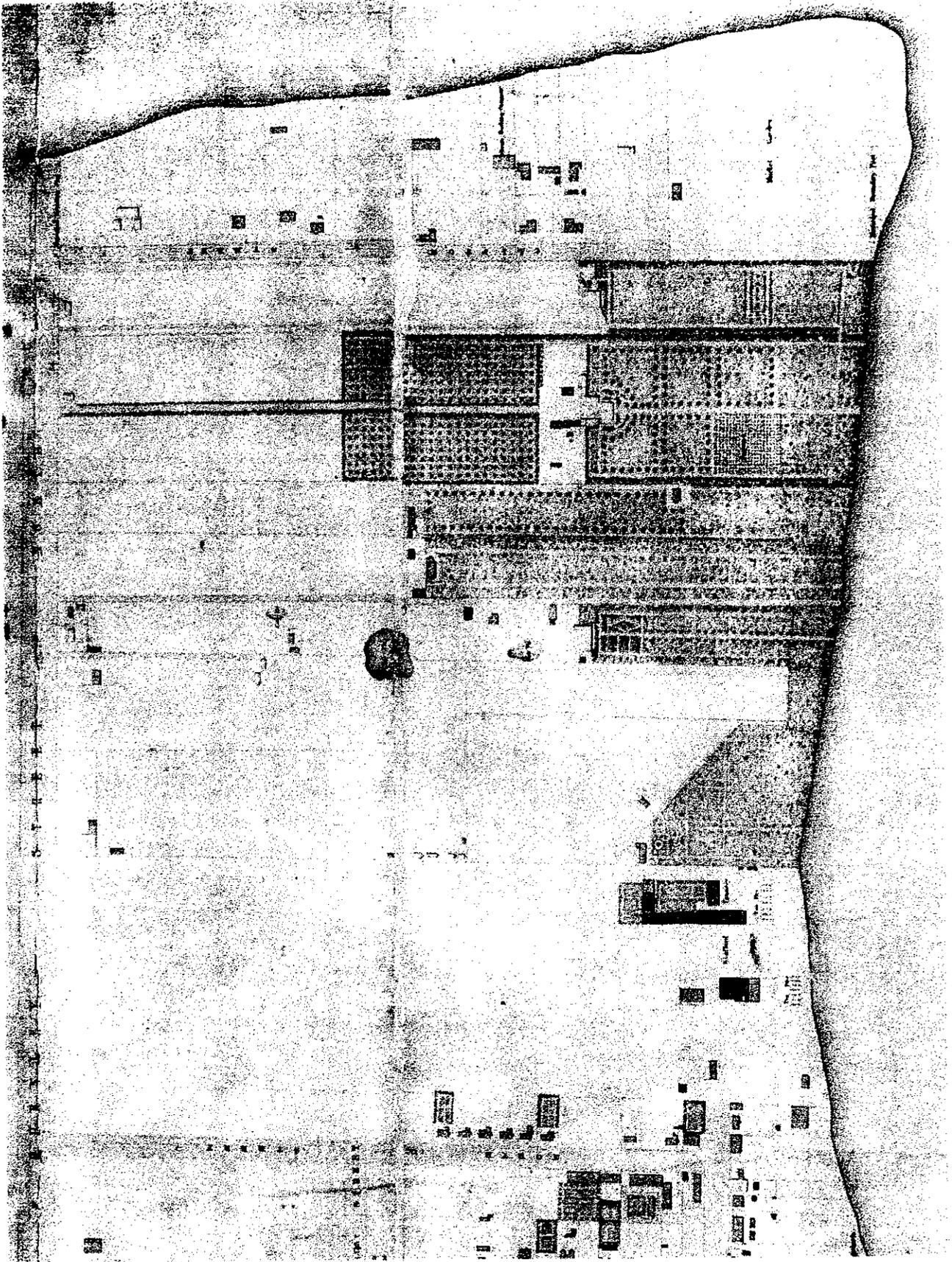
Figure 11 Sara Susannah Bunbury's watercolour 'Brunswick Street—Newtown, from the front of our house, June 1841'. Source: Old Melbourne Town

dictated the separate paths the suburbs' fortunes would take, but in the earlier years, there was little to differentiate one side of Smith Street from the other.

## 2.5 Clement Hodgkinson's 1857 (1855) Plan of Richmond

The 1857 Clement Hodgkinson map of the *Municipality of Richmond*, records that area in the same manner as the Hodgkinson *Map of Collingwood and East Melbourne*; showing the location and development of the building stock, roadways and footpaths to 1855 (Fig. 12).<sup>44</sup> Much of Richmond was yet to be laid out, particularly in the north-east part of Richmond and Burnley. Bounded by the Yarra River on three sides, Survey Paddock, depicted as vegetated with a lagoon and a small group of buildings, dominates. The other public gardens were the Cremorne Gardens; between Cremorne Street, Balmain Street, Cremorne Place and the river. Richmond was not then densely built upon, with most of the buildings located between Hoddle Street, Victoria Parade, Mary Street and the Yarra River. Subdivisions were laid out on a geometric grid within the Government Road framework. There were a number of larger properties, the most extravagant being Doonside, the property of David Mitchell, on the Yarra River (Figs. 12 & 13).

David Mitchell was a prominent Victorian, as well as being an important local identity. A builder, he arrived in Melbourne from Scotland at the time of the post-gold rush building boom and was able to capitalise on this. After a few false starts, he established a builder's yard in Burnley Street, Richmond. He married a local girl, Isabella Dow and built Doonside for her. One of the families surviving eight children was Helen Mitchell, better known as Dame Nellie Melba, the world famous operatic singer. Mitchell built many of the elaborate buildings which went up during the Land Boom, including the Exhibition Building; Scots Church, Collins Street; Georges, Collins Street; the Menzie's Hotel, William Street; and the Presbyterian Ladies College, East Melbourne.<sup>45</sup>



*Figure 12*     *A portion of Clement Hodgkinson's 1857 (1855) map of the Municipality of Richmond*



*Figure 13* Doonside, the Mitchell family home on the Yarra River in Richmond.  
*Source: David Mitchell: A Forfar Man*

Mitchell's home, Doonside (dem.), with its formally planted gardens, was bounded by what is now Burnley Street, Victoria Street, Bridge Road and the river. It is marked by a plaque on the corner of Burnley and Doonside Streets. Oddly, the property was located directly beside the Stafford Tannery. Other larger residences, with landscaped gardens, were located at the corner of Elizabeth and Swan Streets; within Bromham Place (now the corner of Risley & Bromham); and a number of residences along the east side of Church Street; between Catherine and Brougham Streets; and in the vicinity of the corner of Bridge Road and Lennox Streets.



### 3.0 MANSIONS, VILLAS AND SUSTENANCE HOUSING: THE DIVISION BETWEEN RICH AND POOR

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#### 3.1 A Home to Call One's Own

For the first few years of settlement, people of a range of classes and social and economic situations lived in the Yarra district. It was, particularly Newtown, 'the chosen resort of the principal inhabitants, whose residences are dispersed throughout the many lovely spots with which it abounds. Certainly, nothing can be more romantic and secluded than the sites of many of their villas.'<sup>1</sup> Richmond was also (initially) imagined as an ideal, 'where the well-to-do Melbourne merchants and professionals could retire after the worry and the wear, the profit and the loss, of a busy day, and smoke the calmut of peace in the bosoms of their families.'<sup>2</sup>

People began to move out of Melbourne as they came to realise that 'it was a mistake to dwell on land that was worth three or four hundred pounds for the half-acre allotment' while good land was still freely available in Collingwood and Richmond, where if 'they cared to go out upon the suburban land, not two miles away, they could buy or rent good roomy plots whose value was not whose value was not as many shillings.'<sup>3</sup>

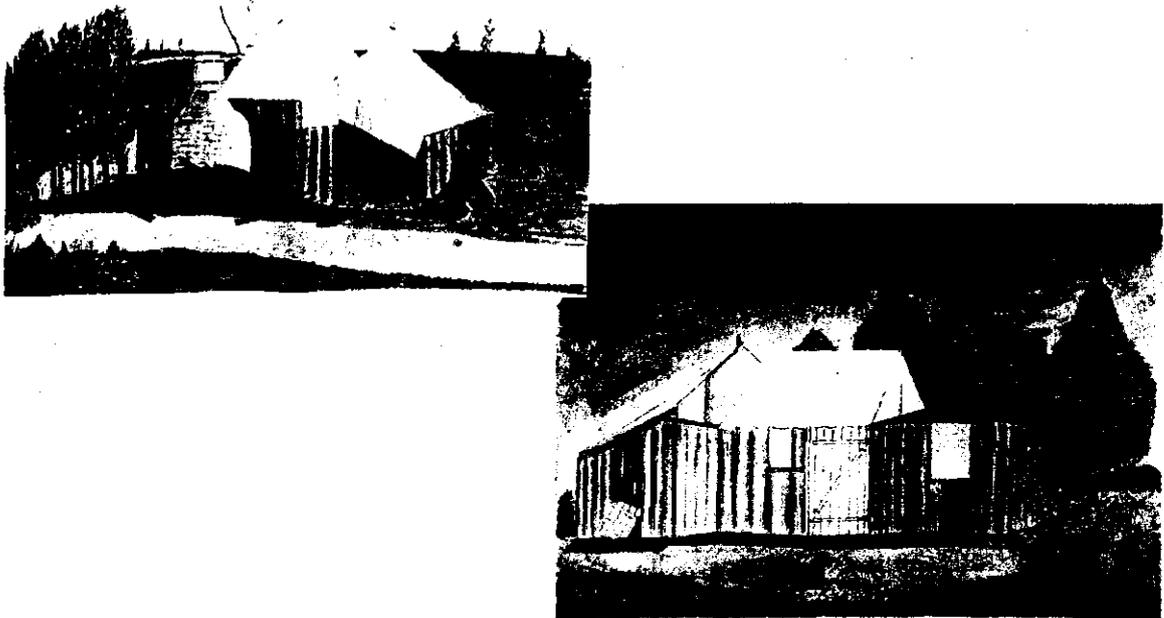
Hence the visitor who strolled by the banks of the Yarra found nothing but open park-land, except the Governor's sunny dwelling of Jolimont, until he had reached the hill in Richmond. Then as he looked down he saw the scattered wooden cottages in trim plots on the flat below ...<sup>4</sup>

The population of the then urban-rural fringe of Melbourne ballooned after the early 1850s, as a direct result of the gold rush. Many new inhabitants began life on lease hold land in 'jerry-built' houses, or tent communities (Fig. 14).<sup>5</sup> These types of houses could still be found at the end of the 19th century; opinion was divided as to whether their removal was unjust, as many of the inhabitants could not afford the rent for other accommodation. The result was a stark difference between areas settled before and after the Gold Rush. This was noted by Edmund Booth in c.1860:

Fitzroy is just as conservative and quiet as Collingwood is radical and riotous. The houses have a staid respectability, and the people a gravity of manner, that Collingwood wonders and sneers at.<sup>6</sup>

Many of Melbourne's wealthier and more influential residents settled on the elevated land at the southern and western extremities of Newtown, for a long time physically separated from the rest of Fitzroy by the Reilly Street drain (Fig. 53). This higher land was at the southern ends of Nicholson, Brunswick and Napier Streets. Through the 1850s, the hill area continued to be a fashionable residential area, being so close to the city and on well-elevated land. Fine houses fronted Victoria Parade, Nicholson Street, and the southernmost parts of Brunswick, George, Napier, Gore and Fitzroy Streets.<sup>7</sup> Not far away, however, the poorly drained and mud-filled areas were settled by working-class Melburnians. Such close proximity of the houses of the wealthy to those of the poor was not unusual in 19th century Melbourne.<sup>8</sup> The early author and social commentator, William Howitt, remarked in 1852 of the Fitzroy, Collingwood and Richmond areas:

Just over the [eastern] hill beyond the town, there meets you an extraordinary spectacle. It is that of an immense suburb ... covered all over with thousands of little tenements, chiefly of wood, and almost every one of them only one storey high.<sup>9</sup>



*Figure 14* Two typical examples of canvas housing, similar to what would have been found in the district in the 19th century. Source: The View from Docker's Hill



*Figure 15* The cottage of D S Campbell, c.1840. This is now the site of St Ignatius' Church. Source: The View from Docker's Hill

A proportion of the buildings in Howitt's view, though not a large one, would have been made up of Fitzroy buildings, with the bulk being constructed in Collingwood and Richmond. By contrast, North Fitzroy was subdivided later, and therefore always subject to the provisos of the *Melbourne Building Act*. It was regarded as residentially desirable from the outset; its early residents were commonly prosperous timber merchants, contractors and manufacturers.<sup>10</sup> Many saw Richmond the same way:

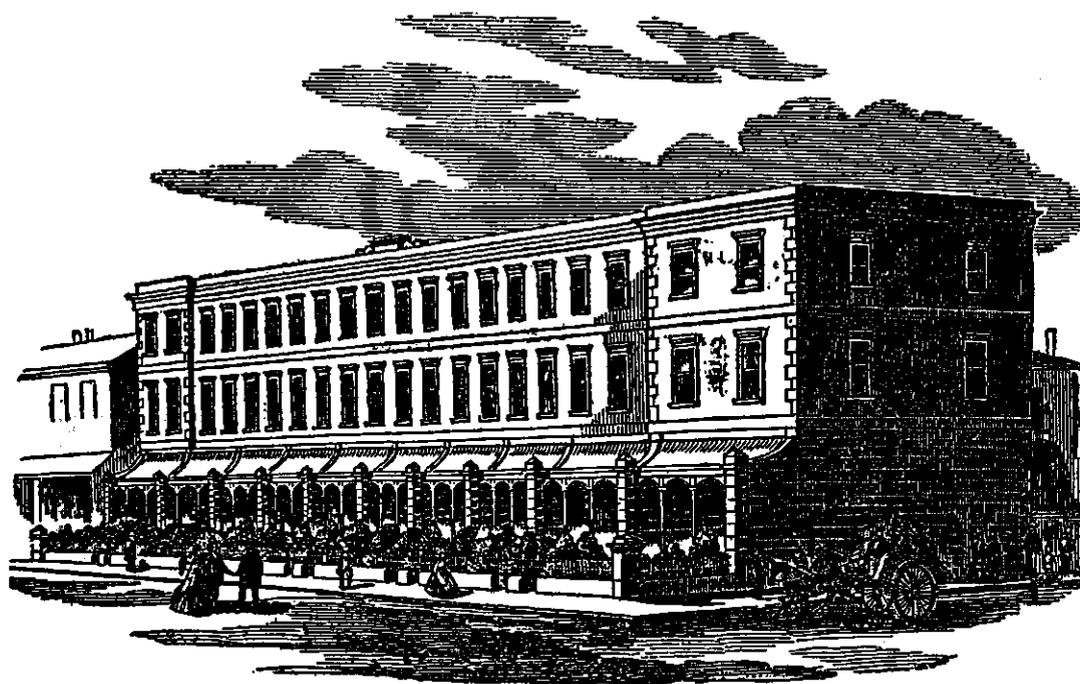
Richmond is not like other metropolitan offshoots—a business place—but a residential one. Many old inhabitants of the Colony are located within it. Business men and clerks seek the quietude of its shelter after the bustle and fatigue of the day. An intelligent, independent body of working men have pitched their residences in it, and the best proof of their honourable character and moral conduct is that their homes are their own property. One peculiar feature of Richmond, in which it differs from some of the other suburban districts, is that there is hardly a house to be seen without a small garden or extensive yard attached. This allows a free circulation of air around the dwellings and consequently better health to the indwellers.<sup>11</sup>

By 1861, there were more than 2,700 permanent houses in Richmond; predominantly homes for the business and upper class. Blocks in Richmond sold well, boosted by poetic advertising which emphasised the area's sufficiencies of natural resources, such as water and timber, and it soon became a prosperous township (Fig. 18). Land which was bought in the Government land sales for £30-£40 an acre soon sold for £100. When offering the land off the Grosvenor Estate, on the Yarra, off Simpson's Road, Messrs. Symons and Perry waxed lyrical:

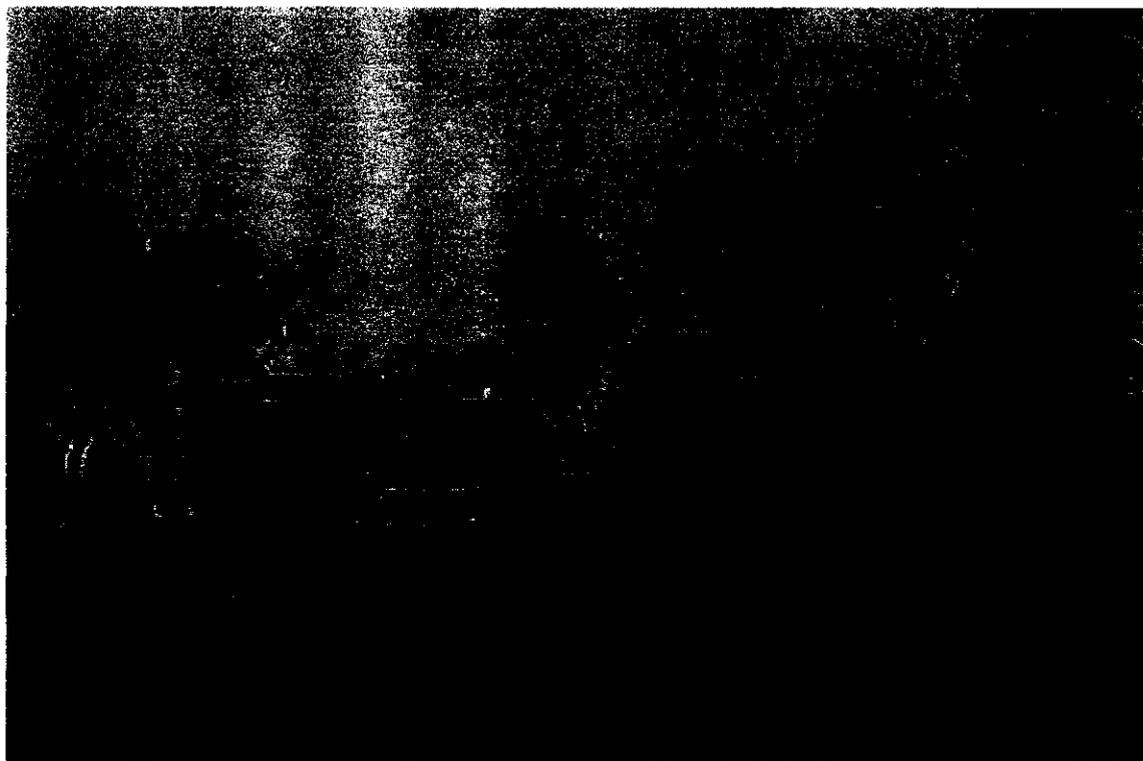
The auctioneers in submitting this property to public competition cannot but congratulate themselves on being the medium for sale of so splendid and desirable an estate. The beauty of the situation is well known, and the willows have long been looked upon as the most beautiful ornament to the finest river walk in the neighbourhood of Melbourne. Such an opportunity to obtain a site of this description cannot occur again, as there is no other land with a similar frontage to the Yarra unsold. Attention may also be called to the fact that the estate must, in consequence of its being bounded by the river, always remain private, and his will be most excellent as a site for residences, while its respectability is established by the immediate neighbourhood of the Honourable the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and other influential gentlemen. The river allotments, it will be observed, have been made large, to afford opportunity to the gentry and citizens of Melbourne to secure eligible sites for villa residences.<sup>12</sup>

The number of houses in Richmond had increased to 4,800 by the early 1880s and doubled again by the end of the decade. As many as six terrace houses were built on blocks of land intended for one building during the Land Boom; many of these remained empty as the Depression hit and deteriorated accordingly.

In North Carlton, the Crown land between the cemetery and Pigdon Street was not subdivided until the late 1870s, developing rapidly thereafter. With the exception of a few blocks to the north of the area, few vacant sites remained after the First World War. Many grand Boom style houses were erected in the decade following subdivision, including: Lime's Grove (265 Pigdon Street), erected for William Hearnden in 1891; Lytton (93 Holtom Street West), erected in 1890 by Arthur Kirkbridge, who designed the house for his own use; and Maelstrom (58 Garton Street).<sup>13</sup>



*Figure 16 Royal Terrace, Nicholson Street, Fitzroy, 1862. Source: Portrait of Melbourne*



*Figure 17 'Back of our house, Darebin Creek'. Sarah Susannah Bunbury's house at Alphington, 1841. Source: State Library of Victoria (Picture Collection)*



*Figure 18* Richmond in the 1870s. Source: *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne*



*Figure 19* The Rest, Abbotsford, 1884. Painted by William Tibbits when in the ownership of R Goldsbrough. Source: *Historic Gardens of Victoria*

In Alphington, the hill-side Yarra allotments of the St James Park Estate were declared 'ideal for Gentlemen's Residences' when 1883. Houses erected at the time included Tower House (6 Tower Avenue) in 1884 for Thomas Stokes and Rosebank (Austin Avenue) erected by Samuel Nathan, a furniture dealer, in 1884, as well as a number of smaller villas; including Bellvista (23 Alphington Street) in 1887 and The Nook (now Tower House, 25 Alphington Street) in 1892-3.<sup>14</sup>

By the Land Boom, the advantage posed by the close proximity to the city was eroded by the development of Melbourne's public transport system. The expansion of the suburban rail network in particular meant that commuting to the city from greater distances was easier and faster. The necessity to live close to the city was not as great as it had been before. As a consequence, Melbourne's wealthier citizens typically chose to escape the increasingly squalid conditions in the city's inner urban areas and built large villas or mansions in the outlying southern and eastern suburbs.

As the wealthier residents moved out of the suburb, many of the grander houses were converted to boarding houses. It was not only the wealthy landowners or professionals of South Fitzroy who chose to move. Many working-class men also moved up in the world, though they typically did not move further than North Fitzroy and Clifton Hill. Nola McKinnon described the typical pattern, whereby men arrived from England with experience as journeymen, worked for years in an established business, acquired a shop or factory in Brunswick Street or Gertrude Street, over several years expanded the number of employees at the business, and eventually moved to North Fitzroy, Clifton Hill or Northcote.

Apart from the movement of many middle-class and respectable working class residents out of the area, the by then sub-standard nature of some of the housing stock in the early to mid-20th century rendered it less salubrious than it had once been. Cheap housing was attractive to poorer people, both workers and migrants. In some ways, Yarra can be characterised as an area of immigrants. For a range of reasons, it has attracted new arrivals to Australia. As the wealthier and more influential early residents moved to more socially desirable areas of Melbourne, and as the district became more industrial, and the housing stock deteriorated, it became a logical stepping stone for Australia's new immigrant population. Many of these migrants in turn moved from Yarra to more desirable areas after a period of years and having improved their socio-economic standing, usually to make way for a fresh influx of migrants yet to make their way in Australia.

A population boom followed World War One, and there were more people than houses. Rent was increased, frequently doubled, and tenants evicted as landlords took advantage of their position. The *Richmond Guardian* reported that, in 1920,

[a] tenant informed the owner that she could not pay that amount as it was a difficult matter to pay her way with the rent of 14/6. Since then she has tramped the streets of every suburb for weeks past in vain endeavour to secure a home ... The silver and blue badge which she wears, indicating that she is a mother of a returned soldier, evidently was of no help to her. She is the mother of nine children, two of whom are returned soldiers. One of these, the bearer of no fewer than seven wounds, was living at the house at the time of ejection ... the other five are mere children, the youngest being a baby five months old. On the day the ejection order was carried out ... she returned home tired and worn out after her fruitless search, only to find out that she had no home to go to. During her absence, the ejection order had been executed, the house entered by the owner's men, and everything bundled out ...<sup>15</sup>

Once the Depression hit, the situation worsened; houses remained empty as people were too poor to afford the rent. In Hope Street, Richmond, all 26 houses were deserted, recalled Ernie Wilson (born 1884), 'the owners used to let people live in them for no rent, just to look after them'.<sup>16</sup> Publicly owned houses were erected on the Richmond Racecourse Estate and competition for them was fierce as potential residents tried to convince the council of their need; 1,300 houses having been condemned between 1941 and 1947.<sup>17</sup>

### 3.2 Lodging People: Hotels and Boarding Houses

As the developing railway system of the 1880s drew the elite and families away from the centre of Melbourne, the inner suburbs became the location for many boarding houses, established in new buildings and converted villas and mansions. They accommodated the factory workers of Fitzroy and Collingwood, and others; including 'commercial travellers, drifters, and new arrivals from the bush or Britain'.<sup>18</sup> Boarding houses were also established to provide accommodation in relation to the influx of arrivals attracted by the Exhibitions of 1880 and 1888. Many boarding houses were run by charitable and religious organisations such as the Hostel for Homeless Men at 164 Fitzroy Street, Fitzroy, run by the Brotherhood of St Laurence.<sup>19</sup> Other (earlier) boarding houses, such as Osborne House, were privately run.

Osborne House was originally known as Helena House, a ten-room villa built for the father of John Alexander MacPherson (Victorian Premier in 1869-70) in c.1850, designed by William Pelling. George Nipper, the founder of the Windsor Hotel, purchased Helena House in 1887 and extended it to 88 rooms; two three storey wings at the front and two three storey wings at the rear. The building operated in two separate parts; one Nipper called Salisbury House, the other Osborne House. Initially a premier boarding house, an advertisement claimed the lodge 'combines the comfort of the home

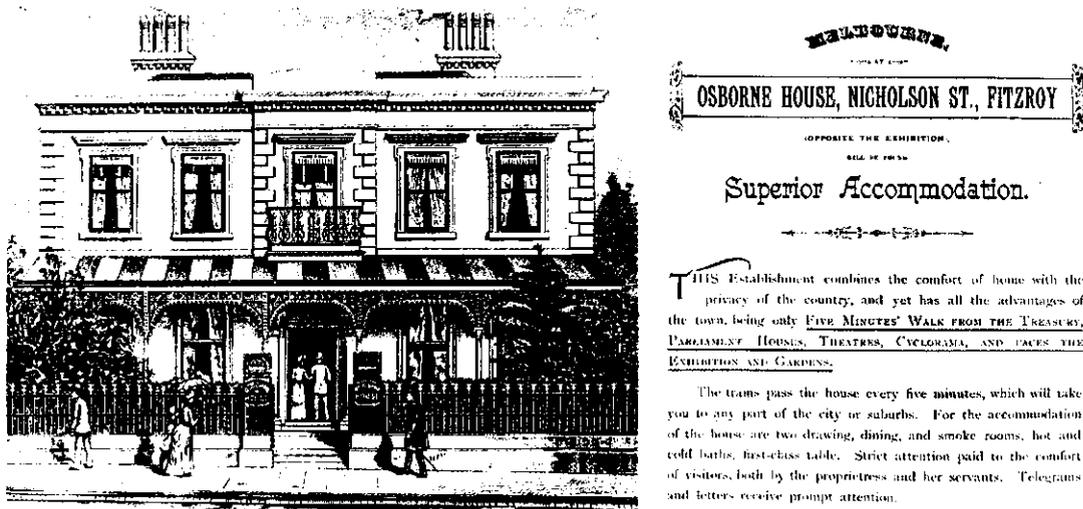


Figure 20 An advertisement for Osborne House from The Commercial Album of Victoria (1888). Source: Fitzroy: Melbourne's First Suburb

with the privacy of the country, yet has all the advantages of the town'(Fig. 20).<sup>20</sup> As the area declined in status so did the boarding house, narrowly avoiding demolition in the 1970s. Osborne House was purchased and restored in the 1980s by the Ministry of Housing and Construction.

From the earliest years of the 20th century, low-cost housing stock in the inner suburbs was attractive to migrants and others who needed to be close to the industrial areas of the Collingwood and Richmond, as well as Melbourne's inner western suburbs. Much of it was large terrace houses which had been converted to boarding houses in the 1880s and 1890s. These large houses and boarding houses were attractive to young single male immigrants from Italy, Greece, Macedonia and Eastern Europe, particularly in the early post-World War II period. Some lived in boarding houses, while other clubbed together to buy a shared house. Small concentrations of immigrants of various ethnic origins thus developed, and were increased by the effects of chain migration, whereby families from the same places followed each other in migrating to Australia, where they then settled in the same city. Many of the trappings of cultural life were quickly established by these different groups in the post-war period and while they included things as diverse as religious congregations or coffee houses, they always constituted a bridge between the old world back home and the new world in Australia.<sup>21</sup>

### 3.3 Slums and the Development of Public Housing

During the late 19th century and early 20th century, inspectors gave evidence before various committees concerned with 'slum housing', the general approach taken being that the occupants had generally contributed to the decay of their houses. This, according to Rosemary Kiss, is in line with the classic argument that, 'old houses run down and become impossible to live in, thus becoming slums and being subject to further deterioration'. However, as Kiss remonstrates citing Fitzroy, much urban decay might be due to the fact that much of the working-man's housing was substandard in the first place, having been jerry-built by speculative builders or developers who economised and cut corners in the process.<sup>22</sup>

The provisions of the *Public Health Act* of 1883 allowed local councils to inspect properties and to have them condemned for human habitation and demolished. Up to 1912, as many as 351 properties in Fitzroy alone were condemned, though only 129 were pulled down as a result.<sup>23</sup> This, and other evidence, reflect on the fact that the local Council was undoubtedly negligent in its responsibilities. George Tibbits has quoted a Central Board of Health Report from 1887 which remarked that 'Some houses—of the worst kind from a health point of view, belong to wealthy proprietors who resent interference, and often defy the law ... It is impossible to avoid noticing the reluctance of many Local Boards to interfere actively against influential property owners.'<sup>24</sup> Particularly if, as in the case of Fitzroy, many of the property owners were not just influential residents, but were actually past or present councillors.

In the early 20th century, a new class of public health professionals turned their attention to questions of sanitation and hygiene. Unsatisfactory or makeshift buildings, particularly where overcrowding occurred, were viewed with even greater concern than before. The appointment of a Joint Select Committee, and a Royal Commission between 1915 and 1918 to examine the slum housing question, indicated a shift toward a more regulated and centralised scientific/medical approach to the problem, rather than the old way of leaving it in the hands of local councils.

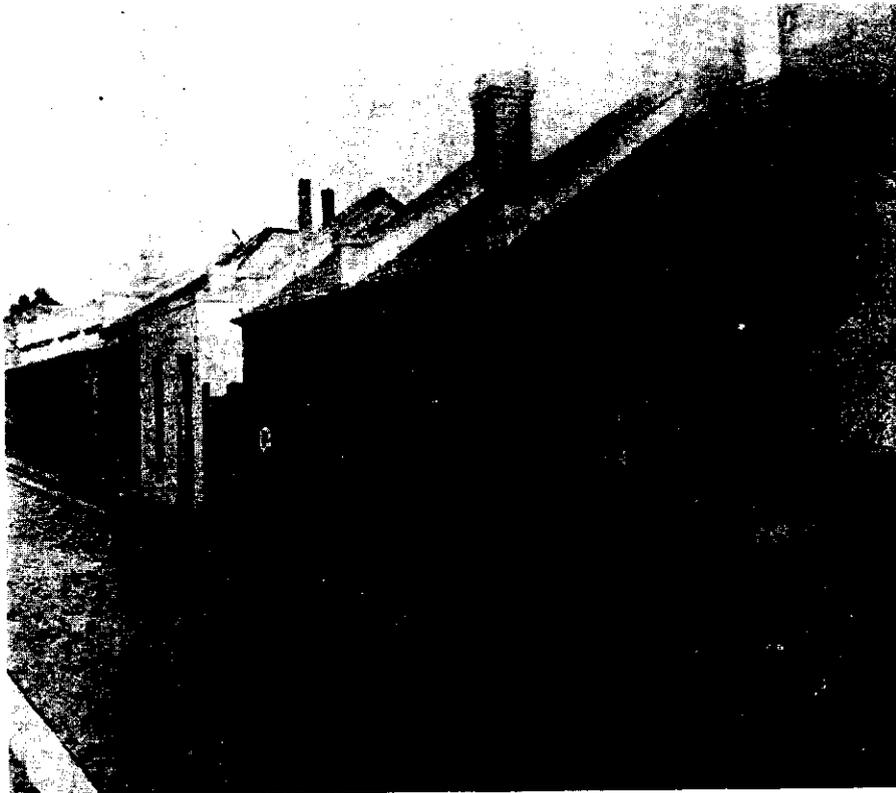
As late as 1917, an enlightening exchange took place before the Royal Commission on the Housing Conditions of the People in the Metropolis and in the Popular Centres of the State. The witness was Charles Neville, who when asked by the Chairman whether houses being constructed in Fitzroy at the time would be of brick, replied:

Yes; but they are of insufficient area and with no back yards. Two houses are built quite close to the Fitzroy wood yard, and there is no back yard at all, and no front space. I cannot remember the name of that street just now. They are built right onto the street ... there is no room for anything in front ...<sup>25</sup>

The Chairman blamed the Council:

The Fitzroy Council is to blame if they allow that to be done, because they have the power, under the Local Government Act, to define the thickness of the walls and the height of the rooms, and they could make regulations as far as this allotment is concerned.<sup>26</sup>

The 1930s brought the attention of well-known anti-slum crusader Oswald Barnett, who carried out extensive, and well publicised investigations into the worst parts of South Fitzroy.<sup>27</sup> Barnett's work and the pressure which it brought to bear upon the Government is generally considered to lie behind the appointment of the Housing Investigation and Slum Abolition Board in September 1936.<sup>28</sup> The end result of the findings of Housing Investigation and Slum Abolition Board, together with the campaign against sub-standard housing carried out by the Brotherhood of St Lawrence, was the creation of the Housing Commission of Victoria and the demolition of much housing stock.<sup>29</sup>



*Figure 21 Little Napier Street, Fitzroy, an illustration to the article—'No Good to Australia' in Building (12 February 1916), addressing slum conditions. The Outcasts of Melbourne*

World War Two brought its own problems. In Richmond, a shortage of materials and labour brought the fear that:

**WORKERS MAY HAVE TO LIVE IN FLATS**

Although flats have been condemned in many quarters as being unsuitable for workers to live in, it is probable that new house planning schemes for inner suburbs like Richmond will favour flats above single houses owing to the shortage of space and for economic reasons ...<sup>30</sup>

The Housing Commission formed in 1938, was making inroads into Fitzroy, Collingwood and Richmond by the 1950s.<sup>31</sup> The development of concrete panels led to the construction of two-storey flats at the St Lawrence Estate. In 1956 it began buying houses in North Richmond as a part of its 'slum clearance' (or 'housing reclamation') program. 218 residents had to move out of their homes to make way for the Anderson Court low-rise flats, with the option of living in the new building. The flats were not popular. According to Jim Condarias, who lived in a house on the site of the North Richmond high rise flats, 'everyone's sorry they're built now because they're a health hazard. They've ruined that part of Richmond when they built those death-traps'.<sup>32</sup>

There was only limited opposition to this type of redevelopment in Fitzroy, but by the time the Commission conceived its Atherton Estate project in the late 1960s, it had abandoned all its previous efforts at renovation of the better existing buildings. George Tibbitts noted that the resistance to clearance came from a variety of sources, not least the growing interest in restoration or renovation of 19th century houses and the movement of middle-class and politically articulate professionals into Fitzroy. Despite opposition the Atherton Estate project went ahead and in the process caused the demolition of a large block of houses and the removal of a number of streets. By the 1970s the political climate had changed and the fight to save Brooks Crescent, in North

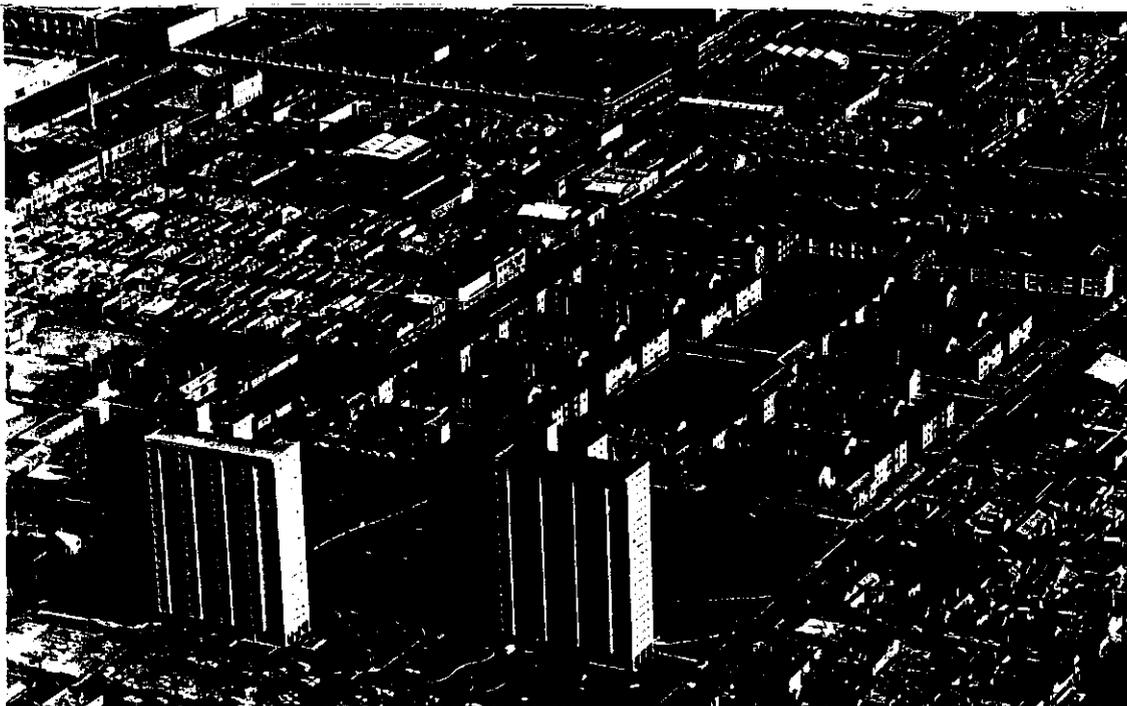


Figure 22 An aerial view of a housing commission estate in Collingwood, west from Hoddle Street. Source: The Inner Suburbs



Figure 23 A cartoonist's views of the Victorian governments attitude to slum clearance. Source: The Inner Suburbs

Fitzroy, saw local residents join with the Council, local businessmen and manufacturers as well as the unions to prevent the demolition of that part of their suburb.<sup>33</sup>

Housing Commission flats had, and continue to have, a stigma. Phil Andrews recalled the day his family had to move into the North Richmond Flats,

I felt a tremendous sense of failure when I first moved into the walk-up flats. There's an enormous stigma in Australia about public housing. I grew up in public housing in England and had never felt that before. To me the whole world lived in public housing except wealthy people. But here the sense of failure is incredible, and it affected me even though from a Christian and socialist viewpoint I didn't really believe in home ownership.<sup>34</sup>

After World War Two the inner suburbs started to become seen as a transit zone to the wealthier outer suburbs of Kew, Balwyn, Doncaster and Templestowe.<sup>35</sup> Large areas of 19th century 'slum' housing were lost, to the immense dissatisfaction of the locals, when Alexandra Parade was widened and the Eastern Freeway was created in the 1970s. During the 1980s and 1990s, much of Yarra has been 'gentrified', as inner urban property has become residentially desirable to middle-class professionals. It remains, however, a 'mixed bag' of the wealthier and poorer classes, students, immigrants, and all found between.



## 4.0 WORKING AND SHOPPING IN THE SUBURBS

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### 4.1 Primary Industry

There were very few primary industries within Yarra, the area becoming established early as a manufacturing centre. There were a number of basalt (or bluestone) quarries in Clifton Hill, leading it to becoming known colloquially as 'The Quarries'. According to Garryowen:

... as bluestone began to be required for building purposes, the pick and the crowbar, and the shovel went to work—and so originated that network of quarry holes that used to be found everywhere here [Clifton Hill], many of which have been recently filled up.<sup>1</sup>

One such quarry was the large Melbourne Corporation Quarry, established in 1839 on the Merri Creek.<sup>2</sup> By the late 1840s, it was declared that most of Melbourne's 'better warehouses and dwellings' were constructed from bluestone quarried from Clifton Hill.<sup>3</sup> There were also a small number of quarries in southern Richmond (now Burnley)—near the intersection of the Melbourne-Hawthorn railway and Elizabeth Street, and south of Berlin Street on the Yarra River.

Farming was uncommon after the establishment of a permanent township, a reminder being the small number of dairies around Collingwood and Richmond, such as Carson's Dairy in Blanche Street, Mr Hampson's round in Jessie Street and McConchie's dairy in Kelso Street.<sup>4</sup> Ted Venn, who grew up in Richmond, recalled: 'Richmond was like dairy country when I was a boy ... Now, how could you have cows feeding and being milked within a mile of Cremorne Street school?'<sup>5</sup> Cows were grazed on public land—Carson's cows grazed in Richmond Park at the corner of Blanche Street and Punt Road—and so it was declared in 1859 in the *Port Phillip Gazette* that:

The land is to be grazed by milch cows only, and the stock so depasturing are to be tailed, and prevented from trespassing on the footpaths and drains, and kept off the streets except when being driven to the houses of their owners.<sup>6</sup>

There were a small number of dairies in Collingwood; on the corner of Gipps and Cromwell Streets, on the south-west corner of Rupert and Vere Streets, in Rupert Street between Langridge and Victoria Streets and Vincent's dairy in Hotham Street. According to a local resident, Mr Atkinson,

[Vincent's] was a big thing then ... It did all the suburbs in two-wheel carts with two large milk cans with taps poking out the back. They would put the milk in billies or saucepans with a hand can. No bottled milk in those days. They would even come to the back of the house to deliver.<sup>7</sup>

These dairies had to cease operating when the number of cows which could lawfully be held privately was reduced to one.<sup>8</sup>

### 4.2 Secondary Industry

Initially manufacturing in the colony remained concentrated in the city, the first moves into the suburbs being residential. There were a few exceptions, which included John Hackett's coach-building works (south-east cnr of Brunswick & Argyle Sts, Fitzroy; est. c.1853);<sup>9</sup> two brickworks, in Richmond; Egan's steam mill (cnr Church St & Bridge Rd, Richmond);<sup>10</sup> the first millers near Melbourne, Charles Dight (Fig. 24) and Captain Peter Hurlstone (both established c.1840);<sup>11</sup> and, in Collingwood, a coach-building and wheelwright factory and the glass factory in Rokeby Street. The latter was the first in



Figure 24 *Dight's Mill, Yarra Yarra. Published by Sands & Kenny, Melbourne and Sydney, 1857. Source: Victoria Illustrated*



Figure 25 *Woolwashing between the old Church Street bridge and the Convent of the Good Shepherd on the Yarra. Source: The Outcasts of Melbourne*

Victoria, and was later converted into a candle and soap manufacturer and a bootmaker.<sup>12</sup> By 1860, Abbotsford (then East Collingwood) and Richmond began to attract more small-scale industries, as the landscape of the lowlands was spoilt by constant flooding. With the opportunity for an advantageous position on the banks of the Yarra River, the majority of these were noxious trades—slaughter yards, tanneries, soap & candle works, fellmongers (sheepskin dealers), woolscourers (woolwashers) (Fig. 25), breweries, brickworks, and the night-soil trade—which relied on the river for fresh water and as a dumping ground for unsavoury and unsanitary wastes.<sup>13</sup> This practice was permitted by local politicians and businessmen who believed it would encourage local business.<sup>14</sup>

In Clifton Hill, there were a few smaller industries such as William Brewer's saw mill and timber yard which, by the turn of the century, occupied much of the area between Spensley and Ramsden Streets, west side. The former box factory (19-27 Grant Street, Clifton Hill) was an important, and probably always the most substantial, portion of Brewer's plant in Clifton Hill. Brewer's business was responsible for importing products for the building industry, saw milling, box making, painting, paper hanging, and handling ironmongery. Premises existed also in Elizabeth Street (Melbourne) and W J Brewer's organisation was described as 'extensive' in the 1904 *Cyclopaedia of Victoria*.<sup>15</sup> Industrial sites consolidated along the route of the Reilly Street drain (now the Eastern Freeway). Buildings such as the William Murray and Co. Woolworks (cnr Hoddle St & Alexandra Pde), the former Clifton Wheel Co. building (Alexandra Pde, west of Gold St) and the Shot Tower (94 Alexandra Pde) remain as evidence of this development.

The stand to attract more industries was supported by the views of the strong Protectionist element, which dictated that manufacturing would be an important part of the urban development.<sup>16</sup> The influence of manufacturers in local government far outweighed their numerical representation on Council, and was related to their status as employers and providers of prosperity;<sup>17</sup> a Labour, Protection and Tariff Reform League was formed in Fitzroy and East Collingwood in 1863.<sup>18</sup> The stand was effective and by 1871, there were 36 industrial establishments operating in Fitzroy, which employed 821 workers, 600 men and 221 women in a variety of trades.<sup>19</sup> A decade later there were 80 manufacturers employing 2,051 employees, 1,350 of whom were men and 701 of whom were women.<sup>20</sup> Richmond, also known as an industrial centre, had 52 industrial establishments, most of which were associated with tanning and brewing.<sup>21</sup>

Brewing had become an important local industry by 1860. Of the 16 independent brewerys at that time, four were in Collingwood, three in Richmond and two in Abbotsford.<sup>22</sup> The breweries listed in the *Melbourne Directory* in 1864 and 1870 were: Daniel Clancy, Stephenson Road, Richmond; Farmer & Son, Lincoln Street, Richmond; J Jefferies, Church Street, Richmond; Michell & Co. Cremorne Street, Richmond; Ernest Miller, Wattle Grove, Richmond; and Parker Brothers, Cecil Street, Fitzroy.<sup>23</sup>

The Yorkshire Brewery was established in 1858 by brewer and hotelier, John Wood, probably on a two acre (1 hectare) site on the eastern side of Wellington Street, Collingwood. A new factory complex in Wellington Street was designed in the 1870s by Wood's son James, an architect (Fig. 26).<sup>24</sup> The brew tower became a dominant feature of the Collingwood streetscape, described at the time as 'the most prominent feature of the premises, and ... a conspicuous object for many miles around.'<sup>25</sup> The brew tower was also intended to provide a superior vantage point, with the viewing platform on the mansard roof offering 'a splendid view ... of the surrounding suburbs ... [with] the Plenty Ranges, Mount Macedon, and the Bay ... clearly discernible in fine weather.'<sup>26</sup>

The complex was purchased by the newly formed Carlton and United Breweries (CUB) in 1909 and was used for many years as a stand-by plant to the main brewing complexes at Carlton, East Melbourne (Victoria Brewery) and Abbotsford.<sup>27</sup>

In Abbotsford, the Foster Lager Brewing Beer Company complex was constructed in Rokeby Street, Abbotsford, in 1888. Messrs. W and R Foster, of New York, United States of America, brought with them some American plant for use in the brewery. The brewery had an innovative design, which did not employ the usual tower system. It was designed to produce the German type of lager beer, as opposed to the strong ales which were being brewed in the Australian colonies at this time, and has been credited with the introduction of these beers.<sup>28</sup> The *Australasian Brewers' Journal* described the brewery as the first of its kind to be erected in Australia, having 'special appliances as could not be procured elsewhere'.<sup>29</sup> In 1889 the brewery was formed into a private company with Messrs Hart, Thomson and Turner as directors, and by 1895 it was successfully pioneering the manufacture of lager beer. As such, it became a market leader and was later joined by the eminent Augustus de Bavay, former head brewer of the Victoria Brewery, as head brewer and director. In 1907, the company was taken over by the CUB. Two of the original buildings remain on the site.<sup>30</sup>

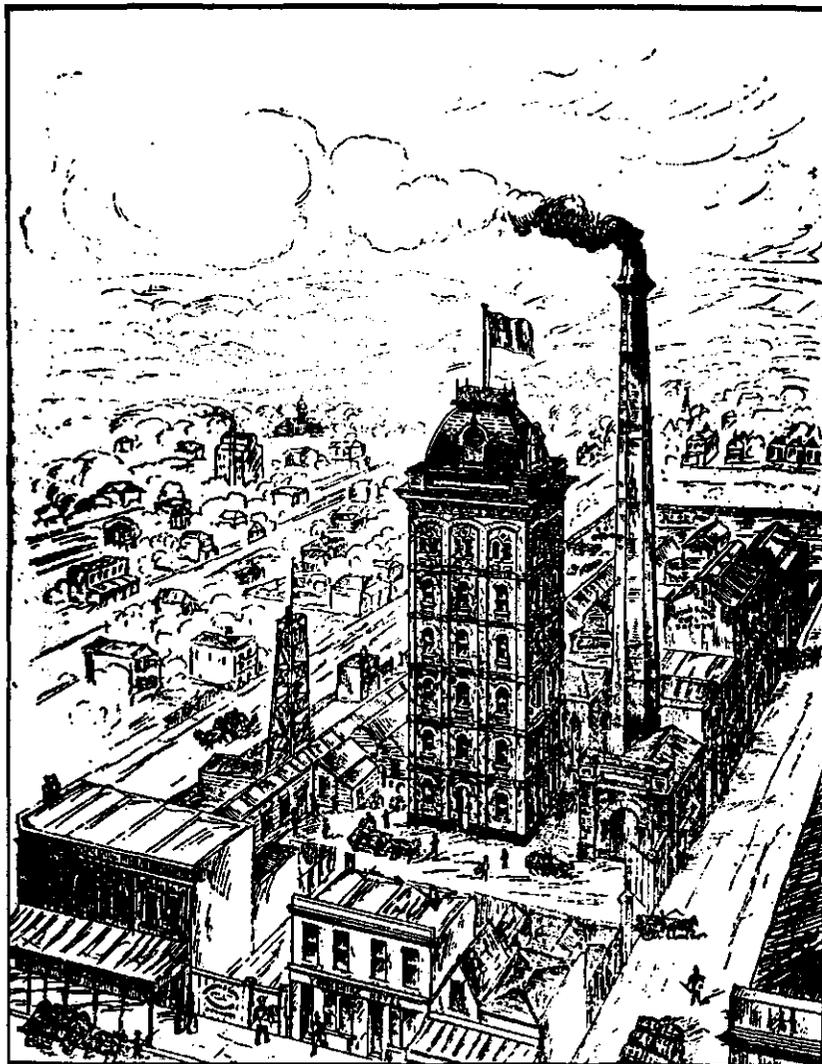


Figure 26 The Yorkshire Brewery, Wellington Street, Collingwood, 1890. Source: The Inner Suburbs

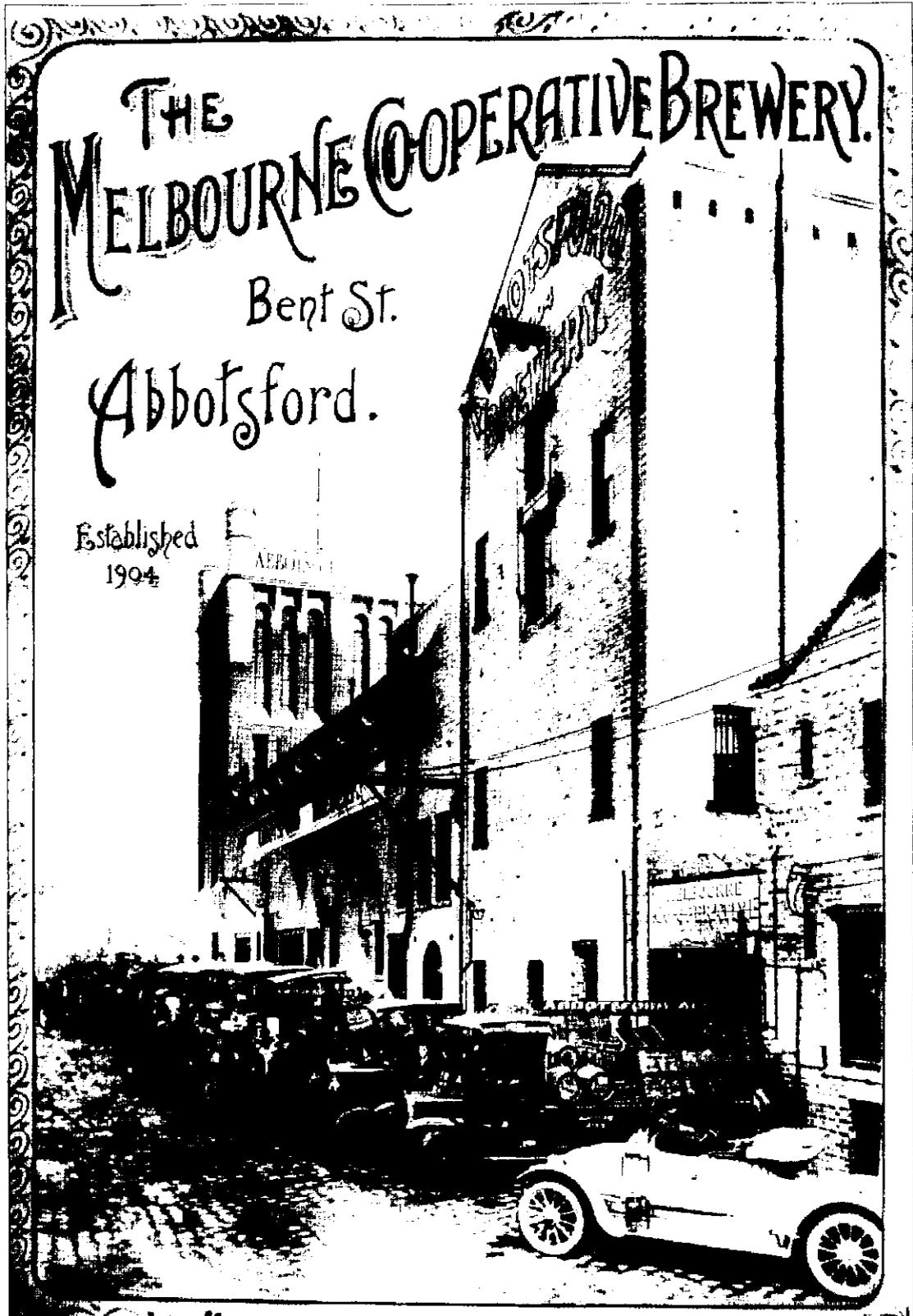


Figure 27 The Melbourne Co-Operative Brewery at Bent Street, Abbotsford, affiliated with Carlton United Breweries. Source: The Amber Nectar

The Carlton and United Brewery was a important part of the social fabric providing entertainment and also employment. Many Collingwood football players were employed there. According to Keith Stackpole:

Leo Morgan, Jackie Ross, Jack Carmody and Marcus Whelan all got jobs on the one day and the other clubs went crook. They said, "How come they all get jobs with the brewery and the other clubs can't?" Of course, Jock McHale, coach of Collingwood was foreman there, worked there all his life.<sup>31</sup>

The Richmond Brewery (dem.) was in Church Street, near the site of the current Belvedere Hotel. It was formerly called the Richmond Nathan System Brewing Co. Pty Ltd as it utilised a system invented by Dr Nathan, a German. The brewery produced Richmond Pilsner, Richmond Bitter, Richmond Lager, Richmond Draught and Kendall Lager. At its peak it produced 5 million gallons of beer a year. The brewery closed in 1962.<sup>32</sup>

Some flour mills also left their mark in Yarra. In Fitzroy were Joseph Whyte (303, later 341, Brunswick Street, Fitzroy), probably established by the Downing Brothers in 1856; Joseph Walker (341 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy); Joseph Draper Cadle (Bridge Road, Richmond), established in 1866; and James Reilly (373, now 433, Brunswick Street, Fitzroy), established in 1869. Joseph Cadle, who married Adelaide Hurlstone, the daughter of Brighton miller Peter Hurlstone, operate da mill at the south-west corner of Bridge Road and Type Street by 1866, however he had sold the mill by 1867, after which it changed hands many times. The address was later given as 454, then 534, Bridge Road as the street numbers changed.<sup>33</sup> Some of these mills were taken over by W S Kimpton, who ran a mill in Brunswick Street (Fig. 28). The firm, established in 1875, was by the 1930s the largest in Victoria.<sup>34</sup>



Figure 28 W S Kimpton & Son Mill, Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, c.1885. Source: The Flour Mills of Victoria, 1840-1990: An Historical Record

Later mills included: D Stratton & Co. in Abbotsford (Lulie Street, near the Victoria Park railway station); George & John Blyth (389 Brunswick Street); and Alex Gillespie (Swan Street, Burnley). Gillespie's operation in Swan Street was described in 1899, by the *Australian Miller*:

On entering from Swan street the visitor faces the large flour store, with its grain store farther on, but cut off by a brick wall. Here, by means of an arrangement of blocks, the flour is stacked—the old method of lifting being superseded by a method of slinging the bags from the hoist right in their place.<sup>35</sup>

The article went on to describe in detail the method of manufacture in the mill. The mill closed down in 1969.<sup>36</sup>

The majority of the colonies' coach and carriage builders were located within Yarra, some of which operated quite substantial works. For example, the Phoenix Carriage Works, run by William Hobbs and Co., was located in Brunswick Street, Fitzroy.<sup>37</sup> The largest of these carriage works, according to the firm's own advertisement, was G F Pickles & Sons, who, in 1890, claimed to be the 'largest manufacturers of high-class Carriages, Buggies, Pleasure and Business Wagons in Australia'. The firm's metropolitan manufactory was situated at 32-38 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy.<sup>38</sup> By 1870, there were three establishments in Bridge Road, Richmond: Robert Dickason; John Gilbert (318 Bridge Road); and Joseph Harvey; and seven in East Collingwood: Jesse King (Otter St); John Lockhead (Napoleon St); C Nelder (South Audley St); William & Alex Nicholson (81 Victoria St); Roberts & Fergusson (cnr 64 Bourke St West & Hoddle St); Adam Thompson (Landridge St); and M Williams (Johnston St).<sup>39</sup>

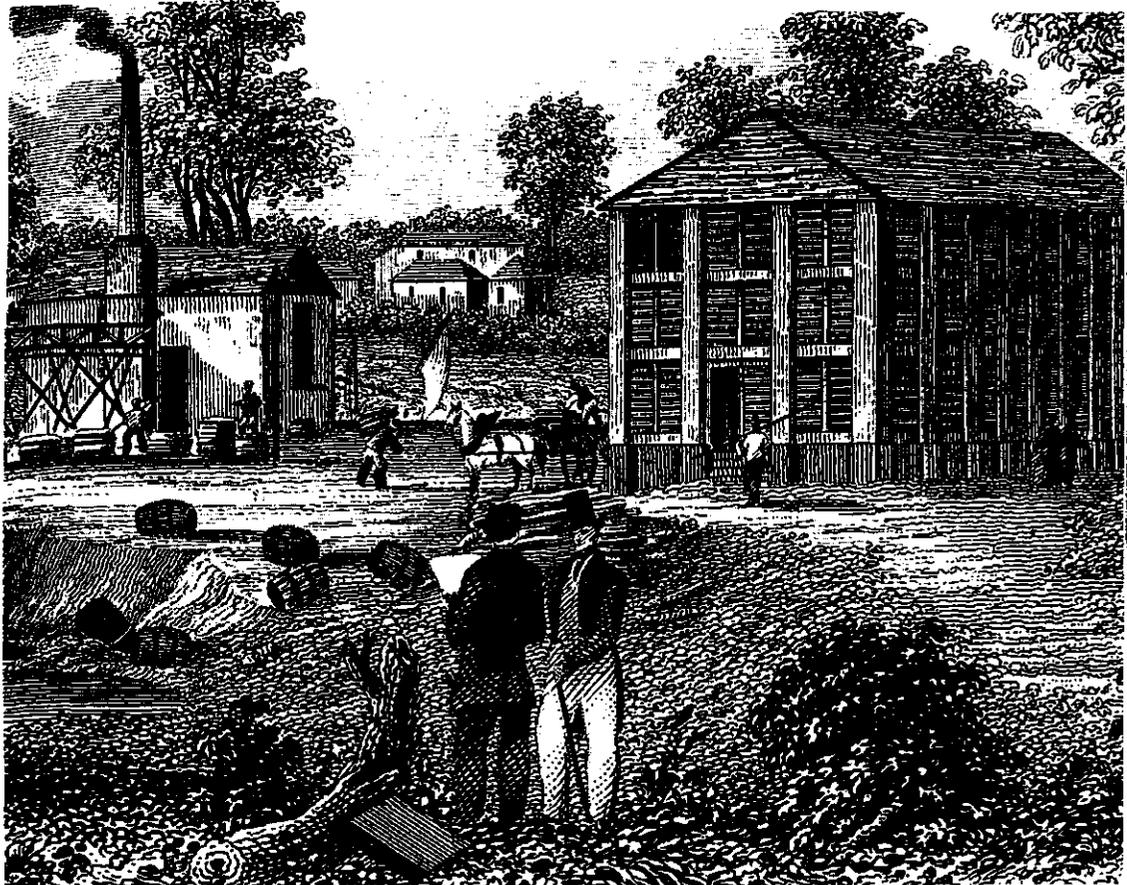


Figure 29 The Victoria Tannery, on the Yarra River. Source: Old Melbourne Town

The most well known and well documented industry was boot manufacturing, which was, in the late-19th century, supplied with local leather from Collingwood and Richmond (Fig. 29). Those in Fitzroy appear to have been very small-scale operations, while those Collingwood were run on a grander scale. The Collingwood Tannery & Boot Factory was set up in 1864 with a workforce of twenty; this had increased to 200 by the late-1860s.<sup>40</sup> By the 1870s one Richmond tannery tanned 300 cattle hides and 50 sheepskins and week, some saying they employed up to 50 men a day, most of which were unskilled labourers.<sup>41</sup> By the 1880s, many larger-scale boot factories had also located their premises in the district, as manufacturers previously located in the City of Melbourne took advantage of cheaper land further away. Between 1885 and 1890, the percentage of the total number of bootmakers in the colony which had their factories in the City of Melbourne had been reduced from one third to around a quarter, most by the end of the 1880s, the majority located in Collingwood and Fitzroy.<sup>42</sup> Perhaps the largest was Richard White's boot factory on the corner of Young and Little Napier Streets in Fitzroy (est. 1864) which by 1888 was claimed to be the 'most extensive boot factory in the colony', with retail houses in North Melbourne and in the city, as well as in several other suburban locations.<sup>43</sup> The business premises were described in 1888 as 'an imposing three-storey structure, having a frontage of 66 ft. [20 metres] by a depth of 120 ft., [36 metres] and ... fitted throughout with the most modern labour-saving machinery, a 20-horsepower engine supplying the power'.<sup>44</sup> The factory employed an impressive total of 300 people at this time. The number of boot and shoe manufactories in Fitzroy appears only to have been exceeded by the number located in Collingwood, which was truly the epicentre of the industry, as shown.

Boot and Shoe Factories in Fitzroy and Collingwood (1895 & 1900)				
Municipality	FITZROY		COLLINGWOOD	
Year	1895	1900	1895	1900
<b>Total Number of Works</b>	9	23	25	29
<b>Male Employees</b>	480	739	888	1,286
<b>Female Employees</b>	127	305	374	561
<b>Value of Plant &amp; Machinery</b>	£28,420	£19,540	£23,080	£32,980
<b>Value of Buildings &amp; Improvements</b>	n.a	£21,160	n.a.	£31,480
<b>Number of Boots &amp; Shoes Produced</b>	478,573	911,574	796,450	1,234,256

The only known boot factory to survive from the 1880s in Collingwood is the Yates Boot Factory (10 Page Street), now known as the Organ Factory.<sup>46</sup>

Perhaps the largest of all the local industrial enterprises was the MacRobertson confectionery works, established in 1880.<sup>47</sup> *The Illustrated Directory of Collingwood and Fitzroy* (1905) devoted several pages to the founder, Macpherson Robertson and his manufactory:

wherein an industrious army is constantly at work supplying white Australians of both sexes and all ages with confectionery and chocolates of every conceivable shape and variety, as well as cocoa, jams, jellies, sauces, preserves and other good things containing pure sugar as one of their principal ingredients, and which are therefore strengthening to the human frame, as well as pleasing to the palate.<sup>48</sup>

The original MacRobertson's factory building, one frontage, at 185 Argyle Street,<sup>49</sup> was demolished in the 1890s and replaced with 'the great buildings, constructed on the most modern lines, which now occupy the whole block bounded by Argyle, Kerr and Gore Streets', the largest complex yet built in south Fitzroy.<sup>50</sup> The expansion of the company's works completely changed the nature of that area of South Fitzroy, which had previously been basically residential, with some small shops, into a large-scale industrial zone.

In 1949 alone MacRobertson's Confectionery owned:

Address	Description	Address	Description
198 Argyle Street	Bk Shop	399 Kerr Street	Bk Garage & Shed
214 Argyle Street	Bk Factory	360 Napier Street	Vacant Land.
215 Argyle Street	3-storey Factory	178 Rose Street	Bk House
358 Gore Street	Offices	361 Smith Street	Bk Shop
369 Gore Street	Lifesavers Factory	363 Smith Street	Bk Shop
415 Gore Street	Bk Factory	365 Smith Street	Hospital
430 Gore Street	Bk Factory	369 Smith Street	Engine House
245 Johnston Street	Bk Garage	375 Smith Street	Bk Factory
257 Johnston Street	4 Shops & Store	401 Smith Street	Bk Factory
159 Kerr Street	3-storey Factory	415 Smith Street	Bk Factory
177 Kerr Street	Bk Store	419 Smith Street	Bk Factory, 18 rm
190 Kerr Street	Sterilizer Factory	421 Smith Street	Bk Store, 1-storey
213 Kerr Street	Bk Factory		



Figure 30 Workers at the MacRobertson's factory in Gore Street, Fitzroy. Source: Fitzroy: Melbourne's First Suburb



*Figure 31 The first stage of the Fairfield Paper Mills under construction in 1920.  
Source: The Spreading Tree*

The estimated total annual value of these properties was £10,818.<sup>51</sup>

The largest factory in Fairfield was the Australian Paper Mills Co. (APM), established in 1895, near Melbourne.<sup>52</sup> The company expanded and in August 1918 land for a new board mill was purchased in Fairfield, comprising 23 acres (9.3 hectares), which had the advantages of river frontage and proximity to the railway line (Fig. 31).<sup>53</sup> The site, previously a part of the Woodlands Estate, cost £14,800. Construction on the building began in 1919, taking two years; opened by the Chief Justice of Victoria, Sir William Irvine, on 31 August 1921.<sup>54</sup> The General Manager of APM, Robert Gray, travelled to America to purchase equipment for the new factory, which was able to manufacture paperboard of 244cm in width at a speed of 460 metres a minute. The completed factory manufactured container board, ticket board, manilla, chip board and varieties of woodpulp board.<sup>55</sup> The Boiler House, built to contain boilers and turbines, was constructed in 1954. The building was designed by Mussen, Mackay & Potter: Mackay was the architect, whilst Mussen and Potter were the engineers. The curtain walling which clads the five-storey building is one of the earliest examples of the technique known in Victoria.

In the early 20th century a number of prominent manufacturers established themselves in Richmond including the Rosella factory in 1905; the Braeside Shirt factory (now Pelaco); Bryant & May, designed by Clements Langford in 1909; and the Wertheim Piano Factory. The Wertheim factory was constructed after Hugo Wertheim studied a number of factories in Europe and America, deciding to have the factory on one floor and the offices on another, a relatively new concept for Australia at the time. The factory, designed by Nahum Barnett in 1909, was capable of producing 2,000 pianos a year.<sup>56</sup> The Edwardian period was the golden age for these companies, which were enormously profitable and firms were often in a position to provide great benefits for

their workers. Bryant & May had company tennis courts and bowling greens, which were constructed in the early 1920s, and Pelaco reduced the working week, provided morning and afternoon tea breaks, with company supplied tea, and were amongst the first companies in Australia to give paid holidays.<sup>57</sup> In the 1920s when the end of World War One combined with the onset of the Great Depression caused many factories to lay off workers *en masse*. The Pelaco factory alone retrenched almost a quarter of its workforce in 1928.<sup>58</sup> Bryant & May were effected as badly.

A number of major engineering works also established premises in Richmond in the early 20th century. In 1908 Messrs. Ruwolt moved from Wangaratta to Richmond, manufacturing dredges for alluvial gold fields, for local use and also for export. Known as Vickers Ruwolt (dem.), the company built 28 dredges between 1908 and 1921. Other engineering related firms included Jacques Bros (pending demolition, 1 Palmer St, Richmond) who also built mining equipment and then expanded into other areas after World War Two.<sup>59</sup>

Of relatively recent construction were a number of much larger factory buildings and complexes. These were also praised for their 'fine' and 'modern' appearance and for the facilities they could offer in terms of improved working conditions. These factories or complexes included the massive four-storey building housing the British United Shoe Machinery Co.'s works (Alexandra Pde, Fitzroy), the Moran & Cato works and stores in Victoria Street, La Mode Industries corset manufacturing works also in Victoria Street, the substantial boot making works of Paddle Bros. in Reid Street, the three factories in Nicholson Street owned by the Easy Phit Slipper Co., and the two Shovelton and Storey factories also in Nicholson Street.<sup>60</sup> The largest and most impressive group of modern buildings covered in the survey was of course the MacRobertson confectionery manufacturing complex.



Figure 32 George Fincham & Sons premises, Richmond, c.1903. Source: The Cyclopaedia of Victoria

### 4.3 Retail: Warehouses and Large Scale Purveyors

By the turn of the century, many large warehouse/showrooms-come emporia were based Yarra. The majority of these were founded in the furniture trade, although some concentrated on other, locally manufactured or imported goods. In the early 20th century they included: Morcombe's furniture warehouse (Fitzroy); Davis' furniture warehouse; the Fitzroy Furniture Company; A Hazell's furniture warehouse; Proffitt Bros. furniture warehouse; the Foy & Gibson bulk store; Paterson's furniture warehouse; Ackman's furniture warehouse; Maples and Dimelow & Gaylard's (Dimmey's). Many of the larger businesses either developed a manufacturing arm, or had originally been manufacturers who had expanded into retailing. This approach was in a number of cases a very successful one; witness the growth of the Foy & Gibson complex of retail and manufacturing buildings .

Foy & Gibson developed from a partnership between Mark Foy, a Collingwood draper, and William Gibson, a Fitzroy trader.<sup>61</sup> Both Foy & Gibson's manufacturing sector and its central retail outlet were located near the boundary between Fitzroy and Collingwood. By the 1930s, from its northern to southern extremities, the series of buildings associated with the firm stretched some two miles.<sup>62</sup> As early as 1897 the firm's first Smith Street store, situated on the east, or Collingwood, side of Smith Street, had been joined by a number of factories to its east (Fig. 33). These represented the first part of what later became an enormous manufacturing complex. The only building which still remains of those Foy & Gibson buildings which were located on the Fitzroy side of Smith Street is the former Diamond Cut Lingerie Building, which has recently undergone internal refurbishment.

Other partnerships had also developed from existing local shops or warehouses. In 1905, W A Bennetts & Son (184-192 Brunswick St) was one of the oldest firms operating in Fitzroy. Bennetts was founded as a general store, specialising in grocery lines rather than hardware, in the early 1840s. An engraving of Brunswick Street in 1842 shows 'Bennett's store' at the corner of Moor and Brunswick Streets.<sup>63</sup> After many years, the business was built up into one which dealt largely in grocery, grain and ironmongery. Around the turn of the century it began to specialise in ironmongery and imported china, glass and earthenware, and the original single frontage had been expanded to five.<sup>64</sup>

H Ackman & Co. was another local success story. Beginning as a pawnbroker at 163 Smith Street, in 1880 he went on to establish a secondhand furniture operation.<sup>65</sup> By 1905, the firm's premises, the 'Ackman's Monster Furnishing Arcade,' at 243-247 Smith Street , were described in the following glowing terms:

"As well known as the Post Office clock", is a saying that might be fittingly applied to the old-established house of Messrs H Ackman & Co. of Smith-street. Founded some twenty-five years ago, it is one of the landmarks of Fitzroy, being known far and wide as one of the reputable furnishing establishments in the State of Victoria.<sup>66</sup>

At its peak, the Ackman's complex occupied a whole block of Fitzroy. Having successfully adopted a policy of backward integration and moving into manufacturing, the firm built a 'modern, multi-storeyed factory backing onto Gore Street'.<sup>67</sup> The only remains of this manufacturing/retail complex which still exists is the facade of the Smith Street building, the site having been developed into a large modern supermarket in the 1980s.

Moran & Cato the grocers was another local firm which developed into a much larger enterprise. Established in 1880, at 191 Brunswick Street,<sup>68</sup> the firm had also set up a second branch, in North Melbourne, by 1885.<sup>69</sup> In 1894, it was described as 'importers,

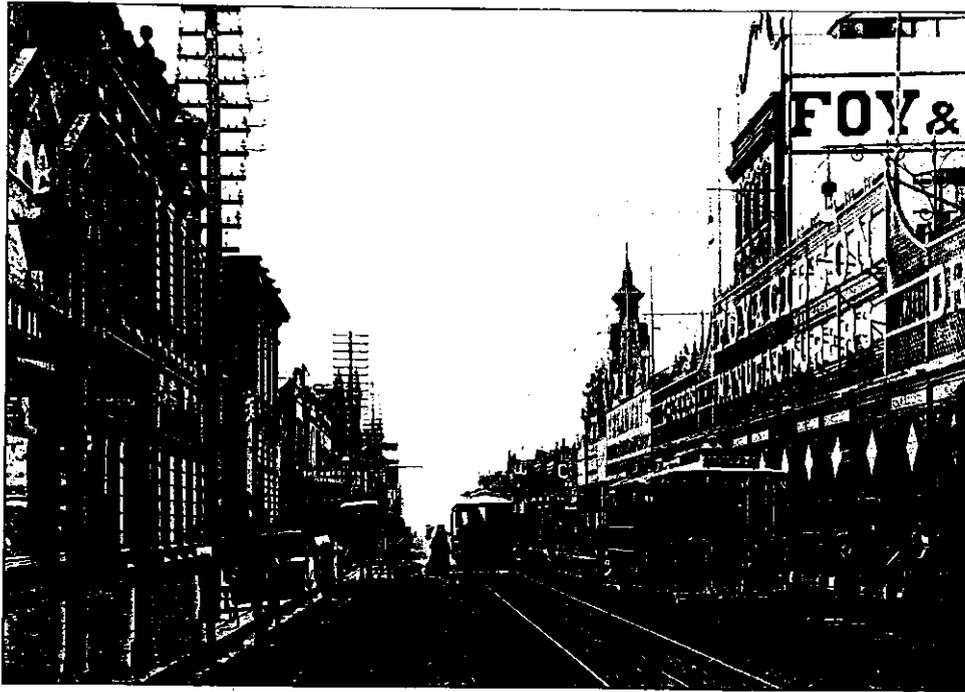


Figure 33 Smith Street, Collingwood, showing Foy & Gibson to the right of shot, c.1900. Source: Greater Melbourne Illustrated

tea merchants, wholesale and retail cash grocers; wholesale depot and office, 190, 192, 194 Brunswick-st, Fitzroy. Branches in all suburbs'.<sup>70</sup> In 1903 headquarters was a large warehouse on the corner of Victoria and Brunswick Streets, in addition to which it also used a factory in Victoria Street, and had extensive stabling at the corner of Rae and Holden Streets, North Fitzroy.<sup>71</sup> By the 1930s, when its founder, F J Cato died, the firm had 170 branches and employed 1,000 people.<sup>72</sup>

The first Dimelow & Gaylard building in Swan Street had been destroyed by fire, and was replaced by 'Dimmey's Model Stores' in 1906-10. It was reported in the *Richmond Guardian* on 24 September 1910 that, after the fire:

The whole of the block, from Green-street to White-street, has been purchased by Mr. Jeffrey, and this will in time be covered by an emporium, which, when completed, will have but few equals in the State ... The outstanding feature of the new building will be a tower ... surmounted by a large globe, formed by 14ft. [4 m] bars of 3in. [7.6 cm] angle iron which serve to hold the sheeting of ruby glass ... For unique design, ornate appearance, and general convenience, the new building stands without a peer in this city and has few equals either in or outside Melbourne.<sup>73</sup>

Many of these large retailers built large stores which obliterated existing commercial frontages in size and modernity. Despite the considerable success of these department stores, the early to mid-20th century witnessed the decline of the great 19th century commercial streets. This was caused by a combination of factors. The fears expressed earlier by traders that improved transport links to the outer suburbs would rob them of business began to seem justified, as the expansion of the outer suburbs, together with the increasing popularity of other shopping centres, both took custom away from the inner suburbs. The incomplete nature of the railways had assisted the local retailers, as passengers from the north had to disembark from the train at Collingwood, North Fitzroy or Northcote, in order to catch trams into the city. Better transport also carried

away sections of the population; Bernard Barrett has commented that with improved transport, the clerks and other white-collar city workers who had previously lived in Fitzroy, Richmond and Collingwood could commute from suburbs further away. This exodus of lower middle-class and middle-class residents changed the suburb's economic profile, making it more working-class.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, the development between 1880 and the advent of World War One of large scale manufacturing industries indirectly led to a deterioration in the quality of housing stock in the area, as many of the solid brick or stone houses were divided into flats or became boarding houses.

#### 4.4 Smaller Retailers: Strip Shopping

During the 1840s, small shopkeepers located in Brunswick Street to provide local residents with building materials, food and clothing.<sup>75</sup> By 1854, according to one memoir, 'shops rivalling those in Bourke-street, Melbourne, were to be found in Brunswick-street':

Here were John Ball and Joseph Moate, grocers, E and D Langton, butchers [No. 66], Bennett the ironmonger, Wymond and Vasey, drapers, as well as the "Brunswick" Hotel (Mrs Elizabeth Lusher) [No. 109], and the "Labour in Vain" [No. 167] ...<sup>76</sup>

Smith Street, and to a lesser degree Wellington Street, were the concentrated retail strips in Collingwood, while in Richmond, by 1864, there was a proliferation of shops and small businesses in Bridge Road to support the local residents. These included: three greengrocers, two fruiterers, five butchers, three chemists, a tailor, eight grocers, three bakers, four drapers, a dentist, a dressmaker, two plumbers, two furniture dealers, a leather cutter, two saddlers, four bootmakers and four shoe/boot dealers.<sup>77</sup> There were



*Figure 34 Brunswick, the intersection of Brunswick Street and Moor Street, with the Wesleyan Church and the first store, c.1840. Source: Old Melbourne Town*

also a smaller number of shops in Swan Street, Victoria Street, Church Street and Cremorne Street.

Around Fitzroy, at the same time, both Brunswick Street and Gertrude Street in South Fitzroy, and to a lesser extent Smith Street, Victoria Parade and the south end of Napier Street, were home to a range of small businesses, most of which would have served only local needs. There was no homogeneity, nor grouping of businesses in this early period. For example, on the east side of Brunswick Street in the block between Gertrude Street and Farie Street (now gone, Farie Street was positioned between Gertrude and Webb Street), the following businesses jostled for local custom: an ironmonger, an undertaker, a musical academy, a general dealer, an upholsterer, a butcher, a seed store, two milliners, a stationer, a fancy repository, a dressmaker, a staymaker, a fruiterer, two drapers, a hatter, a chemist, a grocer, and a butcher.<sup>78</sup> This was a typical mix of businesses and a similar variety of trades was plied elsewhere in Brunswick, Gertrude, and Smith Streets.

Smith Street, Collingwood, was remembered as being,

a thoroughfare only second to three or four of the central streets in the city in regard to the multitude of its traffic. The drapers' shops and the great produce stores, the shoemakers, the clothiers and scores of other trades here make a display that gives to this street a metropolitan air; and on Saturday nights the crowds thronging through its gaslit footpaths are as dense as those in Bourke Street itself.<sup>79</sup>

The concentration of shops on the Collingwood (east) side of Smith Street was between Peel Street and Stanley Street. The businesses there in 1864 included two bootmakers, a seedsman, three grocers, a furniture broker, two hairdressers, three herbalists, a baker, a dentist, a muslin stamper, a dressmaker, two butchers, a tobacconist, an ironmonger, three drapers, a watchmaker, a bonnet maker, a corn dealer, two greengrocers, two fruiterers, a chemist and a hat manufacturer.<sup>80</sup> Later Johnston Street and Queens Parade also attracted shops and shoppers:

In the block in Johnston Street from Victoria Park Station beyond Hoddle Street and perhaps going up to Gold Street there was tremendous variety of shops. There was a competition between greengrocers and lots of butchers. We had our own florist shop at one stage and there was a fabulous place called Paris House presided over by a Mrs Reidberg, a very queenly lady, very fierce. It was a haberdashery shop with a difference. She had a wide range of baby clothes and things like that.<sup>81</sup>

Queen's Parade/Heidelberg Road was also a main route out of Melbourne and the shops served those travelling as well as local residents.

A few solicitors, auctioneers and insurance agents occupied smaller premises, usually in the main commercial streets, but also in secondary streets. Other services appeared in similar proportions to elsewhere. For example, amongst early businesses established in the 1840s and '50s were a number of undertakers, the business of death being a universal one. The Lewis family started its undertaking business in Young Street Fitzroy, but expanded in the 1880s to include premises in Johnston Street.<sup>82</sup> Other early undertaking businesses were those of W G Apps, which was established in Moor Street in 1854, and W G Raven, Undertaker and Embalmer, established in 1855 at 227 Smith Street.<sup>83</sup> In total, by 1864, there were two undertakers in Collingwood, three in Richmond and four in Fitzroy.<sup>84</sup> This number was maintained by 1870, with the *Sands and McDougall's Melbourne Directory* listing five undertakers in Richmond and five in Fitzroy.<sup>85</sup>

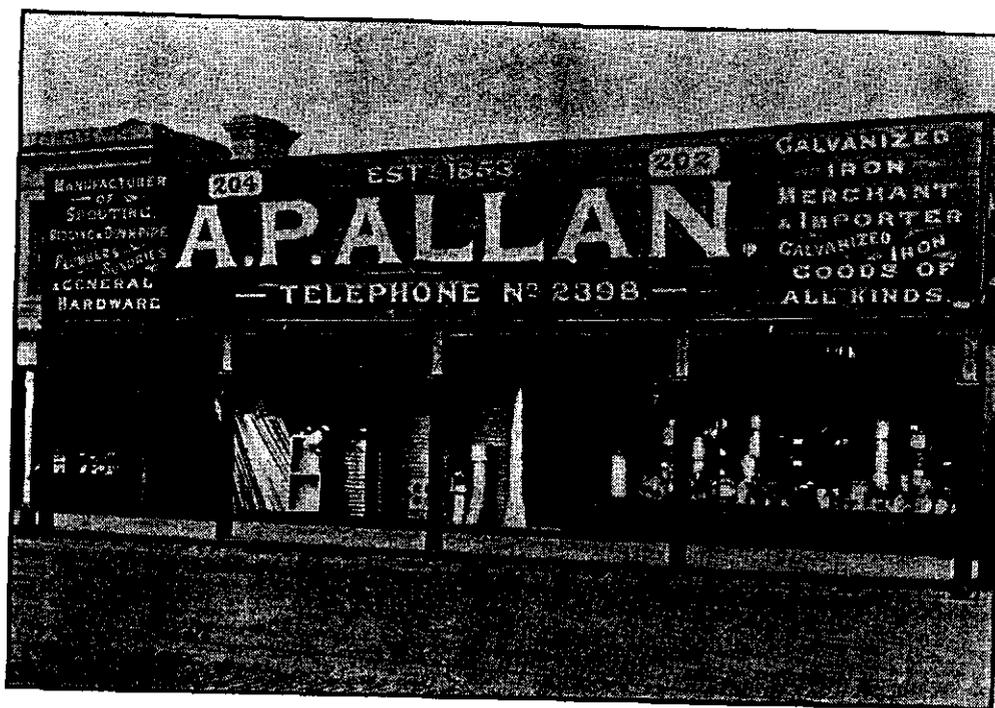


Figure 35 The premises of A P Allan, Brunswick Street, Fitzroy. Source: The Cyclopedia of Victoria

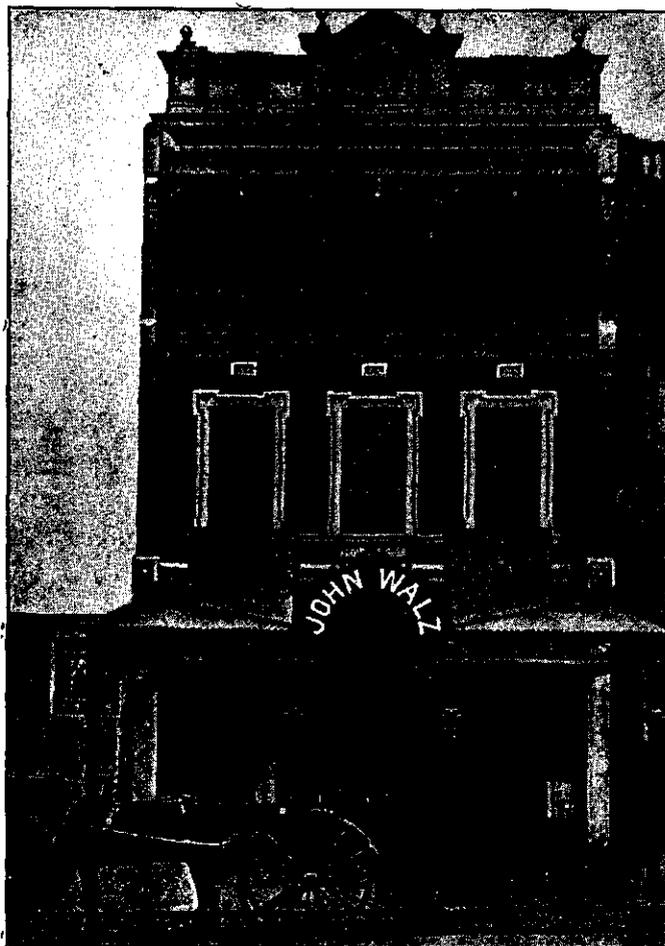


Figure 36 The premises of John Walz, Bridge Road, Richmond. Walz sold trunks and portmanteaux. Source: The Cyclopedia of Victoria

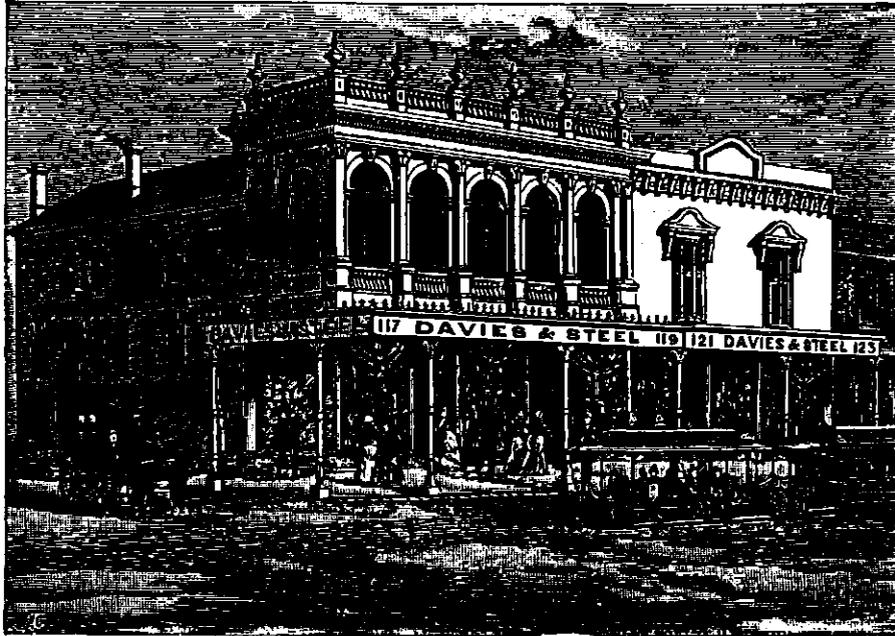


Figure 37 *Messrs Davies and Steel, Drapers, Brunswick Street, Fitzroy. Victoria and its Metropolis*

The 1860s and '70s were a period of consolidation, as the rude structures of the early decades were replaced with more substantial premises. The 1870s and 1880s saw the replacement of many earlier buildings with rows of shops. Examples of these include the former Gertrude Hotel at 63-65 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy, which was designed with a row of shops attached in 1873 by Melbourne architect, John Flannagan, and the later Victoria Buildings in Smith Street, which were designed for their first owner, John Woods, by Norman Hitchcock in 1888.<sup>86</sup> Buildings such as these, though they have in many cases undergone substantial alterations, remain as evidence of the pre-eminence of these main commercial strips in the late 19th century.

In the same period, Richmond's main shopping strips, Bridge Road and Swan Street expanded as exorbitant rents frightened shopkeepers out of Melbourne:

Of late I have heard many serious misgivings expressed by sagacious and far-seeing financiers as to the permanence of the inflated value of city property. For the rise has necessitated the demand for higher rents, and these have reached such a maximum in some localities as to render it impossible for tenants to pay them; and the result is a migration of shopkeepers to the suburbs. Formerly their customers would not have followed them; but since the construction of the tramways this has ceased to be the case; and people flock to Carlton, Fitzroy, Collingwood and Richmond or anywhere else if they can purchase goods there at a reduction on Melbourne's prices ...<sup>87</sup>

Many buildings in both Bridge Road and Swan Street date from this period, particularly on the south side of Bridge Road between Hoddle Street and Burnley Street.

Also in the 1880s, the style of small-scale commercial activity began to change in part. The scale of retail outlets began to alter as larger enterprises were established and many of the self-employed shopkeepers who had made up the bulk of retail proprietors were put out of business.<sup>88</sup> There was also an increased scale of retail enterprise, as more and more large-scale retailing businesses stretched out along the most prestigious shopping strips.

The decline in the fortunes of the main commercial shopping strips is reflected in the general appearance of many of the buildings in these streets, with the exception of Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, which from the late 1970s underwent an extraordinary reversal of fortune to become perhaps Melbourne's best-known and popular strip of Bohemian cafes, bars, restaurants, hotels, bookshops and other boutiques, all of which are popular amongst local residents as well as attracting custom from further afield. More recently, Swan Street and Bridge Road, Richmond and Smith Street, Collingwood, have all experienced a resurgence in popularity as shopping and cafe strips.

#### **4.5 Financing the Suburbs**

The first bank to be established in Fitzroy was the E S & A C Bank which was opened in 1854 on the west side of George Street, just south of Gertrude Street, at what was then 43 George Street. Like many other banks in Fitzroy, this branch was relocated some years after its inception. In 1865 a new building was constructed for the E S & A C Bank at what is now 136 Gertrude Street. It was designed by William Wardell.<sup>89</sup> The E S & A C Fitzroy Branch, which was referred to as the Collingwood Branch up until at least 1880, remained the sole banking establishment in Fitzroy up until 1864.<sup>90</sup> In 1865, the National Bank set up its 'Collingwood' branch at 171 Smith Street. A new building was constructed on the same site in 1873, and the branch name was changed to Fitzroy in 1888.

In 1865, the National Bank of Australia opened a branch in Bridge Road to the design of Lloyd Tayler, who designed many of the banks branches. A branch in Swan Street was not established until 1888, designed by Albert Purchas. The Melbourne Savings Bank (now the Commonwealth Bank) was established in Bridge Road in 1889, an elaborate example of the Boom Style by Wright & Lucas. A branch of the Bank of Australasia was opened in Burnley Street the same year, designed by Anketell Henderson, a prominent bank designer of the period.<sup>91</sup>

Later in the century other banks were located in the main commercial streets of Fitzroy. All of these were established in the 1870s and 1880s. They included the North Fitzroy branch of the London Chartered Bank, a Fitzroy branch of the Bank of Australasia on the south-west corner of Moor and Smith Streets (299 Smith St, 1875), the Union Bank's Fitzroy branch on the north-east corner of Brunswick and Johnston Streets (1887), and now the A N Z Fitzroy branch, the State Savings Bank of Victoria (cnr Smith & Johnston Sts, 1879) and elsewhere in both North and South Fitzroy in the 1890s and in the 20th century, the Bank of New South Wales (west side of Smith Street (1873), the Bank of Victoria (136 Brunswick St, 1873), and the Colonial Bank, now the National Bank's North Fitzroy branch (corner Brunswick Street and Queen's Parade, 1881).<sup>92</sup>

Commonwealth Bank branches opened in Fitzroy and Richmond in the 20th century, including the former State Savings Bank in Swan Street in 1907, designed by Billing Son & Peck. The London Chartered Bank opened a branch on the south-west corner of Brunswick and Westgarth Streets in 1877.<sup>93</sup>

## 5.0 LOCAL COUNCIL AND COUNCIL SERVICES

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### 5.1 The Establishment of Municipal Boundaries

The City of Melbourne officially became a municipality in 1842, at which time it encompassed Newtown (now South Fitzroy), which became a separate ward—the Fitzroy Ward—in 1850. Collingwood and Richmond both split from the City of Melbourne to become separate municipal councils in 1855 and 1856 respectively. Fitzroy became a separate Borough in 1858, annexing North Fitzroy in 1860. North Carlton was originally on the outskirts of the Gipps Ward of the City of Melbourne, then within the Smith Ward, which was established as a separate ward in 1856, after the number of people settling in that area increased.<sup>1</sup> Carlton unsuccessfully petitioned to become a separate municipal council in 1858 and remained within the City of Melbourne. Alphington, Fairfield and Yarra Bend were governed by the Heidelberg District Road Board (formerly the Heidelberg Parish Roads Trust) established in the early 1840s. Alphington, Fairfield and Yarra Bend remained a part of the Shire of Heidelberg, established in 1871 (becoming the City of Heidelberg in 1934) until they were annexed by the City of Northcote in 1960. When the new City of Yarra was established in 1994 it comprised the former Cities of Collingwood, Fitzroy and Richmond, as well as annexing Alphington, Fairfield, North Carlton and Yarra Bend.

The need for Collingwood and Richmond to have more direct government had been exacerbated by the influx of immigrants during the first years of the gold rush, in the early 1850s. At first it was thought that the areas would be annexed by the City of Melbourne, but this was fought by the local residents. Concerns included rates, which they were not currently paying, and the *Melbourne Building Act* (1849) which would then spread its boundaries to Collingwood and Richmond. Locally, support was divided between establishing a Road Board, which would not implement taxes, or self-government.<sup>2</sup> Eventually, Collingwood (including what is now Abbotsford and Clifton Hill) became a municipal council in 1855, and Richmond followed the next year. The immediate problem, common to Collingwood and Richmond, and also Fitzroy and Carlton, were the laying out and straightening of the streets. Not surprisingly, much of the new councils' time was taken up with consideration of the urban infrastructure, public works, services and transport. These were all of the utmost importance to local residents. General municipal pride and the successful provision of services and transport were also one of the criteria against which the newly-emerging and fast-growing municipalities were judged. Competition was keen and in the later years the quest for excellence manifested itself in the ultimate symbol of municipal maturity—a lavish town hall. Today, the provision of many of these services including the metalled roads, the footpaths and channels, streetlights, electric power lines and stormwater drains are self-evident.

### 5.2 Civic Buildings

The Richmond Town Hall was built in 1869-71, designed by Charles Vickers (Fig. 38). The design was in response to a competition judged by the Inspector-General of Public Works, William Wardell.<sup>3</sup> This description appeared in the *Richmond Australian*, on 20 March 1869, following the decision:

The new buildings comprise Town Hall and Municipal Offices, Police Court, Post and Telegraph Offices, Savings Bank, and Public Library, including a clock tower 95 feet [28.5 metres] high ... The centre portion comprises the Municipal Offices, with public library over ... Connected with the Town Hall is a refreshment room and retiring rooms for ladies and gentlemen, and also an



Figure 38 The Richmond Town Hall in the 1880s, before the clock was installed.  
Source: Victoria and its Metropolis

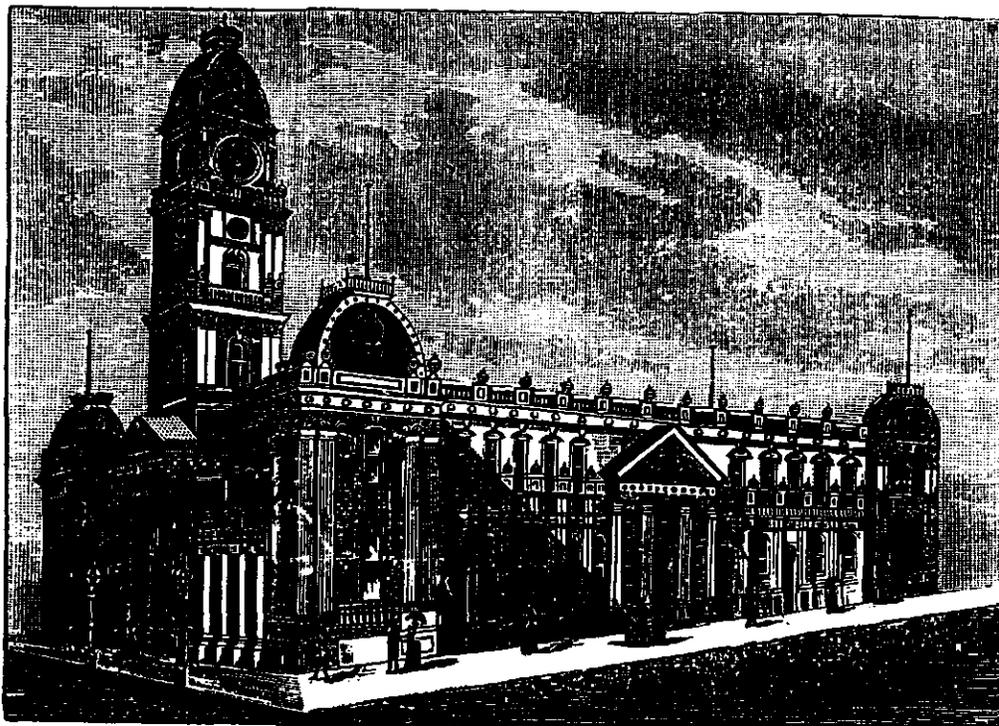
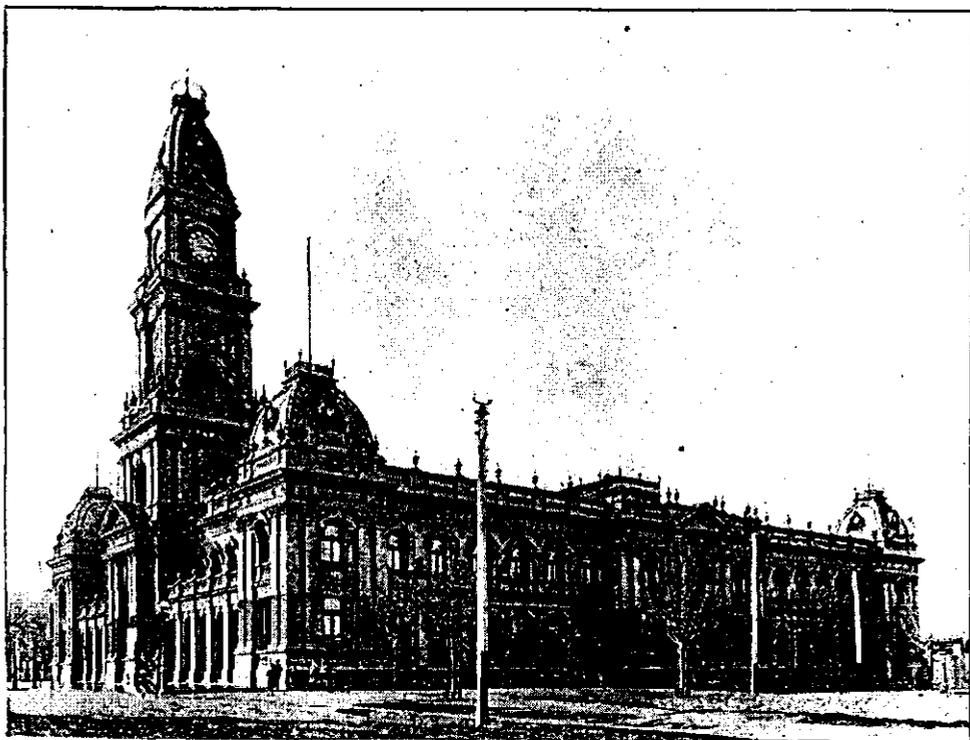


Figure 39 The Collingwood Town Hall. Source: Victoria and its Metropolis



*Figure 40 The Fitzroy Town Hall, c.1900. Source: Greater Melbourne Illustrated*



*Figure 41 The Collingwood Town Hall, c.1900. Source: Greater Melbourne Illustrated*

enclosed court or annexe ... The wing nearest Church Street will contain the Post and Telegraph Offices and Savings Bank. The corresponding wing on the east will comprise the Police Court. The great and governing principle in forming the plan is complete separation of the different departments, which not only allows of more ventilation, but also allows the opportunity of erecting the building by portions. The sum only of £7,000 being available the design is necessarily plain, and depends more upon outline and form than extraneous ornament. The principal part will be of brick, varied and relieved by dressings, mouldings, etc. of white bricks.<sup>4</sup>

The building was erected by Lydyard Carrell, of Emerald Hill, for £2,385.14.0. The building, including municipal buildings, post office and police station were completed in 1871 at a total cost of £8,000.<sup>5</sup> The Town Hall was made over in 1934-36, including the remodelling of the façade in the Egyptian Revival style, opening with a mayoral ball.

Panelled in polished blackwood, the hall has undergone an entire transformation. Above the panels the walls have been artistically shaded in pastel tones, and huge electroliers and modern wall lighting effects combine to make the hall one of the best in the metropolitan area.<sup>6</sup>

Fitzroy raised finances for a town hall (Fig. 40) by the early 1870s, with a £25,000 loan, and the building was erected by James Nation & Co. for £11,000, to the design of William Ellis. The Council borrowed £15,000 for improvements in 1887, which were completed to the design of G R Johnston. The town hall was used for a number of civic functions including a School of Design, a library, a Philharmonic Society, staging plays, Rifle Club meetings, and housing the local branch of the Australian Natives Society.<sup>7</sup>

After Fitzroy erected its town hall in 1874, there was competition in Collingwood. Land was purchased from John Budds Payne in Hoddle Street for £7,000 in 1884. The building itself was financed by a loan from the government for £40,000 in combination with the proceeds from the sale of municipal owned sites. The new building comprised municipal offices, a court house, post office, mechanics institute and the Collingwood Library (Figs. 39 & 41).<sup>8</sup> When complete it was described in the *Picturesque Atlas of Australia* as being:

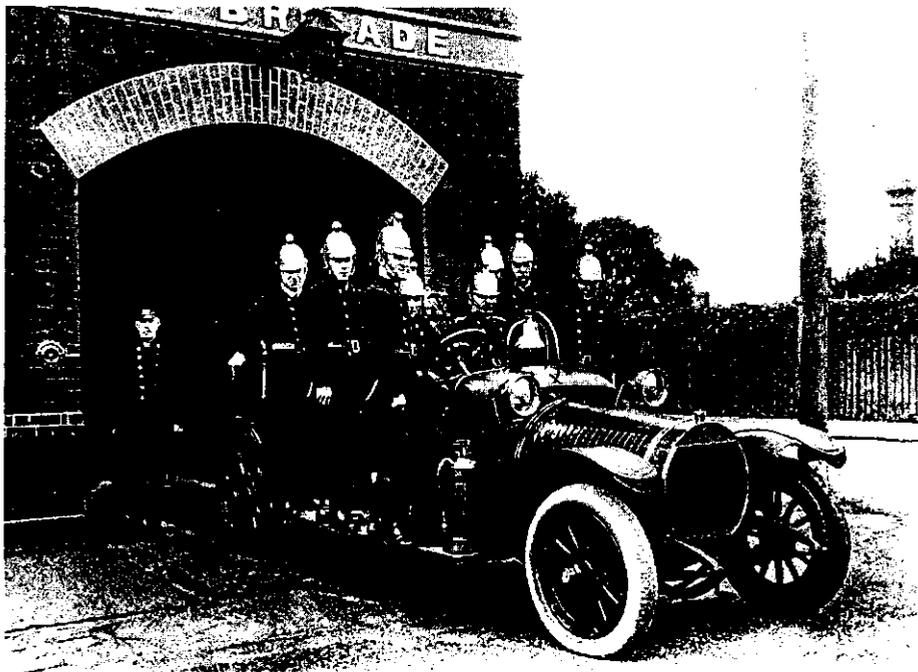
... one of the largest and handsomest near Melbourne ... The architecture is of the Renaissance style. Over the main entrance is a tower ... and at each angle of the building is a pavilion enriched with coupled columns and surrounded by a curved mansard roof. These pavilions are united with the central tower in the principal facade by means of an arcade, and the general effect of the whole elevation is decidedly rich. Inside is a fine hall ...<sup>9</sup>

Fire Stations were situated all over the district. There were two 'A District' stations: the No. 7 in North Carlton (129 Amess St) opened in 1893 and closed in 1915; and the No. 9 in North Fitzroy (St Georges Rd) built in 1891, rebuilt in 1912 and closed in 1983. There were also four 'B District' stations. These were the No. 10 in Hoddle Street (Fig. 42), Abbotsford, opened in 1891, extended in 1916 and closed in 1966; the No. 11 in Clifton Hill (662 Smith St) bought in 1892 and closed in 1913; the No. 16 in Burnley (Somerset St) opened in 1907 and closed in 1916; and the No. 17 in Lord Street Richmond opened in 1893 (Fig. 43), then replaced by a new station in Church Street in 1966. The reel shed for all these stations was behind the Richmond Town Hall.<sup>10</sup>

The Fitzroy Council was served by two volunteer fire brigades, one each for North and South Fitzroy. The Council's only obligation was to provide them with uniforms and equipment, and to make some contribution towards the cost of their buildings.<sup>11</sup> As well as fighting fires in Fitzroy, both brigades co-operated with brigades nearby and



*Figure 42 The Abbotsford No. 10 Fire Station. Source: Victoria Illustrated, 1834-1984*



*Figure 43 The Richmond No. 17 Fire Station. Source: Victoria Illustrated, 1834-1984*

fought fires in Collingwood, Carlton and Richmond.<sup>12</sup> These volunteer brigades were replaced by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade after its establishment in 1889.

A postal service was established in Collingwood in 1856, receiving boxes erected on the corner of Hoddle Street and Gibbs Street in 1862; and on Victoria Parade at Wellington Street.<sup>13</sup> A post office was built in Peel Street, between Oxford and Cambridge Streets, which was first relocated to 174 Smith Street, then replaced by a new post office, erected in 1891 (extant). The new building was designed by John Hudson Marsden of the Public Works Department.<sup>14</sup>

The Fitzroy Post Office is located at 296 Brunswick Street. At the south-western corner of Johnson and Brunswick Streets, the building is on one of the most prominent sites in the municipality. It was built in 1876 to a standard Public Works Department design. The architect was John Thomas Kellener, and the builders were Beardall & Cross.<sup>15</sup> The North Fitzroy Post Office, at 251 St George's Road, is on another prominent, but more unusual, site. This building was not purpose-built. It was constructed as an office/residence in 1887/8 by local real estate agent, Thomas Rogers.<sup>16</sup> Rogers sold the building in 1890, to the Standard Building Society, which continued to operate from the premises until 1907.<sup>17</sup>

The South Richmond Post Office was erected in 1905 to the design of J B Cohen by builders McConnell & McIntosh (Swan Street). Its design was unique for its incorporation of a tower.<sup>18</sup>

### 5.3 Local Policing and Defence

Until local police forces were established, the police in Melbourne were responsible for maintaining the peace of the inner suburbs. Police stations were included in the three town halls in Collingwood, Fitzroy and Richmond, as were courthouses. A separate police station building was added to the Richmond complex in 1871.

The Yarra area also remains home to a greater than average number of drill halls. As in many other parts of Melbourne and country Victoria, Volunteer Forces were established in Collingwood and Richmond after 1854, as part of the reaction to the perceived threat of Russian Invasion during the Crimean War. It was thought that, as directed by the *Age*: 'Every member of free community should have arms, and known how to use them'.<sup>19</sup> The Richmond Rifles were one of the first companies, who initially drilled in Daniel Campbell's paddock at six in the morning and evening; Campbell officiating as Lieutenant.<sup>20</sup> The Collingwood and Richmond Battery RVVA was listed in 1860, to be replaced by separate Batteries for each suburb the following year. Then, in 1862, the companies became the Collingwood-Richmond Volunteer Artillery, along with a number of original Volunteer Rifle regiments.<sup>21</sup> A simple timber drill hall was erected at the corner of Gipps and Docker Streets in 1867, which was extended in the 1890s.<sup>22</sup> The drill hall replaced two iron sheds which had been erected in 1860.<sup>23</sup>

A number of corrugated iron drill halls were erected during World War One: in Swan Street, Burnley;<sup>24</sup> Park Street, Carlton North;<sup>25</sup> and 140 Queens Parade, Fitzroy North.<sup>26</sup> While other buildings, such as the Former boot factory at the corner of Roseneath and Groom Streets, Clifton Hill,<sup>27</sup> were converted to cope with war time manufacturing needs for munitions and clothing. A brick drill hall was erected to the design of George Hallandal at 16 George Street, Fitzroy in the lead-up to World War Two.<sup>28</sup>

## 5.4 Crime and Punishment

Crime within Yarra encompassed everything from 'larrikins' in the street creating 'a perfect pandemonium ... swearing, spitting, fighting'<sup>29</sup> to two notorious underworld figures: 'Squizzy' Taylor in Richmond and John Wren in Collingwood.

Joseph Theodore Leslie Taylor, commonly known as 'Squizzy', was a local identity of some standing, with whom everyone wished a connection, even if they didn't like him:

I never met Squizzy Taylor but I seen him dozens of times. He used to have an open car with the hood rolled down, and he'd sit up there as bold as you like. He used to have a Stutz—he'd always go for the best. And he'd generally had a driver. Oh, he was an arrogant little bugger!

Everyone used to talk about Squizzy Taylor, "There goes Squizzy!" They made a hero of him. There wasn't the entertainment then, see. Nowadays you'd just turn around and watch TV. But he'd dob his mates in. He was a police pimp and a two timer. Thievin', racketeerin', sly grog—he was into all that. But if you got him on his own he wouldn't be worth a zack [sixpence].<sup>30</sup>

Squizzy was suspected of being involved in three murders. His alibi was provided by a barber's shop in Bridge Road, near the corner of Church Street. The barber's shop was itself a front for bookmaker Jack Corry. Squizzy was shot in a gunfight with Sydney gangster, John 'Snowy' Cutmore and died in St Vincent's Hospital in 1927. He was remembered fondly by many, including Hilda Green who said that

I don't give a dang what anybody said, Squizzy Taylor was good to the poor of Richmond. He was a gentleman. He robbed the rich to give to the poor. A lot of people didn't like him, but the majority of people in Richmond liked Squizzy Taylor.<sup>31</sup>

John Wren was born in Collingwood in 1871, who started a life in crime by running a small-scale bookmaking gig to supplement his income as a boot clicker when he was 12.<sup>32</sup> He branched out in 1893 when he opened a 'tote', or gaming establishment, from a tea shop at 136 Smith Street Collingwood. In the *Victorian Parliamentary Debates* (1898) Isaac Isaacs described the racquet:

The tote shops are not exhibited to the street, but the conductors have them in a back yard, as was the case in Collingwood, surrounded by all sorts of precautions. What they do is have a so-called tea shop at, will we say, 136 Johnson-street, Collingwood [the establishment of John Wren]. It is an innocent-looking place, where a man stands behind a counter with a white apron on, and when any person comes in and he is not known, and asks for a pound of tea, the man behind the counter will give him one; but if the visitor is one of the man's friends, or is one connected with the betting establishment, the flap of the counter is lifted up, and in the visitor marches.<sup>33</sup>

The betting was never carried on the premises, rather directly behind it. The men running the 'tote' wore masks and long dresses to disguise themselves and a number of escape routes were planned in case of a police raid. Isaacs believed Wren made £20,000 a year in this manner.<sup>34</sup> Wren organised bribes for local councillors—'The usual thing is 10 pounds for each councillor'<sup>35</sup>—for zoning permits, special purchases etc. He also owned the Richmond Racecourse, at the river end of Bridge Road, which he had taken over in 1907. He was also chief steward of the trotting industry and had enormous control, being able to issue fines and life bans on those who did not tow his line. Most of the people he hired at the track were criminals. The track closed down in 1932 and the land was bought by the government for the Housing Commission.<sup>36</sup>

Public opinion was divided over Wren. He was a kind of Robin Hood, and was very supportive of the needy and the Catholic Church; but was condemned by wowsers, W H Judkins, as being a 'Vesuvius of carnality ... greed ... animalism'.<sup>37</sup> His gambling was stopped, in the main, by the 1906 *Lotteries, Gaming and Betting Act*. However, Wren had become a millionaire from the gambling and could afford to go straight. Ironically, it was Wren who then established the Victorian Trotting Association with the aim of cleaning up the sport. Wren was also involved in boxing, cycling, theatre and film, farming, gold mining, newspapers, distilling, yeast manufacture, restaurants and cosmetics and ladies frocks.<sup>38</sup>

## 5.5 Private and Public Transportation

While the extent of the City of Melbourne limited the growth of the area to the west, the Yarra River formed a natural boundary to the east, closing Richmond off from South Yarra and Hawthorn. From 1843 the town had been connected to Melbourne by river transport (Fig. 44), such as Palmer's Punt (Fig. 45) and Barrow's Twickenham Ferry, which, by 1884, was advertising:

### **BARROW'S TWICKENHAM FERRY, BURNLEY AND TOORAK, TWICKENHAM-ON-YARRA**

The most picturesque boating on the Yarra connecting Richmond with Toorak, with the most comfortable cable ferry boat, *Nancy Dawson*.

Choice colonial wines, fruits and first class boats to suit all aquatic parties. Three minutes walk from the Burnley Station, and adjacent to Grange Road, Toorak.<sup>39</sup>

There were six small steam boats which travelled between Princes Bridge and the jetty at the bottom of Cremorne Street, as well as from between banks. The ferry operators would supplement their income by working for the council, which would

... give them a bounty on the number of bodies they got out of the river. It wasn't much. There used to be a lot of dead animals floating in the river in bags, mostly cats or dogs.<sup>40</sup>

When the first bridges were erected, ferry operators were able to remain in service as they remained cost effective. A bridge at the end of what is now Bridge Road was constructed from timber in 1851, and then in stone ten years later.<sup>41</sup> The Church Street Bridge was completed in 1855, at a cost of £20,000, and a toll was paid to use the bridge. This was also the case with the Hawthorn Bridge which opened in 1871. The Victoria Street Bridge, connecting Richmond, Collingwood, Hawthorn and Kew was constructed 13 years later in 1884.<sup>42</sup> Ferries were still in operation in the early 20th century, such as Nelson's Ferry which was established in 1905, but struggled to survive, their failure due both to the bridges across the Yarra and also the new variety of transport options. The Twickenham Ferry survived until 1934 when it was replaced by the MacRobertson Bridge, financed by Sir Macpherson Robertson.

An unusual bridge was erected in 1856-7 linking Church Street with Chapel Street. A 210-foot span, ten-foot high, iron bridge with solid riveted iron walls had been designed to prevent Russian snipers from killing British troops during the Crimean War. The bridge was dismantled and reconstructed, with stone buttresses, in Richmond.<sup>43</sup> The bridge was demolished in 1923, replaced with a bridge designed by Harold Desbrowe Annear. A laminated timber bridge was erected spanning from Government Paddock, Richmond to the Botanic Gardens. Michael Cannon described the bridge as rising 'in a graceful arc ... supported by cross-girders, enabling thousands of pleasure seekers as well as goods traffic to cross from Swan Street to Anderson Street'.<sup>44</sup>

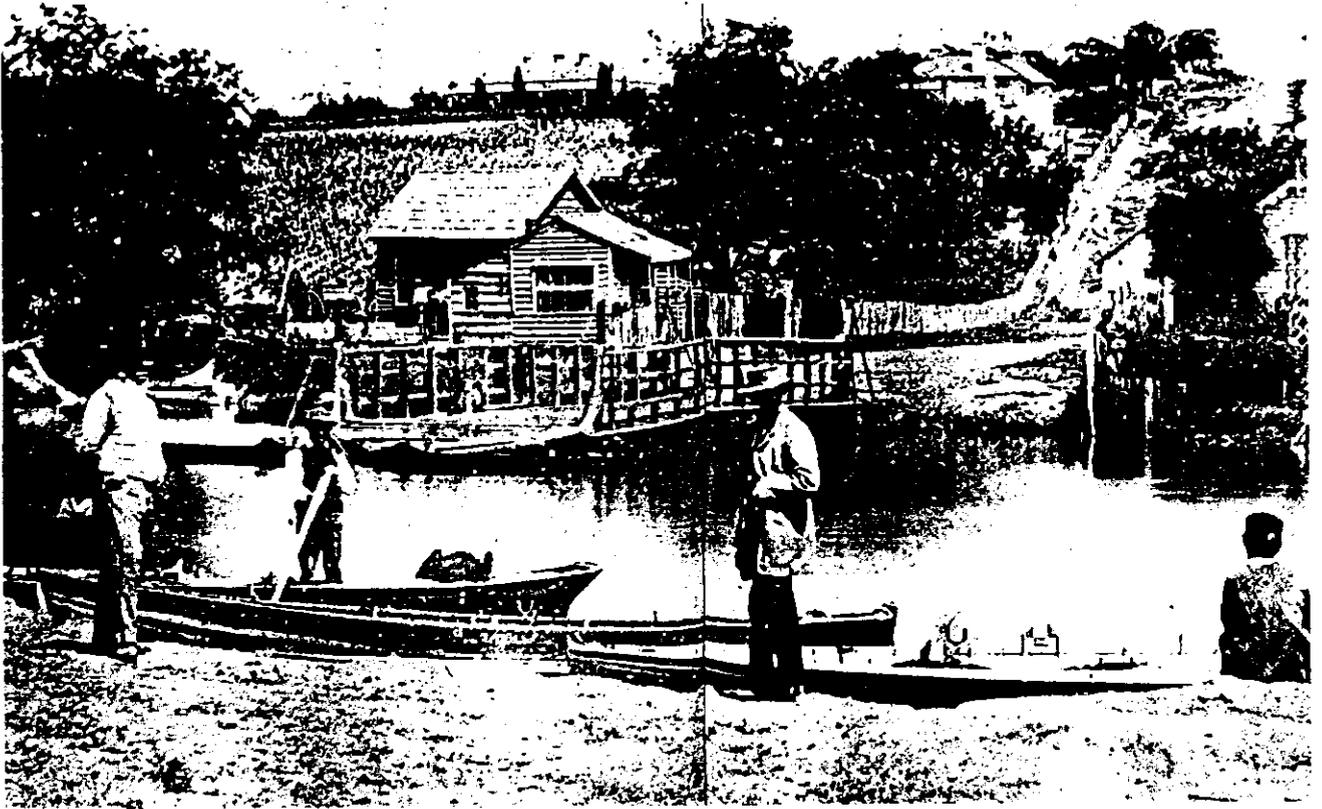


Figure 44 *Punts on the Yarra River at Richmond, c.1850s.* Source: Australia in the Victorian Age: 3; Life in the Cities



Figure 45 *Palmers Punt, Richmond, c.1845.* Artist W Withers. Source: Victoria Illustrated, 1834-1984

Roads were improving and the Road Board was spending money on macadamising. One of its first works was to seal most of Bridge Road, from the end of Wellington Parade. By 1857, three miles of Bridge Road/Hawthorn Road had been formed; one mile of Church Street; five miles of Heidelberg Road; one mile of Punt Road; and one and a half miles of Victoria Street, Collingwood.<sup>45</sup> Nicholson Street, Fitzroy was extended two years later. By 1862, at which time Collingwood was home to 12,600 people making it the largest suburb in Melbourne, 14 miles of road had been sealed and ten miles of kerbs laid.<sup>46</sup> All this made it easier for services such as the omnibus to run. Of the 18 omnibus companies established by 1860, running services from Melbourne to the suburbs, four operated from Collingwood—Patrick Donohoe, John Lambell, James Shannon and Josiah Williams. Most suburbs at the time only had one.<sup>47</sup>

The railway through to Richmond was accomplished by 1859, the *Melbourne Age* stating that

increased facilities will shortly be afforded for connecting the city of Melbourne with one of its most picturesque suburban townships, the railway from Prince's-bridge to Punt-road, Richmond now being completed.<sup>48</sup>

The service comprised a train of five carriages which ran to Melbourne at half-hourly intervals. The track was extended to South Yarra in 1860 and to Hawthorn in 1861; Richmond stations were rapidly becoming the busiest in Melbourne. Tom Bolger recalled:

My father was the station master at East Richmond in 1912. He was there for a few years. It was a busy station then because there were no trams along Swan street. They had a station master, an assistant station master, two booking clerks and two porters. Once the trams got going they weren't so busy.<sup>49</sup>



Figure 46 The Fitzroy Engine House Pit, 1888. Source: Mind the Curve!

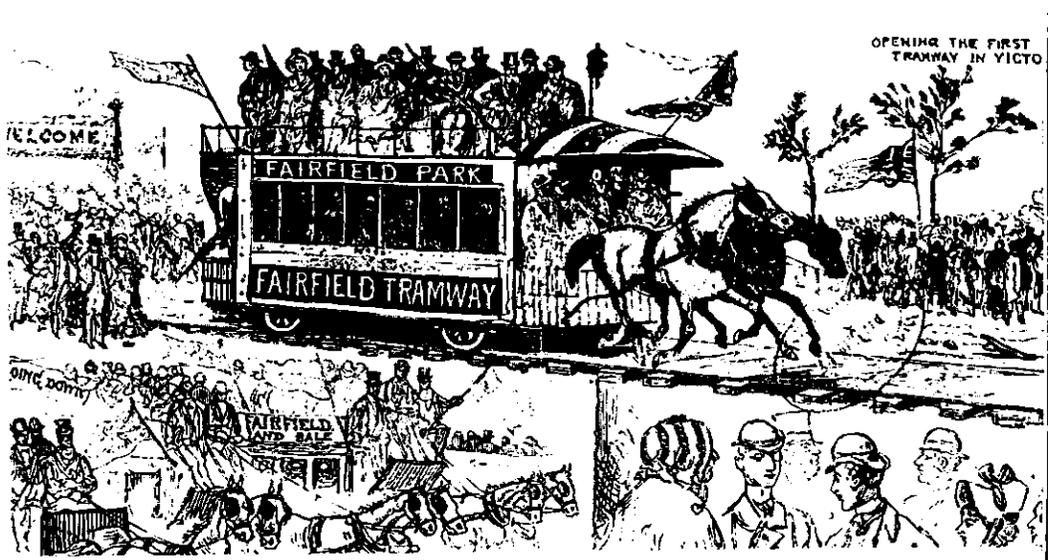


Figure 47 The opening of the Fairfield Tramway. Source: Life in the Cities



Figure 48 Views of the Richmond cable railway system. Source: Mind the Curve!

The first cable trams to the area ran from the city to Richmond in 1885, and were so successful that within a few years every suburb within a five mile radius of Melbourne was connected.<sup>50</sup> The only people not happy with Richmond's tram service were the Hansom cab drivers who would travel ahead of the tram to try and poach their passengers.<sup>51</sup>

Fitzroy residents had vehemently opposed establishment of a horse-drawn cable car route through Fitzroy in the 1860s for a variety of reasons.<sup>52</sup> Into the 1880s, despite improvements in the technology, residents continued their vocal opposition to cabletrams, in the end to no avail.<sup>53</sup> Fitzroy's route was established in 1886 and 1887. One track ran along Nicholson Street from the city, then divided at Gertrude Street into two, one of which ran along Gertrude Street to Smith Street and the other which continued northward along Nicholson Street. The other route ran down Brunswick Street.<sup>54</sup> Unlike the pattern of urban development in some of Melbourne's then outer suburbs, where the location of tram routes facilitated and stimulated the development of those streets into a major commercial strips, the tram routes in Fitzroy were located along streets which were already consolidated commercial precincts. Cable Tram Depots in Fitzroy were at Nicholson Street, North Fitzroy (on the east side of the street, near Liverpool Street), on the north-west corner of Holden Street and St George's Road, North Fitzroy.<sup>55</sup>

The Clifton Hill-Alphington railway line, known as the 'nowhere-to-nowhere' line, was constructed in 1883 but was a limited token gesture from a government which had been providing rail services to most other suburbs. It was connected to a new service from Royal Park to Preston in 1889.<sup>56</sup>

A cable tram route was constructed along Rathdowne Street, North Carlton in 1889 which was replaced with a bus service when the electric tramway was laid in Lygon Street. The cable tram attracted commercial properties, and the street is still a residential/commercial mix.<sup>57</sup>



*Figure 49 A Clifton Hill track being demolished. Source: Mind the Curve!*

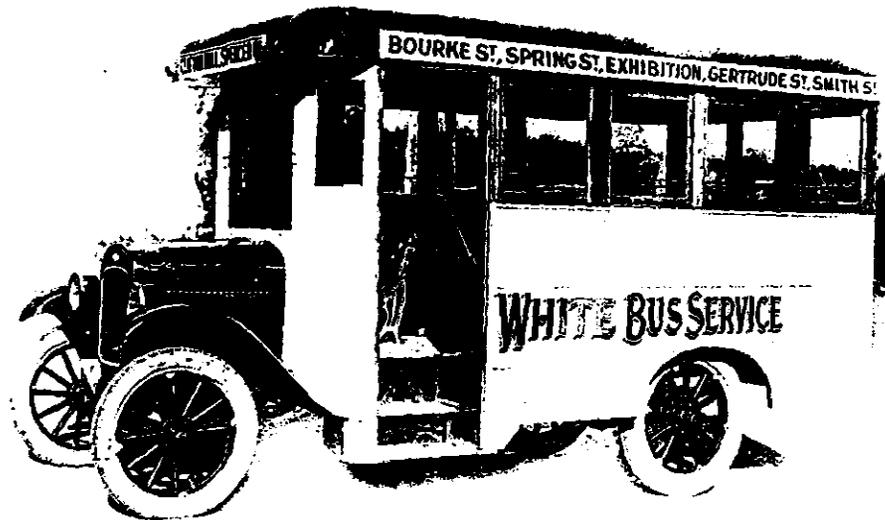


Figure 50 The Chevrolet bus purpose-built for the route from Spencer Street to Clifton Hill, c.1920. Source: Victoria Illustrated, 1834-1984

Transport in general continued to be a thorny and controversial local issue throughout the 19th century. Some traders eventually came around to the view that being 'on the road to more places', the newer suburbs to the north, might have an advantage, while others disagreed.<sup>58</sup> The same objections were raised with regard to the issue of railways through the suburb, but by the 1870s and 1880s, the residents had become fairly convinced that to have a rail link running through Fitzroy, and possibly terminating at the city end of Nicholson Street, would add to the commercial hustle and bustle of South Fitzroy.<sup>59</sup> Most of the argument was about the direction from which a Gippsland-Melbourne rail link would approach the city, and later about a possible Heidelberg-Melbourne link.<sup>60</sup> Eventually, of course, the shortlived and outrageously expensive Outer Circle Railway linking Heidelberg and Melbourne via North Carlton and Royal Park was built in 1888.<sup>61</sup> The Outer Circle Railway cost £292,000 and was open for only three years. Despite the interest shown in the route by land speculators, passengers willing to travel on a line which took 4 hours 20 minutes to reach the City from Oakleigh were few and far between.<sup>62</sup>

As well as prompting the construction of the North Fitzroy Station in Park Street (now demolished), two short spur lines ran off the Outer Circle Line: one went to Collingwood's Victoria Park and one to Fitzroy's Edinburgh Park.<sup>63</sup> The Edinburgh Gardens Station has also been demolished. When it came, the direct link from Heidelberg to the city went through Collingwood. Apart from remnant railway crossings, which can be seen in many other suburbs, the most obvious reminder of Fitzroy's problematic relationship with the Victorian Railways Department is the



Figure 51 *The Burnley Railway Station, c.1890s. Source: The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne*

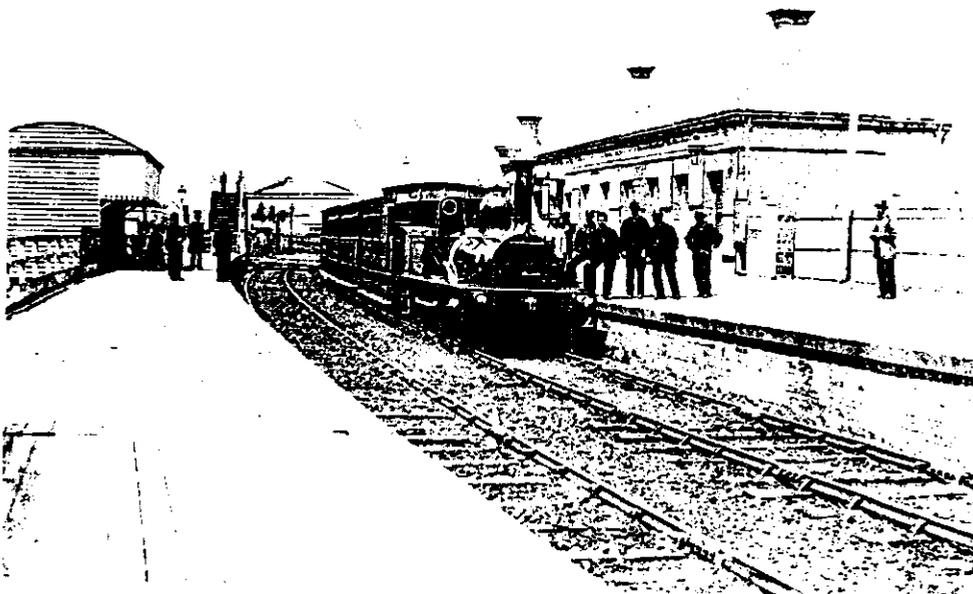


Figure 52 *Richmond Railway station, 1888. It was replaced by the current station in 1958. Source: Victoria Illustrated, 1834-1984*

electricity substation which was built on railway land at the north end of Brunswick Street in 1915-16. The original proposed location for this substation was at North Carlton, but the site at Fitzroy was eventually selected. The building was designed by the Victorian Railways Ways and Works Branch and was constructed by Swanson Bros.<sup>64</sup>

Bernard Barrett has argued that the boom in railways and tramways in the 19th century offered little to either Fitzroy or Collingwood. Too close to the city to play the role of a terminus, both suburbs were bypassed to a certain extent by commuters from suburbs further out. For Fitzroy, the effect of greater commuter mobility was marked:

One consequence was that middle-class or white-collar people working in the city or in Smith Street could leave their Fitzroy homes and move out to more attractive dormitory areas. The less affluent stayed in Fitzroy, making the average economic condition of Fitzroy more like Collingwood.<sup>65</sup>

Swan Street, Richmond was not included on the cable tram system until 1916, the occasion of which was cause for celebration. Marj Oke, who was five at the time, remembered

the trams coming down Swan Street ... My dad said, "Do you want to go and see?" and I said yes, so he harnessed up our horse in the jinker and said, "Well, off you go," and sent me off at that age driving a horse and jinker down. I remember going down Mary Street, and the trams were just starting to go along, and I stopped because I couldn't see properly around the corner of Mary Street up to Swan Street to see if a tram was coming. I asked someone on the corner if it was all right, and they said yes, and then when I got out into the middle of the road I could see this tram coming up over the hill and I got a great fright.<sup>66</sup>

Collingwood had to rely on the 1885 cabletram network until the railway was opened in 1901 and electric trams were installed in the 1940s. Residents predominantly relied upon horse drawn transport until relatively recently, many not wealthy enough to afford the motorised equivalent. 'If you saw someone with a car you'd say "Gee, he must be rich" and it'd be a little old Ford'.<sup>67</sup> When the railway was built from Clifton Hill to Princes Bridge, Mr Atchison recalled,

all the kids got a day off school for a free ride to Melbourne and back ... I remember waiting in the tram stations. There were hurricane lamps and galoshes left in the waiting room. People left them in the winter time when they were catching the early morning trains. They would pick them up again when they came back at night. I don't know if anybody ever took the wrong lantern.<sup>68</sup>

## 5.6 Water and Sewerage

Problems with flooding and sewerage were rife in the 1840s, '50s and '60s. Water was either in to great or too small a supply (Fig. 54). In Richmond, on 29 February 1848, a Melbourne newspaper noted:

**Scarcity of water.** — The inhabitants of Richmond are put to their trumps in consequence of the most extraordinary scarcity of water, for it is anticipated that shortly there will not be a single drop in the township, nor within such reasonable distance that the inhabitants can obtain a supply. The last unfortunate circumstance which happened was that of a bullock dray getting too near the brick work of the only well in which drinkable water was to be found, and sending up the whole of the superstructure to the bottom of it, by which the spring became choked up, and, what is astonishing, although the

rubbish has been cleared and every effort used to obtain water from the same spot, yet from this accident the spring has been diverted in another channel, and thus the people are deprived of their last resource of obtaining water in the neighbourhood.<sup>69</sup>

Followed by a flood in the same year, the fifth on record:

The residents of Richmond were in a state of complete isolation for two days, as they had no means of crossing over the formidable body of water sweeping the Collingwood and Richmond Flats, as well as the Fitzroy Gardens and the Richmond Paddock to the Yarra. In thirty-six hours the Yarra at Melbourne attained the height of fifteen feet. The flood of 1844 was higher than the present one, for then the water was sixteen inches higher in the second floor of Dight's mills at Studley Park.<sup>70</sup>

In 1853 a local committee was formed to address the issues of inadequate roads and drainage. An open drain was built in Reilly Street in the 1850s (Fig. 53) and the Blind Creek, which entered the Yarra north of Gipps Street after travelling towards Gold and Wellington Streets, was channelled in 1858.<sup>71</sup> In relation to Clifton Hill, Barrett reported that the Reilly Street drain, now under Alexandra Parade, was intended to drain the crown land in Clifton Hill, thus increasing land values and enabling profitable sales to



*Figure 53* The Reilly Street swamp, location of the infamous Reilly Street drain, at the corner of Reilly (now Alexandra Parade) and Smith Streets, c.1870. Source: Fitzroy: Melbourne's First Suburb

developers. However, this vain hope was soon dashed when the drain overflowed onto the Collingwood Flat in the first winter after it was constructed.<sup>72</sup> It continued to be a hazard, as 'occasionally someone fell in and was drowned'.<sup>73</sup> It was a landmark for all the wrong reasons; a swampy wasteland about which Garryowen said:

It was for a long time building enterprise would never penetrate to any extent beyond the sickly Reilly Street drain. This due northern region was the most unpleasant of the surroundings of Melbourne; the cold north wind in winter and the hot wind in summer, produced climatic variations anything but agreeable. One was either half-drowned or half-baked, and between mud and dust, and wet and heat, you could hardly dream that homes and hearths could have an abiding place there.<sup>74</sup>

Even after settlement progressed past the drain, it proved a strong physical, as well as mental barrier, between North Fitzroy and the more established South Fitzroy. Collingwood's backyard slaughtering, which persisted despite the new abattoir on Merri Creek, added blood and offal to the water and sewerage which ran down the open channels to the Flat.<sup>75</sup> Life on the Collingwood Flat was put in verse in 1861, in the *Melbourne Punch*:

Lo from the stinking pools what vapours rise,  
To dim with their blue haze yon lustrous skies;  
Children inhale the subtle venom'd reek,  
And fade forthwith the roses off their cheek;  
Languid they droop; their silver laughter no more  
Rings joyously from out the cottage door;  
Quench'd the clear light of those engaging eyes,  
The fever-smitten victim moaning lies,  
And from that narrow, dark and foetid room  
Will pass out to the still more narrow tomb.<sup>76</sup>

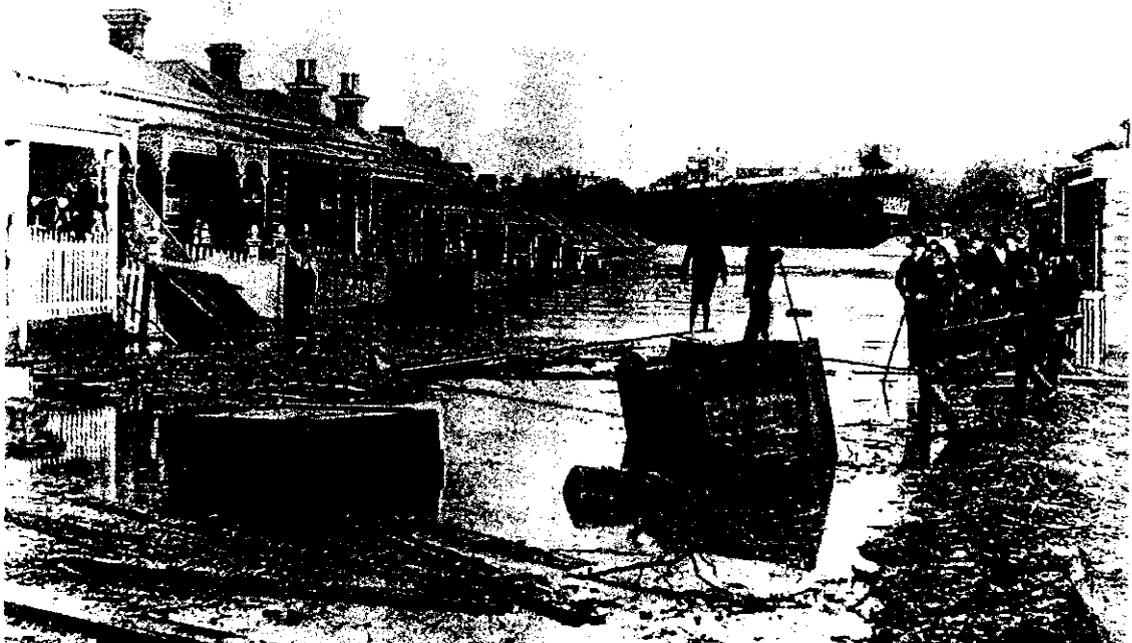


Figure 54 Flooding in Richmond, 1891. Source: Victoria Illustrated, 1834-1984



Figure 55 Working on the 46-inch main in Punt Road, Richmond, north of the Richmond Cricket Ground. Source: Vital Connections

In February 1866 a meeting was held between members of the East Collingwood, Hotham and Richmond Councils to address the problems. The *Observer* had published concerns about Cholera in 1865, stating that,

cholera is an epidemic conveyed by an atmospheric agency; if so, then there is no part of the world actually safe from the visit of such a dreadful scourge. There can be no doubt, however, that the more cleanly a district or country is kept, the less likelihood is there for such being made the abode of this unwelcome visitor.<sup>77</sup>

The conference concluded that the city manure depot, both insufficient for their needs, and also a source of contamination to surrounding suburbs, that suburban depots for night-soil were unsanitary and some method should be found to deodorise and remove it.<sup>78</sup>

In 1891 a Richmond surveyor reported that

the combination of animal and vegetable decay, intensified by the refuse of fellmongery yards and kindred industries and the general dirtiness of the method of distribution, rendered the fluid supplied deleterious, if not absolutely dangerous, for human consumption ...<sup>79</sup>

In 1891 residents could rely on a regular supply of drinkable water when the Maroondah Dam opened but problems with sewerage were not eradicated easily, even with regular nightmen, and in 1916 a 'Richmond Resident' noted that Cubbitt Street, on 24 February 1916, was:

full of horse manure, waste papers, empty tins, rabbit entrails, dead cats and such-like flotsam and jetsam, whilst the channels contained a quantity of malodorous slush.<sup>80</sup>

The evidence of previous out-houses and the present sewerage system has not remained readily apparent. However some aspects of the development of the urban infrastructure and services have left their legacy and now provide important points of reference in the urban fabric.

## 5.7 Gas and Electricity

In 1856, just a few years after the first gas light had been lit in Melbourne, and in the same year as the supply of gas was connected to the city, some of the inhabitants of the Fitzroy Ward of the Corporation of Melbourne met in Clarke's Hotel in Smith Street, 'for the purpose of considering on the best means of obtaining a supply of gas within the ward'.<sup>81</sup> By July 1856, mainlining to supply both Fitzroy Ward and East Collingwood (now Collingwood), was in progress and Albert Street, East Melbourne, and Brunswick and Nicholson Streets all had some gas available, reaching Richmond only four years later.<sup>82</sup> At this time the price of gas was a source of much conflict as the City of Melbourne Gas and Coke Company operated a monopoly on its supply. As a result a number of local gas companies were established to combat the excessive prices charged by the Company. The first was the Collingwood, Fitzroy and District Gas and Coke Company, which was formed early in 1859. It eventually secured the right to supply gas for a six mile radius from its works which were established on the corner of Smith Street and Reilly Street (now Alexandra Parade) North Fitzroy in 1861<sup>83</sup> When the supply was first started it was used to spell out the words 'Collingwood Gas' on the front of the Theatre Royal in Bourke Street.<sup>84</sup> In 1878, the Collingwood, Fitzroy and District Gas and Coke Company amalgamated with the Melbourne and South Melbourne companies. At this time, the works in Smith Street became known as the Fitzroy Station of the Metropolitan Gas Company. Compared with the company's other metropolitan works, at South Melbourne and West Melbourne, the Fitzroy works proved to be less profitable to operate and as a result, the amount of gas produced at Fitzroy was gradually reduced over the years, and the site was developed to accommodate the Company's construction workshops instead.<sup>85</sup> A point of some interest is that in 1919, the only riveted gas holder (or 'gasometer') ever built by the Metropolitan Gas Company was constructed at the Fitzroy works (Fig. 57). Fitzroy's no. 3 holder was also of some significance, being apparently the 'World's First Welded Holder'.<sup>86</sup> When it was dismantled in 1978, the *Melbourne Times* noted that the gasometer was,

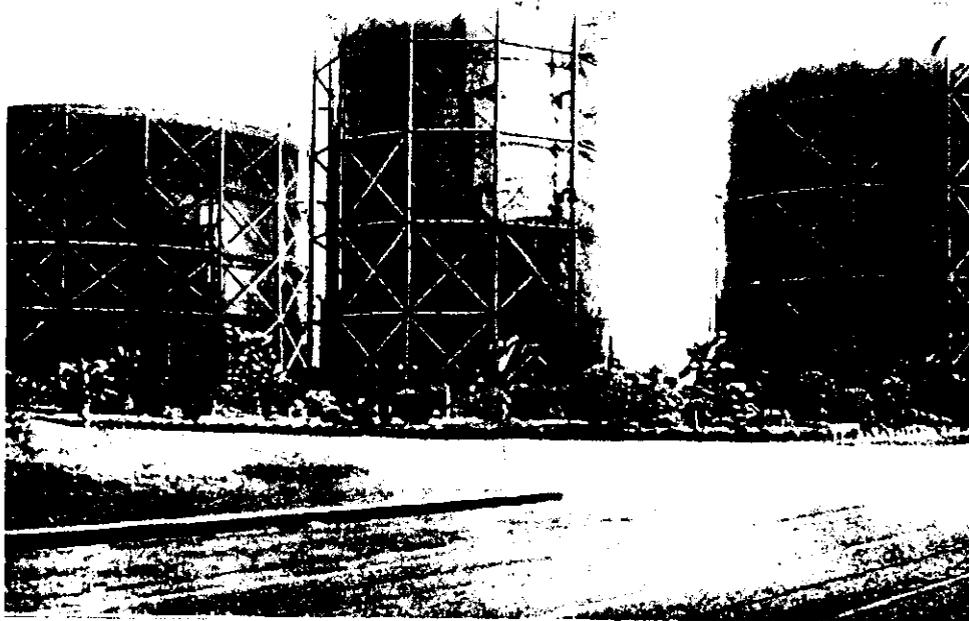
of international importance when it was erected in 1922. It was the first completely arc-welded structure in the world and many overseas construction experts flocked to Fitzroy to marvel at the gasometer.<sup>87</sup>

Alphington was provided with gas in 1889 when the Heidelberg, Ivanhoe, Alphington, Fairfield Gas Co. laid mains; a subsidiary of the Heidelberg Gas Co.<sup>88</sup>

When the Melbourne City Council decided to become involved in the supply of electricity in the late 1880s it moved the Australian Electrical Co. Ltd. from Russell Place to Oddy's Lane in Richmond, as it was no longer necessary to have the power source as near the consumer. The firm was renamed the New Australian Electric Lighting Co. and was located in a building designed by architect, Henry B Gibbs. The firm supplied power to southern Richmond, Prahran and South Melbourne. It was in direct competition with A U Alcock's which was located in Neptune Street, Richmond. The two firms merged in 1901 as the Melbourne Electricity Supply Co. and the premises in



*Figure 56 The Richmond Gas Inspector's residence, Gleadell Street, Richmond, built in the 19th century. Source: Victoria Illustrated, 1834-1984*



*Figure 57 The gasometers at Fitzroy, c.1928. Source: Circle of Influence*

Oddy's Lane were extended. The complex was taken over by the State Electricity Commission (SEC) in 1930 and generated power until 1976 when operations ceased.<sup>89</sup>

When electricity was introduced, people tended to mistrust the new technology. Frank Pickett (Richmond resident, born 1917) recalls that,

Our house was the first in Crown Street to have electric lights. We were classed as toffs because it was still a bit of a novelty. I remember my uncle making a special trip into Swanston Street about 1920 to have a look at an electric light. You thought you were the Queen of England to have an electric light.<sup>90</sup>

Richmond resident Hilda Green (born 1899) persevered with kerosene lamps well into the late 20th century, even though she had 'any amount of bowls, but the globes and wicks [were] hard to get sometimes'.<sup>91</sup>

## 5.8 Hospitals

The banks of the Yarra River was perceived to be a remote rural area, ideal for such institutions as the Inebriate Retreat (1873) on the Merri Creek and the Yarra Bend Lunatic Asylum (1848) and, recommended first in the 1870s, an infectious Diseases Hospital at Yarra Bend.<sup>92</sup> Temporarily abandoned, the subject was pursued again in 1890 following a report which stressed Melbourne's need for an infection diseases hospital, which was run separately from the Melbourne and Alfred Hospitals.<sup>93</sup>

Architects, Wharton Down and Gibbins, prepared drawings in 1893.<sup>94</sup> Funds were raised for the building, to be known as the Queen's Memorial Infectious Diseases Hospital. The municipalities of Prahran, South Melbourne, Hawthorn, Footscray, St Kilda, Brighton, Williamstown, Essendon, Flemington and Kensington, Northcote, Kew, North Melbourne, Brunswick, Heidelberg, Boroondara and Malvern were all represented on the committee. The government granted 15 acres [6 hectares] of land for the complex and by 1897, £16,000 had been raised. It remained a slow process and the first buildings were not erected until 1901, while the hospital was not in operation until 1904.<sup>95</sup> By this stage only Melbourne, Fitzroy, Richmond, St Kilda, North Melbourne, Brunswick and Coburg remained on the committee.<sup>96</sup>

By then the complex reserve had increased to 22 acres [9 hectares], comprising a receiving house, with separate areas for scarlet fever and diphtheria, and two large wards (25 beds each) similarly separated; kitchen block (dem.), at the centre of the complex; and a nurses' home, which was enlarged by architects, A & K Henderson in 1916 and 1932.<sup>97</sup> In June 1917 new administration buildings and two Ward pavilions, also designed by the Hendersons, were opened to cater for cerebro-spinal meningitis.<sup>98</sup> The ambulance garage, work shops and men's quarters, were designed under Public Works Department Chief Architect Percy Everett in 1940, followed by the F V G Scholes block in 1949.<sup>99</sup>

One of the legacies of the extension of philanthropic activity in Fitzroy during the 1890s was St Vincent's Hospital, which was established in order to dispense aid during the Depression of the 1890s. St Vincent's provided a contrast to some of the other church-based charities operating in Fitzroy and the City of Melbourne at this time, since the institution was considered to be less discerning than many about the morals or respectability of those whom it chose to help. One writer remarked in 1905 that:

There are charity organisations for assisting respectable people who are victims of misfortunes mourning by the current of adversity. But if one is to grade the various schemes for assisting distressed humanity, the premier position must undoubtedly be accorded to that noble institution, conducted by the Sisters of Charity, and known wherever established by them as St Vincent's Hospital.<sup>100</sup>

St Vincent's was opened on 6 November 1893 by Janet, Lady Clarke.<sup>101</sup> Despite fears that the hospital would not survive the depressed 1890s, the writer went on to point out that 'subsequent events have proved that the sisters were right when they realised that there was no such word as fail.'<sup>102</sup> In 1905, it was reported that, 'the word success is branded on their efforts until now they find it necessary to complete the colossal establishment'. The building which was under construction during 1905 faced onto Victoria Parade on the corner of Regent Street.<sup>103</sup> It still stands today but has been built over on the Victoria Parade side by the Stephenson and Turner wing. (Fig. 58)

More exclusive were the dentists and other surgeons which were located in the south-western part of Fitzroy, particularly in Gertrude and Brunswick Streets. Dentistry was a profession which was still very much for the well-to-do, as the elegantly furnished waiting rooms and surgeries in southern Fitzroy testified.<sup>104</sup> The location of a number of surgeons' and dentists' rooms in the hill area of South Fitzroy was testament to the fact that the area was still prestigious.



*Figure 58 St Vincent's Hospital, 1934. Building, 12 April 1934*

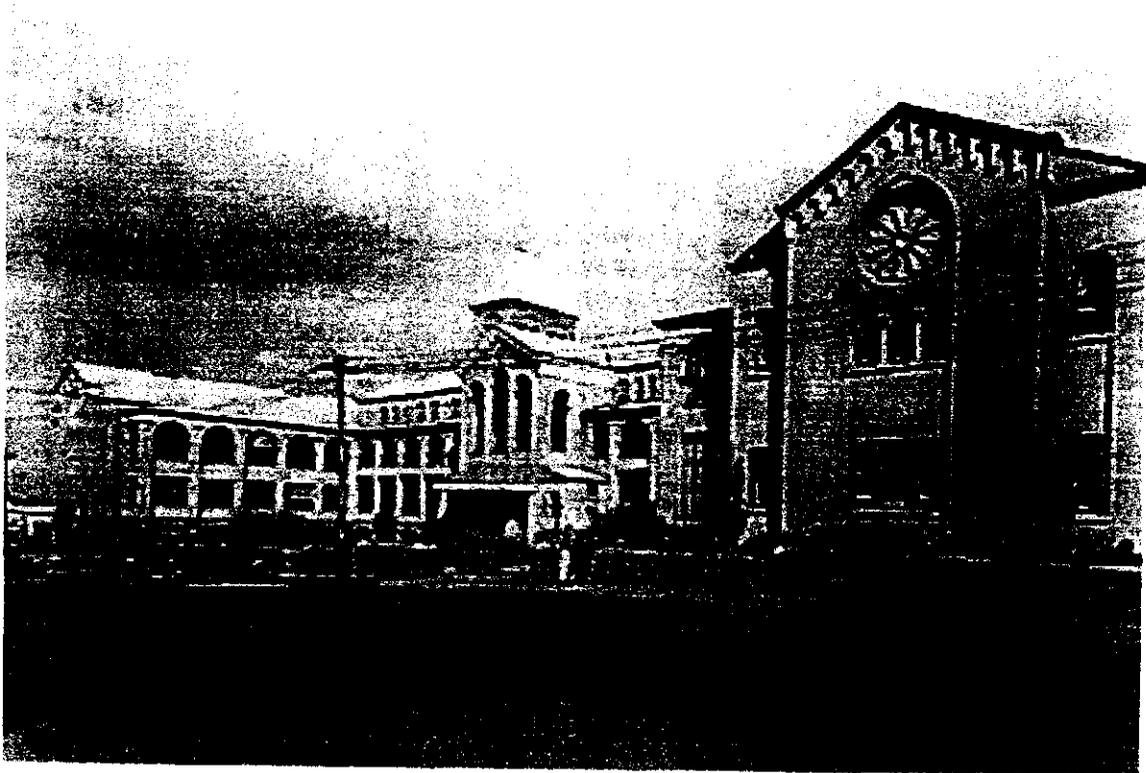


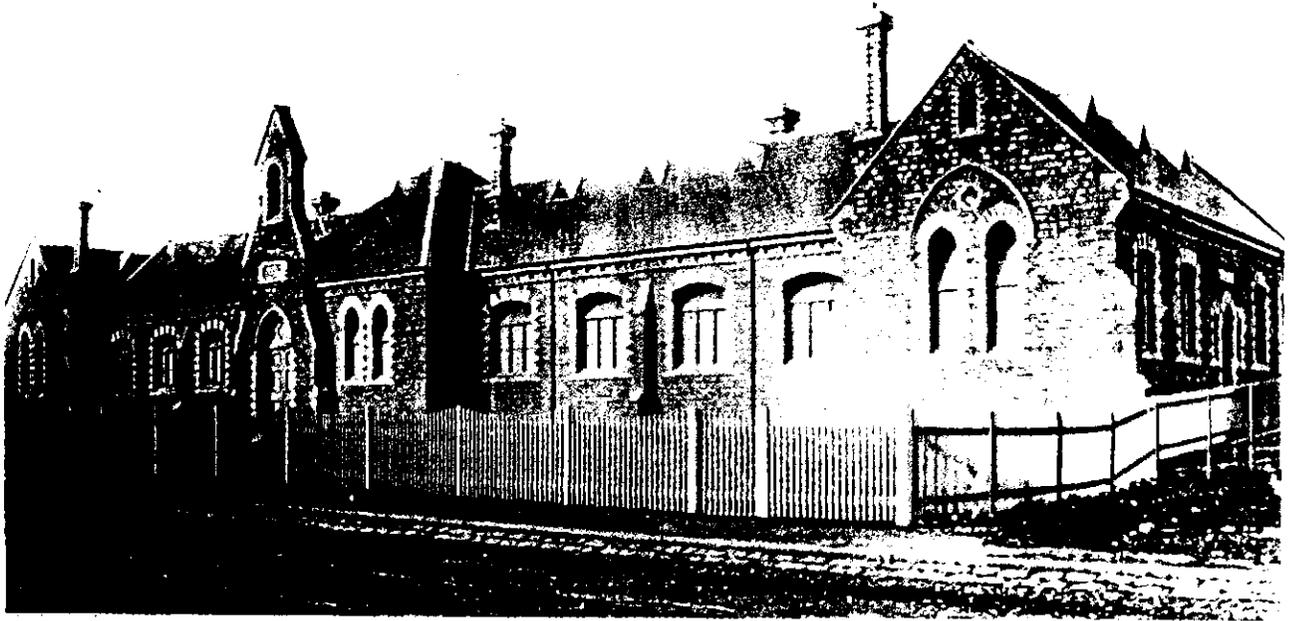
Figure 59 Epworth Hospital, Erin Street, Richmond, c.1940. State Library of Victoria (Picture Collection)

In Richmond, the Salvation Army opened, after much opposition, the Bethesda Hospital (now Epworth) in Erin Street. From 1903, they leased Millewa, the home of Robert Hoddle's widow. They purchased the mansion, and extended it by 1912. The house has now been engulfed by later additions. (Fig. 59) The archivist of the Salvation Army, George Ellis, described Bethesda as 'a pioneering hospital ... [of which] Richmond should be very proud'. Its philosophy was to provide three levels of care: paying private patients, working-class patients who only paid what they were able to afford and poor patients who were treated for free.<sup>105</sup>

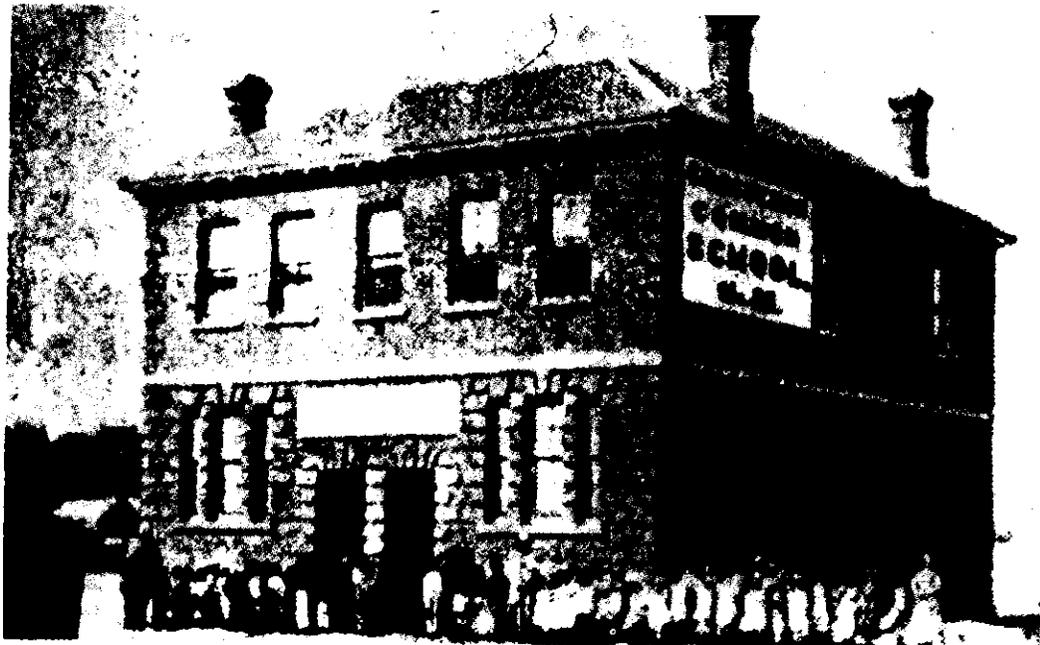
## 5.9 Education

In 1863 the Good Shepherd Order purchased Abbotsford House, which they had found empty, to found 'an asylum for fallen women' which they expanded in 1865 with the purchase of the neighbouring St Helliars from Edward Curr's widow. In 1864-65 they established an 'industrial school for the preservation from vice of neglected little ones' as well as 'a reformatory for the reclamation of criminal [Roman Catholic] children'.<sup>106</sup> A new building, an industrial school, was erected in 1868 to the design of J B Denny. It became the north wing of the present Sacred Heart Complex. A chapel, the Church of Immaculate Conception, was erected between 1870 and 1880. In 1889-1902 a new convent, designed by Reed Smart & Tappin was erected at which time Abbotsford House was demolished.<sup>107</sup>

In common with most metropolitan areas, before the passing of the 1872 *Education Act*, allowing for free and compulsory education, there was a range of schools of varying sizes in Fitzroy and Richmond, a number of which were church-based. The survival of these small private schools was dependent on the vagaries of fortune. In the mid-1850s Richmond's education system depended entirely upon the church, schools being organised by the Anglicans (St Stephen's), Roman Catholics (St James'), Wesleyans



*Figure 60*     *State School 1396, Brighton Street Richmond, 1874, by Wharton & Vickers. Source: Victorian Schools*



*Figure 61*     *Grosvenor Common School No. 811, Bond Street, Abbotsford, 1863. Source: Victorian Schools*



*Figure 62*     *State School 1360, Gold Street, Clifton Hill, 1874, by W H Ellerker.*  
*Source: Victorian Schools*



*Figure 63*     *State School No. 111, Bell Street, Fitzroy, purchased by the State*  
*Government in 1873. Source: Victorian Schools*

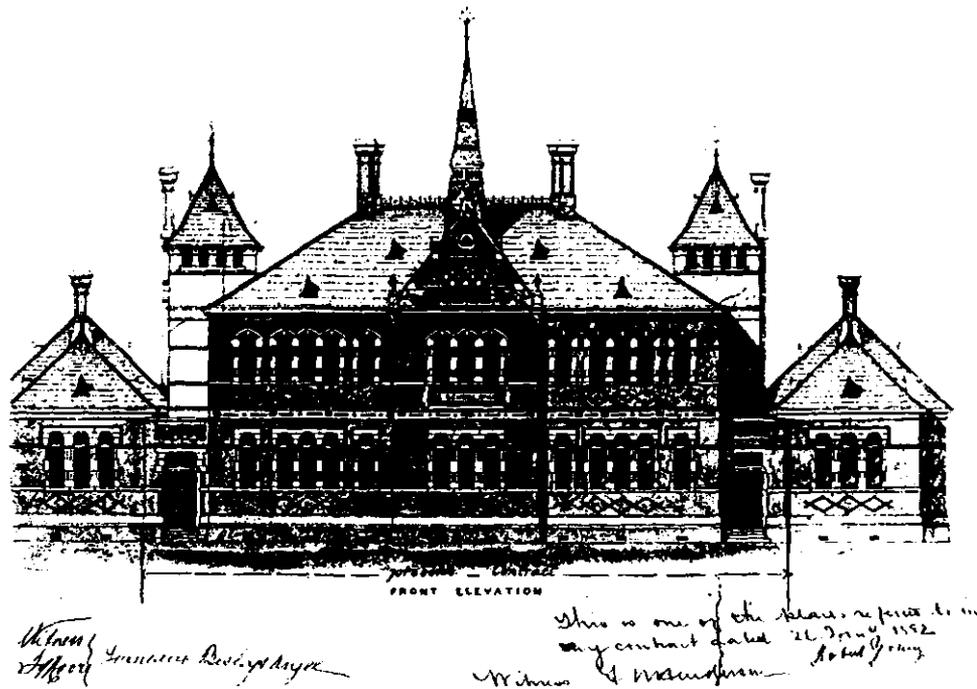


Figure 64 Elevation drawing for the Vere Street, Collingwood school, dated 20 December 1881. Source: Victorian Schools



Figure 65 State School No. 1490, Fitzroy North, 1875, architect H R Bastow. Source: Victorian Schools

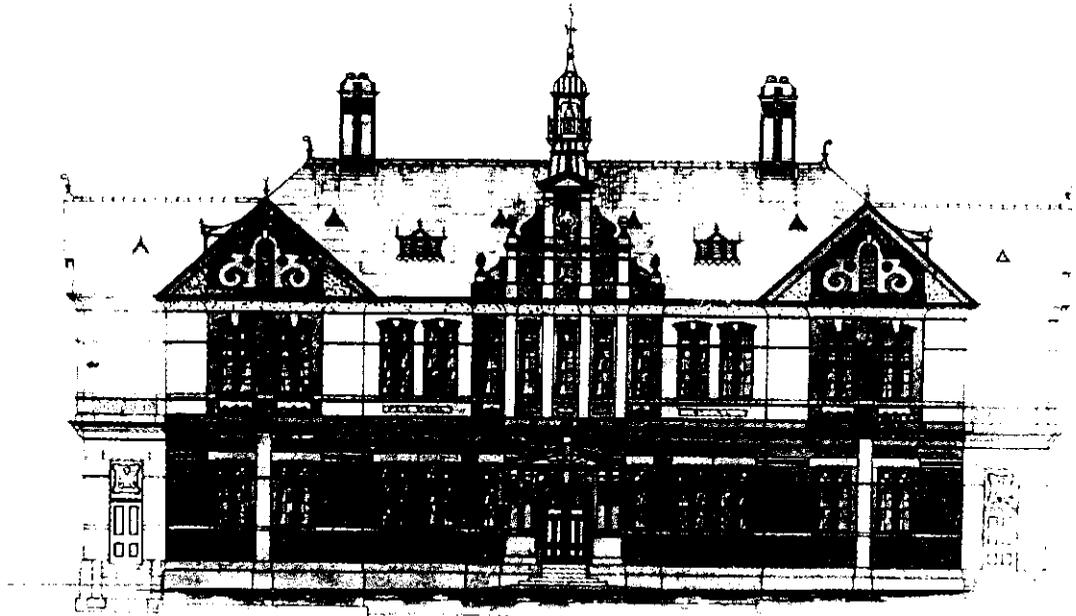


Figure 66 Elevation drawing for State School No. 3146, Spensley Street, Clifton Hill, 1891. Source: Victorian Schools

(Methodist) and a Free Presbyterian School.<sup>108</sup> Nola McKinnon remarked that Fitzroy 'schools listed in the Education Reports have a tendency to appear and disappear with alarming ease.'<sup>109</sup> Following the introduction of the Act, the situation became clearer, and the schools were reorganised and to some extent rationalised. The only denominational school to survive in Fitzroy was the Roman Catholic system,<sup>110</sup> with one of the larger-scale church school casualties being the Wesleyan Common School, which was situated in the National Hall, just to the north of the National Hotel, in Brunswick Street. By 1881, the overwhelming majority of Fitzroy children (63.8%) were being educated in State schools.<sup>111</sup> Many small private schools, most run by governesses, and with between 10 and 20 pupils, continued to operate well into the 1880s and 1890s. Most of these were in South Fitzroy, but with increasing numbers in North Fitzroy by the early 1880s.<sup>112</sup> All of these schools, as well as the numerous small privately run music and dance schools and academies which were scattered throughout Fitzroy, were conducted in non-purpose-built buildings, sometimes over shops but more often in private residences.

One of the earliest State schools in Fitzroy was the National or Common School, State School No. 111, in Bell Street, Fitzroy. This school has been remodelled for use as apartments, c.1995.<sup>113</sup> Other early buildings were the Education Department's George Street school, which was constructed in 1874,<sup>114</sup> and State School No. 2511, in Napier Street, Fitzroy.<sup>115</sup>

Early schools, prior to the Act, included a number of private schools which were advertised in the newspaper: 'Children requiring a home and an education; received by a competent lady; terms, 10s per quarter, apply Hogan's Draper, Cremorne St, Richmond' (*The Argus*, 7 July 1855); and 'Educational establishment for Young Ladies, conducted by Mrs Merrick, 176 Church St, 2 doors below Mr Stewart. A sound English education is imparted with French, music, drawing and plain and fancy work' (*Richmond*

*Australian*, 22 November 1861).<sup>116</sup> Richmond and Collingwood both boasted 'Domestic Arts Schools' where girls would learn

cookery, housewifery (jams, bottled fruits, polished articles, home-made polishes etc), laundering, needlework, crochet, knitting, literary work, singing, folk dancing, arts and crafts, woodwork, leatherwork and millinery.<sup>117</sup>

In Collingwood, a number of schools opened and closed in the early years, however, most were established after the *Education Act*. St Joseph's Catholic School, established in 1860, is an exception. The first schools opened in Gold Street, Clifton Hill (1874), Lithgow Street and Cambridge Street (1877), Cromwell Street (1886), Victoria Park (1889), and Spensley Street (1891). Collingwood High School, originally known as the Collingwood School of Domestic Economy, opened in 1915, following the Collingwood Technical School which opened in 1912.<sup>118</sup> The schools were generally overcrowded, and the children poorly dressed. Local residents counted on schools in times such as the Great depression. At the Cromwell Street School, the principal Herbert Penrose, organised that 150 children be provided with a daily meal, free boots (for 800), warm underwear and a supply of vegetables. A former student remembered that,

during the Depression years they used to go and get soup at Foy & Gibson's and bring it down for the children whose fathers were not working and couldn't afford dinner.<sup>119</sup>

Most students left school at 13 or 14 to help supplement the family wage.

After the *Education Act* was passed School Nos. 1396 (Brighton Street Richmond) and 1567 (Richmond) were erected in 1874 and 1877 respectively. Brighton Street was designed by Wharton & Vickers, while Richmond Central was designed by George Wharton alone.<sup>120</sup>

The relatively early establishment of kindergartens in Fitzroy was related to welfare initiatives in the very early 20th century. Educationalists such as the leader of the kindergarten movement in Victoria, Isabel Henderson, encouraged middle-class church women to recognise education as a means of improving the condition of the working classes. Like many other welfare initiatives, kindergartens were first tested in Fitzroy, at first in the local church halls, and later in separate buildings. A number of the first kindergartens in Victoria were run in local church halls in Fitzroy, before the Fitzroy Mission Kindergarten (later renamed the Isabel Henderson Kindergarten) was established on the corner of Young and Leicester Streets.<sup>121</sup> The Alice Lovell kindergarten was established in Gore Street in 1919, in a building which had previously housed the Mission of the Holy Redeemer (1890).<sup>122</sup> Other kindergartens were the Fitzroy Crèche Kindergarten in Napier Street in 1914, the Annie Todd Kindergarten in Napier Street (1916), and much later, the Fitzroy Crèche and Day Nursery in 1954.<sup>123</sup>

Dame Nellie Melba became the patron of a kindergarten held in St Stephen's Hall, in Richmond, which was later known as the Dame Nellie Melba Free Kindergarten. The Kindergarten was established in 1915, to counteract the inadequacies of existing crèches. Melba was a regular visitor to the centre, which was moved to Goodwood Street, Richmond, in 1928.

A specialist school established in Yarra, now a part of the Burnley Campus of the University of Melbourne, was the Burnley School of Horticulture. The gardens were opened in 1863 by the Horticultural Society of Victoria for fruit tree trials. A director of the gardens later commented,

Has anyone ever thought seriously of the extraordinary condition which the early settlers found the continent of Australia? No. fruit-yielding tree or shrub worthy of perpetuation. No grain-yielding grass fit for culture ... This, too, in

a land with such a vast range of climate and wealth of soil as to eminently fit it for the growth of fruits of every latitude and the home of useful animals of all parts of the world.<sup>124</sup>

The site also contained pleasure gardens accessible to the public. In 1891 the site became the School of Agriculture, administered by the Department of Agriculture. At some stage after his appointment as principal in 1897, Charles Bogue Luffmann implemented his own plan for the gardens, some of which survives today. Many of the trees on the site predate Luffmann's tenure as principal. The garden has undergone further design change since the turn of the century.

### **5.10 Libraries and Mechanics Institutes**

The Collingwood Mechanics Institute was erected in 1855 when a number of similar buildings were erected following the gold rush to cater for the influx of immigrants; in Collingwood, Emerald Hill, Warrnambool, Castlemaine, Sandhurst (now Bendigo) and Kilmore.<sup>125</sup> The institute had first met in the Independent Chapel in Collingwood. It was believed that a Mechanics Institute was needed there as it was 'a working class suburb, populated by those very artisans for whom mechanics institutes were intended'.<sup>126</sup> The foundation stone was laid by the Duke of Edinburgh and is now located at the Collingwood Post Office.

The first free public library in Richmond was the opened in a temporary town hall in 1862, which as well as offering a small reading collection, was the base for the local debating group. The library was damned as being unprofessional and was closed by 1863.<sup>127</sup> When the new town hall opened in 1869, the building included a library and reading room. The library was opened in 1873 in what is now the Building Surveyors room and by the end of the year had been visited by 26,736 people.<sup>128</sup> The South Richmond Free Library and Reading Room was opened in May 1875 in the Oddfellows Hall in Church Street; it became a branch of the town hall library in 1876, to ensure funding, and in 1878, was moved to a purpose built building (dem. 1973).<sup>129</sup> The building was on the site of the current Richmond Library. Both the town hall and the South Richmond libraries were closed after World War Two and the area was served only by temporary libraries until the current Richmond library was opened in late 1970. The library service was named Carringbush, in conjunction with the services in Fitzroy and Collingwood.<sup>130</sup>

The Fitzroy Free Public Library opened shortly after Richmond, in 1877. It was opened mostly due to the efforts of a local pharmacist, Thomas Ewing. Fitzroy at the time was resisting Collingwood's efforts to establish a joint free public library service in Smith Street, instead planning to incorporate a library in the new town hall. Ewing became Mayor in 1873 and, a great bibliophile, was very supportive of the endeavour. The library was opened in 1877, owing much to the fundraising efforts of Ewing. The service was upgraded in the 1950s and '60s to cater for the influx of immigrants with a non-English speaking background.<sup>131</sup>

The Collingwood Free Library was established in the 1859 Town Hall in Johnston Street, with books donated by John Pascoe Fawcner, who was at that time a resident of Smith Street, Collingwood.<sup>132</sup> It moved with the council into the new town hall in the 1880s. It remained there until 1976 when the Church of Christ chapel, opposite the town hall, was purchased and the library was moved again, at which time it merged with the Richmond Library.<sup>133</sup>

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## 6.0 DEVELOPING URBAN INSTITUTIONS

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### 6.1 The Establishment of a Religious and Spiritual Network

Church buildings were an important focus of many social and spiritual events in early Port Phillip society, providing cultural links between people of like backgrounds and experience. By the early 1850s, the Congregationalists, Presbyterians and the Primitive Methodists had all erected timber churches in Collingwood and by 1853 the Congregationalists had erected a stone church, which was considered the finest building in the district at the time.<sup>1</sup> The dominant religions were Church of England and Roman Catholic, while the remainder of the populous represented a broad range of religious persuasions. These included the various other Protestant churches, ranging from the low evangelical churches such as the Primitive Methodists and the Congregationalists to the various Scottish churches, Jews, and even nine members of the Freethinkers church.

Early churches in Fitzroy represented the diverse settler groups in Fitzroy in the 1840s and 1850s. The Anglican St Mark's Church, which has been described as 'Melbourne's finest early bluestone church',<sup>2</sup> opened in George Street in 1855.<sup>3</sup> Its substantial form and relatively elaborate design, originally by architect James Blackburn Jnr. and extended some years later in two stages by Leonard Terry and Charles Webb, reflected the financial support it received from the most moneyed and influential of early Fitzroy's residents.<sup>4</sup> Many Wesleyans were also amongst the earliest settlers in Fitzroy. It was here that the first Wesleyan church in the colony was constructed in 1841. This was replaced by a bluestone church in Brunswick Street, which in turn was replaced in 1874 with a large new building in Nicholson Street, North Fitzroy which was designed in polychrome brickwork by architects Terry & Oakden.<sup>5</sup> Another of the Wesleyans' early buildings is the former Wesleyan Hall, a prefabricated iron chapel imported from England and which is now All Saints' Catholic Hall, in King William Street.<sup>6</sup>

The Christian Israelite Sanctuary was constructed for the sect in 1861 at 193 Fitzroy Street, Fitzroy. This building is a very rare example of a Christian Israelite sanctuary, and is now the world headquarters for the small sect which, never large, numbered 115 at its zenith in 1871 and which has since all but died out.<sup>7</sup> It was at a cottage at the rear of the sanctuary that the Sect's founder, John Wroe, died whilst on a visit to the colony in 1863.<sup>8</sup> The Bible Christian Chapel at 278 Gore Street, Fitzroy, also dates from the 1850s. It was the first such chapel in Australia.<sup>9</sup>

The Roman Catholic population in Fitzroy was large, but its members were deemed to be part of the central parish of St Patrick's, though the mission church of St Brigid's on the corner of Nicholson Street and Alexandra Parade in North Fitzroy was made a parish church in the 1880s.<sup>10</sup> The Catholics were also represented in Nicholson Street by the Convent of Mercy containing the Academy of Mary Immaculate girls school and the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception built 1887-89. The Presbyterians started out with grand plans and erected a magnificent bluestone building at 122 Napier Street in 1871 but which was never completed.<sup>11</sup>

In Richmond, churches benefited from the foresight of the Rev. Joseph Docker. Joseph Docker was born in England in 1793. He migrated to Australia in 1828, settling in Sydney before he travelled overland to Port Phillip, where he established the Bontharambo run (now near Wangaratta) by 1840. Docker desired freehold land for security and purchased two blocks of ten hectares each on 1 August 1839.<sup>12</sup> Docker offered free land on his Clifton Village estate, near what is now Church Street, reasoning that people would want to live within walking distance of their church. The first to accept the offer was the Rev. William Wakefield of the Independent Church, who

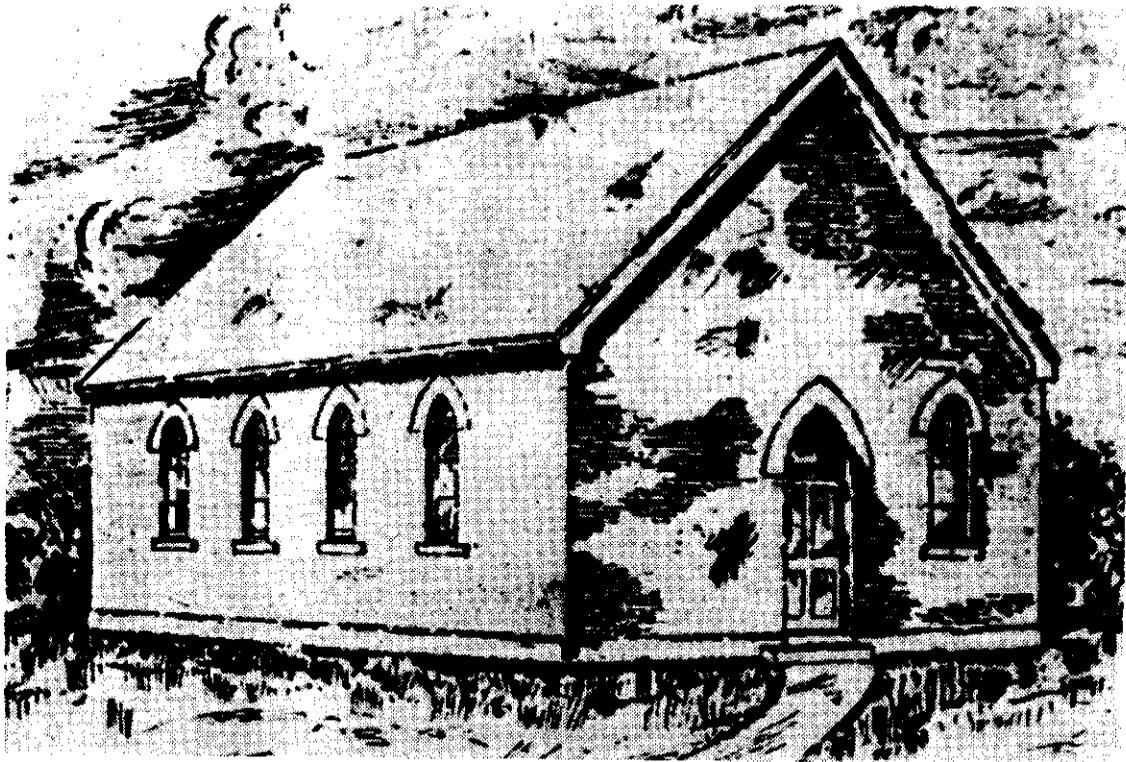


Figure 67 Wesleyan Chapel, Brougham Street, Richmond, 1846. Source: Melbourne Churches: 1836-1851

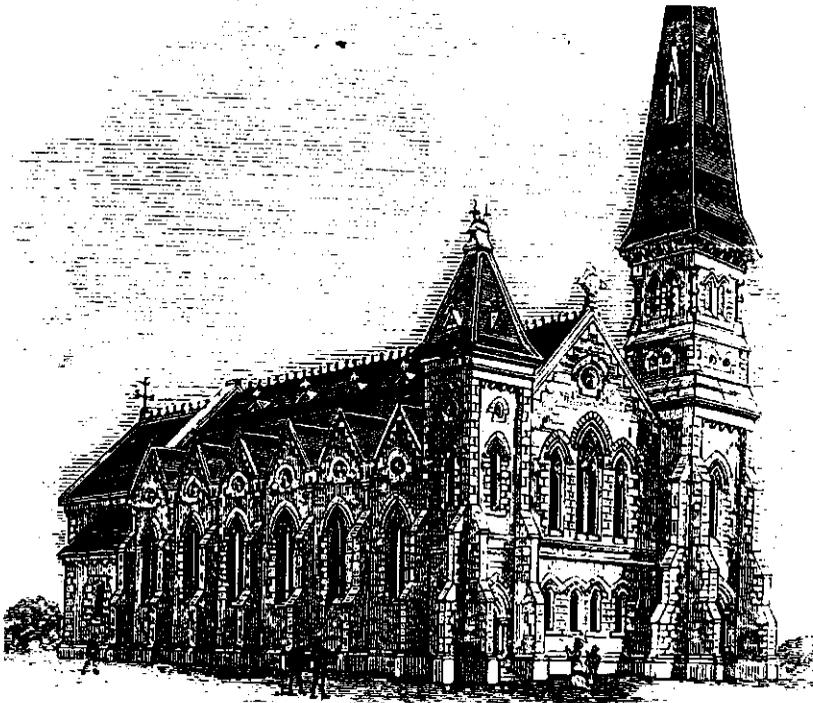


Figure 68 St Luke's Anglican Church, St George's Road, North Fitzroy. An engraving by the architects Crouch & Wilson, 1879, from the Australian Sketcher, 12 April 1879. Source: Fitzroy: Melbourne's First Suburb

accepted land in Gipps Street, somewhere between Church and Clifton Streets. A Day School was complete by 1842. The Church of England built on the Government Road (Church Street) in 1848, followed by the Wesleyan Chapel, St Ignatius' Roman Catholic Church and St Stephen's Anglican Church. By 1866 the Methodists alone had churches in Baker, Hoddle and Charles Street, and were also holding services in Victoria and Rose Streets.<sup>13</sup> As elsewhere, the church was irrevocably intertwined with both social and intellectual life. In 1862, as reported by the *Richmond Australian*, one could attend a lecture on electricity at the Richmond Young Men's Christian Association; an essay addressing the topic "Are the planets of the solar system the seat of animal and intellectual life?" at the Young Women's Christian Association hall; an address on the position and prospects of the United Church and Ireland in Victoria at St Stephen's or attend a meeting of the Richmond Band of Hope at the United Methodist Chapel.<sup>14</sup> Socially, St Stephen's Anglican offered a harriers (athletic) club, girls physical culture, a Young People's Missionary Organisation, a Ladies' Guild and a Mothers' Union. It was aimed to encourage people to mix, and marry, with their own faith: 'There were a lot of marriages as a result of people meeting through the churches.'<sup>15</sup>

In Richmond the majority of the population were Roman Catholic, while slightly less were Church of England. A Catholic parishioner, Harry Gayton, recalled that

They used to have up to five masses up at St Ignatius every Sunday and they were packed. There were seven confessional boxes around the church and they were packed too.<sup>16</sup>

The three churches which stood side by side in Church Street, Richmond, giving the street its name, survive. The Wesleyan Chapel was erected in 1854 by Wharton & Burns, a coursed bluestone rubble church with a rendered facade (now painted). St Ignatius, of bluestone construction, was designed by William Wardell in 1867-83; and St Stephen's, which is one of Melbourne's earliest bluestone churches, was designed by Newsome & Blackburn in 1850. The latter retains stained glass windows by Fergusson & Urie, Brooks Robinson and August Fisher.<sup>17</sup>

In Collingwood, Abbotsford and Clifton Hill, churches include the bluestone Church of the Immaculate Conception (Roman Catholic), erected in 1870-71; St Joseph's (Roman Catholic), a cement rendered building with windows by Fergusson & Urie, Rogers & Hughes and William Montgomery; St Savior's Mission Church (Anglican) by Terry & Oakden, a bluestone Gothic church designed in 1874; St John the Baptist (Roman Catholic) by J B Denny (1876). A later building is the Church of Christ Tabernacle, now the Collingwood Library, designed by Jonathan Rankine in 1888-89.

In North Fitzroy, the first Seventh Day Adventist Church in the southern hemisphere was organised in 1886 from a mission tent on the corner of Brunswick and Scotchmer Streets. The church met in various halls until its first permanent church building was constructed in Alfred Crescent in 1896.<sup>18</sup> The Seventh Day Adventists are now represented in Fitzroy at the Greek Seventh Day Adventist Church in St George's Road, North Fitzroy, a small Gothic style church with distinctive buttresses decorated in polychrome brickwork. It was originally built in 1887 as the Church of Christ. Also located in North Fitzroy was the Salvation Army whose barracks are at 720 Brunswick Street. It is a small castellated brick building erected in 1884 and which has something of the same character, if not the same scale, as the Army's buildings in Victoria Parade.

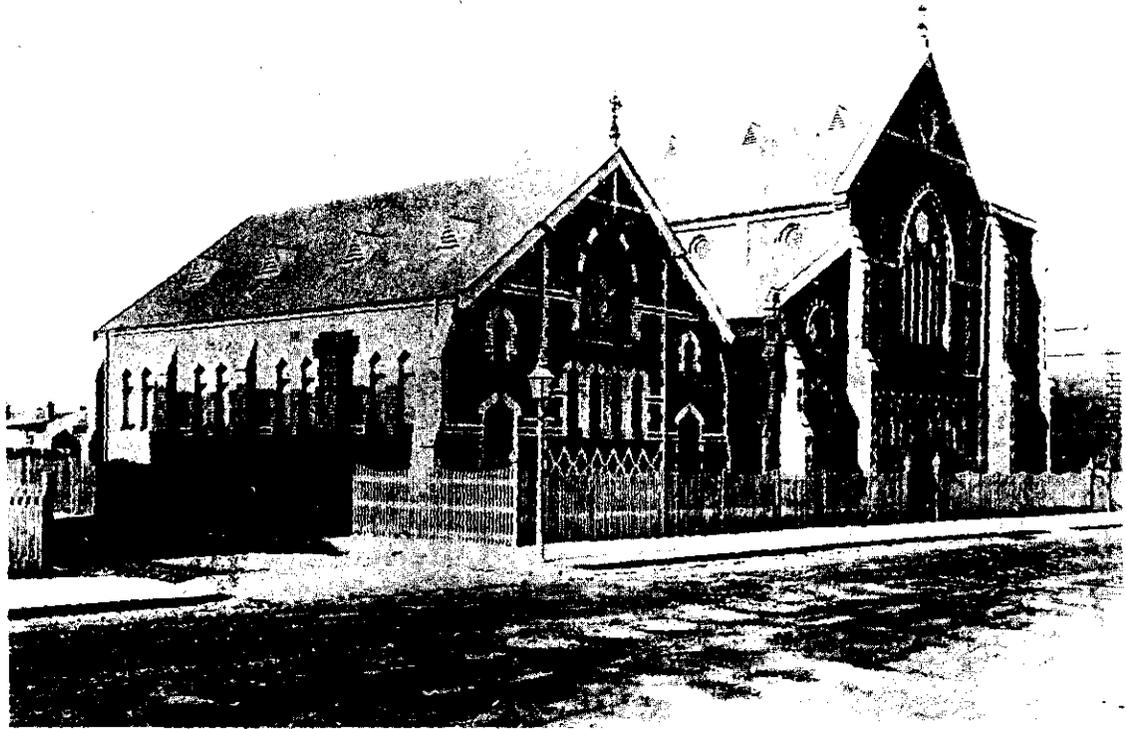


Figure 69 *The Wesleyan Methodist Church, Gipps Street, Collingwood, c.1880s (now demolished). Source: A Short History of Collingwood*



Figure 70 *St Stephen's Church, Church Street Richmond, c.1921. Source: State Library of Victoria (Picture Collection)*

## 6.2 Missions and Asylums

Dr John Singleton established a mission house in Little Bourke Street in 1879 which was later taken over by the Salvation Army.<sup>19</sup> Singleton then opened a refuge in Collingwood (Fig. 71). He believed that at least half of the female assisted migrants became prostitutes, particularly those who had to seek shelter in boarding houses: 'Vast numbers of them, without control and friendless, have been seduced from virtue's path's, and quickly swell the numbers of the fallen'.<sup>20</sup> Singleton tried to find these girls, or new immigrants before they 'fell', and get them food, lodging and work.

The Salvation Army arrived in Richmond in 1883. Originally in the old Methodist Church hall in Church Street, they opened their own citadel on the corner of Green and Chapel Streets, and within a few years had four centres in Richmond. The Salvation Army,

saw a great need in Richmond and established a social program [there]. It saw that people were hungry, and you couldn't expect them to listen to the gospel on an empty stomach.<sup>21</sup>



Figure 71 *Dr Singleton's Home for Fallen Women in Collingwood. Source: Land Boom and Bust*

Fitzroy carries a reputation as Melbourne's 'Much-Charitied Acre' which has been discussed at length in other publications.<sup>22</sup> In the depressions of both the 1890s and the 1930s, a variety of charitable organisations responded to the crisis faced by working-class people in Fitzroy with a range of different strategies. Late 19th and early 20th century Fitzroy has been likened to those areas of down-town Boston which are known for their role as the focus of a new wave of American philanthropists and social reformers.<sup>23</sup> In Fitzroy, the overwhelming majority of these groups were associated with religious organisations. The widespread deprivation and hardship suffered throughout the district in the 1890s drew the attention of philanthropists who based their assessment of claims for assistance largely on the need, but also sometimes partly on the moral stature, of the applicant. It also attracted a range of individuals and organisations aspiring to more fundamental and modern social reform objectives, which looked toward health, welfare and education initiatives to solve the problem of the slums. Thus, while religious bodies ran temporary shelters and supplied much needed food and clothing to the needy, educationalists like Isabel Henderson enlisted the support of middle-class church women from Malvern and Brighton to crusade for the establishment of kindergartens.<sup>24</sup>

One of the better known welfare initiatives, whose buildings are still used in the same way was the establishment of the Old Colonists Homes in Rushall Crescent, North Fitzroy. When the Old Colonists Association was formed in 1869, its stated objectives were to 'assist necessitous old colonists: to promulgate facts relative to the history of the colony: to promote the advancement of native-born Victorians, and to encourage friendly recognition between the members'. Laurie O'Brien has noted that the construction of the Old Colonists Homes in North Fitzroy was a gesture which was specifically aimed at certain of the suburb's residents who 'rewarded a modest number of respectable beneficiaries with secure accommodation in an almshouse-style retreat'.<sup>25</sup> In 1905, the



*Figure 72* *Old Colonialists' Home on the corner of Coppin and McArthur Avenues, North Fitzroy. Fitzroy: Melbourne's First Suburb*

complex consisted of a block of five acres of land which had been granted by the Government. On the land was a 'pretty hall for religious services and meetings: library capable of seating about 100 people, and caretakers quarters'.<sup>26</sup> As well as these buildings there were 53 cottages, most of which bore the names of their benefactors (Fig. 72).

Members of the Old Colonists Association who lived in Fitzroy were typically that suburb's prominent manufacturing, merchant and municipal leaders. The social significance of membership of the organisation is indicated by the fact that lists of Life Governors and the lesser 'subscribers' were published 1888 in T W H Leavitt's *Jubilee History of Victoria and Melbourne*.<sup>27</sup> Less exclusive, of course were a range of other refuges and organisations for the poor and needy in Fitzroy. These included the Salvation Army, the Sisters Rescue Brigade, and from the 1930s, the Brotherhood of St Laurence, which made the slum areas of Fitzroy its primary focus of attention.

Though Fitzroy's churches are located in both North and South Fitzroy, most of the suburb's church-based and other philanthropic and social welfare initiatives were based in South Fitzroy. The dislocation, poverty and social and economic distress engendered by the 1890s Depression was much more pronounced in South Fitzroy than in the north, where the better-off residents had built their terrace houses. The extent of the effect of the Depression on Fitzroy is reflected in the fact that Fitzroy lost population at the rate of about 1,500 per year between 1892 and 1894.<sup>28</sup> The building industry in Fitzroy appears to have suffered as heavily as retailing and industry. According to Nola McKinnon, those engaged in relief work in Fitzroy during the Depression, 'remarked on the number of "respectable artisans", carpenters, stonemasons and the like unable to find work'.<sup>29</sup>

The 20th century witnessed the partial breakdown of the old Protestant parish communities in Fitzroy.<sup>30</sup> As the incumbent of St Mark's Anglican Church put it in the early 1920s;

In the past twenty years there has been a continued exodus of people to the more favoured residential suburbs. The people with home ideals and better prospects move away from Fitzroy, and as in all industrial parishes they constituted the keenest portion of the churchgoing population. The migration will continue. The parish has to face a continued withdrawal of its strong supporters and factories are encroaching every year upon the residential areas of Fitzroy.<sup>31</sup>

This comment might carry a pessimistic air, however, since 1930 the work of the Anglican Brotherhood of St Laurence has been a considered and varied response to perceived social and economic problems in Fitzroy and elsewhere in Melbourne's inner suburbs. While the Brotherhood's primary focus in the 1930s and 1940s remained the eradication of slum areas in Fitzroy, later Brotherhood projects related to issues other than housing and included a series of pilot projects aimed at persuading the State Government to initiate action on specific issues. Thus, the first Family Planning Clinic and the first Victorian branch of Alcoholics Anonymous were both started by the Brotherhood in Fitzroy.<sup>32</sup>

Yarra Bend, was the site of the first Victorian mental institution (Fig. 73). Prior to the establishment of the Yarra Bend Lunatic Asylum, patients were sent to Tarban Creek Asylum in Sydney. The new building site was described by Garryowen as being in 'the romantic bend of the river at Studley Park ... for centuries a favourite haunt of the Aborigines',<sup>33</sup> noting that 'insanity was a malady quite unknown among the Blacks, though essentially a concomitant of civilisation'.<sup>34</sup> The asylum opened on 5 July 1848 and was originally considered a ward of the Tarban Creek Asylum, and was known as the

'Lunatic Asylum, Merri Creek'.<sup>35</sup> After the separation of Victoria from New South Wales in 1850, the institution became known as Yarra Bend and was initially, for the first three years, run by a lay administration, a situation which created many problems.<sup>36</sup> In 1852, a Committee of Enquiry produced the first report on the asylum, the conclusions of which shed light on the human abuses and mismanagement which characterised the institution.<sup>37</sup> Another enquiry was held in 1854, which recommended the construction of a new asylum.<sup>38</sup> An elevated site was chosen just north of the present site of Yarra Bend and construction began in 1856, halting the following year because of the prohibitive cost.<sup>39</sup> In 1858 a Legislative Assembly Select Committee was appointed to examine the state of Yarra Bend and the suitability of the proposed new site at Kew. This Committee recommended the adoption of a combination of a large central asylum building with groups of cottages around it.<sup>40</sup>

In 1863, the Government agreed to the construction of additional asylums and also the construction of special wards at general hospitals. Many 'lunatics' were also accommodated in the colony's penal establishments, in the private Cremorne asylum in Richmond, and in the old powder magazine at Royal Park, which was also converted to a receiving house. In 1866 the old Collingwood Stockade was also converted to a Temporary Asylum.<sup>41</sup> This system of 'branch asylums' was in operation for about ten years, each additional facility serving to ease the burden on Yarra Bend, pending the construction of new permanent asylums.<sup>42</sup>

Garryowen recalled a 'narrative ... [of a] ghastly, grotesque scene' which is indicative of the response to lunacy at the time:

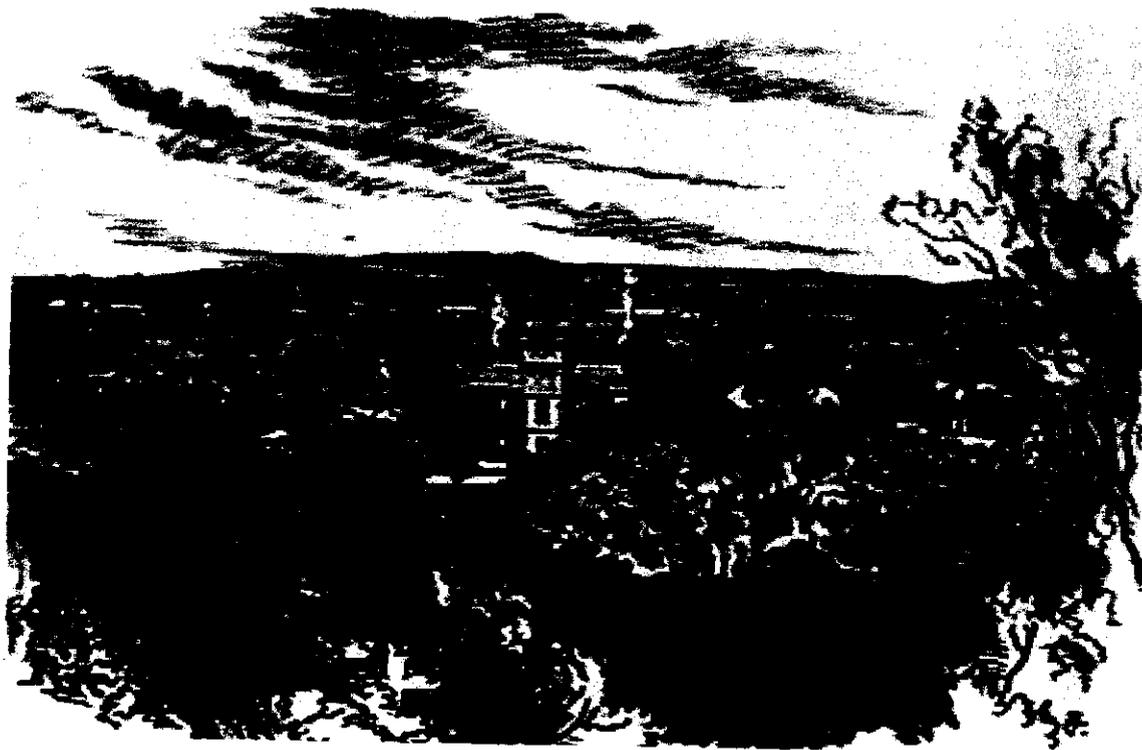


Figure 73 *The Yarra Bend Asylum, an engraving by Charles Frederick Somerton, 1862. Source: State Library of Victoria (Picture Collection)*

On a fine Sunday afternoon, Mr. Edmund Ashley ... was returning from a walk to the Merri Creek, and in traversing a corner of the bush now appropriated as College reserves ... he was astonished to behold ... a man with a chain padlocked around his waist at one end, while the other was firmly stapled in the tree trunk. The man looked gaunt and hungry, and in reply to some questions, declared he had voluntarily settled himself there, where he had been, without breaking fast, for three days, and intended to so remain whilst he lived, which he did not expect to be very long. He shewed [sic] no wish to be released, and from his manner there could be little doubt of his insanity ... the emancipist was taken to the lock-up and on medical examination, found to be so demented, that he was transmitted to the "Yarra Bend" Asylum.

One day, twenty years after, Mr. Ashley took his wife and Mrs. Richard Heales to see the Asylum ... his notice was specially attracted by the antics of a man affusing himself with some bits of painting of a theatrical character ... Ashley recognised ... the identical individual found so long before chained under the tree. He had a vivid recollection of all that happened on that fine Sunday, "twenty golden years ago", and assured the visitor that he had been very happy and comfortable since their last interview.<sup>43</sup>

It was unlikely that this was correct, as the Board appointed by the Government found that Yarra Bend was 'a gloomy, cheerless, and insecure structure; wholly unfit for the reception and treatment of lunatics', leading to the construction of the Kew Asylum (Willsmere), the first section of which was commenced in 1864.<sup>44</sup>

The Irish Sisters of Mercy were the first religious order to arrive in Melbourne. They established a fee-paying Academy in a 'cottage' in Nicholson Street, and ran a House of Mercy in the adjacent building. This was a refuge for 'respectable young women out of situation', whom they trained as domestics. The complex was enlarged to include a ragged School for 'stray children driven through poverty to the streets'; an Industrial School; and a school for children who could not afford to pay fees.<sup>45</sup> One of the school fee-paying students was Mother Mary McKillop, who was born and lived in Brunswick Street, Fitzroy.<sup>46</sup>

The Convent of the Good Shepherd was established in Abbotsford in 1863, by four Catholic sisters, and one of the earliest to be established in Victoria, preceded only by the Mercy Convent. According to Andrew Lemon, while the Mercy Order 'directed its efforts chiefly to schools, orphanages, and the training of immigrant girls for domestic service, the Good Shepherd Order's priority was the care of "fallen women".<sup>47</sup> Before long, however, the Order extended its work to encompass the care, training and education of poor children and from 1879, to the establishment of a general Catholic day school for the district.<sup>48</sup>

The sisters were taken to view a number of 'available properties' by the Bishop. They purchased Abbotsford House, where they opened a women's refuge, known as the Magdalen Asylum:

In those days the convent villa was enclosed with an iron fence in Clarke Street and a paling fence in St Helier's [sic] Street, and in the grounds where fine gum trees grew and cattle grazed, there was a railed-in pathway from the house to a comparatively small brick building where the penitents started the laundry ... there was no garden in the Convent ...<sup>49</sup>

The Order purchased the adjoining St Helier's estate for £4,500 in 1865.<sup>50</sup> By 1866, the complex housed state wards (juvenile criminals) at the reformatory; 'preservites' (girls placed in the convent and supported by guardians) at the Preservation School; and neglected juveniles committed by the courts to the industrial school.<sup>51</sup>

The Industrial School was the first substantial new building to be constructed on the site following the arrival of the Good Shepherd Order. It was designed by architect, J B Denny, and was a 'fine brick building' of two storeys. At this time, 'with the exception of another of rather limited capabilities, recently established in Geelong ... [the Industrial School at Abbotsford was] the only one of its kind in the Colony of Victoria.'<sup>52</sup> The complex was described thus:

[T]he Convent proper ... is a villa having a broad verandah running around two sides of it which was originally a private dwelling and whose original external appearance has not been altered. Several large substantial brick buildings have been erected since the nuns settled down at Abbotsford so that now the place presents the appearance of an extensive factory ... however [there is also] the beautiful and spacious church (not yet completed) ... a large portion of the grounds attached to the Convent is devoted to kitchen gardening; and the clothes that come from the extensive laundry to be dried look like the sails of a distance [sic] fleet.<sup>53</sup>

By 1880, when the various charitable facilities on the site were all operating at peak capacity and the buildings had been extended in order to provide adequate accommodation for each, the complex was indeed a substantial one, though retaining something of a rural atmosphere:

The area of the convent ground is about 27 acres [11 hectares], the soil is good and well-cultivated, supplying nearly all the vegetables required for the use of the inmates. There is a large orchard, poultry yards and a number of milch cows supplying various necessaries for the use of the inmates. The ground lies on the banks of the River Yarra, which bounds it for a long distance. It is very pleasantly indeed picturesquely sited having a fine view of the high and well wooded parklands on the other side of the river. The land is agreeably undulating rising high above any danger from floods, although occasionally considerable damage and loss of property have been incurred through the flooding of the lower lying portions of it. Immediately above the Convent itself there is a small cemetery in which are interred the sisters who have died in the Convent. Immediately around the Convent is arranged a great mass of buildings for the accommodation of the numerous industrial and other orphan children who are boarded and trained here. These buildings are all of two storeys, some stuccoed and some left in plain brickwork, are substantial and very commodious ... A short distance apart is a large two-storey building part of which is used as a day school for outside children. A large pile of two-storeyed brick buildings for the accommodation of the Magdalens stand some distance off in the grounds in another direction. These buildings are substantial, suitable and well-planned and contain the necessary appliances for carrying out the various labours in which they are employed by the inmates by whom a large amount of valuable work principally in connection with the laundry is performed.<sup>54</sup>

## 7.0 LEISURE AND ENTERTAINMENT IN THE SUBURBS

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### 7.1 Licensed Hotels and 'Sly Grog'

The importance of the drink trade in early Port Phillip society was reflected in the large number of hotels established in the inner suburbs in the late 1840s and early 1850s, particularly in Fitzroy. By 1842 there were three 'Fitzroy applications for "authorised grog shops" before the magistrates sitting at the Annual Licensing Session'.<sup>1</sup>

The first licensed hotel in Fitzroy was the Travellers Rest (dem.) in Nicholson Street in 1842.<sup>2</sup> It was joined later that year by the Devonshire Arms which, though delicensed in the early 20th century, still stands as the oldest surviving hotel building in Melbourne today.<sup>3</sup> In Richmond, also a suburb with a large proportion of hotels, The Richmond (dem.) opened in 1842 on the south corner of Abinger and Church Street, followed in 1843 by the Punt Inn (dem.) at the eastern end of Punt Road and the Royal (dem.) which opened on the corner of Swan and Docker Streets in 1847. However, the real rash of hotel building in Fitzroy began in the early 1850s with some 33 hotels being constructed, most in the South Fitzroy area. A large number of these were located on the suburb's main commercial strips, Brunswick and Gertrude Streets. The number of hotels in South Fitzroy in the 1850s was large but not extraordinary, however it is unusual to find such a large proportion of these early stone or brick hotels still surviving today. Far fewer hotels were built in the later settled area of North Fitzroy. The first hotel to be built in North Fitzroy was the British Queen in Nicholson Street, near the corner of Reid Street in 1854.<sup>4</sup> Of the 57 hotels operating in Fitzroy in 1870, 45 were located in the area south of Johnston Street.<sup>5</sup> This situation was rectified to a certain extent during the 1870s, when prospective publicans concentrated on opening up licensed premises in North Fitzroy; 19 of the 25 hotels built in this decade were situated north of Johnston Street.<sup>6</sup> North Fitzroy was still a long way behind, however, and even today does not have anywhere near the number of hotels as South Fitzroy.

By the mid-19th century all of Melbourne's inner suburbs were characterised by a high concentration of hotels. In the absence of other venues, and the lack of instantaneous forms of mass communication such as those used today, hotels were a primary focus of social, political and economic activity. In Richmond,

... around the Vine Hotel on the corner of Bridge Road and Church Street, there were always a hundred or so men standing outside with half-a-dozen in the bar—picking up the smell of it.<sup>7</sup>

They were most important meeting places in the colony, their proprietors often acting as the main source of news and editorial comment;<sup>8</sup> at the Belvidere Hotel, on the corner of Brunswick Street and Victoria Parade (now the Eastern Hill Hotel) the stonemasons resolved to fight for an eight-hour day.<sup>9</sup> Apart from offering a place where people could meet and drink, hotels often offered those recreational facilities which were permitted under the licensing legislation. In those hotels whose proprietors held an appropriate license, billiard tables were installed. These were often located in separate rooms either within the hotel building or immediately adjacent. For example, Benjamin Drewery, the owner in the 1850s of Drewery's Hotel in Gertrude Street, Fitzroy (known for most of its life as the Renown Hotel, renamed Squizzy Taylor's and now named the Renown Tavern) leased a Brick Billiard Room from his neighbour, Joseph Horsefall.<sup>10</sup>

Richmond's hotels opened with a comparable speed to Fitzroy and by 1862 there were 36 pubs.<sup>11</sup> However 'sly grog' that is, unlicensed alcoholic drinks, was widely available at all times of the day or night. Collingwood was reported to have 220 'sly-grog' shops

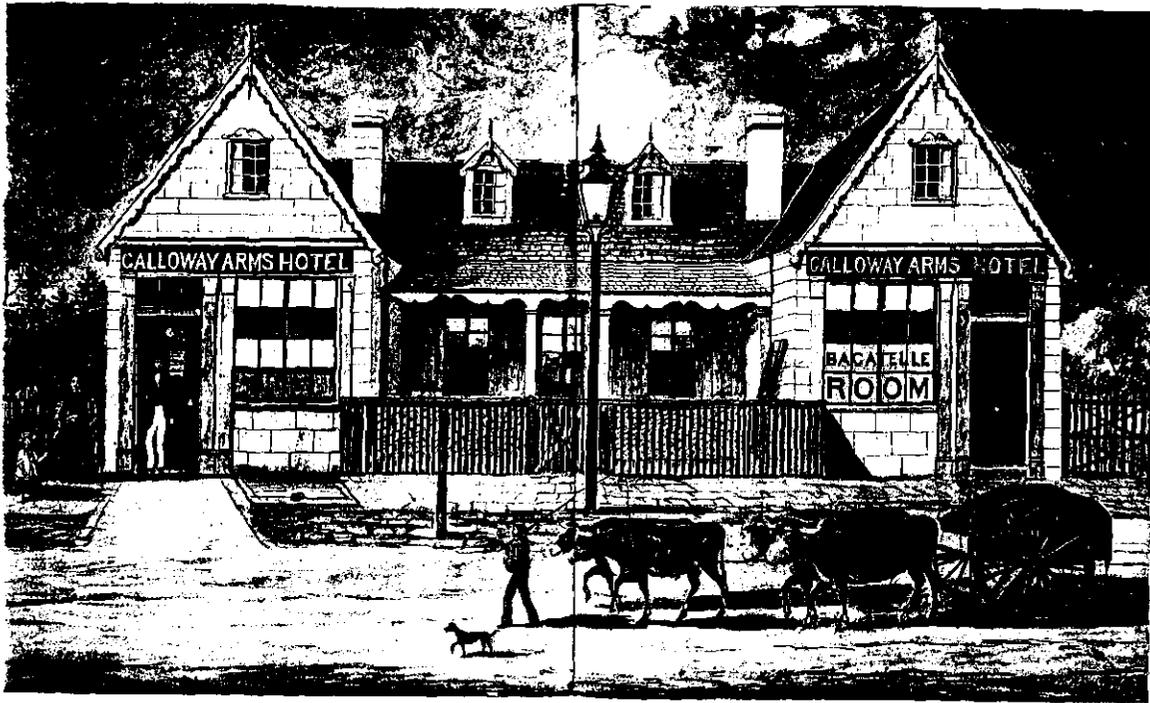


Figure 74 The Galloway Arms, Johnston Street, Collingwood, c.1850s. Source: Melbourne After the Gold Rush



Figure 75 The Earl of Zetland Hotel, Stanley Street, Collingwood, c.1862. Source: The Inner Suburbs

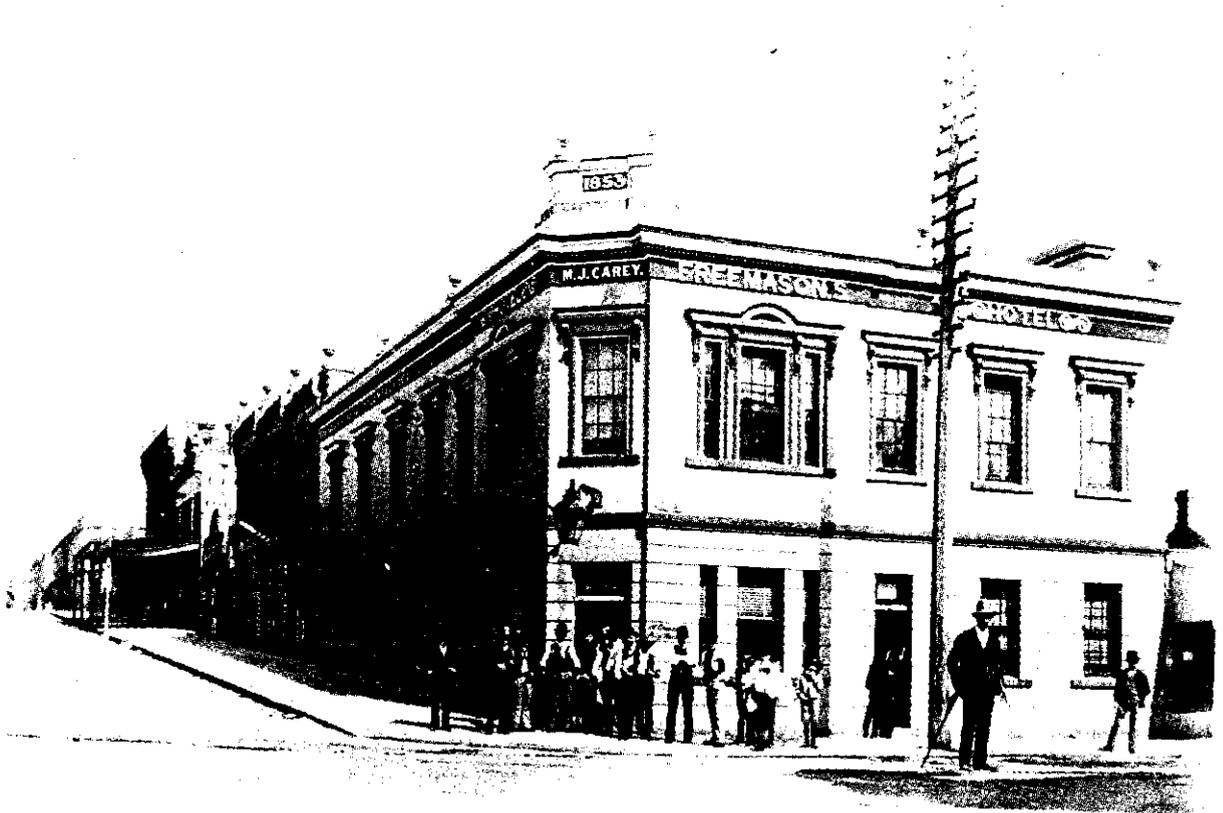


Figure 76 *The Freemason's Hotel, c.1888, corner of Smith and Gertrude Streets, Fitzroy(now demolished). Source: Fitzroy: Melbourne's First Suburb*

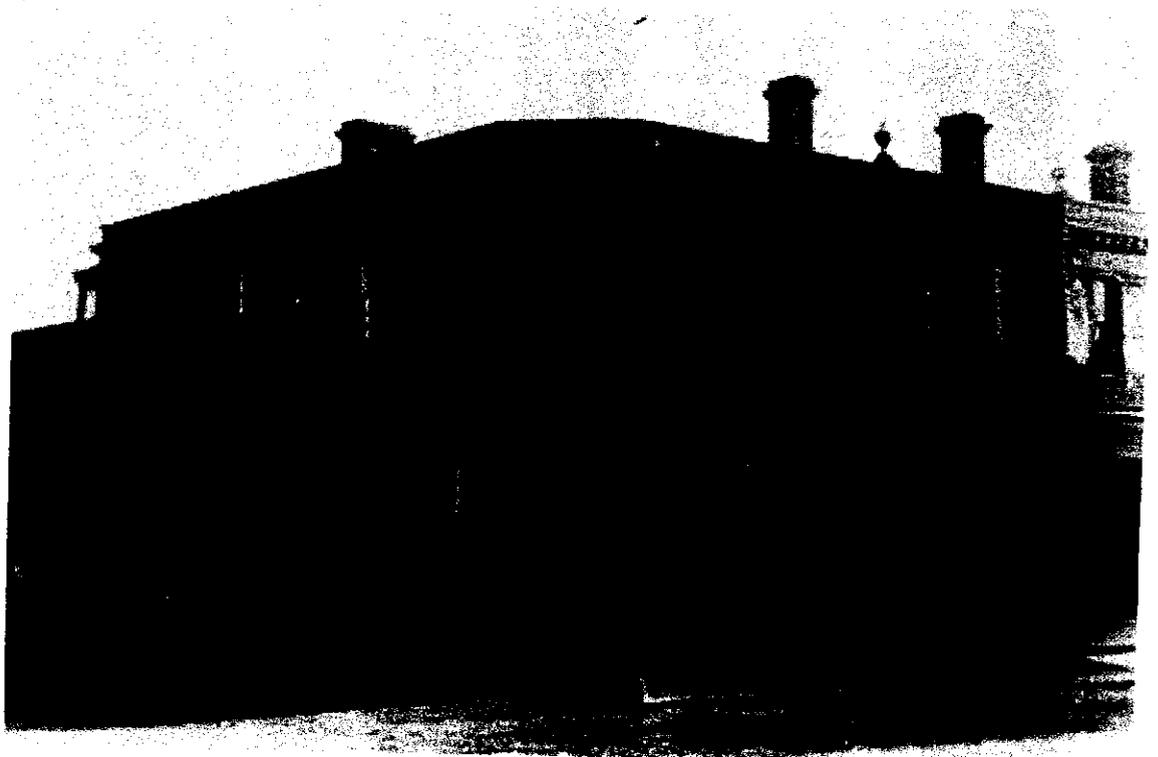


Figure 77 *The Mountain View Hotel (now Barassi's), corner Bridge Road and Rotherwood Street, Richmond, date unknown. Source: State Library of Victoria (Picture Collection)*

by the 1860s by Assistant Inspector of Distilleries John Enshaw, who stated that 'All the grocers sell it there with impunity, especially in Smith Street and on the Flat, that is, down about the brickyards'.<sup>12</sup> In Richmond, one could always get 'sly-grog' around the Cremorne Gardens or, later, as Frank Ponchard (born 1907) remembers, from 'Deafy':

There was a fellow called Deafy who had a sly grog place in the first street past Victoria Street, off Church Street. He used to sell grog for 1s. 6d. a bottle, which meant he was making sixpence a bottle. He'd be there till about ... 11 o'clock at night, and when he went to bed he was that deaf that you could hammer on the door as much as you liked and he'd never hear you. He used to tie a bit of string to his toe and put it outside the door hanging on a stick. You'd pull this string and out would come old Deafy and say, "What d'you want?". He finished with plenty of money, houses and everything.<sup>13</sup>

Collingwood's hotels tended to be located on transport routes, such as Simpson's Road (now Victoria St) and Johnston and Wellington Streets. The c.1855 *Map of Collingwood* lists four hotels,<sup>14</sup> which had increased to ten hotels in 1861, those officially listed in the directory, and by 1870 the number had jumped to over 75.<sup>15</sup> Many hotels were named after nearby industries: the Bakers' Arms (cnr Victoria & William Sts), Brickmaker's Arms (cnr Victoria & Flockhart Sts), Jolly Hatters, the Butcher's Arms (corner Hoddle and Easey Sts), and the Quarryman's Arms, Council Club and Courthouse (all in Johnston St). Hotels were generally suited to the tone of the area and its residents: Our Boys was patronised by the upper classes, while the lower class of hotel remained

dirty, badly furnished, badly conducted, devoid of accommodation, and the liquors sold in them are abominable trash. They [were] resorted to by besotted drunkards, loafers, vagabonds, thieves and prostitutes.<sup>16</sup>

In Richmond, by 1864, there were 27 hotels listed in *Sands and McDougall's Melbourne Directory*: the Admiral Napier (Bridge Rd), Albion (Bridge Rd), Bricklayers' Arms (Church St), Builders' Arms (Rowena Parade), Cricketers' Arms (Punt Rd), Dove Hotel (Swan St), Duke of Richmond (Swan St), Eureka (Church St), Fire Brigade (Church St), Greyhound Inn (Swan St), Lord Raglan (Hoddle St & Victoria St), North Richmond (Victoria St), Oxford and Cambridge (Lennox St), Prince Alfred (Church St), Quarrymans' Arms (Church St), Richmond (Cremorne St), Royal (Punt Rd), Royal Saxon (Church St), Spread Eagle (Bridge Rd), Star and Garter (Bridge Rd), Surrey (Lennox St), Swan (Swan St), Sydenham (Elizabeth St), Vice-Regal (Church St), Vine (Church St), White Horse (Swan St), Yarra (Cremorne St).<sup>17</sup> This number had more than doubled to 59 by 1870.<sup>18</sup> Many of the later hotels survive, albeit in altered form, such as the Bricklayers' Arms (Victoria St), Cricketer's Arms (Punt Rd), White Horse Hotel (250-252 Swan St Richmond, c.1850), Freemason's Tavern (5 Wellington St, Richmond, 1865) and the Napier Hotel (Bridge Rd).<sup>19</sup>

The Licenses Reduction Board, in regard to the licensing districts of Central Fitzroy, South Fitzroy and Jolimont, in 1910 found that areas within this district had a surplus of hotels:

These three districts adjoin each other, and, except for the East Melbourne and Jolimont portion of the latter, are all within the municipal boundaries of the City of Fitzroy. They are very old settled districts, and the manner in which the hotels are located presents some curious anomalies. The Jolimont District affords a further illustration of the difficulty of estimating the real overstocking by the excesses on paper. There is only a surplus of two, but of the twelve hotels in that district, no less than ten are situated in the comparatively small Fitzroy portion, bounded by Victoria-parade, Nicholson, Gertrude and Smith Streets, leaving only two for the large residential population in East Melbourne

and Jolimont. This is a striking example of how the residents of one portion of a district may carry the overstocked hotels in another, and so leave themselves without any possibility of obtaining an adequate share of hotels ...<sup>20</sup>

Despite the forced closure of a number of hotels in South Fitzroy, the easy availability of liquor in this part of the suburb remained marked. In 1933, Oswald Barnett's study of the slum areas of South Fitzroy isolated the drink issue as one which adversely affected 'family life and well-being' and contributed to the plight of those people Barnett described as 'slum types'.<sup>21</sup> In his report, Barnett noted some 23 hotels and five wine shops in South Fitzroy.<sup>22</sup>

From the turn of the century, because of changing licensing laws and the pressure put on publicans by the Licenses Reduction Board to upgrade facilities, many of these early hotels have undergone significant additions and alterations. Others were demolished and rebuilt in the early 20th century, while a significant proportion were delicensed. It is these last examples which, if they still survive, tend to have retained more of their original fabric, than those which still trade today.

## 7.2 Clubs, the 'Pictures' and Dancing

Richmond is famous for being the birthplace of the world famous opera singer, Dame Nellie Melba, who made her public debut in the new Richmond Town Hall in 1869, aged eight. It was reported by the *Richmond Australian* that,

Little Miss Mitchell, a young lady of the precocious age of ten years [sic]<sup>23</sup>, who, not content with singing in really first rate style "Can't You Dance the Polka", but also accompanied herself on the piano, was, we thought, the "Gem" of evening, and richly deserved the spontaneous encore she received, and responded by singing "Coming Through the Rye". In this Scotch air she again took the large audience by surprise to hear such sweet notes coming from a comparatively such a mere child ... she is indeed a musical prodigy, and will make a crowded house whenever she is announced again.<sup>24</sup>

Melba was born Helen Porter Mitchell in 1861, living at Doonside (now demolished, the house generated the name Doonside Street), Richmond, on the Yarra River, the home of her father, builder David Mitchell. Melba was also known as 'the All-Australian World's Champion Bitch'.<sup>25</sup>

The town hall was an important venue for social and political gatherings. Even in the 1870s, before the extension of the Fitzroy Town Hall, the Fitzroy Philharmonic Society played there, while free concerts were held by the Mayor. Following its extension, other groups gained access to the facilities there, including the Curlew Club, the Rifle Club, and other locally-based clubs and societies, as well as private entrepreneurs hoping to stage entertainments there.<sup>26</sup> Long-time Fitzroy residents have recalled dances with eight hundred people at the Fitzroy Town Hall on a Saturday night.<sup>27</sup> Collingwood was pressured to build a town hall after Fitzroy's was completed. The residents of Collingwood had previously held their social events in a school or private premises such as Peter Nettleton's wool store.<sup>28</sup>

Prior to the advent of the 'pictures' Richmond residents went to see the lantern shows:

we would go and see the lantern slides down on the corner of Chapel St and Green St. It was a penny to get in but if it was so crowded you couldn't get in, the man in the fruit shop would put a ladder up, and we'd get up the ladder and sit there. The windows were open and we'd get a free go with the magic lantern, and by Jove, it was beaut for us kids in those days.<sup>29</sup>

Then the National was built in Bridge Road in 1911, replaced by a second building in 1939 by Cowper, Murphy & Appleford. The National was followed by the Globe, 409 Church Street, designed by H W & F B Tompkins in 1911 (closed 1970), Kings, 313 Burnley Street, Burnley, which was only open from 1912 to 1914, the New Richmond (339-45 Bridge Road) in 1912, the Crown, 216 Victoria Street, in 1914 (later the Victoria and the Valhalla) which closed in 1987, Cinema Richmond, 313 Bridge Road, in 1919 (now BBQs Galore), which only ran until 1925, North's Open Air Picture Theatre, and the Burnley, designed by Bohringer, Taylor & Johnson in 1928 (now Swan Auctions).<sup>30</sup> The movies were

all silent then, but they had some interesting sound effects. There was usually a woman playing the piano to suit the activity. They rubbed sandpaper for a train, beat drums for thunder and two coconut halves for horses' hooves and swished around broken glass to make the sound of waves.<sup>31</sup>

In Clifton Hill: the Clifton, 83 Queens Parade, was built in 1918, designed by C W Vanheems, later the Cinema Italia, closed in 1983;<sup>32</sup> in North Carlton the Jubilee (later the Adelphi), 357 Nicholson Street, erected in 1912, closing in 1967 and now in use as the San Remo ballrooms.<sup>33</sup>

Cinema became very popular in Fitzroy, particularly in the inter-War period, when three cinemas were operating. One resident recalled that 'It was nothing to go three times a week to the local pictures ... they'd have two programmes a week at each theatre and there were three local picture theatres and two films at each show'.<sup>34</sup> One of these cinemas, the Regent Picture Theatre in Johnston Street, opened in 1929 and was demolished in 1983 after closing in 1959.<sup>35</sup> Also in Johnston Street, Collingwood, was the Austral, which was built in 1921;<sup>36</sup> and the Vita, at 306 Johnson Street, Abbotsford, which was built in 1914, and was later known as the Star before closing in 1922, and is now used as shops and offices.<sup>37</sup>

Apart from its primary function, St George's Picture Theatre, in Holden Street, North Fitzroy was used as a meeting place for a variety of purposes, including World War I recruiting drives.<sup>38</sup> Also in North Fitzroy was Denton Hall, which was a privately owned venue, catering for auctions, fund-raising concerts, and meetings of various local groups and associations, as well as in its main capacity, which was as a dance hall.<sup>39</sup> The current owner, Allan Willingham, has written of the hall:

[The hall was] ... a popular spot in the first decade of the 20th century. In one year alone, 1904, a leap year, the Denton's held no less than forty four leap year dances in their sumptuous and lofty hall. It could justifiably be called the social centre of North Fitzroy. A family friend, Bernard Hoy, recalled that: 'We had so many leap year dances and the ladies were so good to us all. I kept a diary that year and know that I went to 66 dances no less than 44 being complimentary'.<sup>40</sup>

For a variety of reasons, however, the hall fell into disuse as a dance hall by the time of the outbreak of World War One. It was later turned into a factory, and has more recently undergone restoration works.<sup>41</sup>

One of the more unusual entertainment-related buildings in Fitzroy was demolished in 1927. Dominating the Victoria Parade skyline on the western corner of Fitzroy Street for almost forty years, the Fitzroy Cyclorama (Fig. 79) eventually fell victim to changes in entertainment technology. Though it had been popular for many years, the illusionistic pictorial entertainment of the cyclorama, which had been invented in 1787, was no match for the cinematograph following the latter's introduction to Australia from the late 1890s.<sup>42</sup> The building, which was designed by well-known Melbourne architect,

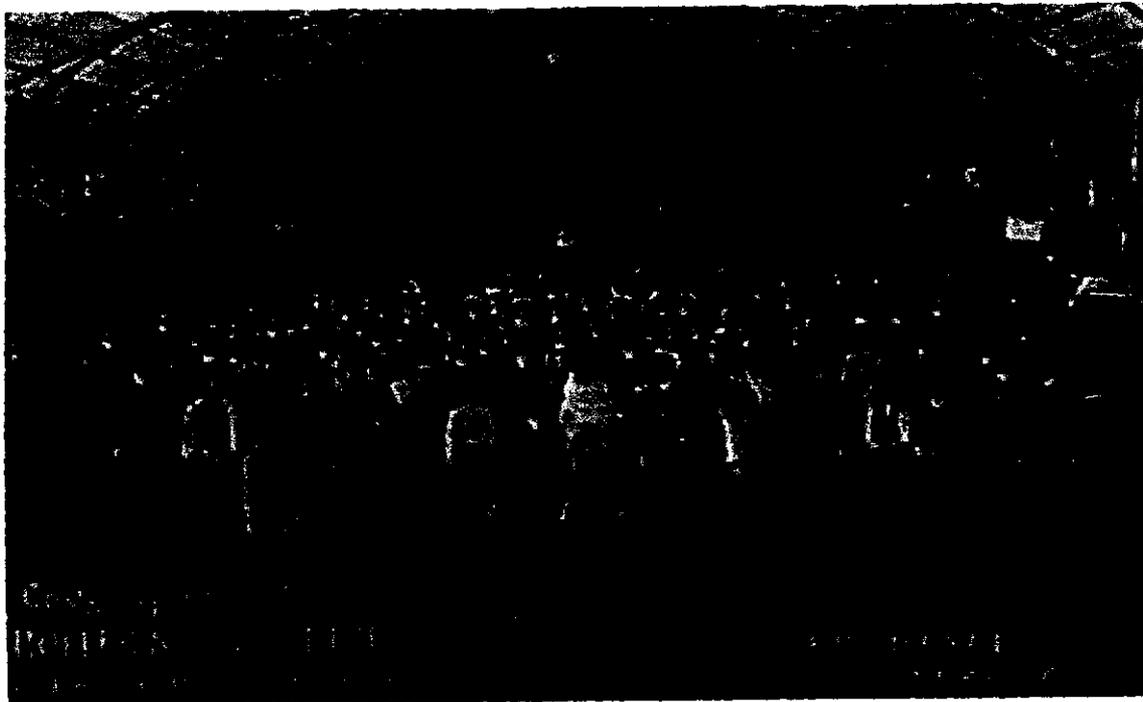


Figure 78 *The Crystal Palace Roller Skating Rink, Bridge Road, Richmond, c.1900. Source: State Library of Victoria (Picture Collection)*



Figure 79 *The Fitzroy Cyclorama, erected in 1889, on the corner of Victoria Parade and Fitzroy Street. Source: Fitzroy: Melbourne's First Suburb*

Lloyd Tayler for the American entrepreneurs Isaac Newton Redd and Howard H Gross, was purpose-built and had a striking and unique form.<sup>43</sup> A handbill from one of the cyclorama's shows gives some indication of the types of subjects explored in this manner:

Short History  
of  
the Eureka Stockade  
Ballarat, 1854  
Description of  
the Picture  
and  
List of the Killed and Wounded  
Compiled by R P Whitworth  
for  
the Melbourne Cyclorama Co. Ltd.<sup>44</sup>

It closed in 1904 and in 1927 was demolished to make way for extensions to St Vincent's Hospital.

One of the most important occasions on the Richmond social calendar was the Richmond Football Club ball which was considered to be a 'big occasion ... you were very honoured to be invited ... to be taken by a footballer was the greatest thing that ever happened'.<sup>45</sup> Other dances were held throughout the year. During the Depression the Richmond Unemployed Relief Committee used the Richmond Town Hall to run 'old time dances and 'euchre parties'.<sup>46</sup>

### 7.3 Small Backyards But Parks Instead

The area along the Yarra River has always been a popular tourist destination. The *Illustrated Melbourne Post* declared on 4 October 1862,

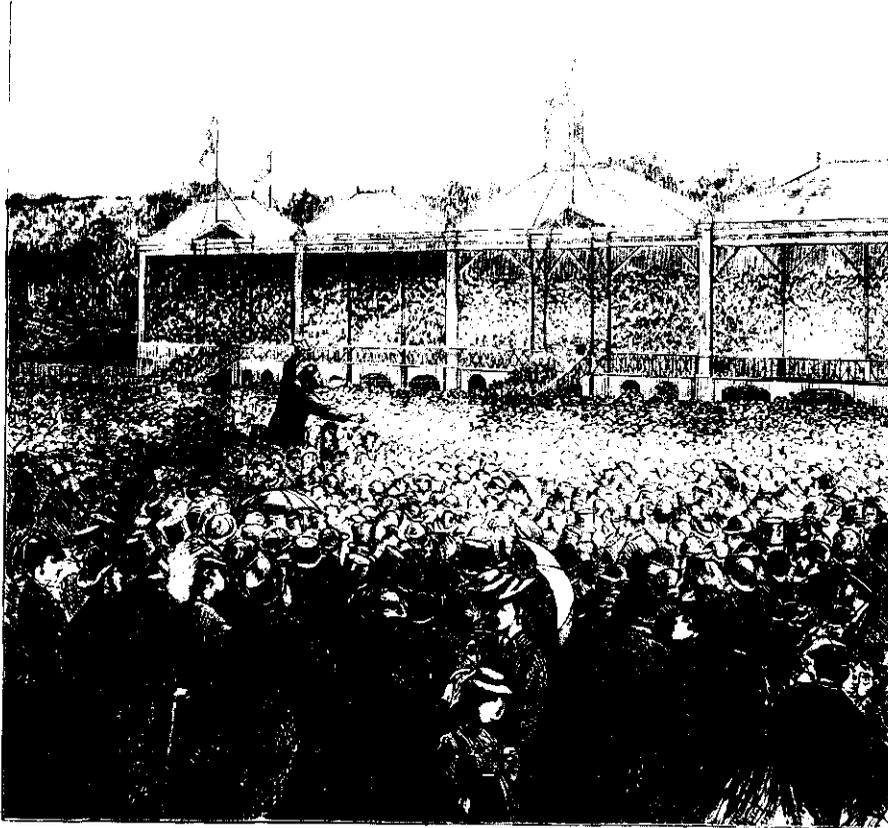
Some of the prettiest bits of scenery around Melbourne are to found on the Upper Yarra ... [Dight's Mill] is a well-known spot and from its picturesque situation is a great resort of the citizens of Melbourne during the summer season.<sup>47</sup>

In an attempt to beautify the district further parks were created and roads, such as Victoria and Queens Parade, were planted as boulevards. This followed the English tradition that 'properly understood, a boulevard is to the inland town what the promenade is to the seaside resort'.<sup>48</sup> The trees preferred were the elm, 'the best of all trees for avenues in the southern half of England'.<sup>49</sup>

A city reserve was situated behind the Town Hall in Richmond, but was not well looked after. By the 1930s, it had become,

a home for tramps, fire fiends, card and two-up parties, spring-heeled jacks and undesirables of all classes. Trees have been destroyed, holes dug in the ground, grass torn up, pickets pulled down from the fences, electric lamps broken ...<sup>50</sup>

The Park Street Reserve, North Fitzroy, running the length of Park Street was established on the alignment of the Inner Circle train line in 1888, which linked Royal Park to North Fitzroy Station. The Barkly Gardens in Richmond were established on the site of a filled-in quarry, and appear as early as 1865 on a Lands Department Map. The park was popular at the turn of the century, attracting crowds of thousands for band recitals in its rotunda on Sundays.<sup>51</sup> During World War Two trenches were cut in the park for fear



*Figure 80 Henry Varley, religious orator, preaching to expose the city's sin in Richmond Park, 1877. Source: The Outcasts of Melbourne*

of air raids on the industrial suburb. Historian Janet McCalman noted that 'South Richmond's oasis of charm, the Barkly Gardens, were desolated and have never been returned to their original state'.<sup>52</sup>

#### *The Cremorne Gardens, Richmond*

The Cremorne Gardens (Fig. 81; now the site of the Rosella factory) were founded by James Ellis, from the gardens of the same name in London, and were purchased by George Coppin in 1856. The pleasure gardens consisted of 4 hectares of ornamental planting and features including a theatre, menagerie, artificial lake, maze, pavilion for dancing, fountains, grottoes and bowling alleys.<sup>53</sup> Shortly after opening the gardens were the site of the first celebration of the Eight Hours' Movement, which included the 'celebrated Bombardment of Sebastopol' with fireworks comprising:

Water Rockets, Fountains, Fierce Dragons, Golden Rain, Bomb Shells, Sky Rockets, &c. Explosion and Blowing Up of the Malakoff Tower, the Town on Fire &c. and Also a Grand Water Piece consisting of an Horizontal Wheel, discharging innumerable Rockets, with every variety of Beautiful Bouquets of Roman candles with superb colours.<sup>54</sup>

From 1857 the gardens displayed copies of classical and modern statuary, some of which were sold to the Fitzroy Gardens when the Cremorne Gardens closed in 1863.<sup>55</sup> In 1900 Coppin made an offer of

a large plaster statue of "Shakespeare" [by] the late Mr Summers' to the City of Melbourne (the offer was refused) with the remark: 'It is now forty three years since I imported a large collection of statuary for "Cremorne Gardens" a portion of which may be seen in Fitzroy Gardens'.<sup>56</sup>



Figure 81 *Cremorne Gardens.* Source: *Victoria Illustrated*, 1834-1984



Figure 82 *Picnicing in Survey Paddock at Christmas.* Source: *Victoria Illustrated*, 1834-1984



Figure 83 *The Burnley Gardens, Richmond, 1919.* Source: Historic Gardens of Victoria: A Reconnaissance

#### *Richmond Park and the Burnley Gardens, Richmond*

Richmond Park was popular, with its cricket pitches, football ovals, banked bicycle track and large open spaces perfect for playing hide-and-go-seek and cowboys-and-indians. Originally a part of the area of Richmond known as Survey Paddock, as the surveyor's horses grazed there,<sup>57</sup> families would picnic there, trainers would take their animals, and you could swim or fish in the Yarra River.

They had a canoe club at the Twickenham Ferry, where the Grange Road Bridge is now. Now and again they'd have a carnival to raise funds. They had kiosks in Survey Paddock and canoe races on the river, there'd be others just wandering leisurely in their canoes under the willow trees with a girl and a gramophone on board.

We enjoyed the river, especially being so close to Survey paddock. We were always down there playing cricket and football. You didn't have to worry about the back yard being small because you had the space around the river and the park. The Horticultural Gardens (at Burnley College) were beautiful too, and there was never anyone there. A lot of people even now don't seem to know its there, because it's a bit out of the way.<sup>58</sup>

#### *Darling Gardens, Clifton Hill*

The Darling Gardens (Fig. 84) were reserved in 1863-66 as a 'Site for a Public Gardens and Recreation Purposes.'<sup>59</sup> Some of the early plants were provided by Ferdinand Mueller, the director of the Melbourne Royal Botanic Gardens. In the 1880s and '90s, a type of beautification programme appears to have been undertaken and the garden was fenced, a semi-circular elm avenue was planted, seating, a rockery and a drinking fountain were



Figure 84 *The Darling Gardens, Clifton Hill (Collingwood), c.1906. Source: "I should be glad if a few elms and oaks were included"*



Figure 85 *Yarra Bend c.1860. Source: State Library of Victoria (Picture Collection)*

constructed and many areas of the gardens were planted.<sup>60</sup> By 1895, it was declared by the local press that

The caretaker of the Darling Gardens Clifton Hill can claim he has made that erstwhile uninviting area bloom like a rose. Entering the Gardens at the south-east corner, the visitor surveys a grotto of real beauty, and he is surprised to find silver and gold fish disporting in the pools which it would almost be thought Nature had provided. A few weeks ago the artistically arranged beds were gay with zinnias and chrysanthemums, but later blooms are now taking their place.<sup>61</sup>

A year later, when the gardens intended to be 'a popular and health giving resort for families',<sup>62</sup> an avenue was planted along Hoddle Street. The Gardens were the focus of many of the areas social occasions, especially those involving children. In May 1901, the *Clifton Hill Tribune* described a children's carnival:

In the Darling Gardens an immense concourse of people shared the pleasures of the afternoon. A little overcrowding was unavoidable, even in such a large reserve, but everybody experienced that enjoyment which a fine day, good humour, and happy associations can produce. Blondin performed his feats of balancing, the steam merry-go-round kept a continuous whirl, overcrowded with every trip, and the ocean wave whirled through the air heavily freighted with delighted children. Bands played and fun prevailed ... The scene at night was very pretty. Chinese lanterns hung from the trees which lined the reserve ... blocks surmounted by a tar barrel. Fireworks were shown with a framework specially constructed. It was a day and a night to be remembered.<sup>63</sup>

A bandstand was erected in 1906, although a band had been recorded as playing there since 1898, and a year later another period of major planting was instigated. In 1957, the Clifton Hill Maternal and Child Health Care Centre was constructed, which was extended in 1964-65, on the Hoddle Street side.<sup>64</sup>

#### *Yarra Bend Park, Yarra Bend*

Accessed by the Johnson Street cable tram, Yarra Bend Park was a popular 19th century recreational facility (Fig. 85). It also was the site of a number of the cities institutions including the Yarra Bend Lunatic Asylum (est. 1848), the Merri Creek school (a mission for aboriginal children established in 1848), the Queen's Memorial Infectious Diseases Hospital (est. 1904) and a cemetery, located upstream from Kanes Bridge. There were also many boat houses located in the park. The park was the home of the Deep Rock Swimming Basin, and its associated Deep Rock Swimming Club, which remained a popular spot for competition and recreational swimming well into the 20th century.<sup>65</sup> After the asylum was decommissioned in 1922, its parks and gardens were absorbed by Studley Park to become the Yarra Bend National Park, its Landscape gardener being Hugh Linaker, previously the gardener for the asylum. Improvements were carried out in the 1930s catering for games and picnics, including the Kane suspension bridge (1934) and the Yarra Bend National Park Golf Club House, also designed in 1934, by Percy Everett, the Chief Architect of the Public Works Department. The park was bisected by the Eastern Freeway in the 1970s.

#### *Edinburgh Gardens*

In Fitzroy, the only sizeable piece of parkland is the Edinburgh Gardens, which were reserved as public open space in 1859 and were initially used as sports grounds. The park was reduced in area in 1862 by Clement Hodgkinson, and a number of clubs were allowed to establish themselves, including the Collingwood Commercial Cricket Club

(1862) and the Prince of Wales Cricket Club (1863), which combined to form the Fitzroy Cricket Club in 1872, a bowling club (1877) which was located on the present bowling club site, and a planting programme was implemented in the 1880s. The gardens were used for rubbish disposal prior to this time, including dead animals, a practice which was damned as a 'danger to the public health', this was rebutted by the local council who declared in 1887 that 'only 7 horses have been buried in the Gardens during the past 6 years and none of them less than 4 feet below the surface'.<sup>66</sup> The railway line was put through in 1888<sup>67</sup> which cut the park in two, which was removed c.1981.<sup>68</sup>

#### 7.4 Sports and Leisure

Swimming was very popular, with swimming holes along the Yarra River and pools in Fitzroy, Richmond and Marine Parade in Collingwood (est. 1895). The popular Richmond pool was built in 1897 as a measure to lower the number of drownings which occurred in the Yarra. The present pool was built in the shell of the old in 1936, when it was converted from an outdoor to an indoor pool. The pool was segregated: boys could swim every day except Friday, which was reserved for the women. This itself did not pass without criticism. A writer to the *Richmond Guardian* in 1897 seemed to think that an afternoon of swimming was sufficient for the ladies as

before noon they are busy in the household, after six, the young have engagements outside — the elders inside — the house. The water is running to waste, the lessee is earning nothing, and at those very hours there are always a number of men and boys who want a dip.<sup>69</sup>



Figure 86 *Swimming on the banks of the Yarra River, c.1915. Source: Copping it Sweet: Shared Memories of Richmond*

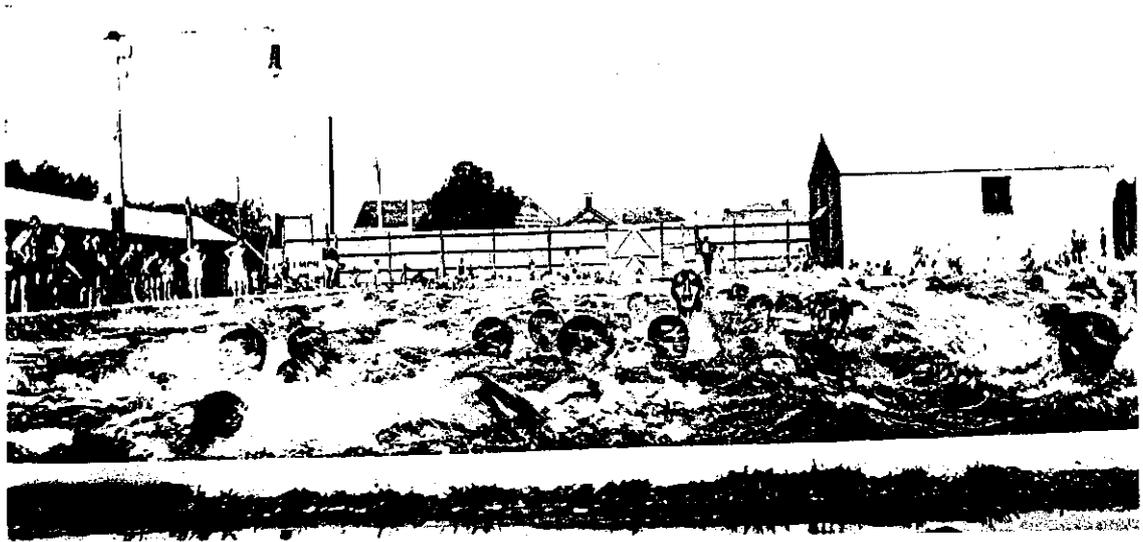


Figure 87 *The Richmond Baths, before it was converted to indoor baths in 1936, date unknown. Source: Copping it Sweet: Shared Memories of Richmond*

The cost of one penny a time discouraged many, and the Yarra was still very popular. Norm Prest remembers that

In Summer we used to jump off the Punt Road Bridge and swim in the Yarra, and we used to get boils in our ears because the water was so dirty. We'd go under the railway bridge near the back of the Rosella. We had ropes tied there and we'd swing out into the river.<sup>70</sup>

Social life in Richmond, Fitzroy and Collingwood (and also North Carlton, with the Carlton Football Club) revolved around the local football club, inspiring great passion and emotion. The first recorded game took place, in an almost unrecognisable state, at Yarra Park, in 1858. The Richmond Football Club was established by Tom Wills, at the time Richmond's top cricketer, to allow the cricket team to keep fit in winter. Wills had learnt to play rugby in England and modified the game with his cousin Henry Harrison to suit the locals. A team was formed in 1860 and they played in Richmond Paddock. Wills and Harrison left the area shortly afterwards and the team folded, reforming in 1885 far more local support. The Mayor was elected President of the club; local parliamentarians Joseph Bosisto and Charles Smith were supporters, Bosisto providing eucalyptus oil; George Bennett supplied cordials; and White's Brewery a half-time bottle of whiskey. The team was not a great success on the field but was regarded as 'recruiting from decent young fellows only' despite the fact that Richmond was 'not regarded as an aristocratic centre'.<sup>71</sup>

In 1896 six clubs from the Victorian Football Association—Collingwood, Essendon, Fitzroy, Geelong, Melbourne and South Melbourne—split to form their own league, worried that they were supporting the less popular and financially able teams. Carlton and St Kilda were invited to join the new Football League of Victoria, leaving only five teams in the Association, which included Richmond. The following year Foy and Gibson's was already advertising that 'The demand for footballs of our own make has

been so great that we have been obliged to put on extra staff in our football factory'.<sup>72</sup> Richmond was not admitted to the League until 1908, the first club, with University, to be included since the League's formation. Even the Sherrin footballs were manufactured locally, by Tom Sherrin at his Wellington Street factory, established in 1883.<sup>73</sup>

The Collingwood council purchased Victoria Park for £2,562 in 1878 for use as a recreational facility. From 1882, Victoria Park was being used as a cricket and football ground by the Capulet Cricket Club and Britannia junior football club, the predecessor of Collingwood Football Club. The first grandstand was completed on the west side of the ground in June 1892; this was moved in 1909, when a much larger structure was built in its place, and demolished in 1951. A third grandstand—the Members' Stand—was built by the Council in 1929 on the north side of the ground; bars were operated from this building from 1940, when Collingwood became the first sporting club to gain a liquor licence.

Both the players and spectators were passionate about their 'footy'. At a Richmond-North Melbourne match, in 1902, North Melbourne left the field and the

Richmondites and the umpire, who remained in the centre of the ground, were left at the mercy of the crowd, though the troopers who raced their horses through the unruly and cowardly mob did their best to protect the visitors. Several of the Richmond team were injured by stones being thrown at them whilst a missile in the form of a heavy stick was secured by one of the constables ...<sup>74</sup>

All of this when the Richmond side was winning! The players were not much better, Barney Herbert declared in 1921, in the *Richmond Guardian*, 'the harder I swore, the better I played, and I was going like a son of a gun at the finish'.<sup>75</sup> Father Flynn, of the St Ignatius Church in Richmond, had 'four big yellow lights and he illuminated the spire in black and yellow stripes'.<sup>76</sup>



Figure 88      *Legendary Richmond footballer, Jack (Captain Blood) Dyer, c.1940.*  
Source: Copping It Sweet: Shared Memories of Richmond

To be a boy growing up meant defending your team in the schoolyard, playing in the street after school, and attending the games with your father on Saturdays. Football was the ideal game for a poverty stricken area—it was cheap, physical, male oriented and capable of founding strong bonds. Women were often excluded, although they could be counted on to provide nourishment during and after the game. Gwen Wilson remembers that:

Mum always had a huge bowl of soup waiting for us when we got home in Winter. It was so cold ...<sup>77</sup>

In Richmond, James Ford Cairn recalled that in the 1930s,

Whenever I went [to Richmond Reserve] there were always several hundred men hanging about on the Reserve. They'd sometimes play football if anyone ever had a football; they had little stalls where they used to sell kinds of meat pies for a penny ...<sup>78</sup>

Football was a part of the routine of most people, especially men, in the inner suburbs.

Fitzroy Football Club held its last meeting in 1997, when the club amalgamated with the Brisbane Bears to form the Brisbane Lions, which are based in Brisbane.

## 7.5 Arts and Architecture

Some sections of Yarra, particularly Fitzroy, have always been popular with artists. The view along Brunswick Street was captured by Sarah Susannah Bunbury in 1841 and Jane Dorothea Cannan sketched the area for Morewood & Rogers, English manufacturers of portable iron houses. Nicholas Chevalier and his new wife Caroline Wilke moved to 9 Royal Terrace, Nicholson Street c.1857. Chevalier was considered to be one of the four best artists in the colony since his arrival in 1853, and had been represented in *Melbourne Punch* and *Victoria Illustrated*, as well as having *The Buffalo Ranges* win the 1864 Fine Art Commissioner's prize. Henry Gritten, a founding member of the Victorian Academy of Art, lived at 292 Nicholson Street and engraver Samuel Calvert built at 13 George Street, Fitzroy (now no. 41). This house was purchased by Louis Buvelot, who remained there until his death. Buvelot took excursions of *plein air* students to paint the Merri Creek. One student of Buvelot's, Tom Roberts, lived briefly at 170 George Street (now no. 226). Sculptor, Charles Web Gilbert, worked from 59 Gore Street, Fitzroy in the late 19th century.

In the 20th century, the area was popular with artists because of its cheap rent, and the short distance to classes at the National Gallery Art School. Danila Vassilieff lived for one year (1936-37) at 236 George Street and painted many scenes in Fitzroy both during and after that time. Arthur Boyd worked in the area for his uncle in a paint factory in 1934-3; he lived in Henry Street after his marriage to Yvonne Lennie in 1945. His works include a view of the Fitzroy factories, *Butterfly Hunter*, in 1943.<sup>79</sup>

The artists eventually attracted galleries. The first gallery was opened by Sweeney Reed, who established a gallery in Brunswick Street in 1972-75. Reed was himself an artist, and was the son of Joy Hester and Albert Tucker, raised by John and Sunday Reed, and later adopted by them. Now the galleries include the Australian Print Workshop, 210 Gertrude Street; the Centre for Contemporary Photography, 205 Johnston Street, 18-110 Gertrude Street; First Floor Writers and Artists Space, 95 Victoria Street; Fitz in Artworks, 243 Brunswick Street; and the Fitzroy Gallery, 274 Fitzroy Street. Richmond also has a number of, predominantly modern, art galleries including the Christine Abrahams Gallery, 27 Gipps Street; the Helen Gory Gallery, 377 Punt Road; and the Niagara Gallery, 245 Punt Road.



## 8.0 ENDNOTES

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