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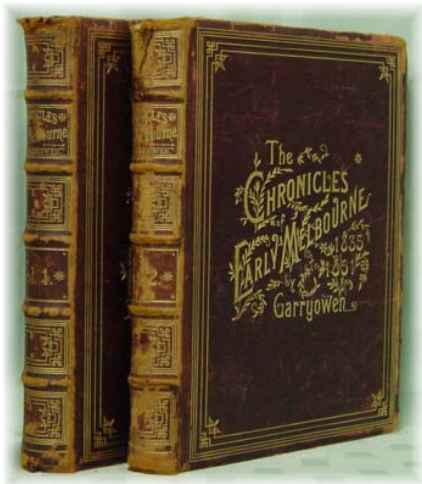
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The Chronicles of Early Melbourne 1835 - 1851

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THE
Chronicles of Early Melbourne

1835 TO 1852.

HISTORICAL, ANECDOTAL AND PERSONAL,

BY

“G A R R Y O W E N,”



AUTHOR OF “THINGS NOT GENERALLY KNOWN.”

“Palram quam meruit, tulit.”

CENTENNIAL EDITION,

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

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1888.

INDEX TO SYNOPSES.

CHAPTER.	SUBJECT.	PAGE.
I.—	THE UN-NAMED VILLAGE AND ITS BEGINNINGS	1
II.—	INCREASED VALUE OF TOWN LANDS	13
III.—	CORPORATIONS AND MUNICIPALITIES	20
IV.—	PRIMARY POPULATION: ITS EXTENSION AND PROGRESS	32
V.—VI.—	INTRODUCTION OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT: FORMATION AND GROWTH OF THE PUBLIC DEPARTMENTS	39
VII.—VIII.—	THE SUPREME COURT AND MINOR TRIBUNALS	65
IX.—	OLD MELBOURNE DESCRIBED, 1840-43	108
X.—XIV.—	RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS: THEIR FOUNDATION AND FIRST CELEBRATIONS	118
XV.—	OLD COURT-HOUSES, OLD GAOLS, AND THE PENTRIDGE STOCKADE	179
XVI.—	MELBOURNE "UNDER FIRE," WATER, AND SNOW	203
XVII.—	THE THREE GOVERNORS AND LADY FRANKLIN	218
XVIII.—XIX.—	OLD MELBOURNE CHARITIES	227
XX.—	TWO DEFUNCT PUBLIC BODIES	253
XXI.—XXII.—	THE MELBOURNE CORPORATION	258
XXIII.—	SOME MUNICIPAL REMINISCENCES	308
XXIV.—	BANKING AND PAWNBROKING	320
XXV.—	ELECTIONS TO THE LEGISLATURE OF NEW SOUTH WALES	331
XXVI.—	REMOVAL OF THE SUPERINTENDENT	344
XXVII.—XXVIII.—	REMARKABLE SUPREME COURT TRIALS	347
XXIX.—	EXECUTIONS	394
XXX.—	PHYSICAL PHENOMENA	412
XXXI.—	OUR TWO OLDEST INSTITUTIONS	417
XXXII.—	THE BOTANIC GARDENS, AND THE YARRA BEND	424
XXXIII.—	BLACK THURSDAY	441
XXXIV.—XXXV.—	THEATRICAL AND KINDRED ENTERTAINMENTS	451
XXXVI.—	HOW PORT PHILLIP WAS PEOPLED	491
XXXVII.—	THE RIVER YARRA: ITS FALLS, PUNTS, BRIDGES, AND NAVIGATION	497

CHAPTER.	SUBJECT.	PAGE.
XXXVIII.—	THE ANTI-TRANSPORTATION CAMPAIGN	518
XXXIX.—	TEMPERANCE AND TEETOTAL SOCIETIES	530
XL.—	THE MELBOURNE INN-KEEPERS AND THE LICENSING MAGISTRATES.	540
XLI.—	FUEL, LIGHT, AND WATER	554
XLII.—	PORT SHIPPING	564
XLIII.—	SHIPWRECKS	577
XLIV.—	COMMERCE AND QUARANTINE	592
XLV.—	BLACK AND WHITE	599
XLVI.—	THE BRETHERN OF THE MYSTIC TIE	612
XLVII.—	LITERARY AND EDUCATIONAL	624
XLVIII.—	ANCIENT SAINT-WORSHIP, NATIONAL SOCIETIES AND CELEBRATIONS	642
XLIX.—	A MIXED FREIGHT	661
L.—	ORANGE AND GREEN; OR HURLING AND SHOOTING	675
LI.—	SOLDIERS, CEMETERIES, POUNDS, AND APOSTLES	688
LII.—	THE TWELVE "APOSTLES"	707
LIII.—LIV.—	SPORTS AND PASTIMES	711
LV.—	A BUNDLE OF OLD ADVERTISEMENTS	753
LVI.—	EARLY SKY-LARKING AND DUELLING	768
LVII.—	THE AGE OF GOLD: ITS BIRTH AND EARLY DEVELOPMENTS	785
LVIII.—LIX.—	THE NATIVITY AND NON-AGE OF MELBOURNE JOURNALISM	820
LX.—	POLITICAL AND PROFESSIONAL PENCIL-LINGS	859
LXI.—	THE DISCIPLES OF ÆSCULAPIUS	878
LXII.—	A MORTUARY GROUP	894
LXIII.—	SOME RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS	902
LXIV.—	THE STORY OF SEPARATION, AB OVO USQUE AD MALUM	906
LXV.—	THE COLONY OF VICTORIA	922
LXVI.—	THE GENERAL ELECTIONS	930
LXVII.—	SOME PECULIAR PEOPLE	938
LXVIII.—	FLOTSAM, JETSAM, AND LIGAN	946
	APPENDIX	986

THE CHRONICLES OF EARLY MELBOURNE.

CHAPTER I.

THE UNNAMED VILLAGE AND ITS BEGINNINGS.

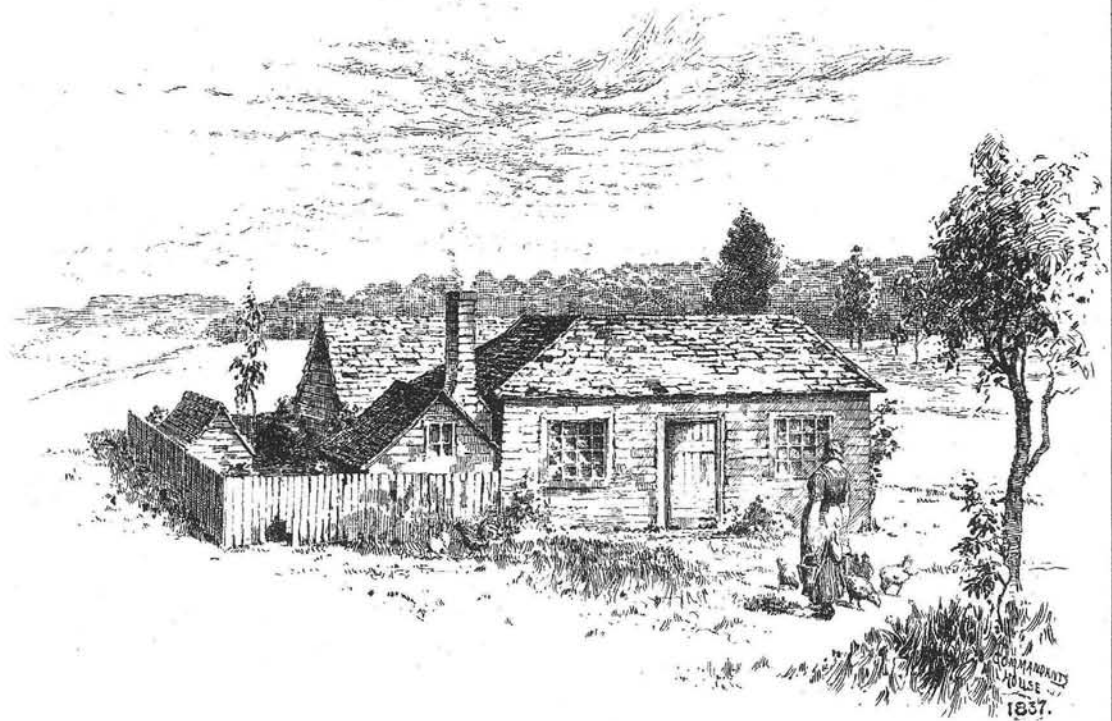
SYNOPSIS:—First White Discoverer of the Yarra.—Selection of the Site of the Embryonic City.—Famous Flank March of Sir Thomas Mitchell.—Captain Stewart's Report.—The First Ordinance.—Limited Autocracy.—“Bearbrass.”—Attack by Aborigines.—A Black Protectorate.—Interesting Relics.—Early Bonifaces.—Population of the Colony in December, 1836.—Arrival of Sir Richard Bourke.—Batman and Fawkner.—While Foundation of the Colony.—Historical Curiosities.—Early Title Deeds of Land from Natives.—First Arbitration Award in the Colony.

THOUGH an oft-told tale, it may be as well to secure a thorough starting point by indicating the dates of a few remarkable events—the chronological symbols that act as way-marks to the commencement of those incidents which have, in so short a period, rendered Melbourne, as the Capital of Victoria, one of the marvels of ancient or modern colonization.

The first European who sighted this portion of the Australian Continent—the present Cape Everard, in Gippsland—on the 19th of April, 1770, was Lieutenant Hicks, an officer of the memorable expedition of Captain Cook; and on the 4th of June, 1798, Bass, an adventurous ship surgeon, whilst on a coasting expedition from Sydney, in a whale-boat, made Western Port. Lieutenant Murray discovered the bay of Port Phillip (15th February, 1802); and on January 20th, 1803, Mr. Grimes, the Acting Surveyor-General of New South Wales, arrived from Sydney, in charge of a party to examine the bay and “walk round” the adjacent country. On the 9th October, in the same year, Lieutenant-Colonel Collins, as commandant of a convict expedition with a few free settlers, entered the Heads, and established himself near the now Sorrento; but, after a brief stay, deeming the place unsuited for a penal settlement, abandoned it and sailed away to Van Diemen's Land. Messrs. Hovell and Hume, in November, 1824, accomplished an overland journey, from Sydney to Port Phillip, in the course of which they crossed and named several rivers. They penetrated as far as Geelong and saw Port Phillip Bay, which Hovell mistook for Western Port, whilst Hume held differently, in consequence of information received from Mr. James Fleming, a member of the Grimes Survey Party. In 1826 some vague rumours of an intended French seizure of Western Port and Western Australia moved the British Government to take measures for the occupation of these places, and a military force was despatched from Sydney to Western Port. A landing was effected, and the eastern part of Phillip Island fortified; but, the scare dying out, the place was abandoned in less than a year. In January, 1827, John Batman, a resident of Van Diemen's Land, applied, for himself and others, to the New South Wales Government for permission to establish a settlement at Western Port, but the application was refused. A Captain Wishart, whilst on a sealing voyage from Sydney in a cutter called the “Fairy,” was driven by stress of weather, on St. Patrick's Day, into a bay to the westward, which he named “Port Fairy,” after his little vessel. Portland Bay, in 1828-29, was visited by Mr. William Dutton, in the course of some sealing ventures, and it was he who put up the first house on the present site of Portland. He returned to the place occasionally until 1832,



Fort
Phillip
St.
1839



Commandant
House
1837.

qualified to be Councillors, four Aldermen, two to remain in office for six years, and two for three years. No Councillor could vote for himself. Every Councillor, elected as Alderman, continued a Councillor until the 1st of November next after he ceased to be an Alderman. The Mayoral election was fixed for the same day, and in the same manner, but to take place after the Aldermanic one; no candidate's vote for himself to be allowed; the Mayor to be chosen from amongst the Council, his tenure of office to be for one year, and to remain a Councillor till the 1st of November next after ceasing to be Mayor. The qualification for Councillors, Aldermen, Auditors, and Assessors excluded "Holy Orders" and ministers of religion. If a Councillor or an Alderman should be possessed of real or personal estate, or both, amounting to £1000, either in his own or his wife's right, or be rated on the annual value of not less than £50. No person in the Council, or an Auditor, or Assessor, could be, by himself or partner, directly or indirectly interested in Corporation contracts or employment (except as a shareholder in a company), contracting for lighting, the supply of water, or insurance, nor hold any office of profit under the Council, except as Mayor; and neither Auditor nor Assessor could be elected to the Council, nor any Judge, Chairman, Officer or Clerk of any Court of Justice, or Ministerial Law Officer of the Crown. The offices of Town Clerk and Treasurer could not be held by the same person, and "no mace-bearers or other officers, merely for parade or show, could be appointed." It was optional to vote as salary or allowance to the Mayor, such sum "as shall seem reasonable and proper;" but it should be fixed (if any) within ten days after acceptance of office. The town rate was not to exceed 1s. in the £ per year. The Council was empowered to make a rate for police purposes half-yearly, not exceeding 6d. in the £ for a whole year; both funds to be kept separate and distinct. A lighting rate was also leviable, but not to exceed 4d. in the £ per annum; property situated in any unlit part of the town to be exempt. At the first election three Councillors were chosen for each of the four Wards, one of which retired annually by rotation. Sewerage, water-works, and various sanitary and municipal powers were conferred, and insolvency was specified as disqualifying a member of the Council.

Between the passing of the Act and its coming into operation, there was much agitation over the selection of candidates; turbulent Ward meetings were held, frothy, insincere speeches made, and much bad blood stirred up. The newspapers rushed like furies into the fray, with an indiscriminate zeal, and one of them (the *Gazette*) was brought over the coals by a libel action and an adverse judgment.

Until the machinery provided by the Act could be regularly set going, the Executive was authorised to appoint an interim Mayor, Aldermen, Assessors, and Collectors to compile and revise the first Burgess Roll, and hold the maiden election under it. The town was subdivided into Wards, of the same number and dimensions as those under the Markets Act, and the following appointments were made:—

MAYOR.—Captain William Lonsdale (Sub-Treasurer).
TOWN CLERK.—Mr. H. F. Gurner (Crown Solicitor).

LONSDALE WARD.

ALDERMAN.—Major F. B. St. John.
ASSESSORS.—Messrs. A. Cunninghame, and J. S. Griffin.
ROLL COLLECTOR.—Mr. W. R. Belcher.

LATROBE WARD.

ALDERMAN.—Mr. J. D. Pinnock.
ASSESSORS.—Messrs. G. S. Airey, and W. B. Wilmot.
ROLL COLLECTOR.—Mr. D. F. Lang.

GIPPS WARD.

ALDERMAN.—Mr. Samuel Raymond.
ASSESSORS.—Dr. P. Cussen, and Mr. R. S. Webb.
ROLL COLLECTOR.—Mr. J. J. Mouritz.



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- use the "Match case" option when you want to eliminate all the occupations "smith" if you only want the name "Smith"
- Don't just search for names. Search the book for other names, places and subjects of interest:
 - look for others of the same name
 - look for others who lived in the same place or street
 - who was the postmaster or police officer in the town?
 - how often and at what time did the coach arrive in town?
 - what churches were there and what time were services held?
 - what other activities were there in the community?
 - look for others who had the same occupation or other interests
- All of this and more may be available in a seemingly mundane book such as a directory. You could learn or write much of the background of life at the time, even if your ancestor is not listed there.

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