BIRTH OF A NATION?
CONSTRUCTING AND DE-CONSTRUCTING
THE EUREKA LEGEND

Anne Beggs Sunter

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Department of History
The University of Melbourne

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This thesis examines the contention that Australian democracy was born at the Eureka Stockade. In this investigation, issues of identity, nationalism and memory have been central to an exploratory study of the contested memories of Eureka.

The records of the Victorian goldfields in 1854 were examined to discover to what extent contemporaries thought they were establishing a new social order. The immediate political gains won by the Stockade had ramifications for the whole of Australia. Later interpretations of 1854 are also examined, to understand how later generations, in different times and places, interpreted the actions of the Stockaders of 1854. These interpretations are epitomized in literature, music, art, museums, public celebrations and commemorations, in Ballarat and elsewhere.

Central to this thesis has been the role of the Eureka flag as a symbol of identity and a symbol of protest. The contests surrounding its creation, ownership, authenticity, and exhibition are examined. In spite of these concerns, the flag became a powerful symbol, flexible enough to be used by extreme Right and Left wing political movements.

Using the Nietzschean analysis of the uses and abuses of history, the thesis examines the role of public history through the memorialisation and commemoration of an historic event, and examines the process of constructing a Eureka interpretation centre in Ballarat.

The contest over the meaning of Eureka has been strongest in Ballarat, which now claims to be the birthplace of the Australian spirit. In recent years tourism and economic exploitation of history have added a new dimension to the legend.

New contests surrounding the legend continue to arise, evidence of the substance of the legend. In terms of national identity, the confusing uses of the Eureka legend reflect uncertainty about national identity. The openness of the symbolism of the flag to broad interpretation ensures its relevance as a potent metaphor of the nation.
DECLARATION

This thesis comprises my own work, and due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used. The thesis is less than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of the bibliography and appendices.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people and institutions have helped me uncover the mysteries of Eureka. Foremost are my Sydney friends Bob Walshe, Len Fox and Evelyn Healy.

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CHAPTER ONE
A CHEQUERED HISTORY

In Ballarat, Eureka is everywhere. The official motto of the City of Ballarat is 'Eureka - Birthplace of the Australian Spirit', a logo that raises a number of questions. On Bakery Hill a huge Eureka flag flies, welcoming visitors to the city. On the Town Hall is another Eureka flag, and the original is displayed in its shrine of remembrance in the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery. Every night the diggers' rebellion is fought again at Sovereign Hill, where the sound and light show Blood on the Southern Cross is a major tourist attraction. Nearby, the story is explained in a more traditional way at the Eureka Stockade centre, situated close to the original battle scene. At the old Ballarat cemetery, the graves of all those who died are carefully tended. Numerous business houses around the town use the word 'Eureka' and the stars of the Southern Cross as a marketing symbol. There is no doubt about the fact that Ballarat in 2002 is a city proud of its rebellious history.

That logo 'Eureka - Birthplace of the Australian Spirit' lies at the heart of this thesis. What was the connection between an event that occurred in Ballarat in 1854 and the development of Australian identity? Who believed in this connection? Was it just a catchy phrase dreamed up by an advertising agency, or did it reflect the views of the citizens of Ballarat? More importantly, does the rest of Australia agree with the statement? What, in essence, has been the contribution of the Eureka Stockade to Australian culture?

My aim in this thesis is to examine and explain the uses that successive generations have made of the events surrounding the Eureka Stockade of 3 December 1854, and the relationship of the Eureka Stockade to the development of an Australian spirit. Issues of myth-making and the shaping of memory are central to this project, since they so greatly influence the ways that Eureka has been remembered, celebrated and interpreted by each generation. In recent years, under the influence of post-modernist and post-colonialist theory, the whole idea of national identity has been challenged, and this challenge impinges on my study.¹ In his

entry under ‘National Identity’ in the *Oxford Companion to Australian History*, Graeme Davison observes that where identity was once supposed to be inherent, it is now seen as something that is constructed and ‘constantly renegotiated, something derived from the past yet still to be discovered’. Post-structuralist theories have caused a reassessment of texts and symbols, offering the possibility of a fresh analysis of what has been written, spoken and pictured. The iconography of the Eureka flag is central to this examination.

**Background**

Ballarat began in 1851, following the discovery of gold at nearby Buninyong. A swarm of men from all parts of the globe descended on Ballarat. These victims of gold fever searched desperately for their personal El Dorado. An uneasy peace was maintained between the miners in the valley and the government commissioners and police troopers stationed high on the escarpment overlooking the diggings.

Relations between the miners and the troopers were tense from the beginning. The more outspoken miners, schooled in the ways of revolution in Europe, led movements to protest against the imposition of an inequitable license fee to search for gold. The cry of ‘No taxation without representation’ was raised, echoing the rhetoric of the European and American revolutions. The diggers bitterly resented the fact that they had no representation in the Victorian parliament, where a handful of squatters and Melbourne businessmen monopolised affairs of state. The miners resented the fact that they were seen as a cash cow to be milked by the government for revenue, and their resentment was kindled by a police force riddled by corruption, and perceived as consisting of ex-convicts from Tasmania who had little respect for British traditions of civil liberty. The corruption extended to magistrates of the goldfields administration, and anger was stirred by the fiery new journal, *The Ballarat Times*, owned and edited by the radical Henry Seekamp.

In November 1854 the diggers organised themselves in the Ballarat Reform League and called mass protest meetings on Bakery Hill, where they raised a new flag of the Southern Cross, and swore an oath by the flag ‘to defend our rights and liberties’. Many defiantly burnt their licenses and marched away to the Eureka Lead to form a defensive stockade and collect weapons.

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The British Governor, Sir Charles Hotham, feared he was facing republican revolution. He conferred with his commandant at Ballarat, Robert Rede, and ordered a force of 276 police troopers and soldiers to attack the protesting diggers whose strength was estimated at less than 150 men. Carefully planned and secretly executed, the attack caught the defenders of the Stockade unaware on the dawn of Sunday morning 3 December 1854. Far from 'keeping holy the Sabbath', the government caused blood to flow as first the diggers, then innocent bystanders, were mown down by a rampant police force. At least 22 stockaders were killed, and five soldiers. Unofficial estimates put the death toll higher, and many were injured, including the leader Peter Lalor, who lost his arm in the battle. Over 100 prisoners were taken back to the government camp. The diggers' flag was torn down and carried away as a battle trophy.

In early 1855 thirteen men stood trial in Melbourne for the capital crime of treason. By that time the popular imagination had been gripped by the diggers' cause. No jury would convict these men, who were now celebrated as heroes of liberty.

Within weeks of its occurrence, Eureka begun to be incorporated into a national legend of democracy, equality and mateship. At a practical level, a series of reforms introduced in 1855 abolished the hated gold license, introduced a Miners' Right that carried the right to vote and gave the diggers representation in parliament. In a crowning victory, Peter Lalor and J.B. Humffray, the diggers' champions, were elected to parliament.

Ballarat settled down to become a loyal stronghold of the Empire. By the time of Federation, when Alfred Deakin agreed to represent the electorate of Ballarat, it viewed itself as a city

3 Captain Thomas, military commander of the attack, gave these figures in his report to Governor Hotham, reproduced in *Eureka Documents*, Melbourne, Public Record Office, 1976, p. 20.
4 *Argus*, 4 Dec. 1854.
5 Estimates of fatalities vary widely amongst sources. Peter Lalor's list of 22 killed diggers is published in Ian MacFarlane, *Eureka From the Official Records*, Melbourne, Public Record Office, 1995 p. 203; Monty Miller said he counted 38 dead diggers in his autobiography *Eureka and Beyond*, Willagee, WA, Lone Hand Press, 1988, p. 46; S.D.S. Huyghue, government clerk at Ballarat, estimated 'from 35 to 40' in his account, reproduced in Bob O'Brien, *Massacre at Eureka*, Kew, Australian Scholarly Publishing, 1992, p. 21; Dorothy Wickham found 27 registrations of death, five of whom were soldiers in her *Deaths at Eureka*, Ballarat, 1996; Captain Thomas estimated 'not less than 30 killed on the spot, and I know that many have since died of their wounds', quoted in *Eureka Documents*, p. 22; Two eyewitnesses, Thomas Pierson and Samuel Lazarus, gave the figure of 50 diggers killed in their diaries.
6 A list of those arrested is published in MacFarlane, *Eureka From the Official Records*, pp. 205-6.
boasting the best of British and the best of Australian traditions. Ballarat returned the highest vote in the nation in favour of Federation.

The memory of Eureka was for many years a troublesome one, best forgotten. It took 30 years for a monument to be erected on the site of the stockade. The Eureka flag was for many years lost from public memory. But the legend had taken root in an oral tradition. At different times and in support of many different causes, men and women chose symbols from Eureka to illustrate their ideological cause. The flag became a metaphor for radical action by a diverse group of activists who have found spiritual nourishment in the 'Stockade everlasting'.

The Eureka Stockade has been variously described as a riot, a rebellion, a revolt, an attempted revolution and a massacre. The motivations of those men who took up arms against the colonial government have been described in a myriad of ways, from greedy self-interest to ideological vision, depending whether they have been characterised as drunken ex-convicts, foreign opportunists, British Chartists or Irish republicans. Eureka has provided a message to each succeeding generation. The message has been interpreted in different ways, allowing a widely disparate spread of organisations to use its symbolism. From the anti-Chinese protesters at Lambing Flat in 1861, to the striking shearers at Barcaldine in 1891, to the Australian Army fighting the Japanese in World War Two, to the Communist Eureka Youth League formed in 1941, to National Action and the Australian Independence Movement in the 1970s, to small businessmen in the 1990s, to the S11 anti-globalisation protests in Melbourne in 2000 - all have invoked the Eureka precedent of making a stand in the face of oppression. I will examine the way particular values have been highlighted at different times as representative of Eureka, and the passionate responses that these conflicting uses evoke.
The issues of class, gender and race must be examined to see what impact they had on the gestation of these values. What ethnic groups were involved in the original Eureka movement? Were there any manifestations of racism towards the Chinese or was this not an issue at Ballarat in 1854? How important was the class issue in 1854? Given the 'clay-covered' equality of the alluvial diggings, class issues had not emerged on the goldfields. But there was already antipathy between the diggers and those who sat in the Legislative Council, most of all the squatters. By 1890 Eureka begins to be evoked in class struggles of unionists, and during the Depression of the 1930s by Communists and the ALP.

I shall examine the development of goldfields protest movements and the extent to which Chartist and European revolutionary ideas influenced their gestation, especially the Ballarat Reform League. The aims of the League will be compared with the immediate political outcomes of the Stockade in 1855, and the longer-term effects on creative literature, art, in public debates, memorials and museum collections. I shall examine why the story of Eureka has at certain times been discouraged by those in authority, while at other times it has been publicly celebrated.

When I began this study, my hypothesis was that the contested meanings of Eureka impeded it making a positive contribution to debates about Australian nationhood. This appeared to be confirmed when the question of Australia becoming a republic was raised nationally at the end
of the twentieth century. The 1999 republican referendum failed. Yet an alternative hypothesis could be that because of the contested interpretation of the event, it has been a subject of perennial discussion, and even physical contest, which has kept it alive in public memory. This contest has been strongest in Ballarat, but is in no way limited to that place. Eureka's greatest contribution to our public culture is its flag, which has become a truly national and truly popular symbol, in spite of not being officially sanctioned as a national flag. It is a flag of protest, but also a flag of aspiration, of bringing together migrants from many lands under the constellation of the Southern Cross.

Histories of Eureka

Much has already been written about Eureka, by participants in the events of 1854 and by later writers who have produced interpretative histories of the event. The secondary sources embrace two distinct strands of writing. On the one hand there are the popular historians, many of whom have been local and parochial in their views, jealously guarding Eureka as an event that belongs to Ballarat. On the other hand, academically trained historians from many parts of Australia have been drawn to study the event, which has always been included in the Australian narrative as the nearest approximation to a war of independence in our otherwise peaceful history. (Of course this usage masks the bloody wars fought between Aboriginal people and white invaders for possession of the land.)

RAFFAELLO CARBONI

The first book to be published about Eureka, and the most enduring, is undoubtedly Raffaello Carboni's self-published work, *The Eureka Stockade.* There have been many subsequent editions with important commentaries on the state of Eureka historiography. Carboni was a participant in the events, who threw in his lot with the protest movement. So his account is a partisan one. Carboni launched his book on the first anniversary of the burning of Bentley's hotel in October 1855, selling copies at the Ballarat cemetery on 3 December 1855. The book cost five shillings, and there were 1000 copies printed. The *Age* published extracts and the *Argus* called it a work of genius. It became a rare book, but was brought back to notice by Ballarat journalist W.B. Withers in 1870, when he used it as a major source in his *History of Ballarat.* Sunnybrook Press reprinted Carboni in 1942 in a deluxe, illustrated edition of 150 copies.

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8 Raffaello Carboni, *The Eureka Stockade*, Melbourne, the author, 1855
copies, with an introduction by Dr H.V. Evatt.\textsuperscript{10} Evatt reflected on the writing of Australian history about Eureka, and denounced that writing as ‘quite inadequate’, being far too summary in dismissing Eureka’s importance. He was critical of Professors Shann, Scott and Portus, but praised Withers, H.G. Turner and R.S. Ross. Evatt saw Eureka as ‘a turning point in Victorian and Australian affairs’.\textsuperscript{11}

The New South Wales historian John Dennis reviewed the Sunnybrook edition in 1943, regretting that the edition was limited and expensive, and hoping that a cheap, indexed edition would soon be published.\textsuperscript{12} (There is still no indexed edition!) He analysed the historiography of Eureka, as Evatt did in his introduction, and agreed with Evatt that history texts had generally followed the ‘broad and beaten track of error’ in dealing with Eureka. In 1947 Dolphin Publications, a Communist publishing house, made a very cheap edition widely available with an introduction by Brian Fitzpatrick.\textsuperscript{13} Fitzpatrick saw Carboni’s book as a seminal work, required reading for every school child and every citizen. He wrote that ‘the democratic spirit, so dear to most Australians still, was asserted by Ballarat gold diggers, first to enrich it with their blood, at Eureka in 1854’.\textsuperscript{14}

In 1963 Melbourne University Press published a new edition of Carboni, with an introduction by Geoffrey Serle.\textsuperscript{15} Serle refers to his book \textit{The Golden Age} for a full account of Eureka. He notes that ‘most important, Carboni’s book provides strong backing for the key explanation of Eureka – that the Stockaders took up arms in self-defence against what seemed an intolerable oppression, and that very few of them had ulterior political or revolutionary objectives’. According to Serle, Carboni stood with Peter Lalor and the Irish in ‘contempt of Chartist "yabber-yabber"’, and sees little overlap between the Stockaders and the political idealists. For Serle, Carboni was an important witness whose description of events had been borne out

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{10} Carboni, \textit{The Eureka Stockade}, with an introduction by H.V. Evatt and illustrations by W.E. Pidgeon, Sydney, Sunnybrook Press, 1942. The introduction was re-published in Overland, no 2, Summer 1954-5.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., introduction.
\textsuperscript{12} John Dennis’s review in the Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society, 1943. v. 29, 1943, pp. 45-61.
\textsuperscript{13} Carboni, \textit{The Eureka Stockade}, introduced by Brian Fitzpatrick, Melbourne, Dolphin Publications, 1947.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p. 9.
\end{flushleft}
by other sources and carries 'the greater part of the truth about Eureka. It is a mixture of the sublime and the petty, of self-dignity and self-pity, of profound truth and nonsense.'

The 1993 edition has an introduction by Thomas Keneally. As a leader of the growing republican movement in Australia, Keneally noted that this edition was issued at 'a time of great significance' for Australia. Keneally suggests that 'Eureka was always a supreme event for republicans and nationalists in the tradition of Henry Lawson'. While Carboni introduced us to republicans in his story, he is mocking in some of his descriptions of them, and Keneally estimates that 'to Raffaello and probably to the bulk of Australians Eureka stood for something less ideologically defined - a practical assertion of fair-goism'.

NINETEENTH CENTURY HISTORIES

Thomas McCombie produced the first interpretative history of Eureka in his *History of Victoria*, published in 1858. McCombie was a Melbourne merchant and politician, a participant in the foundation of the colony of Victoria who wrote in heroic tone of the astounding progress of the infant colony in its first 20 years. He wrote sympathetically of the diggers, and saw the resignation of Chief Secretary Foster following the Stockade as 'the beginning of responsible government in Victoria'. He compared the people of Victoria to the Canadians, writing that both obtained justice only 'after attempting to levy war on Her Majesty'. The justice the Victorians obtained by their efforts at Eureka was the gaining of 'political privileges, including local self-government'. McCombie referred to Peter Lalor as 'the Commander-in-Chief of the Forces of the Republic of Victoria', and called the Eureka flag 'the Australian flag, of blue, with a white cross'. His history was an important vehicle

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16 Ibid., p. xv.
18 Ibid., p. vii.
19 Ibid., p. vii.
22 McCombie The History of the Colony of Victoria, p. 282.
23 Ibid., p. 285.
24 Ibid., p. 285.
25 Ibid., p. 277.
26 Ibid., p. 274.
for spreading the story of Eureka and for allowing the republican interpretation of the legend to take wing. His account of the Stockade was quoted in full by Withers, the subsequent Ballarat historian, who pointed out a few factual errors made by McCombie. Withers did not correct one obvious error in McCombie where he stated that Lalor lost his right arm in the battle. 27 Shortly after, the Irish magistrate William Kelly published a damning account in his traveler’s tale, Life in Victoria. 28 Without reference to documents, his account was based on personal opinion, which characterised the diggers as a ‘deluded mob’ led by self-seeking Scotchmen and Americans, seeking to overthrow the British constitution. Kelly is unique in laying stress upon the Scottish role, which is accounted for by his conversations with a Scotchman from Ballarat.

William Westgarth published The Colony of Victoria in London in 1864. 29 Westgarth, a Scot, had lived through the events as one of the only elected members of the Legislative Council in 1854. He had been active in the Anti-Transportation League of 1851, and was appointed to chair the commission of enquiry into the goldfields after Eureka, so he was very well informed about events. In the preface to his history, he pointed out that his history had ‘drawn on my own personal recollections’ and he was conscious of the need, even at that early stage, for a Victorian archives. His history of Eureka is short, disposing of the troubles on the goldfields in his chapter ‘Riot at the Diggings’ in a mere six pages. He has practically no detail, and makes an elementary error, referring to the ‘stockade created on Bakery Hill’. 30 He also claimed that foreigners, ‘chiefly Germans’, were responsible. 31 While ignoring the political role of the Ballarat Reform League, he did note the importance of changes to mining law after Eureka, with the Victorian reforms taken up in New South Wales, British Colombia and New Zealand. In terms of political significance, Westgarth described Eureka as ‘the Great Charter of Australia’, which led to Victorians tearing up the conservative constitution that had been drafted before Eureka, and replacing it with a more democratic one. 32 Geoffrey Serle

27 W.B. Withers, History of Ballarat, (1870 edition), Ballarat, Ballarat Heritage Services, 1999, p. 79.
30 Ibid., p. 149.
31 Ibid., p. 150.
32 Ibid., p. 157.
admired the life and writing of Westgarth, describing him as a most 'complete democrat' whose writing was 'a landmark in Australian intellectual history'.

In the same democratic tradition was William Bramwell Withers, a professional journalist of English birth who came to Ballarat in 1856. His History of Ballarat was first published by the Ballarat Star newspaper in 1870, with a revised and expanded second edition published by Niven in 1887. Both editions have been republished in the latter part of the twentieth century. Withers made extensive use of oral history, collecting accounts from eyewitnesses, and letting these witnesses speak directly. He also used archival documents, which are reproduced in the book, together with artists' views. The cover of the 1870 edition carried an accurate representation of the Eureka flag, which is itself a tribute to the care Withers took to uncover the facts. The book was favourably reviewed and accepted by contemporaries who had themselves lived through the events - a testament to the accuracy of his account. More than half the book is concerned with the events surrounding Eureka, an indication of the prime importance that Withers attached to the event.

Another journalist who turned to history was David Blair, a Scot who had been encouraged to Australia by the Rev J.D. Lang, and shared many of Lang's radical views. Blair's History of Australasia was published in Glasgow 1878. He made use of official sources in his account and claimed that it provided the first complete history of Australasia. He devoted a chapter 'The Ballarat Rebellion' to the events surrounding the Eureka Stockade. Because he had been a journalist with the republican Age newspaper in 1854, he highlighted republican aspects of the rebellion, including the 'Australian flag' hoisted by the 'provisional government'. Given that Blair spoke at the mass meetings in Melbourne after the Stockade, he described these meetings in some detail, pointing out that the mass meetings in Melbourne and Geelong were a surprise to Governor Hotham, and that 'no authority can long exist without the confidence of the people'. His history influenced a generation of young Australians, including Henry Lawson.

34 W.B. Withers, History of Ballarat, 1870, and his revised edition, History of Ballarat, 1887.
37 Ibid., p. 452.
Stuart Macintyre argues that by the 1880s there was a more cautionary tone in the writing of Victorian history.38 William Rusden, an English-born public servant, exemplified this conservative school of thought in his three-volume *History of Australia* published in 1883.39 His treatment of the events of 1854 was highly critical, but based on a systematic analysis of official archives, indicating that he was a disciple of the new German School of historiography pioneered by Von Ranke.40 Rusden devoted a lengthy chapter to political events on the goldfields and had no sympathy for the diggers, whom he described contemptuously as ‘pestilent disturbers’.41 His evidence is all from official sources, and he totally failed to mention the digger hunt of Friday 1 December 1854, which Ballarat residents saw as such a provocative act by the administration. He was vitriolic in his criticism of the role of the *Age* newspaper and also attacked McCombie and Blair for misreporting the facts.42 In characteristically conservative fashion, he warned of the difficulty of conferring responsible government on a community that did not have an established ruling class, as in Britain.43 Rusden was vilified by the emerging nationalist press in Australia, particularly by the *Bulletin*, which critiqued the ‘humorously lopsided’ interpretation of this ‘frenzied Tory’.44

The centenary of White Settlement led to the publication of some lavish illustrated histories, which played an important role in the promotion of Eureka to a national audience. The *Picturesque Atlas of Australasia* was published in 1886-8 and sold an astonishing 50,000 copies.45 The work included a short, factual description of the Eureka Stockade in its chapter on Victorian political development.46 A young woman from Ballarat wrote the Eureka story for *Cassell’s Picturesque Australasia*, which was published in four volumes in 1889.47 Mary Gaunt, educated at Grenville College in Ballarat and one of the first women admitted to Melbourne University in 1880, had become a journalist by 1887 when she was commissioned

42 Ibid., p.689.
43 Ibid., V. 3, p. 165.
44 *Bulletin*, 1 December 1904, editorial on Eureka, p. 10.
by Cassell to write a number of chapters for the monumental centennial publication. Gaunt, who signed her articles in the gender-neutral way as M.Gaunt, contributed a chapter called 'The Eureka Stockade' to this book published in London, New York and Melbourne. She gave a very lively account of the events of 1854 in Ballarat, taking Withers as her reference and using her novelist’s skill. Her sympathies were not with the diggers, understandable for the daughter of a former gold commissioner and judge. Her hero was the moral force man Humffray, and she saw the diggers being led astray by a small number of political hotheads, disaffected Irishmen and foreigners. In this interpretation she echoed both Governor Charles Hotham and Rusden. She referred very deliberately to the ‘Declaration of Independence’, giving the impression that she had seen it. There is mocking irony in her reference to the site of the Eureka Stockade as ‘the stronghold of the Republic of Victoria’. She ended her essay by saying that Ballarat had become, by 1889, prosperous and peaceful, with the events of the Stockade all but forgotten. Yet her essay in this national publication may well have revived the memory of Eureka throughout Australia. Alexander Sutherland’s Victoria and Its Metropolis also included a detailed account of Eureka, with illustrations. While conservative, Sutherland gave a very fair account of the reforms flowing from Eureka.

To this flush of monumental publications can be added Robert Percy Whitworth’s Short History of the Eureka Stockade, published in 1891. Like Withers, Whitworth was an early practitioner of oral history, and he produced a popular account. Soon afterwards, the book From Tent to Parliament was published in Ballarat. It was a partisan account from the diggers’ perspective, although anonymous. There has been much speculation over the authorship of this book, and I incline to the view that local trade union official James Vallins was the author. We should also include the account of participant John Lynch, written with

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48 Ibid., p. 205.
49 Ibid., p. 201.
50 Ibid., p. 203.
51 Alexander Sutherland, Victoria and Its Metropolis, Melbourne, McCarron Bird, 1888.
53 From Tent to Parliament, the Life of Peter Lalor and His Coadjutors, Ballarat, Berry Anderson, 1893 (republished 1904, 1934).
the benefit of hindsight. Published in the Catholic journal *Austral Light* during 1893-4, it influenced later generations of Catholic writers.\(^{54}\)

Henry Gyles Turner was a banker in the conservative mould of Rusden, who produced a very accurate account of the events in his *History of the Colony of Victoria* (1904) and his later *Our Own Little Rebellion* (1913).\(^{55}\) Like Rusden, his approach to history was Rankean, making extensive use of official documents such as official despatches, parliamentary papers and newspapers to give 'an impartial and authentic record'.\(^{56}\) He wanted to chart a line between the partisan accounts of both the supporters of the government and the supporters of the diggers.\(^{57}\) The English-born Turner arrived in Victoria on 4 December 1854 and was present at the public meetings in Melbourne following the Stockade, so he had legitimate claims as an eyewitness to the aftermath of the battle. He was very critical of the administration of the goldfields, claiming that it ruled with 'a brutal insolence that quite justified the eventual turmoil.'\(^{58}\) Unlike Rusden he showed sympathy for the diggers whom he described as 'mainly stalwart and industrious, honest and clean-living'.\(^{59}\) He famously characterised Hotham as 'a quarter-deck martinet'. Turner emphasised the republican political aspects of the movement in Victoria, reprinting a copy of the 'New Constitution for Victoria' in his 1913 book and describing the Eureka flag as 'the Australian flag'. Turner's view of Eureka is summed up by the title of the 1913 book - *Our Own Little Rebellion*. By world standards it was a small event, but it brought 'momentous changes' to the colony and was deserving of a book of its own.\(^{60}\)

**SCHOOL HISTORIES**

Around the time of Federation, Australian history began to be taught in schools, and textbooks began to appear, as opposed to the earlier works for a general readership. Angus & Robertson was an important publisher, and its *History of Australasia for Junior Pupils* and Arthur W. Jose's *History of Australasia* for senior students both went through many editions. Chris

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\(^{56}\) Ibid., p. 12.


\(^{58}\) Ibid., p. 9.

\(^{59}\) Ibid., p. 24.

\(^{60}\) Turner, *Our Own Little Rebellion*, 1913, p. 13.
Healy examined the emergence of history in the school curriculum as part of the emerging discourse of the nation and citizenship.\(^1\) At the time of Federation, the ‘new education’ installed Australian history into the curriculum as a means of training young citizens in patriotism both civic and imperial. So while the story of Eureka was included in the story of gold, it was included as a salutary tale, an ill-judged assault on British values efficiently dealt with by the ‘heroic’ British military. The junior history included Eureka in its chronology, with some amusing mistakes. It has ‘many killed and wounded’ on both sides of the battle, ‘over a hundred taken to Melbourne and tried for high treason’, and Peter Lalor accepting a knighthood.\(^2\) It makes fun of the republican aspects of the uprising, noting that the diggers ‘proclaimed the republic of Victoria’ which lasted all of two days. Jose’s account is more detailed, but followed the same interpretation, emphasising that the foreigners who tried to establish the republic of Victoria were defeated, and the capable Governor Hotham acted to remove the grievances of the mining population, allowing Victoria to return to peace and good (British) order.\(^3\) Interestingly Jose, in his survey of Australian literature, salutes Rusden’s history as ‘the most serious and detailed historical work attempted here’.\(^4\) As a corollary, the long-lived Victorian School Readers, so important in bringing a sense of Australian identity to generations of school children, made no mention of Eureka.\(^5\) Like stories of bushrangers, the story of a rebellion against authority was not seen as suitable material to form the minds of young Australians who must be ready to serve the British Empire.

School texts changed little between the wars, but by the 1960s the Empire orthodoxy had given way, challenged by the rising influence of academically trained historians. Popular history texts gave a more radical interpretation of Eureka, such as Manning Clark’s *Short History of Australia*.\(^6\) This was my own history text for matriculation in 1966, and I will return to Clark shortly.

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\(^2\) *History of Australia, for the Use of Junior Pupils*, new edition, Sydney, Angus & Robertson, 1932, p. 53.


In complete opposition to the conservative interpretation of Rusden, another view of Eureka had been forming from the 1880s, nourished by the accounts of participants in the event, and by the first generation of Australian-born descendants of the gold generation. This body of writing glorified the symbolic importance of Eureka for those struggling for a new social order - nationalist, socialist and republican. According to Manning Clark, it was Victor Daley and Henry Lawson who 'began to write of Eureka as the cause of all the democratic and radical achievements'. The journalist R.S. Ross, who shaped socialist opinion in Victoria in the early years of the twentieth century, was the leading exponent of this school. In 1914 Ross published *Eureka: Freedom's Fight of '54*. It was stridently, proudly polemical, incorporating Eureka into a socialist inheritance, as also did Monty Miller, born in Tasmania, who claimed he was at the Stockade and later became a socialist speaker and activist. According to Ross's preface, his book 'makes accessible to the masses at a popular price an account of the Eureka Stockade cast in a tolerably accurate perspective'. He makes extensive use of earlier Eureka historians, including Carboni, Withers, McCombie and Turner, but his position is far from dispassionate and objective.

Ross stressed the importance of looking at the Stockade as part of the diggers' movement in Victoria. In summing up the significance of Eureka, he saw the sequence of events - insurrection, Martial Law, outlawry to people's sovereignty - as 'attesting to their sublime and splendid awakening and promoting of the devotion to Democracy and the love of Liberty'. He called the diggers' action of burning licenses 'Australia's first great strike'. After the Stockade, he saw the importance of the people of Melbourne, Geelong and Bendigo making 'common cause' with the 'warrior-diggers' of Ballarat. This led to Governor Hotham being 'indicted at the bar of public opinion'. The recommendations of the Commission of Enquiry into the Goldfields led to 'government of the people by the people through fairly representative Parliament, with the benefits of manhood franchise and local government'.

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71 Ibid., p. 135.

72 Ibid., p. 144.
vital part of this democracy was the institution of local courts and the appointment of local Justices of the Peace. 73

Ross’s history concluded with a chapter called ‘The Stockade Everlasting’ where he waxed lyrical about the significance of Eureka, likening it to ‘a lighthouse whose Beacon shall never be dimmed; it is a lamp to Australia’s feet’. 74 He questioned why historians before him had made so little of Eureka, seeing it as trivial and lacking in picturesqueness. They lacked a ‘working-class viewpoint and philosophy’, which Ross manifestly possessed. 75 Eureka was important in a number of ways for Ross. First, in its results, in that it gave birth to a movement that produced ‘our pioneer trades union and our premier political league’. 76 He wrote also of the emotional power of the Stockade as a strike, where men sanctified the cause with their blood and their lives. 77 Most of all, he saw it as an illustration of the importance of unity in fighting for a cause. ‘When the people have been united they have won; when they have been divided they have lost’. Eureka possessed the germ of working class solidarity, in its ‘economically impelled appeal to ...physical force...to effect a political revolution’. 78

Ross’s book was a rallying cry for social action, calling on a later generation to follow the example of the ‘warrior-diggers’ and introduce a new order of society. His cry resonated with his own and subsequent generations of socialists and communists, who drew on the accounts of Ross and Monty Miller in their attempts to build an Australian radical tradition that ran counter to the model citizen tradition that the Education Department was attempting to build through its publications. Brian Fitzpatrick, Bob Walshe, Len Fox and Robin Gollan were all influenced by this tradition.

ACADEMIC HISTORY

From the early years of the twentieth century, the writing of Australian history began to be increasingly controlled by the universities. Sir Ernest Scott was appointed Professor of History at the University of Melbourne in 1913, and went on to have a profound impact on the training of professional historians. 79 The first edition of his Short History of Australia was
published in 1916 and went through a number of revisions, becoming a standard academic
text that was in print for more than fifty years. The theme of the history is positive,
documenting the progress of the colonies towards nationhood. In this storyline, Eureka is a
manifestation of mateship and impatience with arrogant police, and he hints at the influence of
foreign leaders. Scott gave Eureka little prominence in the general scheme of Australian
history, but he did note that among Australian miners the Eureka Stockade incident has
always been regarded as in some sense 'a fight for freedom' and he admits that a 'liberalizing
of the government institutions' was connected to the event. Incidentally, Scott makes the
same mistake as McCombie, writing that Lalor lost his right arm. His view of Eureka was
repeated by Keith Hancock in his influential Australia, published in London in 1930 and by
G.V. Portus in the Cambridge History of the British Empire (1933), which relegated the event
to a protest by small capitalists against the changing circumstances of mining, as it moved
from alluvial to company-dominated operations. A.G.L. Shaw reiterated this economic
rationalist view in his account of the event in 1955, while Geoffrey Blainey took the concept
even further in The Rush that Never Ended, his 1963 history of mining in Australia. Always
a maverick in his interpretations, Blainey was able to analyse the documentary evidence in a
new way, arguing that the diggers were entrepreneurs keen to rid themselves of restrictive
laws, and that the reforms to mining law following the Stockade had the effect of allowing the
development of large-scale capitalist mining.

David Goodman has labeled another group of historians 'conservative revisionists', who
examined the event and could find no contribution to democracy. In 1921 Edward Sweetman
argued this way in his Constitutional Development of Victoria 1851-1860, as did I.D.
Macnaughton in 1955 writing in Greenwood's influential textbook, Australia: A Social and

80 Ernest Scott, A Short History of Australia, London, Oxford University Press, 1916; Stuart
Macintyre, 'The Writing of Australian History', in D.H. Borchardt and Victor Crittenden (eds),
82 W.K. Hancock, Australia, London, Ernest Benn, 1930.
83 G.V. Portus, 'The Gold Discoveries 1850-1860' in E. Scott (ed.) Australia: Cambridge History of the
86 P.Fennessy, 'Economic Significance of Eureka', Meajin, v. 8, 1949, pp. 54-55, also offered a
similar interpretation.
88 Edward Sweetman, Constitutional Development of Victoria 1851-56, Melbourne, 1921, p. 42.
**Political History.**[^89] J. Normington-Rawling similarly dismissed Eureka, preferring to highlight radical movements in the 1840s.[^90]

Radical-nationalists also appeared amongst the academic historians, led by Russel Ward, a post-World War Two history researcher, who saw Eureka as an important strand in the development of the Australian Legend that linked the heroic efforts of convicts, diggers, selectors, shearers, trade-unionists and soldiers in the creation of a distinctive Australian identity. Keith Hancock’s *Australia*, first published in 1930, discussed the shaping of the digger legend - of the gold-digging generation of the 1850s as the ‘Pilgrim Fathers’, the first self-respecting, independent, vigorous Australians - as opposed to the convicts. He argued that ‘the legend is more important than the fact’, and ‘in truth, the legend of the Australian diggers does not greatly distort the fact’. However he argued that we should not accept the gold digger legend in its entirety, for democracy, trade unionism and nationalism had their beginnings before 1851.[^91]

The first wave of communist-influenced historians incorporated Eureka into their Marxist interpretation of Australian history. Brian Fitzpatrick, publishing from the 1930s, subjected Australian history to a class analysis. He was followed by Robin Gollan, Russel Ward, Ian Turner, Bob Walshe, Manning Clark, Geoffrey Serle and Weston Bate who had all inherited World War One, the Great Depression, the struggle against fascism, World War Two, and Post-war Reconstruction. All acknowledged a debt to Keith Hancock and Fitzpatrick, and all wrote about Eureka in class terms, to give a very different interpretation from the conservative accounts of earlier historians like Rusden.

The centenary of Eureka in 1954 was a highpoint in this historiography. The most important work was the special Eureka supplement of *Historical Studies*, edited by A.M. McBriar, who presented to readers ‘the fruits of recent historical research’. This was the first special supplement produced by the academic journal *Historical Studies* (which had commenced in 1940) and McBriar commented that Eureka ‘shows the calamities arising from lack of compromise’. The editor hoped that this supplement did not go too far in the opposite direction, representing a wide range of interpretations and approaches to history from Serle, Feely, Churchward, Hume Dow and Walshe to Murtagh. It also included some primary

[^91]: Hancock, *Australia*, pp. 35-6.
documents for study and provided rich material for analysis by history students, especially Bob Walshe’s thoughtful essay on the significance of Eureka. At the time Walshe was enrolled as a doctoral student at Sydney University, and he had made a detailed study of the written sources. He argued that Eureka led to the introduction of responsible government in Victoria, so that the colony became the vanguard of democracy in Australia. In this sense, Walshe upholds the ‘Whig’ interpretation of Eureka, affirming H.V. Evatt’s 1942 contention that ‘Eureka was of crucial importance in the making of Australian democracy’. So popular did the supplement prove that a revised edition, edited by F.B. Smith, appeared in 1965, and it was reprinted in 1972.

The academics did not dominate the writing about Eureka in the centenary year. Catholic writers were to the fore, anxious to re-claim Eureka from the Marxists at a time when the political Left was splintering at the height of the Cold War. Drawing on earlier Catholic accounts such as those of John Lynch and James Hogan, the Sydney lawyer C.H. Currey contributed *The Irish at Eureka* and Dr. T.J. Kiernan produced *The Irish Exiles in Australia*. All the Irish-Australian historians place Eureka within the context of Irish struggle against authority. Currey’s account is conservative, and critical of the misguided Irish. He qualifies this in his conclusion by contending that Peter Lalor and the Tipperary Boys were motivated by their memories of oppression by the British to make a stand against tyranny, prepared to fight ‘for personal, political, and national freedom, and above all freedom from calculated disregard for the worth and dignity of the miners as individual men’. His history was particularly popular in Catholic circles, emphasising the Irish-Catholic ownership of the Eureka story. Other Catholic writers with similar interpretations of Eureka were Father James Murtagh, Father Walter Ebsworth, Father Tom Linane and John Molony, himself a former priest. After the surge of material around the time of the Eureka centenary, Brian Fitzpatrick and John Bastin reviewed the field with articles in *Meanjin* and *Australian*

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93 Walshe, ‘The Significance of Eureka’, p. 78.


96 Currey, *The Irish at Eureka*, p. 87.
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Geoffrey Serle produced perhaps the best account of Eureka in *The Golden Age* (1963), his history of Victoria in the 1850s. The title sums up his theme, a liberal history in the empirical tradition, based on extensive archival research of official and personal sources. This work extends his earlier article on 'The Causes of Eureka' in the 1954 supplement. He discusses the 'bewildering variety of explanations for the causes and significance of Eureka that have often been characterised by over-simplification and biased distortion'. He stresses that other colonies had strong democratic movements before 1854, and because the Victorian constitution had been drafted prior to Eureka it cannot be argued that Eureka represents the birth of Australian democracy. However, he goes on to contend that Eureka was a 'dramatic incident that ushered in the first period of great democratic victories in Australia' and agrees with Ernest Scott that Eureka was a 'fight for freedom or a democratic protest against arbitrary government'. More emphatically, he argues that Eureka's importance lies 'in its strength as a tradition'.

**CRITIQUE OF THE RADICAL-NATIONALIST TRADITION**

Manning Clark challenges the radical nationalist tradition and the romantisation of Eureka in his inaugural lecture at the Australian National University in 1954. In this lecture he challenged the 'comforters of the past', the myths that allowed people to feel more secure in their world. These comforters included the Protestant ascendency and the 'Bushman' myth. He singled out Victor Daley's *Ballad of Eureka* as 'beginning to create a pantheon of democratic victories in the past to which Eureka belonged'. He argued that Daley's view was embroidered by R.S. Ross, so that 1850-4 became the great watershed of Australian history. Such a construction ignored the contributions of the pre-gold era. He was the first historian to criticise the racism of the Pioneer Legend. In fact Clark offered a number of conflicting

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99 Ibid., p. 186.
100 Ibid., p. 181.
101 Ibid., p. 185.
103 Ibid., p. 135.
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99 Ibid., p. 186.
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101 Ibid., p. 185.
103 Ibid., p. 135.
interpretations about Eureka, because in spite of his debunking of its importance, he was drawn to the ideas of the ‘warm hearts’ of the Left who had embraced it. In his subsequent *History of Australia*, he provided a racy account of Eureka, with the diggers acting in an alcoholic haze, but he has praise for the visionaries who were overcome by the timid bourgeoisie who took over after the rebellion. Later he gave a lecture in Ballarat in the Austin McCallum Memorial Lecture series titled ‘The Heroes of Eureka’ in which he saluted the diggers for ‘giving us a flag and a hope’, quoting Henry Lawson’s poem *Blood on the Wattle*. He had moved finally to embrace the radical nationalist tradition.

The radical-nationalist view was challenged by the ‘New Left’ historians of the 1970s – led by Humphrey McQueen, R.W. Connell, Terry Irving and Stuart Macintyre, who all attacked the radical nationalists for accepting the liberal-bourgeois hegemony. McQueen led the challenge in *A New Britannia* (1970), where he argued that the diggers, far from giving birth to the labour movement, were so corrupted by the allure of gold that they believed that ‘capitalism was not without promise’. Instead of Eureka exemplifying a revolutionary tradition, he argued that in fact it demonstrated the opposite, a desire to achieve wealth and comfort. The New Left’s class analysis, which exposed the racism of the ‘Pioneer Legend’, culminated in the extensive study by Connell and Irving, where they argued that Eureka was a rebellion of ‘would-be entrepreneurs’. The similarity to Blainey’s view is striking.

Weston Bate revived the ‘Whig’ interpretation of Eureka, with a superb account of Eureka in *Lucky City* (1978), his history of nineteenth-century Ballarat. The work is in the mould of Serle, but uncovered new local sources, which included maps and pictures. It has proved a marvellous source for exploring the offshoots of Eureka through its detailed endnotes. Bate’s interpretation of Eureka charts a mid way between the Marxist analysis and Blainey’s capitalist explanation, explaining complex local factors and demonstrating how

108 Ibid., p. 179.
Ballarat’s growth as a community was determined by ‘the release of pent-up radical energies’ in 1854.\textsuperscript{110} The same could be said of John Molony’s \textit{Eureka}, published in 1984, and reissued in 2001 in a new illustrated edition.\textsuperscript{111} Molony, who was a pupil of Clark at the Australian National University, has inherited something of the passionate moral tone of Clark in a history that exalts the role of the Irish and explains the diggers’ movement as a push for human rights.

The most recent academic historians can be characterised as cultural historians, influenced by post-modernist theory. Chris Healy brought a new slant to the examination of Eureka in his study of the role of memory in history, \textit{From the Ruins of Colonialism: History as Social Memory}. His central interest is the ‘historicity of history’ - how historical sensibilities have changed over time and why particular visions of history have held central places in the public imagination. Healy’s starting point for his exploration of the function of social memory was the 1988 Bicentenary celebrations. Questioning this event led him to examine the way Australian history has been constructed in the public imagination, through writings, memorial events, monuments and creative works. He is interested, too, in the interplay between colonialism and modernity. He sees the colonial era as a world in ruins, but also a world that has given us the most powerful public historical narratives, such as Eureka.\textsuperscript{112} He is interested in the way the ‘profoundly masculinist and nationalist’ story of Eureka has been fashioned over time, coming to exceed the limits of both its time and its structure.\textsuperscript{113} In examining the Eureka legend, he explores its construction through histories, monuments, poems and films. Healy begins his examination of Eureka with Rafaello Carboni’s 1855 history, \textit{The Eureka Stockade}, which he contends was not written for contemporaries so much as for future readers, lauding the heroic actions of the Stockaders lest they be forgotten by later generations. Healy puts the absence of any written accounts or memorialising events over the next 30 years down to the belief that oral tradition kept the memory green, and there was no need for memorials until the 1880s, when the eyewitnesses were growing older and beginning to die.\textsuperscript{114} Healy charts the transmission of Eureka from a local event, which it still was in 1885, to a national event, part of the great metanarratives of labourism and nationalism.\textsuperscript{115} He suggests that in the 1880s and 1890s the events of Eureka were written down in a more abstract way, not by participants but by others who wanted to keep the memory green, before

\begin{itemize}
  \item[\textsuperscript{110}] Weston Bate, \textit{Lucky City}, Carlton, Melbourne University Press, 1978, p. 73.
  \item[\textsuperscript{111}] John Molony, \textit{Eureka}, Ringwood, Penguin, 1984
  \item[\textsuperscript{112}] Chris Healy, \textit{From the Ruins of Colonialism}, p. 5.
  \item[\textsuperscript{113}] Ibid., p. 8.
  \item[\textsuperscript{114}] Ibid., p. 145.
  \item[\textsuperscript{115}] Ibid., p. 154.
\end{itemize}
the oral tradition of their fathers was gone. Central to this process were creative writers like Henry Lawson, Victor Daley and Mary Gilmore. Healy sees the 1954 centenary celebrations continuing the 'trajectory of memory' towards general categories of the character, heritage and tradition of Australian men, of Eureka as an affirmation of Australian mateship and hatred of tyranny.\textsuperscript{116} He wonders how important film will be in the future representation of the Eureka story.

Literature reviews of Eureka have been provided by a number of authors - Bob Walshe (1954), Joanna Monie (1972) and David Goodman (1998).\textsuperscript{117} Goodman, whose history \textit{Goldseeking} provided a fresh interpretation of the experience of goldfields life, gives a pithy summary of the leading theories on the meaning of Eureka, concluding that it has become 'a symbol of democratic protest and national identity'.\textsuperscript{118} He demonstrated how social history has shifted from a concern with Marxist analysis of class, to a concern with representations - the language, symbolism and ritual through which people construct their reality. This is the linguistic or semiotic turn in historiography, influenced by post-modernist and post-structuralist ideas.\textsuperscript{119}

In the latter part of the twentieth century, some of the concerns of 'new history' have been taken up. Feminist historians began to re-evaluate gold history after Miriam Dixson's \textit{The Real Matilda} in 1976 asked why historians had not looked at the impact of the goldfields on the life of women and children.\textsuperscript{120} Shurlee Swain and Margaret Anderson have begun that evaluation.\textsuperscript{121} As an introduction to the new millenium, the exhibition \textit{Gold and Civilisation} that opened the new National Museum in Canberra provided a timely moment for the re-evaluation of the history of the gold era. In association with the exhibition, the National

\textsuperscript{116}Ibid., p. 153.
\textsuperscript{119}As discussed by labour historian Neville Kirk, 'Postmodernism and the Linguistic turn in British Social History' at the Labour History Conference, Australian National University, April 2001.
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Museum sponsored the publication of a new history *Gold: Forgotten Histories and Lost Objects of Australia* (2001), which takes a fresh look at the significance of gold. Contributors re-examine the extent of gold’s impact on democratic political institutions and progress towards nationhood. This history offers glimpses of the possibility of new histories of Eureka, which will consider the neglected elements of the radical-nationalist myth, especially gender, class, race and environmental issues.

**THE NEW POPULAR HISTORIES**

Popular disdain for academic histories, which have become increasingly specialised and jargon-laden, has re-ignited the populist strain of writing about Eureka, following the tradition of the eyewitnesses such as Carboni, John Lynch and H.R. Nicholls. People with a particular interest have written about Eureka - Ralph Birrell about mining law in Victoria in *Staking a Claim*, John Ireland about legal aspects, Al Grassby about the multicultural perspective, Laurel Johnson, Val D’Angri and Dot Wickham about women, Len Fox about the Eureka flag, Bob O’Brien about descendants of Eureka, Bert Strange and Jack Harvey about the site of the battlefield, and Peter Mansfield and David Miller about significance issues. It is impossible to leave out Tom Evans from this survey of writers about Eureka, although this local historian has published his views in the columns of the local Ballarat newspaper rather than in books or journals. He has taken the historiographical debate

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122 McCalman (ed.), *Gold: Forgotten Histories*.


about Eureka into the public domain, drawing members of the general public and academically trained historians into a very contentious debate about the significance of Eureka conducted through the letters-to-the-editor column of the Ballarat Courier.

On reflection this debate is not new. Conflicting accounts of Eureka were produced in the 1850s, and conflicting interpretations of the meaning of the event continue to appear today. There is no 'cut and dried' history of the event, no 'one true facts' version, as some members of the general public expect. Hugh Anderson and Ian MacFarlane have performed a great service to the debate by publishing collections of official records, and eyewitness accounts are now available on the Internet.\footnote{Hugh Anderson (ed.), \textit{Eureka: Victorian Parliamentary Papers, Votes and Proceedings 1854-1867}, introduced by Hugh Anderson, foreword by John Molony, Melbourne, Red Rooster Press, 1999; Ian MacFarlane, \textit{Eureka From the Official Records}, Melbourne, Public Record Office of Victoria, 1995; \textit{Eureka Stockade as Reported in the Pages of the Argus}, compiled by Neil Evans and Mary Cannon, 2\textsuperscript{nd}. Edn., Melbourne, State Library of Victoria, 1998; Internet sites of the State Library of Victoria and the Public Records Office of Victoria.} With the primary sources readily available for examination, the 'linguistic turn' of historiography can have its day. The new methodologies of oral history and analysis of representations have had a decisive impact on the developing realms of museology and cultural tourism. New visual approaches to history are also changing the way we make our histories.

This survey has revealed a wide variety of interpretations of Eureka in the written literature. Questions of significance have been posed by nationalists and Marxists, liberals and conservatives, Catholics and republicans, insiders and outsiders. The views of these historians form an important base for my examination of Eureka's impact on Australian identity, but they are only one part of the rich fabric of the representation of Eureka. Creative writing, visual and musical representations are increasingly important cultural sources in our society, as are public commemorations and tourist entertainments. Using all these sources, I will endeavour to understand the symbolism that resides in the Eureka legend.
CHAPTER TWO  
EUREKA: THE BIRTH OF THE NATION?

The Eureka Stockade at Ballarat in 1854 brought the issue of republicanism and revolution dramatically into the public spotlight. In this chapter I examine the claim that Eureka can be seen as the birthplace of Australian democracy. This claim is contested by many historians, who looked to other moments in our history for the beginnings of democracy and the stirrings of national independence. My analysis will focus on the role of the Ballarat Reform League, which I contend was the first political organization to articulate a charter of democratic rights for Australians. The actions of the League determined that the language and temper of Australian political life would henceforward be democratic.

The labour historian Paul Pickering speculates that news of the discovery of gold persuaded many British commentators to believe that the Australian colonies would soon become independent.¹ The lure of gold drew the adventurous from many nations, many schooled in the democratic political ideas of 1848, the year of revolution in Europe. There were republicans already in the Australian colonies. Some came as political prisoners,² some as free immigrants, and some were native born. It was these pre-Gold radicals who led the first embryonic republican movements, notably in Sydney where a group congregated around the Rev. J.D. Lang, Edward Hawksley, Charles Harpur and Dan Deniehy. Using public meetings and their own newspapers, they attacked the British government when it proposed to revive transportation to Australia’s eastern colonies. They campaigned for the right to self-determination, a cause which had led to bloodshed in Canada in 1837, causing the British Government to accept the principle of granting self-government to its colonies.³ A.G.L. Shaw examined the history of violent protest in Australia, arguing that the use of physical force was part of the history of British political protest and was not necessarily revolutionary. He also

³ Lord Durham recommended a policy of self-determination in 1839, a policy that was progressively adopted between 1847 and 1867, beginning with the Canadian provinces, then the Australian colonies, New Zealand and the Cape Colony.
concludes that until the middle of the nineteenth century, the movements did not proceed beyond making threats.\(^4\)

In the midst of a public debate about whether transportation of convicts should revive, the new colony of Victoria came into being on 1 July 1851. Gold was discovered in the same month, completely changing future possibilities for the colony. A nascent movement for independence existed in the Australasian League, which had been established by Rev John West of Launceston. A branch of the League was formed in Melbourne in February 1851, and unfurled its banner, which used the stars of the Southern Cross as a symbol. The League, whose Victorian organiser was Captain John Harrison, spoke about uniting the colonies in a federation. However the discovery of gold put an end to transportation, at least as far as the Eastern colonies were concerned. With its prime aim achieved, the Australasian League faded from existence, its great contribution having been its flag, which is the model for our current Australian flag.\(^5\)

![Australasian League Flag, 1851, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston, from Frank Cayley, Flag of Stars, Adelaide, Rigby, 1966.](image)

The issue of convicts continued to vex Victorians, who feared an invasion of ex-convicts from Tasmania. The Legislative Council passed a Convicts Prevention Act in 1852, which violated


the Imperial government's policy of free movement between colonies. This issue raised republican resonances during the next few years. 6

**Political Stirrings on the Goldfields**

Lieutenant Governor Joseph La Trobe reacted quickly to the discovery of gold in the new colony of Victoria. News reached Buninyong on 25 August 1851 that the colonial government would impose a licence fee of 30 shillings a month on all miners, beginning on the first day of September. That night a mass meeting was held to protest at the news. The *Geelong Advertiser*’s reporter, Alfred Clarke, attended the meeting under the stars and wrote that ‘there has not been a more gross attempt at injustice since the days of Wat Tyler. It is a solemn protest of labour against oppression, an outburst of light, reason and right against the infliction of an effete, objectionable Royal claim... It is taxation without representation’. The passionate and articulate journalist warned with considerable foresight that ‘tonight for the first time since Australia rose from the bosom of the ocean, were men strong in their sense of right, lifting up a protest against an impending wrong, and protesting against the Government. Let the Government beware’. 7 The protest movement against the gold licence had been launched and the seeds of Eureka sown. The implied threat here is not against the Crown, but rather expressive of what Wayne Hudson describes as a republicanism associated with English constitutionalism following Cromwell’s revolution and the sovereignty of parliament enshrined in England from 1688. The republicanism of Victoria in the early 1850s expressed opposition to tyranny, rather than opposition to monarchy. 8

This early agitation was followed by a number of protest movements, beginning with the formation of a Miners’ Association at Mount Alexander in December 1851. Geoffrey Serle traces these embryonic movements, which rose and fell with the movement of diggers from goldfield to goldfield. 9 Bruce Kent’s 1954 analysis of agitations on the goldfields still stands as an astute investigation. He argues that the protests were driven by opposition to tyranny and

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issues of social rights, rather than more explicitly political issues. By 1853 there had been a number of protest movements, including an effective one at Sofala on the Turon in New South Wales where miners succeeded in having the licence fee reduced. In Victoria there were protests at the Ovens and at Bendigo. In Melbourne a Colonial Reform Association came into existence on a radical platform. The goldfields entertainer Charles Thatcher wrote songs in support of the diggers, one under the title ‘Hurrah for Australia’:

Hurrah for Australia the golden,
Where men of all nations now toil,
To none will we e’er be beholden
Whilst we’ve strength to turn up the soil;
There’s no poverty here to distress us,
“tis the country of true liberty,
No proud lords can ever oppress us,
But here we’re untrammelled and free.

The English songster expresses the sentiment of constitutional republicanism that was developing on the gold fields. At Bendigo in the winter of 1853 protesting diggers wore red ribbons in their hats, a symbol of republicanism. Captain Harrison flew his red flag with a white star, and William Dexter made a ‘diggers’ flag’. The English journalist William Howitt was a perceptive observer of these protests in Bendigo, and noted the influence of the ‘Red Republican’, William Dexter, who advocated a republic, and votes for women and children, as well as men! Howitt dismissed these republican ideas contemptuously, believing that all problems would be solved by a representative government and access to land for small capitalists.

The diggers refused to pay more than ten shillings a month as a licence fee, and collected a monster petition that was presented to Governor La Trobe on 1 August 1853. It sought

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12 Ibid., p. 134.
immediate reform of government administration, the right to vote for the unrepresented diggers, and land reform. The petition - all 13 metres of it containing over 5,000 signatures collected throughout the Victorian goldfields - was couched in Chartist terms. Chartism was a popular movement in Britain, which began in the 1830s, seeking to extend social and political rights to the working classes so that they could legislate to improve their working conditions. The movement was split into moral and physical force factions. The advocates of moral force used the tactics of monster meetings and petitions to government in their efforts to effect political change by constitutional means. The physical force advocates urged armed revolt, as practised by the revolutionaries in Europe. Chartism is now seen as the last gasp of eighteenth century radicalism, rather than the naissance of socialism.

Chartist tactics of protest spread to Ballarat in August 1853, when a Dr Brown spoke to a public meeting on a platform of "no taxation without representation". Shortly afterwards, Dr Alfred Carr and the Welshman John Basson Humffray spoke at a huge public meeting in Ballarat on 21 November 1853 against the licence and in support of the Bendigo diggers. A Gold Diggers' Association wrote to the Governor seeking enfranchisement of the diggings. About the same time the English Chartists, Henry Holyoake and George Black, formed a Chartist newspaper, the *Diggers Advocate*. The Government's new 'Act for the Better Management of the Gold Fields' retained the hated licence, and extended the vote only to those diggers who took out an £8 annual licence. This did not satisfy the diggers and on 4

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17 The petition is in the State Library of Victoria, and has been transcribed. A copy of it is in the Eureka Stockade Centre, Ballarat, with a computer database created from the names. The petition is also reproduced in Hocking, *To The Diggings*, p. 134. It is available on the Web at the State Library of Victoria's Goldfields Exhibition site, [www.statelibrary.vic.gov.au/slv/exhibitions/goldfields/petition](http://www.statelibrary.vic.gov.au/slv/exhibitions/goldfields/petition).
22 *Argus*, 25 November 1853, carried a letter from H.H.Silvester, Secretary, Gold Diggers' Association, Ballarat.
23 Kent, 'Agitations on the Victorian Gold Fields', p. 15. The paper appeared sporadically from November 1853 until September 1854.
24 J.A. Feely, 'With the *Argus* to Eureka', *Historical Studies: Eureka Supplement*, p. 70.
November 1853 the *Argus* reported the formation of a colony-wide Gold Diggers’ Association. By December 1853 there was talk of a Diggers’ Congress, which would fight for ‘social and political rights’ for the diggers throughout the colony.  

Another meeting at Ballarat warned the governor that if he did not follow ‘the spirit of the age’, he would face civil war. 

In July 1854 Sir Charles Hotham arrived as the new governor to replace the gentle La Trobe, just after Robert Rede had arrived as the new Commissioner at Ballarat. Hotham was a naval man. He had expected a posting to the Crimea; instead he had to take the bitter pill of a governorship in the Antipodes. He determined to make the best of it, to balance the books and bring order to his domain. Hotham visited Geelong on 15 August 1854 and spoke at a public banquet where he proclaimed what seemed a message consistent with republican principles—’that all power springs from the people’. The people of the goldfields gave him an enthusiastic reception, and he gained the false impression that the diggers of Ballarat formed a loyal, prosperous community, which could well afford to pay the licence fee. He gave orders to the police to increase patrols to inspect licences and catch tax evaders. 

The popular young Scotchman James Scobie was murdered near Bentley’s Hotel at Ballarat on 6 October 1854. The consequences would test the popularity of the new governor severely, and the tactics of moral-force political protest began to change to physical force. It was public knowledge that Bentley was the culprit, yet the inquest and subsequent inquiry cleared the publican of any guilt. Jury members dissented from the findings of the Coroner and the Police Magistrate, John D’Ewes, a known associate of Bentley. The finding highlighted rampant police and legal corruption on the goldfields, and the new local newspaper, the *Ballarat Times*, called for an investigation. A mass meeting was called at Bentley’s hotel on 17 October, to protest against the finding. Thomas Kennedy, a Scot, took the chair. A resolution was passed to have the case brought before more competent judges. The Irishman Peter

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26 Meeting held on 17 December, reported in *Melbourne Morning Herald*, 31 December 1853. The meeting is reported by Clark, *History of Australia*, vol. 4, p. 66.  
27 A note in the *Argus*, 3 June 1854, announced the arrival of Rede.  
31 Carboni, *The Eureka Stockade*, p. 27.
Lalor acted as secretary of the meeting, the Scot J.R. Thompson was Chairman, and the Englishman, T.D. Wanliss, was Treasurer. 32 This committee was the beginning of a new and determined movement to seek justice on the Ballarat goldfield, and it was clearly British in composition. The journal of Alpheus Boynton, a Canadian and a carrier operating between Geelong and Ballarat, records this meeting where ‘talented men came forward in red shirts and “wide awakes” to address the meeting; not to fix the people with a rebellious spirit, but a spirit of resistance to oppression to claim their rights as men’.33 At the conclusion of the meeting troopers appeared, and confusion reigned as the hotel was stoned and then set alight, and Bentley escaped under police protection. Three men were plucked from the crowd and charged with riot. One of them, Andrew McIntyre, had actually been trying to assist the police in saving people and property in the fire. Carboni commented that as the hotel burned, ‘the diggers are lords and masters of Ballarat: and the prestige of the Camp is gone forever’.34

The diary of Samuel Lazarus provides a perceptive and dramatic insight into these events. This young man from Liverpool was working in a store in what is now Bridge St, and was a business associate of the printer Thomas Fletcher, one of those charged with arson. On 24 October he recorded his impressions of the court appearance where Fletcher was charged on trumped up charges, and Lazarus was not allowed to visit his friend at the lock-up. A monster meeting was immediately called and a deputation sent up to the Camp to demand the release of the three men on bail. This show of popular determination bore fruit, and the men were released. The diggers began organising funds for bail and legal costs.35 A petition of Ballarat miners was sent to Governor Hotham on 23 October over the name of Peter Lalor as secretary, seeking a re-trial of Bentley.36 The Geelong Advertiser referred to a Diggers’ Rights’ Society being formed to ‘tickl the Camp when it acted unconstitutionally in the future’.37

32 Goldfields Commission of Enquiry Report, 1854-5, paragraph 2342.
34 Carboni, The Eureka Stockade, p. 130.
35 Diary of Samuel Lazarus, La Trobe Library, MS 11951. According to Peter Lalor, Argus, 10 April 1855, the Reform League grew out of a committee organised to defend the prisoners taken for the burning of Bentley’s hotel.
37 Geelong Advertiser, 25 October 1853. The meeting at the Gravel Pits was held on 23 October, and is reported by Kent, ‘Agitations on the Victorian Gold Fields’, p. 21.

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The Ballarat Reform League

Chartists from Britain took leading roles in these meetings - the Welshman J.B. Humffray, the English journalist George Black of the *Diggers' Advocate*, Englishmen Henry Holyoake, John Cathie, Steve Cummins, Henry and Charles Nicholls and the Scot Tom Kennedy. Humffray called a meeting for 1 November 1854 to form a Ballarat Reform League to fight 'for social and political rights'. The protest movement now moved from social grievances to political objectives. In fact the League was seen as being derived from the Anti-Corn Law League in Britain, which campaigned successfully against a duty on corn in the 840s, but having a Chartist program. These members were joined by the German Frederick Vern, the Canadian Henry Charles Ross and the Irishman Timothy Hayes, who led a Catholic Irish contingent that was incensed at the mis-treatment of their priest Father Smyth and his servant.

The secretary and theorist of the League was John Basson Humffray, a 30-year old Welshman from Newtown, a scene of intense Chartist campaigns in the 1830s. He had studied law, but was drawn to Victoria in September 1853, accompanied by his brother. They set up a bookshop in Ballarat, and immediately he became involved in politics as a member of the Gold Diggers’ Association, and a member of a deputation to the Government complaining about the licence and lack of political representation of the mining districts. Humffray also spoke in Geelong, where Walter Hitchcock recalled him ‘speaking eloquently in the Market Square dressed in his usual red serge shirt’. He also made contact with the Bendigo political protest movement led by William Denovan, who had formed a Gold Fields Reform League at Bendigo on 15 October. Like Denovan, Humffray was an advocate of moral force, and with a liberal education behind him, he was a natural choice to write the charter of the League.

On 1 November, a meeting of 5,000 men discussed the program of the League. Hotham had advised Robert Rede, the Resident Commissioner, to have agents attend public meetings and

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38 *Argus*, 2, 9 November 1853
39 Carboni, *The Eureka Stockade*, p. 56; *From Tent to Parliament*, Ballarat, Berry Anderson, 1893, p. 38. A letter from Frederick Vern, published in the *Ballarat Star*, 4 October 1856 states that the leading members of the Reform League were Humffray, Black, Lalor and Vern.
40 17 November 1853, deputation from Ballarat, see Votes and Proceedings, 1855-6, vol. 2, p. 749; Diane Langmore, in her *Australian Dictionary of Biography* entry on Humffray, wrongly states that his first public speech was in November 1854.
41 Walter Hitchcock, Reminiscences, National Library of Australia, MS2038, p. 32.
43 Tina Ford began an MA Thesis on Humffray in 1998, at the Australian Catholic University, being the first scholarship-holder of the Eureka Stockade Memorial Trust. Sadly, illness forced her to withdraw from her studies.
report on them. Three such reports on the 1 November meeting exist, giving a detailed record of this meeting. Holyoake, Kennedy, Black and Ross addressed the meeting, where many resolutions were put, one being for the formation of 'a Gold Fields Reform League'. The reporters noted the divide between moral and physical force, but felt that there was no 'inflammatory language'.

On Saturday 11 November, in the afternoon, the League was officially formed at a meeting on Bakery Hill when an estimated 10,000 diggers attended to ratify its charter. Humffray, Vern and Kennedy addressed the meeting. The Sydney radical, Rev. J.D. Lang, had been asked to speak at the meeting, but urgent family business in Melbourne meant that he could not be present. The charter had been in process of formulation for some time before the meeting, and was read and approved. Henry Seekamp, reporting on the meeting in the Ballarat Times, thought Bakery Hill had become 'the rallying ground for Australian freedom'. He called the charter 'the draft prospectus of Australian independence'.

The charter contained five of the six basic Chartist demands - full and fair parliamentary representation, manhood suffrage, no property qualifications for members of parliament, payment of members of parliament, and short term parliaments. It did not mention the secret ballot, which was the sixth point of the British Charter. Its immediate demands were abolition of the Gold Commission system of administration and abolition of the licence tax. It did not mention land, although the report in the Melbourne Morning Herald mistakenly included 'unlocking the lands' as one of the points. It begins with the words 'That it is the inalienable right of every citizen to have a choice in the laws he is called on to obey, and that taxation without representation is tyranny'. Here are direct echoes of the American Declaration of Independence and the charter contains a strong threat if its demands are not won:

If Queen Victoria continues to act upon the ill advice of dishonest ministers and insists upon indirectly dictating obnoxious laws for the colony, ... the Reform League will endeavour to supersede such Royal prerogative by asserting that of

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44 Robert Rede correspondence, 33 letters, La Trobe Library, MS11490, box 59/3.
45 Note the significance of the date in Australian history. It was also the day Ned Nelly was hung, Armistice Day and the date Gough Whitlam's government was sacked.
48 Ballarat Times, 18 November 1854.
49 Melbourne Morning Herald, 16 November, 1854.
the people, which is the most royal of all prerogatives, as the people are the only legitimate source of all political power.  

The labour historian Robin Gollan argued that by adopting the charter, the diggers of Ballarat threw down the gauntlet to the government: either grant at least some of the points of the charter, or face civil war. The League wished to act within the constitution, but the threat of independence was clear.

Significantly, the government poster issued after the battle called for the arrest of ‘Lawler and Black’ for their use of seditious language on or about the 13 November, a clear reference to this meeting. Alpheus Boynton recorded in his diary on 25 November the formation of ‘a sort of independent club, the reform league, determined to oppose the operations of Government. I fear these heretofore peaceful diggings will become a scene of war unless the Government secures people’s confidence and takes steps to rid itself of its corrupt and villaneous officers’.

Hotham believed that he was dealing with more than simple disaffection with the gold licence system. He saw signs of the popular rebellions of 1848 that had convulsed European countries, as well as the huge Chartist demonstrations in London, which the government had ruthlessly suppressed. This fear is expressed in his correspondence with his superior, the Secretary of State for the Colonies in London. It dominated his response to the protest movement in Ballarat. His antipathy to the protestors was no doubt heightened by the Crimean War. At such a time, when Britain was engaged in war against a European enemy, any criticism of the ruling power was likely to be seen as treasonous, especially by Westminster.

Lalor wrote that the committee issued cards of membership for the League. Only one example of a membership card is known to exist - the card of Alfred Weir, issued on 6 November 1854, terms one shilling entrance fee and sixpence per week. The card bears the name of Humffray as Secretary, the Treasurer was the Manager of the Bank of NSW, and the sub-treasurer was Frederick Vern. The conservative Rusden noted that membership cards were

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52 Alpheus Boynton’s journal, 25 Nov, 1854, Mitchell Library MSS 1058.
53 Britain and France declared war on Russia in March 1854 over conflicting interests in Turkey. This was the first war covered by war correspondents.
54 Mitchell Library, Ab 193.
issued and business conducted in a tent, and he unkindly characterised the political activists as 'pestilent disturbers'.

A letter later written to W.B. Withers by a man who had been a journalist covering the meetings added further detail:

There was the old "hall", with its walls of scantling and roof of calico. There is the Chairman, and round him are grouped the expectant speakers, each (like us reporters at the adjoining trestle table) smoking his hardest: while Weekes, or A.A. O'Connor, or Kennedy, or that wonderful Highlandman from Buninyong poured his throat in fiery appeals, or scathing epithets. How the frail erection rang with the sympathetic roaring, the clapping, the stamping and the ramping.

The League was in communication with other goldfields' groups, and the Geelong Advertiser and the Age reported that a number of representatives met in Melbourne 'charged with the formation of a general congress or convention, when plans may be originated to ensure success in the coming agitation'. This congress co-incided with the delegation of George Black, Humffray and Kennedy meeting with Governor Hotham on 27 November and demanding the release of the three men imprisoned for burning Bentley's Hotel. They also presented the Ballarat Reform League's charter and raised the land issue. Hotham was incensed at the use of the word 'demand' and he cut short the meeting, writing 'put away' on

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56 W.B. Withers, 'Some Ballarat Reminiscences', Austral Light, June 1896.
57 Age, 28 Nov. 1854, from Geelong Advertiser's correspondent, 21 November.
58 A full transcript of the interview is included in Eureka Documents, Melbourne, Public Record Office, 1976, pp. 11-15.
the charter. Surprisingly, it was not produced as evidence at the treason trials the following March.

The delegates returned to Ballarat, and the committee met to consider the next move. The committee resolved - only by a majority of one - to propose to a public meeting on Wednesday 29 November that the diggers burn their licences. This meeting, held on Bakery Hill in the afternoon, was attended by upwards of 10,000 men. (The population of Ballarat was estimated on 2 December 1854 as 24,600 people, including 4310 women and 4410 children.) The object was to hear the reports of the delegation to Governor Hotham.

The League’s new flag of the Southern Cross was unfurled from a tall mast, a most potent symbol of the emerging democratic spirit. Many contemporaries referred to it as ‘the Australian flag’ including Henry Gyles Turner in Our Own Little Rebellion. The Irishman William Kelly wrote of the Reform League as ‘a mad movement for achieving independence from the British yoke’, describing the flag as ‘the standard of the southern hemisphere’. Captain Thomas, commander of the military, referred to it as ‘the revolutionary flag’. The government clerk Samuel Douglas Huyghue described it as ‘Crux Australis, the symbol of the revolutionary League’. The Ballarat correspondent of the Argus described the flag as ‘an absorber of nationalities’. Clearly, people in Victoria in 1854 read a republican message into the flag.

Licences were burned and the meeting resolved unanimously to refuse to take out any more licenses. In the event of any digger being apprehended, ‘the united people will defend and protect them’. Carboni tells us that he took out his membership for 2s 6d from Reynolds, one of the treasurers, and that a meeting was planned for the Adelphi Hotel on Sunday afternoon. Withers gave a full account of the meeting, and reported that Kennedy was sent to Creswick.

59 Serle, Golden Age, p. 165; VPRS 4066, Box 1, November No. 69.
60 Population statistics given in MacFarlane, Eureka From the Official Records, p. 11. VPRS 6927. Withers says ‘some 12,000 men, it is said, were present.’ History of Ballarat, 1887, p. 62.
61 Henry Gyles Turner, Our Own Little Revolution, Melbourne, Whitcombe & Tombs, 1913, p. 58; Kelly, Life In Victoria, pp. 107-8, 115; MacFarlane, Eureka From the Official Records, p. 92.
63 Argus, 4 December 1854.
64 Carboni, The Eureka Stockade, p. 54.
to raise volunteers. Using Carboni as his source, Withers states that this was the first time Lalor spoke publicly.\textsuperscript{65}

At the subsequent Eureka treason trials there was much discussion of this meeting, which the prosecution argued was part of the plot to overthrow Her Majesty Queen Victoria. One of the most reliable witnesses was Loftus Gray, a correspondent for the \textit{Argus}. He gave evidence of people being asked to enrol themselves as members of ‘the Victoria Reform League’, which issued tickets of membership, although he had only seen one ticket since.\textsuperscript{66}

Another emblem of the League was the red ribbon. Red hatbands had been worn at Bendigo in 1853 as a sign of protest, and at Ballarat in November 1854 protesting diggers again wore red ribbons or sashes. Coghlan and Ewing’s 1903 history of the event recorded that ‘mischievous agents went in and out among the miners stirring up disaffection and distributing red ribbons’.\textsuperscript{67} One such sash survives, in the collection of the Gold Museum. It comes from the family of Henry Cuttance, a Cornishman, who trained a group of diggers who wore their sashes at the Stockade.\textsuperscript{68} A government spy also recorded that ‘three thousand men from Creswick are expected, wearing red ribbons as badges’.\textsuperscript{69} I discussed the issue of wearing red ribbons with the English Chartist historian Tony Taylor, who assured me that red was associated with the Chartists in England. Henry Lawson associated the colour blue with Eureka in his poem \textit{As Ireland Wore The Green}, and the shearsers at Barcaldine in 1891 apparently wore blue sashes in honour of Eureka.\textsuperscript{70} At the 50\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of Eureka, old stockaders were given a blue ribbon.\textsuperscript{71} Both red and blue colours were thus associated with the movement – red at the time, and blue in retrospect.

The meeting concluded with a threat, moved by Humffray and seconded Kennedy;

\begin{quote}
that this meeting protests against the common practice of ... military marching into a peaceable district with fixed bayonets, and police firing on the people without first
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{66} Eureka Treason Trial transcript, Supreme Court Library, Melbourne, pp. 97-8.


\textsuperscript{68} The Cuttance family donated the sash in the early 1990s, and passed on the story. The sash is displayed at the Eureka Centre.

\textsuperscript{69} VPRS 937, Box 10.


\textsuperscript{71} Blue Eureka ribbon, associated with John Corran, 1904. Gold Museum collection; Issac Hayward’s blue ribbon is on the Melbourne University Archives.
reading the Riot Act, and if this unconstitutional practice continues, we cannot be responsible for similar or worse deeds by the people.

Humffray was not prepared to move beyond threats, and he withdrew from the movement with other moral-force Chartists including George Black and Alfred Crowe, who later looked back at the events when men ‘attempted to subvert the Government and establish a republic’.\textsuperscript{72} Gollan believed that the diggers had made a de facto declaration of civil war by burning licences and promising to defend anyone captured by the police. Gollan characterises this as a genuine revolt, where a political program was devised to complement specific grievances felt by the population. In his judgment, ‘Eureka was a democratic protest against arbitrary government’.\textsuperscript{73} Serle uses exactly the same phrase, but points out that only a small proportion of the mining population were prepared to burn their licences.\textsuperscript{74}

Next morning, the police conducted a most provocative licence hunt, given that they knew some diggers had burned their licences on the previous afternoon. The intimidatory character of this action led the diggers to call a spontaneous meeting at Bakery Hill that afternoon at about 3.30 p.m.\textsuperscript{75} Between 1500 and 2000 were present, and there was no chairman. Captain Ross again unfurled the Diggers’ Flag, and Lalor stepped forward, in the absence of Humffray.\textsuperscript{76} Lalor ‘mounted the stump and proclaimed “Liberty”’. He called on those present to take off their hats, kneel, and take an oath beneath the League’s flag:

\begin{quote}
We swear by the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other, and fight to defend our rights and liberties.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{72} \textit{Courier}, 16 Jan. 1896. As Tom Griffiths points out, this letter signed ‘Old Identity’ is identified as Crowe’s from his diary. See Tom Griffiths, \textit{Hunters and Collectors}, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 204. Crowe also contributed to the book \textit{From Tent to Parliament}, pp. 37, 44-5. Dorothy Wickham states incorrectly in her \textit{Eureka Research Directory} that he was wounded at the Stockade.

\textsuperscript{73} Gollan, \textit{Radical and Working Class Politics}, pp. 26,30.

\textsuperscript{74} Serle, \textit{The Golden Age}, pp. 180-1.

\textsuperscript{75} Loftus Gray, Eureka Trial transcript, p. 99.

\textsuperscript{76} Peter Lalor’s statement, \textit{Age, Argus}, 10 April, 1855, reprinted in Blake, \textit{Peter Lalor}, p. 110.
This, I contend, was the birthplace of the Australian republic, with men of many nationalities swearing allegiance to the new nation they were forming in the Southern Hemisphere, and a virtual declaration of war against the British authority that had trespassed on their rights and liberties. The old Chartist slogan 'peaceably if we may, forcibly if we must', was being enacted. According to the British historian, W.P. Morrell, the combination of hoisting a flag and swearing of oaths constituted the 'ritual of revolution'. Military organisation began. Carboni wrote that men were fanned into divisions and Alfred Black took down the names of divisions and their captains. We can only ponder what became of this list, which was never produced at the treason trials and which would be one of the greatest treasures for the Eureka Stockade Centre, establishing the identity of the physical force men at Eureka.

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79 Carboni, *The Eureka Stockade*, p. 59. Gray testified having seen the book when he appeared at the treason trial, *Eureka Trial Transcript*, p. 102. A Ballarat digger called Duncan Drummond revealed that 'the detectives had been in the stockade and had a list of all the men who volunteered, their names, and their weapons.' (Goldfields Commission of Enquiry, p. 119, para 2332). One of Commissioner Rede's spies reported that he had 'seen a list containing a great number of names'. (VPRS 1189; box 92; 54/K 13.219, quoted in MacFarlane, *Eureka From the Official Records*, p. 77)
produced at the treason trials and which would be one of the greatest treasures for the Eureka Stockade Centre, establishing the identity of the physical force men at Eureka.

At the conclusion of this meeting, the diggers formed up and marched behind the flag to the Eureka Lead, where they commenced building a stockade and drilling. Carboni describes a 'council of war' held in Diamond's Store that evening, and lists those who were present when Lalor was elected 'commander-in-chief'. By taking up arms the men of Eureka constituted themselves as republicans and formed a provisional government at the Stockade, with messengers sent off to arouse the other goldfields. The stockade has also been seen very differently as simply a space where the miners could be safe from unconstitutional attacks by the troopers. This was the view of Carboni, and also of Geoffrey Blainey, who reasoned that guerrilla tactics would have been used if the diggers planned a revolution.

Withers refers to a declaration of independence being drafted in Ballarat during November by a group that included the American James McGill, the Italian Carboni, the Englishman Alfred Black and the German Friedreich Vern. He claims that the diggers meant 'nothing less than revolution and a republic'. H.R. Nicholls, who shared a tent in Ballarat with Alfred Black, reminisced about this declaration. He thought that Black composed it and read it out to him, and that it was couched in 'very flowery, decidedly verbose language...this declaration was read at night-fall on the Friday, I think, to a number of persons under arms...and was cheered very loudly'. If we can believe Nicholls, the diggers had committed themselves to independence. Sadly no copy of the declaration has survived, and its existence was subsequently denied by McGill and Carboni, although other participants mentioned it in their letters to Ballarat newspapers.

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86 For example *Star*, Ballarat, 8 October 1867.
Hotham genuinely feared an attempt to establish a republic in Victoria. As Commissioner Rede’s coded reports of the meetings in Ballarat reached him, he reacted by sending more troops and ammunition to Ballarat. On the fateful Sunday morning of 3 December 1854, Rede ordered an attack upon the ‘evilly-disposed foreigners’ behind their defensive stockade. This was Hotham’s attempt to nip discontent in the bud before the cancer of goldfields’ rebellion became a terminal disease. The operation was quick and effective. In less than half an hour the rebellion was quashed, about thirty rebels killed and many more severely wounded, with the loss of four soldiers. Over 100 prisoners were marched back to the Camp with the rebel flag dragged through the dust as a trophy of war.

Aftermath of the Battle

Hotham was still fearful of revolution and wrote to the Governor of Tasmania requesting military assistance in case the insurgents, ‘mainly foreigners’, might reassemble. Henry Seekamp, editor of the Ballarat Times, was arrested and charged with sedition. The government issued proclamations calling on the citizens to assist in preserving social order, proclaimed martial law in Ballarat, and posted reward notices for the rebel leaders who had escaped. These all constitute evidence that the government believed it was dealing with a revolution.

On 6 December, Humffray organised a public meeting at Bakery Hill, with the Camp’s permission, to justify his moral-force stand and to re-establish his leadership of the popular movement. A number of motions were passed, which could be taken as censoring either the insurgents or the authorities. When Rev. Patrick Smyth and Humffray went to the Camp with the resolutions of the meeting, Humffray was arrested and Commissioner Rede refused to receive the resolutions because they implied a censure on the government. The Melbourne Morning Herald reported further on this deputation, pleased with the sensible intervention of Sir Robert Nickle, the new military commander who had just arrived in Ballarat. Nickle released Humffray and received the deputation ‘courteously’, listening to Smyth’s ‘eloquent
pleas for the protection of innocent people.' The populace respected the military, but deep distrust of the mounted troopers continued.

Humffray and the Chartist Nicholls brothers pursued the time-honoured Chartist method of organising a petition, signed by 4,500 residents of what the Argus described as an 'officially-ridden place,' seeking an amnesty for the prisoners taken at the Stockade. Father Smyth arranged for the Catholic bishop in Melbourne to present the petition to the governor on 19 December 1854, and a deputation of Humffray and C.F. Nicholls met Hotham in January, all to no avail.

At Bendigo a branch of the Reform League took similar action, refusing to pay licences and determining to wear red ribbons. Similar meetings took place at Castlemaine. The League was now called the Victoria Reform League, and organised petitions from all parts of the colony, calling for an amnesty and organising digger representation at the hearings of the Commission of Enquiry into the Goldfields.

Lazarus describes in his diary a meeting on 5 January 1855 on Bakery Hill that heard the report of a committee appointed by the diggers to meet with the Gold Fields Commission. Humffray as the leading representative outlined the concerns of the diggers to the Commission, which worked busily from 20 December 1854, holding hearings at Ballarat, Creswick, Bendigo, Castlemaine and Melbourne. There was a new sense of optimism that grievances were at last being listened to. So the community was outraged when a notice appeared saying that licence inspections would resume on Thursday, 11 January 1855. The last monster meeting on Bakery Hill was held on 10 January, and a resolution passed that no more licences would be taken out, as the Commission was likely to recommend a new system. Humffray wrote to Hotham on behalf of the Victoria Reform League Committee, asking the reasons for such an action. 'You have declined to give any verbal answer to our

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90 Melbourne Morning Herald, 7,8 December, 1854.
92 Ballarat Times, 1 January 1855: Argus, 26 January 1855.
93 MacFarlane, Eureka From the Official Records, p. 132.
94 Argus, 26 Jan 1855, letter from Humffray.
97 Samuel Lazarus Diary, entry for 14 January 1855, La Trobe Library.
deputation of yesterday - you will oblige by a written reply to the letter'.

The Welshman continued to be fearless and eloquent in the cause of democracy.

The next day the police came out, but Lazarus commented that they acted with restraint and appeared not to like the duties they were given. In fact Hotham had written to his Commissioner in Ballarat on 2 January 1855, ‘confiding in your prudence and caution to avoid all unnecessary provocation, but until the law is repealed, it must be enforced’. He ordered that police should proceed to collect licences, but not carry firearms, and should use only their staves. He wrote again on 12 January: ‘pending the Goldfields Report, consider the licence fee in existence, but do not go out to collect it with the police as heretofore’. The League had won a victory, but was unable to convince Hotham to introduce an amnesty for the prisoners and to abandon the treason trials.

Nevertheless, the political climate in Victoria had changed dramatically. The Chief Secretary had resigned, and the Commission of Inquiry into the Goldfields was swiftly convened. Lazarus remarked in his diary on 14 January 1855 that ‘Melbourne, Geelong, the press and the diggings’ were united in their opposition to the government. Petitions poured into Melbourne from the diggings and from Geelong. The Bendigo Reform League ‘earnestly warned’ the Governor on 13 March 1855 against proceeding with the treason trials.

The events of late 1854 had stirred the populace of Melbourne to fever pitch. A public meeting in support of the diggers was held at St. Paul’s square on 6 December. Serle observes that this meeting represented ‘the emergence at last and in strength of the popular democratic movement’ in Melbourne. An anonymous pamphlet was distributed among the huge crowd, entitled ‘A New Constitution for Victoria’. In 1913 Henry Gyles Turner published the document as an appendix to Our Own Little Rebellion, and the following year the socialist R.S. Ross referred to it as a ‘remarkable leaflet, delineatory of the democratic impulses of the

98 Rede Correspondence, Box 59/3.
99 Lazarus, Diary, 14 Jan 1855.
100 Rede Correspondence.
102 MacFarlane, Eureka From the Official Records, p. 143.
50s'. The radical *Age* newspaper wrote editorials espousing a new republic, influenced by J. D. Lang, Scottish Presbyterian turned Australian nationalist, who drafted his own 'Declaration of Independence for the sovereign people of Victoria'.

The Goldfields' Commission in January 1855 asked the Governor to grant a general amnesty to all those involved at the Stockade. The Governor refused. He felt it was his duty to proceed with the trials of thirteen men who had been captured at the Stockade and charged with high treason. At the trials held in Melbourne in February and March 1855, members of Melbourne's legal fraternity donated their services to defend the Eureka men, and juries refused to convict any of the accused. This was a clear sign that what was considered treason by the government was not treason to the people. Oldfield speculates what might have happened had any of the thirteen men been found guilty of treason. A huge crowd waited outside the courtroom, and 'at the very least there would have been rioting and bloodshed, and impetus could even have been given to an organised republican movement'.

The jury's decision and the report of the Goldfields' Commission defused the revolutionary situation. The report, released at the same time as the acquittals, castigated the administration and recommended that the monopoly of the public lands by the squatters must end. It recommended sweeping changes to goldfields' management, ushering in local democracy through elected local mining courts, whose elected representatives would be paid - a basic Chartist tenet. Later in 1855, Peter Lalor and J.B. Humffray were among eight members elected to the Victorian Parliament as representatives of the newly enfranchised mining districts. It was appropriate that Ballarat chose representatives of both the physical and moral force movements. The introduction of the Miner's Right, costing £1 annually, which replaced the hated Gold Licence, brought effective manhood suffrage, and offered the possibility of home ownership for the cost of annual renewal. In 1856 Henry Chapman, who brilliantly defended John Josephs at the treason trials, introduced the bill for the secret ballot, and Victoria became the first place in the world to enjoy this basic democratic right - another of the Chartist demands. Although it had not been mentioned in the Ballarat charter, its

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108 The report was tabled in the Legislative Council on 27 March 1855, including the answers to over 6,000 questions. *Gold Fields' Commission of Enquiry. Report*, printed 29 March 1855, Votes and Proceedings, 1854-55, vol 11, A.76.
introduction into Victoria was secured by the vote of the Goldfields' members of the first representative parliament. 109 The Ballarat historian W.B. Withers reflected on these changes in 1870:

government of the people by the people through a fairly representative Parliament.
Thence came our present constitution and all its benefits in the form of manhood
franchise and local self-government. 110

Serle is correct in stating that a new constitution had already been prepared before Eureka, but does concede that manhood suffrage was not enshrined in that constitution. 111 Gollan reflected on the importance of the formation of the Ballarat Reform League. For a revolt against established authority to succeed, he argued, there must be two components of a popular protest movement. There must be specific grievances, and there must be a political program. 112 The charter couched the popular unrest in political terms, and the League became the representative organisation of the diggers. As Gollan states, the protest at Ballarat 'decided that the language of Australian politics would from then on be the language of democracy'.

The conservative political scientist Kenneth Minogue, who spent his early life in Australia, has defined nationalism as an ideology that organises grievance, 'a political movement depending of a feeling of collective grievance against foreigners'. 114 He saw the Eureka Stockade as 'a genuinely nationalist experience, which could be stretched to fit the model', but he felt 'its consequences were remote from the circumstances of Australian life'. 115

I disagree with Minogue. The consequences of Eureka directly influenced the lives of the colonists. The Ballarat Reform League could be counted a very successful political movement and the envy of its Chartist antecedents in Britain. With its basic demands won in 1855, it developed into a new organisation, the Victoria Land League, with its emblem the Southern Cross, and its motto 'Advance Australia'. 116 This movement devolved into the Land

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113 Ibid., p. 32.
115 Ibid., p. 30.
Convention, which influenced the passage of Victoria’s Land Acts and enabled the diggers to become farmers in the 1860s.117

An equally important movement was the organisation of alluvial diggers in the Peoples’ League, which sought the right to mine on private property. It was formed at Sulky Gully near Creswick on 11 November 1856, when 2000 miners met to reinforce the principles that the Ballarat Reform League fought for two years previously. J.B. Humffray was a member of the committee, as was C.F. Nicholls.118 This movement played a central role in the fight to guarantee access to mining for individual miners in the coming age of company mining. From this movement grew a number of miners’ unions, which were brought together by W.G. Spence in the Amalgamated Miners Association. Eventually this became the Australian Workers Union.119

In summary, the Ballarat Reform League was the most effective organization in articulating popular dissent on the Victorian goldfields. Growing into the Victoria Reform League, it was a mass political movement that articulated and fought for democratic change, for the rights of working men, and for basic human rights. There were divergent opinions within the League about moral and physical force tactics and on the question of republicanism, which led to some temporarily withdrawing from the movement. However the wave of popular support for the diggers’ cause after the attack on the Stockade showed that the League’s charter was endorsed by the people of Victoria. Its basic tenets were quickly accepted. Henry Gyles Turner observed that the demands of the League might well have been conceded without bloodshed, had the diggers only been patient. Nevertheless, he admitted that ‘patience was a hard doctrine to preach to men smarting under admitted injustice, and whose protests are met by a summons to obedience and the repression of brute force’.120 Peter Lalor, making his first election speech in November 1855, pointed out that the English had gained their Magna Carta from King John when the Barons presented arms, not petitions.121 Victor Daley echoed that sentiment when he pointed out that the democratic gains had to be won at the cost of human lives:

117 Argus, 29 Dec 1856, 20 Jan 1857; letter by Gray in Age, 5 May 1857.
118 Ballarat Star, 11 November, 1856.
119 W.G. Spence, Australia’s Awakening, Sydney, Workers Trustees, 1909.
121 Argus, 13 Nov. 1855, quoted by John Molony, Eureka, p. 204.
Yet, ere the year was over,
Freedom rolled in like a flood,
They gave us all we asked for—
When we asked for it in blood. 122

**Contemporary Interpretations of the Event**

Until the new Victorian Constitution came into operation in November 1855, Governor Hotham held executive power in the Colony, taking little advice from either his Legislative Council or his public officers. His style of government can be reconstructed through his correspondence and directives. The most important correspondence was with his superior in London, the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Despatches took almost three months to reach London, and three months more for a response to arrive in Port Phillip. And while his worries loomed large in Melbourne, Victoria was only one minor interest competing for the attention of the Secretary of State. In addition, the outbreak of the Crimean War in March 1854 absorbed most official attention in London. It was within this context that Hotham had to operate. 123

The letters between the Secretary of State and the governors of the British colonies created the discourse of power in the colonies before the advent of self-government. The reports from the Governor were necessarily frank, because they could always be compared against the accounts of influential settlers, who were not slow to make their views known – either in London (directly to the Secretary of State), or in Melbourne (through the medium of the newspapers).

News of the Crimean war began to dominate the local newspapers in Victoria from about the time of Hotham’s arrival. The spectacular Charge of the Light Brigade took place on 25 October 1854, just as events in Ballarat were beginning to unfold, and a report of the capture of Sebastopol (which proved to be false) reached Australia at exactly the same time as the story broke locally of the rebellion at Ballarat. In fact the contemporary observer Arthur

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123 Sir Charles Hotham Papers, Brynmor Jones Library, Kingston upon Hull, M2655, included in Australian Joint Copying Project, Part 8, Miscellaneous Series, National Library, Canberra.
Polehampton observed that the news from London ‘helped to divert the popular mind to another channel’, with placards proclaiming ‘forty thousand Russians blown up’.

There were also changes to the government in England. Hotham was sent to Victoria by the Duke of Newcastle, who was replaced by Sir George Grey in September 1854, followed by Lord John Russell and Sir William Molesworth during 1855. Hotham found himself in the unnerving position of writing despatches to someone with whose views he was not acquainted. He sent his first despatch about the Ballarat goldfields to Sir George Grey on 18 September 1854. In it he extolled the ‘true hearted and loyal diggers’, indicating that all nationalities - ‘Americans, Germans and Chinese’ - were interested in upholding authority and law. Ironically this despatch arrived in London about the time that the military crushed the diggers at the Stockade, and the Governor, in his despatch written on 20 December 1854, put most of the blame for the incident on foreigners of republican and democratic demeanour. He described the Bakery Hill meeting of 30 November, ‘whereat the Australian flag of independence was consecrated and vows proffered for its defence’, as part of his justification for taking military action against the diggers.

Hotham’s December despatch is in essence his own history of the events in Ballarat in late 1854, complete with evidence in the form of nineteen enclosures to back it up. These include a wide selection of primary evidence - from newspaper accounts, the shorthand writer’s record of his meeting with a diggers’ delegation, a republican placard handed out at a meeting, a receipt for a horse borrowed by a stockader, and a letter from the officer in charge of the attack on the Stockade. All in all, it is an impressive body of evidence to support his contention that he was dealing with a republican revolution, rather than a simple revolt against an unpopular tax. He states that he had begun his relationship with the diggers with the best of intentions, but had to change his tactics when it became clear that a ‘riot was growing into a revolution’. His military training made him determined not to yield to physical force. But another side of Hotham is revealed in his letter to the Catholic Bishop of Victoria, James Alipius Goold, just three days after the battle. In it he implored Goold to use his influence over the miners of Ballarat to calm the atmosphere, and he authorised Goold to tell the miners

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126 The major dispatches of Hotham are conveniently reproduced as *Eureka Documents: Three Despatches from Governor Hotham*, Melbourne, Public Record Office, 1976.
that he would do 'all I can... to redress the miners' grievances'. Here is a private admission that the diggers did have a just cause, and that he might yield to moral force.

Hotham's growing unpopularity led him to write in January 1855 to his superior, this time a secret and confidential despatch, seeking money for a secret service to stem the agitation to overthrow the government and reassure loyal and well-disposed people. The Secretary of State perhaps sensed Hotham's growing obsession about the threat of revolution, and refused the request.

The colonial newspapers reported the events in depth, taking sides according to their editorial sympathies, with conservative response coloured by the news from the Crimean War. The new Melbourne Age, owned by the republicans Ebenezer Syme and David Blair, took a strongly republican line, as had the Ballarat Times. In Sydney the future premier and father of Federation, Henry Parkes, wrote approvingly in the Empire on 12 December 1854, comparing Eureka to Wat Tyler's rebellion. The Freeman's Journal in Sydney, an Irish Catholic journal, wrote admiringly of the protest movement, then lamented the 'misguided insurgents' who thought that all they had to do was to raise a flag in the 'vain hope of securing the aid of the five colonies in setting up an Australian Republic'. It did however castigate the 'incompetency, misconduct and corruption' of the administration. The Adelaide Times of 5 December 1854 showed sympathy for the diggers and scorn for the self-importance of the officials. The Sydney Morning Herald reported the League on 7 December 1854 as a revolutionary movement, seeking to establish a 'provisional government'. When news arrived in Sydney that the diggers' revolt had been crushed, editor John West rejoiced because 'the rebels had extended their grievances beyond their class, and proposed to establish a new empire, a diggers' empire'. He wrote that this smacked of the evils of the French Revolution, with the working classes seeking control. Although West had led the anti-transportation movement in 1851 from Launceston, and had raised the Southern Cross as the banner of the league, by 1854 he represented the moderate liberal voice.

Influential colonists also aired their views in the newspapers. Caroline Chisholm had toured the goldfields in November 1854, and heard first-hand the diggers' grievances with the

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129 Ibid., p. 174.
130 Freeman's Journal, Sydney, 9, 16, 23 Dec., 1854.
131 Dunn and Darby, 'Aftermath', pp. 63-76. The authors present an assessment of newspaper reaction.
administration. Writing in the Argus, she regretted that the ‘hands of our people are stained with blood’, and urged the Governor to open land for agriculture so that the diggers could become farmers.\textsuperscript{132} Her rival in settlement schemes, the Rev. J.D. Lang, wrote that if reforms were not enacted, and land made available, there would be another Eureka that would establish republican government.\textsuperscript{133}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{‘Let it burn, I’m only a lodger’}, Nicholas Chevalier’s cartoon of Governor Charles Hotham’s reflection on the Stockade, Punch, Melbourne, 16 August 1855.
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\textsuperscript{132} Argus, 2, 29 November, 9 December 1854.

\textsuperscript{133} Argus, 20 December 1854.
In England, after a three months delay, conservative newspapers reacted with dramatic headlines about 'foreign revolutionaries' and painted the diggers in a bad light. In London The Times carried a report of the Eureka Stockade under the heading 'Serious outbreak at Ballarat', which it described as an 'insurrection'.\textsuperscript{134} The report of 12 March 1855 derived from the Argus, noted that the 'strike' of the diggers was over, 'insurrection' being too strong a word. It described the majority of the prisoners as 'foreigners', and noted that 30 of the 150 men in the Stockade were ex-convicts. William Howitt, who sailed from Melbourne in November 1854, arrived back in London to read these accounts, and added a postscript to his book about the Victorian goldfields:

> Will the government now take warning, and disperse these crowds...by the only effectual, permanent and healthy means, - that of putting cheap lands, and of course cheap houses, within their reach?

> What deserves especial notice in these accounts is, that the foreigners were at the head of these disturbances. ...This is as might be expected, and marks the low, red-republican foreigners as a very bad element on the diggings.\textsuperscript{135}

Some newspapers reacted favourably – notably in Ireland and the USA.\textsuperscript{136} The Freeman's Journal in Dublin reported on 2 March under the heading 'Insurrection in Australia' that 'the people of Australian have risen and declared their independence'.\textsuperscript{137} The following day an editorial noted that this 'revolt by the most favoured of her colonies will be a blow aimed at England's heart'. Later reports were more measured, noting that peace had been restored and the 'prospective repeal of the licence tax was taken as a popular triumph'.\textsuperscript{138} The New York Daily News of 24 March 1855 noted that the London papers had 'cooked' reports of the event for continental consumption. It reflected on the current difficulties England faced around the Empire, with problems in the Crimea and Afghanistan. It posed the question that should a revolution break out in Australia, would the British have the resources to break it, and would that be in the best interests of British liberal principles?\textsuperscript{139} Although the Crimean War still

\textsuperscript{134} The Times, London, 7 March 1855, p.9, col. e., 12 March, p. 8, col. b.

\textsuperscript{135} Howitt, Land, Labour and Gold, p. 227.

\textsuperscript{136} Al Grassby, whilst Minister for Immigration in the Whitlam Government 1972-5, conducted an extensive survey of newspaper opinion throughout the world, which he refers to in Six Australian Battlefields, Sydney, Angus & Robertson, 1988, p. 236.

\textsuperscript{137} Freeman's Journal, Dublin, 2 March 1855, p. 2. By telegraph from Melbourne Morning Herald. The report noted that the despatch had evidently been 'cooked for continental circulation'.

\textsuperscript{138} Freeman's Journal, Dublin, 12 March 1855.

\textsuperscript{139} New York Daily News, 24 March 1855.
dominated the journals, Karl Marx heard about Eureka and gave his interpretation of the Bakery Hill meetings in *Neu Oder-Zeitung* (Breslau) where he extolled the diggers who 'raised the banner of independence'. Marx referred to the 'revolutionary movement in Victoria' and compared its claims to the American Declaration of Independence. Marx made his remarks about the Bakery Hill meeting, for he had not read of the Stockade when he wrote his article.

Hotham had very effectively created a myth about 'foreigners and anarchists' leading the reform movement in Victoria. His attribution ignored the key contribution of British Chartists. The Gold Fields Commission Report also commented that foreigners appeared to have been over-represented at the Stockade in proportion to their numbers in the general community, and that they took a prominent part in military organisation of the diggers. The role of Americans has always been problematic. There were reports of well-armed Californians taking part in the movement, and the American James McGill was Lalor's second-in-command, but the only American to stand trial was the black American John Josephs. There were hints that Americans had accepted money to betray the Stockaders, and other hints that the American Consul exerted pressure on Hotham to release (white) Americans. Churchward speculated that Hotham was prevailed on to release the American prisoners because he did not want in international incident to blow up when the British wanted American support for its Crimean campaign. The mystery of what happened to the California Brigade is unlikely to be solved.

On 23 October 1855 the new Victorian Constitution was received from London. This marked the end of the Governor's independent authority, and a month later he presided at the handing over of government to the people. The new Constitution gave the people responsible government and control over their land, although the role of the Legislative Council as a barricade against the democratic will would bedevil Victorian politics for the rest of the

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141 Anderson (ed.), *The Goldfields Commission Report*, p. 44 (Section 66).
143 L.G. Churchward, 'Americans and Other Foreigners at Eureka', *Historical Studies: Eureka Supplement*, p. 86.
century. As Serle remarks, this constitution had been drafted before Eureka, and Eureka’s impact was seen mainly in the granting of manhood suffrage in the Legislative Assembly, setting up a bitter contest between the peoples’ house and the squatter-dominated upper house. 144

Hotham had worked himself to the bone, and he wrote to the Secretary of State, on the day he promulgated the new constitution, tendering his resignation and justifying his actions in the colony. In mid December he caught a chill that turned to a serious infection, and he died at Government House on the last day of 1855, just short of his fiftieth birthday. Although mourned by some members of the Legislative Council, Peter Lalor declared that his monument was the dead who lay at Eureka.

So ended a most dramatic chapter in Victorian politics. The Ballarat Reform League had asserted control over the nascent social and political protest movement, and articulated its democratic charter. The physical force members of the League put their lives on the line at the Stockade, thereby ensuring that their demands were quickly secured for the mining population of Victoria. Although Bakery Hill represented the germ of the Australian republic, the proclamation of the new constitution offered a disguised republic that gave power to the people, but left in place the ceremonial forms of monarchical government. This would prove a model for the Federation of the Australian colonies into the new nation-state of Australia fifty years later. The constitution was not won at Eureka, but the democratic gains won by the Stockaders were real, and even Blainey admitted this when he called the new mining courts ‘the high tide of Australian democracy’. 145 But there would also be important gains that were less tangible. These will be considered in the next chapter.

144 Serle, *The Golden Age*, pp. 184, 378-9
CHAPTER THREE
‘AN ABSORBER OF NATIONALITIES’:
THE CONTRIBUTION OF EUREKA TO NATIONAL MYTHOLOGIES.

The Eureka Stockade led to immediate political changes in the colony of Victoria. But it also had long-term influences on a number of nationalist movements in Australia. I want to consider those movements, continuing to trace Eureka’s influence on nationalist and republican ideas. As this chapter will show, there is a deep ideological gulf between the factions that have espoused Eureka as their symbol. In this journey, I will continue to focus on the contribution of Eureka to the Australian spirit.

The Irish, Eureka and the Nation.

The doyen of Irish Australian historians, Patrick O’Farrell, expounds the thesis that the Irish were profoundly influential in the evolution of a distinct Australian character. He argues that the substantial Irish majority acted as an irritant to the English majority, refusing to accept the old-world social order in Australia. The direct Irish contribution to the Australian spirit, he argues, was the refusal to accept ‘religious and political monopolies, the refusal to accept discriminatory laws, and demands for social equality’.¹ The Irish played a key role in the final act of the Eureka affair, as leadership moved out of the hands of the British moral-force Chartists into the hands of physical-force Irish on the Eureka Lead. The majority of those who died at the Stockade were Irish. The blood sacrifice of those men determined that the language of Australian politics would henceforward be democratic.

When the Irish Stockader John Lynch wrote his account of Eureka in 1893-4, he drew on ancient Irish memories of oppression by the English, and drew comparisons between the events at Ballarat in 1854 and important events in Irish history: notably the 1798 Rebellion, O’Connell’s Repeal movement and the 1848 Young Ireland rebellion.² Looking back to 1854,

¹ Patrick O’Farrell, The Irish In Australia, Kensington, NSW, UNSW Press, 2001, especially p. 11.
Lynch had high praise for the actions of his countrymen at the Stockade, but he also had some sharp criticism of the leaders for drawing too much on their romantic Irish battle memories.

Those memories went back to the battle of Vinegar Hill, one of the final battles in the 1798 Irish Rebellion. This famous battle occurred just outside Enniscorthy on 21 June 1798, when Irish rebels, led by their priest Father Matthew, made a stockade on top of a hill and fashioned pikes, ready to challenge the encircling British army. They were attacked by cavalry and artillery, and after a brave fight by the pikemen, were defeated by superior firepower. Many of the rebels, including men, woman and children, escaped, but those who were captured were tried for treason and some were sentenced to transportation to New South Wales. More than 300 prisoners were transported to Sydney in the first years of the nineteenth century.3

Irish nationalism and republicanism had been born in the wake of the French Revolution, and came to Australia with its exiled champions. One of these Irishmen led the 1804 Castle Hill rebellion. Phillip Cunningham proclaimed 'Death or Liberty', the cry of the United Irishmen of '98, and planned to take Parramatta, then seize a ship and escape back to Ireland.4 Using the precedent of 1798, the convicts fashioned pikes and used as their password 'Vinegar Hill'. A Catholic priest tried to negotiate peace, but he was brushed aside. More than 20 men were killed when a contingent of military attacked, and the rebel leaders were rounded up and executed. Their bodies were strung up on trees in the Parramatta area, a salutary warning to convicts of the fate waiting rebels. R.H. Connell argues that the rebellion was not so much an attempt to establish an Irish republic in New South Wales, as an attempt by older, well-educated Irish convicts to get back to their homes in Ireland, or die in the attempt, so much did they hate the convict system.5 There are some striking parallels to the Eureka rebellion.6

Many Irish came to Australia as free settlers from the 1840s, driven from their homeland by the potato famine. Richard Broome estimated that Irish immigrants to Australia were far in advance of their proportion of the United Kingdom population during the 1840s and 1850s.7

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A surprising number of more affluent Irish, mainly of Protestant faith, also came to Victoria, with lawyers, doctors and clergymen to the fore. A small number came as political exiles after the failed Young Ireland rising of 1848, when the seven leaders were sent to Tasmania.\(^8\) Jay Monaghan noted that a number of the stockaders had Irish and Californian connections and that support for Irish independence was strong in California, where there was also some interest in the idea of Australian independence.\(^9\) Enthusiasm for the Young Irelanders of 1848 was manifested by citizens of Geelong and Melbourne, who in 24 July 1854 presented an elaborate gold cup to William Smith O’Brien, the Young Irelander recently released from incarceration in Tasmania. The cup was engraved with the message ‘in testimony to admiration for his character, Patriotism, and sympathy for his suffering in the cause of his country’. Funds were contributed by residents of Melbourne and Geelong, although Patrick O’Farrell erroneously said the cup was from the Irish gold miners of Ballarat.\(^10\) The cup suggests that republican sentiment was not limited to Ballarat.

The Irish at Ballarat in 1854 found themselves subjected again to arbitrary justice by the younger sons of the hated British gentry, who filled the positions of gold commissioners, police magistrates and military commanders. The Irish presence was strong on the Eureka Lead at Ballarat in 1854, and the Catholic Chapel of St. Alipius had been moved close to the lead at the end of 1853 where upwards of 1,000 people would attend Sunday mass in the canvas chapel.\(^11\) In the middle of 1854 Father Patrick Smyth, a 30-year-old Irishman, was appointed to minister to the Catholics of Ballarat. In Irish Catholic terms, the most important event leading up to the Stockade was the arrest of Joannes Gregorius, the crippled Armenian servant of Father Smyth, who was arrested on 10 October 1854 for not having a licence. By law ministers of religion and their servants were exempt from the requirement to have a licence, so Gregorius should never have been arrested. When Commissioner Johnston discovered this, he had the charge dismissed, and instead promptly charged the crippled man with the preposterous crime of assault of the trooper. Magistrate D’Ewes (who would soon be dismissed for corruption) found the servant guilty and fined him five pounds. Witnesses to this travesty of justice were incensed, as was the whole Catholic community which construed

\(^8\) George Rudé, *Protest and Punishment*, p. 80.


\(^10\) The cup is in the National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks, Dublin. O’Farrell in *The Irish in Australia*, p. 50, mentions the cup in relation to Irish miners at Ballarat.

it as an insult to their priest. The incident had the affect of mobilising Catholics against the administration.

After mass on the following Sunday a meeting discussed the outrage. This was one of the first times when Peter Lalor spoke publicly. Resolutions were passed and a petition sent to Governor Hotham, urging the removal of Commissioner Johnston. This meeting at St Alipius was an important precursor to the formation of the Ballarat Reform League a week later at Bakery Hill. Commissioner Johnston was not removed from his post, as Catholics had sought, and the incident of Father Smyth’s servant continued to ferment rancour in the hearts of Irish Catholics.

At the mass meeting at Bakery Hill on 29 November, the Irishman Timothy Hayes chaired the meeting, and two Catholic priests (Fathers Downing and Smyth) sat on the dais, showing how important the Irish were to the protest movement. Peter Lalor came forward to address the meeting. The language of the first resolution is instructive:

That this meeting views with the hottest indignation the daring calumny of his honour the Acting Chief Justice of the brave and struggling sufferers of Clare, Tipperary, Bristol and other districts, on their endeavours to assert their legitimate rights... and emphatically deny the stigmatising as riots of the persevering and indomitable struggles for freedom of the brave people of England and Ireland for the last eighty years.

This smacks very much of the ‘Young Ireland’ language of 1848 which might have been used by Lalor’s older brother and revolutionary, James Fintan Lalor. The fact that Peter Lalor was elected Commander-in-Chief shows the respect accorded to his family in Irish circles, where his father and brother were well-known.

The Stockade was built on the Eureka Lead, close to Lalor’s hut, and noted as the home of the ‘disorderly Tipperary Mob’. A blacksmith began making pikes, and the parallel to 1798 became even stronger when the password ‘Vinegar Hill’ was adopted. One of the lieutenants

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14 Lalor Family Papers in the National Library of Ireland, Dublin.
16 Chief Secretary’s Correspondence, VPRS 1189: box 94: 5/4/K 13.736.
behind the stockade was James Esmond, a native of Enniscorthy, who would have been well versed in the 1798 story of Vinegar Hill.\textsuperscript{17} Captain John Lynch was highly critical of the decision to form a division of pikemen. Lynch himself, well armed with a double-barreled shotgun and a revolver, joined James McGill’s Californian Rifle Brigade.\textsuperscript{18} He felt that pikes were used simply ‘out of deference to an antiquated sentiment’.\textsuperscript{19} A story had been passed down from 1798 about how the heroic pikemen at Vinegar Hill caused many casualties at close quarters. Lynch regretted that Irish sentiment did not concede to science and recognize the improved firing power of military weapons. He was equally critical of the decision to use ‘Vinegar Hill’ as the password at the Stockade.\textsuperscript{20} Although the word denoted the ‘momentous obligation of secrecy’, it was bandied about in front of enemies and traitors, a ‘fatal remissness’.\textsuperscript{21} William Craig attributed the collapse of the rising mainly to the password ‘Vinegar Hill’.\textsuperscript{22} ‘Many who were disposed before to resist the military, now quietly withdrew from the movement when the news circulated that Irish independence had crept into it.’\textsuperscript{23} An English witness, H.R. Nicholls, also referred to this password in his reminiscences of 1890, remarking that when he learned the password from Lalor on the eve of the battle, he immediately left the Stockade, convinced that the movement was doomed.\textsuperscript{24}

On the Saturday there were reputedly over 1000 men within the stockade, but Father Smyth visited on Saturday evening and urged his flock to return home and attend mass next morning. Many took his advice, and less than 150 remained within the defences that night.\textsuperscript{25}

The Irish were not only strong on the side of the rebels. The lower military ranks of the British army contained many Irishmen. These Irish troops were called up before dawn on 3 December 1854 and made to swear allegiance to the Queen before they marched to the Stockade.\textsuperscript{26} The English commander certainly did not keep holy the Sabbath, the day when so many had

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{17} L. Cranfield, ‘James Esmond’, \textit{Australian Dictionary of Biography} vol. 4, p. 142.
\item \textsuperscript{18} Lynch, \textit{The Story of the Eureka Stockade} p. 29.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Ibid., p. 35.
\item \textsuperscript{20} Withers \textit{History of Ballarat}, p. 73. Withers thought Peter Lalor instituted the password.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Lynch, \textit{The Story of the Eureka Stockade}, p. 35.
\item \textsuperscript{22} Currey, \textit{The Irish at Eureka}, p. 270.
\item \textsuperscript{23} Ibid., p. 93.
\item \textsuperscript{24} H.R. Nicholls, \textit{Centennial Magazine}, May 1890, p. 749.
\item \textsuperscript{25} See Raffaello Carboni’s account, John Lynch’s account and Peter Lalor’s account published in a letter to the \textit{Argus} 5 April, 1855.
\item \textsuperscript{26} This special oath is referred to in the Eureka Treason Trial transcripts of 1855, held in the Victorian Supreme Court Library.
\end{itemize}
withdrawn from the Stockade to attend morning mass. Father Smyth heard gunshots and rode to the scene on his white horse 'Galway'. He found amongst the dead ten Irish diggers, and four Irish soldiers. The young priest, whose every wish was to be a peacemaker, then took a brave and personally dangerous course of action. He gave his horse and clothes to help the wounded leader Lalor escape. Next day he accepted the fugitive into his presbytery, which was felt to be the safest hiding place on the diggings. Lalor's arm was amputated in the presbytery. Bishop Goold did not approve of Father Smyth harbouring the rebel with a price on his head, and ordered his priest to disassociate himself from the rebels. Lalor went to other hiding places, and then to Geelong, where he recuperated in hiding.

The Irish priest came out of the event with great dignity. He tried his best to act as a peacemaker between the diggers and the government, and he fearlessly aided his suffering flock after the battle. On 6 December 1854, while Lalor was still hiding in his bed, Smyth spoke out for the diggers at a Public Meeting in Ballarat and was part of a deputation to the Camp. On the same day Governor Hotham wrote to Bishop Goold, urging him to speak to the

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miners in Ballarat and calm the situation. The Bishop did not act on the suggestion, but he did agree to present a petition from the citizens of Ballarat to the Governor when Father Smyth made the request. Early in 1855, Smyth travelled to Melbourne to be a witness for the defence of Timothy Hayes at the Eureka Treason Trials. He came to be revered by Irish Catholics, who appreciated both his devotion to his priestly vow of Charity, and his fearless courage. Withers states that 'the general conscience of the people here regarded him both as a good priest and a good hater of despotism'. His role was admiringly recalled by later Catholic historians, notably by Father Tom Linane, who became a leading local authority on the Irish at Eureka until his death in 1991.

Eight out of the thirteen defendants at the treason trials were Irish. Irish lawyers also predominated at the bar – the Judge was Redmond Barry, the Attorney-General, William Stawell, headed the prosecution, while the Irish barrister, Richard Ireland, a Young Irelander, gave his services free to defend the accused. Nearly thirty years later Redmond Barry presided at the trial of Ned Kelly. Both Barry and Stawell were strongly antagonistic to Irish nationalism, but scrupulously fair in a legal sense. Public sympathy was now very much with the diggers, and juries refused to convict.

Within a year Lalor was elected to parliament. He was an unusual rebel, coming from a different class from the 'Tipperary boys'. He soon surprised his goldfields supporters by voting with the conservative squatters and merchants on land issues. Yet he was also diligent in pursuing financial compensation for those who had lost their possessions when the Stockade was incinerated after the battle. He spent the rest of his life in parliament, and acquired large holdings of both land and mining shares. The quintessential Irish rebel became a pillar of Victorian society and Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. However, he refused the offer of a knighthood, and when he died in 1889, a surge of memories were released around the country, recalling his courage and inspiration as rebel leader. This issue is further explored later in this thesis.

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32 MacFarlane, Eureka From the Official Records, p. 132.
33 Ibid., p. 254.
34 People of a Golden Faith: Windows Into St Alipius, Ballarat East, St. A lipius, 1993, pp. 31-33.
35 P.S. Cleary, Australia's Debt to the Irish Nation Builders, Sydney, Angus & Robertson, 1933, p. 109.
It did not take long for the Irish role at Eureka to be celebrated by Irishmen. Even before Lalor’s passing, James Francis Hogan began the process of transforming oral legend into print. This former Geelong Catholic schoolteacher-cum-Irish Member of Parliament wrote *The Irish in Australia* in 1888. His chapter on Eureka gave a pre-eminent place to Irishmen. \(^{37}\)

Soon after the book appeared, the Irish patriot Michael Davitt visited Australia and wrote a memoir of his visit, observing that after Eureka ‘Victoria was granted a full Home Rule Constitution’. \(^{38}\)

To coincide with the centenary of Eureka in 1954, the Sydney lawyer C.H. Currey published a history of the Irish at Eureka. Currey placed Eureka within the context of Irish struggle against ‘authority’, comparing it to the Castle Hill rising of 1804. His account was critical of the misguided Irish, but he concluded by admitting that Peter Lalor and the Tipperary Boys drew on their memories of oppression by the British, memories which motivated them to make a stand against tyranny. He saw them as prepared to fight ‘for personal, political, and national freedom, and above all freedom from calculated disregard for the worth and dignity of the miners as individual men’. \(^{39}\)

Ken Inglis also examined the role of the Irish at Eureka in his study of Australian colonists. He contended that the Irish were strongly represented at the Stockade because

> for them the tradition of glorious failure ran deep. It was as if they were preparing less for a fight than for an act of communion with the heroes of earlier defeats by English soldiers. They would carry the pikes as the men of 1798 carried them...and which may in some memories have recalled Castle Hill. \(^{40}\)

Chris McConville argues that because Eureka was seen as a largely Irish affair, and because of its links to Castle Hill, it became part of the Australian myth of Irishman as rebel. \(^{41}\) Patrick O’Farrell contends that Eureka entered not only Irish, but also Australian democratic mythology, because of the Irish mythmaking touches, such as the pikes, the oath, the password and the poetry. \(^{42}\) In a broader context, O’Farrell argues that ‘the distinctive

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\(^{37}\) James Francis Hogan, *The Irish in Australia*, Melbourne, George Robertson, 1888, chap. 4, especially p. 77.


\(^{39}\) Currey, *The Irish at Eureka*.

\(^{40}\) Inglis, *Australian Colonists*, pp. 235-6.

\(^{41}\) Chris McConville, *Croppies, Celts and Catholics; The Irish In Australia*, Caulfield East, Edward Arnold, 1987, p. 45.

\(^{42}\) O’Farrell, *The Irish in Australia*, p. 91.
Australian identity was not born in the bush, nor at Anzac Cove...it was born in Irishness protesting against the extremes of Englishness. Eureka illustrates his thesis. It was the first successful affirmation of political and social liberties by the Irish in Australia, and Peter Lalor became its hero.

**Radical Nationalists**

The story of Eureka was told to J.A. Archibald, son of a London policeman and an Irish mother. His Catholic father had come to Melbourne in 1853 to be part of the new Victorian police force. After his mother's death in 1860, young Archibald lived for a time at Creswick with his father, then as an aspiring journalist, he spent some time 'on the wallaby', sharing the reminiscences of old diggers around outback campfires. From this experience he became a bearer of the Eureka Legend. He began a national weekly magazine, the *Bulletin*, in 1880. Archibald and his contributors played an important role in arousing a sense of Australian national identity, and championed the cause of republicanism during the 1880s. On 2 July 1887 the *Bulletin* launched its famous catch-cry, 'Australia for the Australians'. Marking the centenary of white settlement of Australia, the *Bulletin* called in its 'Centennial Oration' for Eureka Day to be the national holiday, 'the day that Australia set her teeth in the face of the British Lion', in preference to 26 January, which it condemned as 'the anniversary of a loathsome tyranny'. Strangely, at the same time, the Ballarat branch of the Australian Natives Association had launched its successful campaign for 26 January to be declared 'Australia Day'. Here is a nice reversal of the frequent claim that Eureka was an event of only local significance. Noel McLachlan in his history of Australian nationalism gives a prominent place to Archibald as the 'single, most powerful journal-generator of Australian nationalism ever'.

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43 Ibid., p.12.
45 Hudson, 'Republicanism', p. 560, notes that there were fifteen republican organizations and twenty republican journals in the 1880s.
46 This expression was first used by the Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, John Bede Polding, in 1868, in response to attacks on the loyalty of the Irish after the attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh. See Clark, *History of Australia*, vol. 4, p. 256.
In the 1890s, with Australian nationalism growing the Eureka flag was revived again as a symbol of independence and protest. Eureka flags appeared at a Yarra Bank meeting in Melbourne on 29 August 1890 during the Maritime Strike, and again the following year at Barcaldine, Queensland, when they were flown by striking shearsers, and immortalised by Henry Lawson.\(^{50}\) He ended his poem *Republican Pioneers* with the stanza:

> And we'll sleep sound in Australian ground,
> 'Neath the blue-cross flag star lighted,
> When it freely waves o'er the grass-grown graves
> Of the pioneers united?
> When it floats and veers
> O'er the pioneers
> Of "Australian States United"!\(^{51}\)

This was very much the position of the new Labor Party, which suggested that the colonies should federate as an Australian republic rather than the constitutional monarchy proposed in the 1891 draft Constitution. But the republican fervour of the *Bulletin*, other radical weekly journals and the trade unionists was crushed by economic depression, unsuccessful strikes, and growing support for the more moderate Federation movement. Sylvia Lawson contends that Archibald hauled down the republican flag on 25 August 1894, resigned to watching the Federation process develop along Imperial lines.\(^{52}\) Helen Irvine explains the weakening of republican sentiment as the result of its absorption into a general vision of an Australian constitutional monarchy.\(^{53}\) The experience of responsible self-government had demonstrated that colonial governments could govern effectively and innovatively, and this had won over many of the radicals. The same argument was used by the republicans of the *Age* in 1855, when that newspaper dropped its republicanism after the new constitution arrived from England. They settled for a virtual republic, or as David Headon calls it, 'a disguised republic'.\(^{54}\) Bruce Scates offers a more jaundiced explanation, believing the republican

\(^{50}\) Len Fox, *The Eureka Flag*, Sydney, Potts Point, the author, 1992, p. 33. Henry Lawson's *Freedom on the Walaby* was written after this strike, published in the *Worker*, Brisbane, 16 May 1891.

\(^{51}\) Henry Lawson’s poem *Republican Pioneers* was written in his early republican period, *Collected Verse*, v.1, pp. 410-11.


\(^{53}\) Irvine, *To Constitute a Nation*, p. 42

impulse was largely contained by political exigencies and a cynical regime of compromise that accompanied Federation. Bernard O’Dowd and his labour paper the Tocsin did not accept constitutional monarchy, and campaigned against the Federal constitution, using the precedent of the Eureka Rebellion for inspiration. But in 1898 Ballarat voted ninety-eight percent in favour of Federation, the highest level of support in the whole continent. The Ballarat Reform League had made its nationalist affirmation in 1854 with its flag and its oath, and that sense of Australianness, of nationhood, came to maturity at Federation. Weston Bate believes that because Ballarat was the battle ground for political freedom in Victoria, it was ‘built for Federation’, inspired with a patriotism at once civic, national and imperial. Ballaratians were both the best of Britons and the best of Australians, enthused by the editor of the Courier, Colonel R.E. Williams, who editorialised on the benefits of Imperial Federation, of forming a nation within the protective shield of the British Empire. The constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia embraced civic, national and imperial patriotism, allowing all those principles of the Ballarat Reform League charter to flourish.

The Right Road

Another aspect of nationalism is racial. Eureka has been adopted by Right-wing political groups as the basis of their nativist/nationalist tradition. Although White Australia was not a concern of the Stockaders, anxiety over the increasing numbers of Chinese on the goldfields was becoming an issue by the end of 1854. The Commission of Inquiry after Eureka examined the question, noting that there were some 2000-3000 Chinese at Ballarat, and that their numbers were increasing rapidly. Although the Commission did not suggest that the Chinese played any part in Eureka, it did express concern about the influx of ‘a pagan and

55 Bruce Scates, A New Australia: Citizenship, Radicalism and the First Republic, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 208. Scates does not mention Eureka in his work, although he does refer to radical groups using Australian icons, such as the Southern Cross.


58 Weston Bate, ‘Ballarat: Built for Federation’, in Becoming Australians, pp. 20-24. See also other contributions in this collection.

59 Weston Bate, Lucky City, p. 150, notes numbers of Chinese in Ballarat. Russel Ward, Australia, 1969, p. 73 notes that the Chinese were conspicuous by their absence at Eureka.

inferior race... unaccompanied by their wives and children... who use up and waste the water with a thoughtless profusion,... have a proverbial propensity of thieving... and an incurable habit of gaming'. Stacking up all these negative characteristics, the Commission warned of the 'unpleasant possibility of the future, that a comparative handful of colonists may be buried in a countless throng of Chinamen'.

This fear was placated by the introduction of a poll tax on Chinese entering the colony. The Chinese continued to arrive in large numbers, coming overland from South Australia and New South Wales. Battles with the Chinese became a recurring problem on the goldfields, with serious riots at the Buckland River near Beechworth in 1857, and at Lambing Flat in 1861. At Lambing Flat, near Young in New South Wales, a Miners’ Protective League was formed that was open to ‘men of all nations, except Chinese’ and which proclaimed ‘equality, fraternity and glorious liberty’.

The Roll Up banner has strong echoes of the Eureka flag. Young Historical Society collection. Made by Tom McCarthy, it was purchased in 1960 for £1200.

On Sunday 30 June 1861, 3,000 miners marched behind their banner, which bore the Eureka cross, from Tipperary Gully to Lambing Flat, where they attacked Chinese camps. By a twist

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of fate, the same regiment that attacked the diggers at Eureka, the 12th Regiment, was called in to restore order. The leaders of the attack on the Chinese were charged and tried, but most were released, to the cheers of the white population. The principles of the Ballarat Reform League were being twisted into the nativist myth of Eureka, which became important in the developing trade union movement. Men of many nations had been comrades at the Stockade, and not just Caucasians - a black American and a West Indian were tried for treason. Contemporary accounts of Eureka make no mention of the Chinese, and yet Eureka was quickly taken up by anti-Chinese groups. It was because miners feared the economic threat to their livelihood posed by the diligent Chinese that the Eureka cry of justice for the working man was translated into a cry of protect the interests of the white working man.

One can imagine William Lane drawing inspiration from the recommendation of the Goldfields Commission relating to the Chinese. From the first edition on 19 November 1887, his weekly newspaper, the Boomerang, carried on its masthead the slogan 'We are for Australia - the whole white people of this great continent, without distinction of sex, age or previous condition'. Lane was a passionate republican, and a racist. From the beginning, he wove Eureka into his white, radical-nationalist legend. On 21 January 1888 he referred to Peter Lalor as the first raiser of the Australian flag. On 3 March 1888, he wrote about Eureka, but in the context of his anti-Chinese novel, White or Yellow? An illustration has a Lalor-like figure unfurling the 'flag of Australia', at a meeting that is like the Bakery Hill meeting of 1854, except that in Lane's story it is an anti-Chinese meeting, with the digger-patriots resisting a Chinese invasion. The Lalor figure proclaims that 'we shall not be truly safe until we realise the aspiration that found a voice at Eureka and hoist the starry cross above a free and united Australia'. The Boomerang's obituary of Peter Lalor saluted him because he 'refused a knighthood, but preferred to be the father of Australian nationality'. Lane, like so many others, glossed over aspects of Lalor's character that did not accord with his own values. Hence Lane ignored Lalor's support for the Chinese, whom he championed in the parliamentary debates over the introduction of the poll tax in 1855, and he employed them to work for his mining companies.

64 Boomerang, Brisbane, 19 Nov. 1887. A statement explicitly excluded Chinese, Japanese and the Aboriginal people from the human family. Note that this follows closely on the Bulletin's adoption of the term 'Australia for the Australians'.
65 Boomerang, 16 Feb. 1889.
The Clunes Barricade of 9 December 1873 illustrates the tangle of labour, democracy, racism and civil liberties. The newly-unionised miners at the Lothair Company at Clunes went on strike in September 1873 for improved working hours. After a prolonged stoppage, the Company, of which Peter Lalor was a director, brought in five coach-loads of Chinese from Ballarat to break the strike and get the mine back into production. The townspeople of Clunes, including women and children, erected a barricade across the road, and refused entry to the Chinese, so that the coaches were forced to return to Ballarat. The directors finally bowed to the demands of the Clunes miners, who had evoked the Eureka Stockade as an inspiration for their fight. The Communist novelist Eric Lambert later used this little-known incident in the final scene of his novel Ballarat.

The same nationalist-racist message was proclaimed by The Bulletin and Henry Lawson, by the trade unions and W.G. Spence, and by popular journals such as the Lone Hand. So Nathan Spielvogel, the son of a Ballarat Jew, ended his account of the Eureka battle in 1912 with a solitary Chinaman, raking 'amongst the embers of the dead fires for any valuables that might have escaped destruction'. These racist views, commonly held in the nineteenth century, fed into twentieth century extreme Right-wing nationalism. Andrew Moore examines this tradition in The Right Road. The intellectual power behind the movement was P.R. 'Inky' Stephensen, a Rhodes scholar from Queensland who had flirted with Communism as a young man. His 1936 manifesto The Foundations of Culture in Australia proved very influential on a generation of Australian writers. It was a plea for Australian culture and for nationalism, for not bowing to British or American imperialism. He proclaimed Eureka 'the...
first Australian republic’. 72 Under the influence of his wealthy patron W.B. Miles, Stephensen turned increasingly to the Right, formed the Australia First movement in 1941, and suffered four years of internment for his troubles. 73

The Australian National Socialist Party, formed in 1963, took the ‘politically ambiguous Eureka flag’ as its symbol, rather than the Swastika, and attempted to ‘Australianise’ itself by locating itself as an inheritor of the traditions of Eureka, William Lane, Henry Lawson and W.G. Spence. 74 Its successors were the National Front, National Action and National Alliance, shadowy groups active in the 1970s and 1980s, which also used the Eureka flag as their symbol. 75 The National Republicans inherited this tradition. According to their web-site, they stand for ‘political, economic and cultural independence’. Their site offers historical essays on Eureka, Henry Lawson, William Lane and W.G. Spence and opens with an image of the Eureka flag and the statement:

Eureka was not a fight on a foreign battlefield; it was a fight on our own soil for freedom against an alien state...A rebellious spirit is on the march in Australia today - for a National Eureka Stockade! – as Australians mobilise to reclaim their national future. 76

This nativist tradition survives strongly in Australia, exemplified by Pauline Hanson and the One Nation Party in the 1990s.

Late Twentieth Century Perspectives on Nationalism and the Republic

While the right-wing nationalists nurture republican visions, another republican tradition has been nurtured, and another competing use of Eureka as a nationalist symbol. This was particularly true of the Communist Party of Australia, which wove Eureka into its story of Australia’s march to ‘Communist’ nationhood. This happened in the politically and economically charged years of the 1930s, when Communist writers such as Lloyd Ross and

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72 Ibid., p. 68.
74 Moore, The Right Road, pp. 87-8.
James Rawling were using the same events of Australian history as P.R. Stephensen, but for a very different purpose. According to Stuart Macintyre, ‘the most striking feature of popular front communism was its cultivation of national traditions’. This was part of an international trend to such popular and radical appropriations of nationalism. I will follow the communist cultivation of the Eureka legend in later chapters, and also the ALP tradition, which was taken up through the practice of commemoration from the 1920s.

Discussion of nationalism in recent times has been led by theorists such as Elie Kedourie, Ernest Gellner, E.J. Hobsbawm and Benedict Anderson. Anderson’s concept of the ‘imagined community’ has been immensely influential. All these authors agree that nationalism was an ideology that arose in the early nineteenth century, constructed through the spread of literacy and communications media. As noted earlier, immigrants to Australia in the 1850s were influenced by the growth of nationalist movements in Europe in the 1840s. One interpreter of nationalism, Kenneth Minogue, believed that nationalism requires legends, even fairy tales, which have been appropriated from history and brought into politics. An Australian scholar working in London, he gave the Eureka Stockade as an example of a growing sense of Australian identity, ‘material for a legend’.

Kate Darian-Smith and Paula Hamilton offer a number of illuminating observations about national sentiment in Australia by showing us how ‘memories link us to place, to time and to nation’. The contributors to their volume on memory have important insights into the role of oral history as a methodological tool in history, and also about the role of public institutions and the media in shaping our collective memories, and hence our sense of national identity. The editors identify the importance of national myths, which they define as explanatory narratives giving a historical rationale for our present identity. Rather than providing a contextualized history, myths leap through time, drawing on a select number of emotionally charged images and symbolic moments. It is through the simplified and selective narratives of

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79 Minogue, Nationalism, p. 8.
80 Ibid., p. 30.
81 Kate Darian-Smith and Paula Hamilton (eds), Memory and History in Twentieth-Century Australia, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1994, p.1.
collective myths that historical events are rendered emotionally comprehensible and memorable. Mythic narratives are thus the wellspring of nationalism and they are constantly mobilised to serve differing ideological and political interests.82 In this vein, Lloyd Churchward commented in relation to Eureka that 'when the crisis broke, the diggers drew on their revolutionary background'.83

In 1983 the English history journal *Past and Present* arranged a conference to look at the invention of traditions to serve nationalist purposes. Eric Hobsbawm argued that national traditions were invented to inculcate certain values by virtue of repetition and suggested that these practices has a continuity with the past.84 The American commentator John R. Gillis contends that the discourse around memory and identity is relatively modern and became all-pervasive in the 1990s. The subjective nature of both is highlighted, and the way they are used by groups to construct national identity.85 I will consider this process in more detail when I examine the 'invention of tradition' in relation to the commemoration and memorialisation of Eureka.

For Noel McLachlan, in his history of Australian nationalism, Eureka is a pivotal event. This is immediately obvious in his choice of cover, which reproduces J.B. Henderson’s painting ‘Eureka Riot’. He defines nationalism as ‘both an ideology and a movement for the attainment and nurture of such a nation’, and throughout his history compares Eureka to other nation-founding events, from Bunker Hill to the Bastille to Castle Hill to the battles against the Japanese in World War Two. He explores rebellious events as ‘mythmoteurs’ for the development of nationalism, with ‘legends always stronger, more durable, than pedantic truth’, and with poets later celebrating the heroic deaths of revolutionaries who spilt blood for the birth of the nation.86 He argues that thanks to Lane and Lawson, Eureka was the (already embroidered) centrepiece of the radical pantheon throughout Australia.87

In his history of republican ideas Mark McKenna argues that the struggle to establish an Australian republic is a struggle to discover new metaphors and new languages with which to

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82 Darian-Smith and Hamilton (eds), *Memory and History*, p. 2.
87 Ibid., p. 164.
speak about ourselves. He denies the republican tendencies of the Stockaders, arguing that they were seeking constitutional redress of their grievances, rather than political independence. McKenna argues that ‘only afterwards did the Eureka Stockade become an expression of Australian nationalism’. In this context, he concludes that ‘although Eureka was not a republican rebellion, its subsequent function as a symbol of independence is what makes it important’.88 Stephen Alomes comes to more or less the same conclusion, seeing Eureka as an exceptional event that ‘became symbolic of the dreams of radical nationalists’.89

Cultural historians such as Peter Cochrane often make a similar argument that ‘heritage is not something that we are stuck with, rather it is something that we either choose or construct’.90 In this sense, Eureka is deliberately constructed as part of a new republican heritage. Tony Bennett sees this process as part of a settler-invader culture’s need for historical references in order to claim a national legitimacy.91 One of the most influential Australian writers on the issue of identity has been Richard White. He presents a systematic analysis of the motives and processes behind the promotion of popular Australian national stereotypes. He argues that images of Australia are invented at particular times by particular groups to serve their interests and that national identity is a constantly changing invention. Examining Eureka, White argues that the nineteenth century colonial bourgeoisie saw the Eureka stockade as an assertion of the rights of British subjects against tyranny, and that only by the end of the century did Eureka take on a distinctly Australian flavour.92

With the end of the White Australia policy, the Whitlam government ‘invented’ a new national concept of ‘multiculturalism’. Researchers at the Centre for Multicultural Studies at the University of Wollongong have questioned the concept of nation in a world where small states are increasingly controlled by global forces outside their jurisdiction.93 Such a proposition might account for a lessening of interest in national identity, but the evidence from popular culture and from the practice of public commemoration suggests the opposite.

Ken Inglis provides an illuminating survey of the use of the term ‘national identity’ and how it has changed from the 1850s up to the present. Eureka can be fitted into both the Anglo-Celtic and the multicultural view of national identity. In Appendix One I provide an analysis of seventeen different nationalities involved in the Eureka Stockade. The list is instructive, and can be used to support a number of uses of Eureka, according to the purpose of the user – Hotham’s ‘foreigners’ theory, the Irish theory, the multicultural theory, and even the white racist theory. The republican theory appealed to the international media in 2000, when Queen Elizabeth visited Ballarat. Her visit came in the wake of the failed republican referendum of 6 November 1999. The international media asked how ‘the home of Australian republicanism’ would welcome the Queen? She did not visit the Eureka Stockade, but she did visit Sovereign Hill, and was politely entertained by Ballarat’s republican Mayor. Over lunch, Prince Phillip discussed the Eureka affair, demonstrating an understanding of the issues. Media interest in the republican issue meant that the Queen’s visit to Ballarat received huge publicity, both in Australia and in Britain. I was interviewed by a number of English journalists, and was surprised in my literature search to find myself quoted on an international wire service. The expectant media were disappointed when all went smoothly, and the visit was a wonderful promotional opportunity for Sovereign Hill!

Conclusion

So what of the claim that Eureka is the birthplace of the Australian spirit? My examination of the role of the Ballarat Reform League shows that it was an important political movement, with its national ideals symbolised by its flag and its charter. Contemporaries viewed it as a republican movement. Later in the century it was used by writers to develop a distinctive Australian Legend, to use Russel Ward’s term, and it was also part of the Irish-Australian narrative. In the twentieth century, Eureka was re-embroided into the nationalist narratives of both the Left and the Right. As I will show later in this thesis, when I examine the Eureka flag, the creative arts and commemorations, a wide array of political groups were able to draw on the nationalist symbols of Eureka to support their particular nationalist narratives.

95 Australians rejected the question by a margin of 45% in favour to 55% against. The seat of Ballarat almost mirrored the national average, with 40% of the population in favour of the question. See Helen Irving, ‘The Republic Referendum of 6 November 1999’, Australian Journal of Political Science, v. 35, no. 1, pp. 111-5.
Eureka continues to cast a potent spell over historians, politicians, tourism operators and artists, generating scholarly papers, plays poems, films, museum experiences and art works. These works have played their part in massaging the public memory. One of the meanings of Eureka revolves around national political significance. As we move into the twenty-first century, it seems inevitable that Australia will become a republic, but the movement is becalmed after the failure of the 1999 republican referendum. The situation mirrors the plight of the Federation movement a century earlier. A trigger is necessary to re-activate the movement.

On 3 December 1973, at the unveiling of the restored Eureka flag, Prime Minister Gough Whitlam said 'the importance of an historical event lies not in what happened but in what later generations believe to have happened'. He spoke of the centrality of the events of Eureka in forming a sense of national consciousness. A number of cultural historians have commented on the importance of national symbols. Charles Doudiet's painting of the Bakery Hill meeting of 30 November 1854 captures a seminal national moment when men of many nations swore allegiance to the Eureka flag. The flag has been a powerful national symbol through subsequent generations, and will continue to be so. Perhaps it will be adopted as the standard of the Australian republic.

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In 1895 the President of the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, James Oddie, obtained custodianship of the Eureka flag for the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery. Since then it has been looked after by the Gallery, sometimes neglected, in recent times a treasured artefact of great importance. The treatment it has received at different times reflects the way people have valued it. For many years it was totally ignored, with very few people taking an interest in it. Today it is seen as a national icon and it is the centre of a number of disputes that I will untangle in this chapter.

That it is treated with such respect today is largely due to one man, the remarkable Len Fox, writer, artist, social agitator, journalist, who was the only person who believed in the flag in its darkest hour. My debt to his tenacious research, and my admiration for his social conscience, is enormous. Len Fox was born into a comfortable middle-class home in East Malvern, a Melbourne suburb, in 1905. A nephew of the famous artist Emmanuel Phillips Fox, he grew up in a world that valued high culture. He went to the University of Melbourne to study Arts, and for a time was a teacher at the prestigious Scotch College. That was when the big issues of the 1930s imposed themselves, notably economic hardship and the rise of fascism. He became a political
activist, and a member of the Communist Party of Australia. Instead of teaching at a privileged private school, he chose the hard road of working for the Communist Party of Australia as a journalist on the newspapers *Progress* and the *Tribune*. He wrote his first article about the Eureka flag in *Progress* in 1944. His last book on the flag was published in 1992. Fifty years of persistence speaks for itself.

The Eureka flag came to the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery's custodianship from the family of Trooper John King, who tore it down at the Eureka Stockade on Sunday 3 December 1854. The flag had been seen only briefly in public - first raised at a huge public meeting of the Ballarat Reform League on Bakery Hill, Ballarat, on 29 November 1854; last seen flying over the Eureka Stockade on the morning of 3 December 1854.¹

James Oddie, who founded the Ballarat Art Gallery in 1884, was representative of an influential group of artisans who came to Australia in the late 1840s and early 1850s.² They made up almost one quarter of all unassisted migrants in the 1850s; they were usually Protestant Non-Conformists, usually self-educated through Mechanics’ Institutes, and politically active as supporters of the Chartist movement. Oddie was one of the first diggers on Golden Point in September 1851, and one of the first to protest against the license fee that the Government imposed on all those seeking gold. He followed the rushes to Mount Alexander and Bendigo, then in 1853 took to the more certain rewards of storekeeping in Ballarat. He appeared in court for not having a licence fee. In 1854 he pitched his store next door to Bentley’s Hotel, on the Eureka Lead, where he observed the events of late 1854. Oddie supported the moral force position of the Ballarat Reform League, which called on the Government to reform goldfields administration, but did not favour a resort to arms. However the bloody aftermath of the Stockade disgusted him as it did so many other witnesses, as the troopers indiscriminately rampaged through the Eureka Lead. Oddie was one of the first to benefit from the reforms following Eureka, when he was elected first Chairman of the Ballarat City Council in 1856. In the same year he nominated Peter Lalor for the Legislative Council. For the rest of his life he would revere the spirit of Eureka.


History of the Flag.

After the battle, the captured rebel flag was taken back to the Government Camp. A report in the Geelong Advertiser told how ‘the diggers’ Standard was carried by in triumph to the Camp, waved about in the air, then pitched from one to another, thrown down and trampled on.\(^3\) The soldiers were seen dancing around the flag on a pole, ‘now a sadly tattered flag from which souvenir hunters had cut and torn pieces’.\(^4\) On 4 December 1854 Ballarat Camp clerk S.D.S. Huyghue wrote to his friend Reynell Eveleigh Johns in Bendigo describing the dramatic events in Ballarat and enclosing a tiny blue fragment of the rebels’ flag:

The foot police behaved most gallantly and were the first to cross the barricade. One of them distinguished himself by climbing the flagstaff under a shower of balls and possessing himself of the rebel flag - a white cross - star pointed on a blue ground - representing the "Crux Australias" the symbol of the Reform League. Next morning the policeman who captured the flag exhibited it to the curious and allowed such as so desired to tear off small portions of its ragged end to preserve as souvenirs.\(^5\)

The flag next appeared in Melbourne as Crown evidence at the Eureka trials in early 1855, when thirteen stockaders were tried for treason and acquitted. At the trial of John Manning, Trooper John King appeared as a Crown witness and he said ‘I took a flag down. This (flag produced) is the flag. It was almost 20 yards from the tent where I pulled it down’.\(^6\) It appears that nobody claimed the flag after the trials. Two days after the last defendants were found not guilty, Trooper John King resigned from the Victoria Police. It is unclear who took the flag away from the court room, but a letter from former policeman Joseph Archibald, published in the Argus on 22 December 1894 states that the Eureka flag was ‘for some time in the possession of Mr P.H. Smith, inspecting superintendent of police, who returned it to Mr King. Smith was, like King, a County Mayo man’.\(^7\)

Joseph Archibald, father of the famous J.A. Archibald who founded the Bulletin, was an acquaintance of John King when both were living in Warrnambool in the 1870s. In Joseph Archibald’s scrapbook is a copy of letter from Archibald to James Oddie written on 6 July 1896:

\(^3\) W.B. Withers, History of Ballarat, Ballarat, Ballarat Heritage Services, 1999 (1870 ed.), p. 82.
\(^5\) R.E. Johns Papers, MS10075, Manuscript Collection, La Trobe Library.
\(^6\) Queen vs John Manning, reported in Melbourne Morning Herald, 27 Feb. 1855.
\(^7\) Blake, Peter Lalor, p. 88.
Dear Sir,

I beg to send you a note from Mr Michael Heaver, our town inspector, re the flag.

"The parcel containing the flag was handed to me by Mr. Peter Henry Smith, inspecting superintendent, on one of his visits of inspection. It was passed to Mr King, after he requested its return."

This letter helps us trace the provenance of the flag. It seems that Inspector Smith took the flag after the treason trials, but later gave it to John King after he requested it as his personal memento. John King became a farmer, eventually settling in the late 1870s near Minyip in the Victorian Wimmera district. Here the flag made occasional appearances at country bazaars. It disappeared from public memory and those old diggers who had seen it flying over Bakery Hill had notoriously unreliable memories of it. This is not surprising because Carboni’s book, published only one year after the event, described the flag as made of silk, and the cover illustration was a quite different representation of the Southern Cross. Len Fox’s suggestion, which I support, is that Carboni gave a description of the flag to an engraver working for his printer, who came up with this approximate design. It set a hare running that diverted historians for the next century, who would not accept the validity of the flag in the Gallery because it was not the same as the illustration in Carboni’s book. But as Fox points out, Carboni was prone to poetic language, and the basis of his design accords with the basis of the design on the first edition of the History of Ballarat by W.B. Withers - both designs represent the stars of the Southern Cross and an ecclesiastical cross on a blue background.

Cover of The Eureka Stockade 1855 by Raffaello Carboni (left), History of Ballarat 1870 by W.B. Withers (right).

8 Warrnambool Echo, 20 August 1896
9 Len Fox, The Eureka Flag, Potts Point, NSW, 1992, p. 41.
Withers, the first historian of Ballarat, asked S.D.S. Huyghue, an eyewitness and an artist, to provide the cover design for his history of Ballarat.\textsuperscript{12} Huyghue provided a much more accurate representation than Carboni’s 1855 designer. Withers commented in 1870 that he had not been able to find out what had happened to the flag.\textsuperscript{13} It is likely that King read Withers’s book, because he wrote to the Melbourne Public Library offering to sell the flag to that institution. The Librarian, Marcus Clarke, asked Peter Lalor for his opinion on the genuineness of the flag, but Lalor could not be certain, and asked ‘Can you find someone whose memory is more accurate than mine?’\textsuperscript{14} The Library decided not to purchase the flag, because there was some uncertainty as to its authenticity.

Joseph Archibald, after his retirement from the police force in 1880, became involved in artistic and historical matters as curator of the Warrnambool Museum, and retained an interest in the King flag. Following the death of John King in 1881, the Warrnambool Museum approached James King asking him to donate the flag, but it seemed he was intent on selling it.\textsuperscript{15} He must have offered it to the City of Ballarat, for the Town Clerk wrote to King in 1886 saying ‘it is not in the power of the City Council to purchase the flag, but I have forwarded your letter to the Old Identities Association’.\textsuperscript{16} Withers says he became interested in the flag in 1891, after meeting Joseph Archibald, who told him where the flag was located. He ‘at once put the Old Colonists’ Association on the quest for the so-called relic of the Stockade, but they failed to get possession and the matter dropped’.\textsuperscript{17} By 1894 Archibald was still interested in the flag, and wrote to the \textit{Argus} suggesting

\begin{quote}
...it would be only necessary for some person properly authorised on behalf of one of our principal museums to apply to Mr King, in order to obtain it for the public advantage, as I think Mr James King’s well-known public spirit would prompt him to dispose of the flag in the only way of which so interesting a memorial should be disposed of with a proper regard for its future preservation.\textsuperscript{18}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{12} Preface to First Edition of Withers, \textit{History of Ballarat}.  
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., Appendix E.  
\textsuperscript{14} Letter reproduced in Dot Wickham, \textit{The Eureka Flag, Our Starry Banner}, Ballarat, Ballarat Heritage Services, 2000, p. 44. There has been some confusion over the date of this letter - whether 1871 or 1877. John King’s letter to the Public Library is clearly dated 13 September 1877; see King Archive, Ballarat Fine Art Gallery.  
\textsuperscript{15} Undated letter from Warrnambool Museum to King Family, in King Archive, BFAG.  
\textsuperscript{16} Letter from Mr Perry, Town Clerk, Ballarat, to J.B. King, Minyip, 3 March 1886, King Archive, BFAG.  
\textsuperscript{17} Withers in \textit{Austral Light}, May 1896.  
\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Argus}, 22 December 1894.
James Oddie said he was prompted by a conversation with the Rev. Crook of Buninyong to ask the secretary of the Ballarat Gallery to write to Mrs King in 1895 in a new attempt to secure the flag for public display, either as a gift or on loan. James Powell wrote:

> Mr Oddie having learnt through the Rev. Robert H. Crook that you have in your possession the flag that floated above the Eureka Stockade has desired me to request the very interesting relic as a gift for the Ballarat F.A. Gallery, or failing your family’s willingness to part with it altogether, to lend it for a specified term for public exhibition therein.  

Archibald commented that he regretted that the sum of £150 was asked for it, ‘as it seems to draw the tar brush over it’. This indicates that Oddie may have been involved in some negotiation with the King family over purchasing the flag. Nevertheless, Mrs King sent it to the Ballarat Gallery by post, wrapped in a brown paper parcel, on a loan basis.

The new exhibit in the Gallery prompted much discussion and prompted local historian W.B. Withers to conduct a 'commission de vexillo inquirendo'. Withers wrote that he had not been particularly interested in the flag in 1870 when he wrote his history, but that now, more than forty years after the event ‘we are now on the fringe of the time when legend and poetry, and a certain blending of patriotism and veneration in some quarters are, it would seem, beginning to gather around the Stockade’. Withers had interviewed many of the diggers of 1854, and commented on the ‘chaos of contradictory descriptions’ they gave him. He carefully assessed the evidence of 1854-5 accounts, and discovered in his quest that a piece of cloth which Dr Alfred Carr received as a souvenir at the Camp immediately after the Stockade was in the possession of Mrs Clendinning and her son-in-law, Colonel Rede. Withers borrowed the fragment and took it to the Gallery so that the local manager of the woollen mill could test the two fabrics. He pronounced them identical, a telling point in establishing the authenticity of the King flag.

Fred Riley, a visitor to Ballarat in 1912, describes how the flag was displayed at the Gallery:

> I went to the Art Gallery to see the flag the men fought under and strange to say no-one there seems to value it in the least. It is hung over a trestle affair exposed to the

19. Letter from J.A. Powell to Mrs J. King, 24 August 1895, King Archive, BFAG.
20. Steve Cuming, an old Stockader, mentioned this same sum in a letter to Withers, so it must have been common knowledge around Ballarat. The letter is reproduced in Wickham, *The Eureka Flag*, p.37.
22. *Ballarat Star*, 1 May 1896
public. Well I got into conversation with the keeper, and persuaded him to give me a bit of the flag, and much to my surprise and astonishment he gave me a bit. I was with him when he tore it off. It seems wanton sacrilege, vandalism or something worse to tear it still he did and I am in possession of that piece.²³

R.S. Ross was another visitor to be offered a piece of the flag. He described his visit to the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery in 1914 to see the flag - ‘mysterious and majestic symbol and heirloom’. He was horrified at the way ‘pieces of the flag had been vandalistically purloined by pilgrims at the shrine’, and felt that the precious remnants should be enclosed behind glass.²⁴

The kindly but misguided custodian at the Gallery continued this habit of giving small samples of the flag to interested visitors, almost as holy relics were distributed to pilgrims in Medieval times. In a strange way Charles Harvey and his successor William Keith were enthusiasts for Eureka. Without realising it or articulating the sentiment, Keith promoted the spirit of the flag and its symbolism. He was the custodian of the flag, and was responsible for its care from 1933 until his retirement thirty years later. He reported in October 1934 that ‘the Eureka flag has been put in a glass case in the Antique Room and alongside the case is Captain Wise’s sword’.²⁵ Shortly afterwards the international peace activist Egon Kisch visited the Gallery and remarked on the unlikely juxtaposition of the flag and the sword.²⁶ In August 1937 Keith recommended that the sword be handed over to the Historical Society, along with a bugle presented by the late Lieutenant Colonel Greenfield. A painting of the Eureka Stockade had already been given to the Society in July 1936. Although Keith did not mention it, it seems that the Gallery was prepared to hand over the flag as well, but Nathan Spielvogel of the Historical Society was not prepared to accept it as ‘we are not satisfied as to its authenticity’.²⁷

William Keith was happy to help any people who demonstrated an interest in it, including members of the Communist Party. In the turbulent years of the 1930s, when economic depression and the rise of fascism dominated the public arena, the small Communist Party changed tactics to move away from a narrow, sectarian philosophy to work with other anti-fascist groups. Len Fox

²³ Letter from Fred Riley to his father, 13 January 1912, National Library of Australia. The piece is with the letter. Letter and piece displayed in Eureka 140 exhibition, Ballarat, 1994. It can be viewed on the National Library’s Web site, or in Barrie Sheppard, Eureka Rebellion, Port Melbourne, Heinemann, 2000, p. 16.

²⁴ Ross, Eureka! Freedom’s Fight of ‘54, p. 175.


²⁶ Egon Kisch, Australian Landfall, pp. 204-5.

wrote that this new broad approach, heralded by George Dimitrov's report to the seventh international congress in 1935, led him to become a member of the Communist Party. Because of the policy of forming popular fronts, Communists were encouraged to link their struggle into national traditions, and so the CPA adopted Eureka as part of the history of workers' struggle against oppression. When Party Secretary J.B. Miles visited Ballarat to see the Stockade and the flag, he was impressed with the need to study Australian history, and the party newspaper, *Workers' Weekly*, began to publish articles which exalted Eureka as a 'true expression' of Australian identity. This policy led the Melbourne Artists' Branch of the CPA to make Eureka flags for the May Day March in 1938. One of the young artists, Evelyn Shaw, had grown up in Ballarat, and told the group that she had seen the original flag in the art gallery. She wrote to her mother to find out if the flag still existed, so that her friends could make an accurate reproduction of it for the May Day March. Mrs Shaw visited the gallery and talked to the custodian, who brought the flag out from the drawer where it was stored. He carefully tore off a small rectangle of blue cloth and gave it to the visitor. She then sent it to her daughter, enclosed in a letter describing the visit and containing a sketch of the design. Evelyn gave her mother's letter and the piece of fabric to Rem McClintock, the senior member of the art group. He was delighted to find that the original Eureka flag still existed in Ballarat, and from the description, the artists produced their flags. The May Day march in 1938 may well have been the first public airing of an authentic replica of the Eureka flag since its unfurling in 1854.

Through Rem McClintock, Len Fox heard about the flag and became interested in it. McClintock told him that the flag's authenticity was doubted, and that it was hidden away in a drawer. The doubts had been cast by Spielvogel, curator of the Ballarat Historical Museum, who believed that the real flag was made of silk and would resemble the illustration in Carboni's 1855 book. The issue fascinated Fox, by now a journalist in Sydney with the Communist newspaper *Progress*. He wrote an article about the flag in December 1944 and began his serious investigation, much as Withers had done in 1896. He wrote to the King family, the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery and Nathan Spielvogel. Mr Keith sent him a piece of the flag in March 1945, together with a careful drawing, and although Spielvogel gave his reasons for doubting the authenticity of the flag, he promised his assistance. Fox came to Ballarat in May 1945 to see the flag and meet Spielvogel.

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28 Len Fox, *Broad Left, Narrow Left*, Potts Point, NSW, the author, 1982, pp. 52-60.
30 Interviews with Evelyn Healy (nee Shaw), conducted by the author. See also Evelyn Healy, *Artist of the Left*, Sydney, the author, 1993, p. 3.
31 Letter from Keith to Len Fox, 6 March 1945, copy in BFAG.
who showed him the Withers article from 1896. The Sydney journalist was excited by the old newspaper report, and wrote an article headed 'Eureka Flag Mystery Solved?' for the Tribune on 17 July 1945, putting forward his arguments for the authenticity of the flag, and raising the issue with readers. He continued to write articles, in Meanjin in 1947, and for the new journal Overland in 1954. In January 1963 Fox visited Ballarat again and inspected the flag, which Mr Keith laid out on a table. Fox politely declined the offer of another sample of the flag. Fox's passionate interest in the flag led him to self-publish a booklet in that year which set out his arguments as to why the flag in the Ballarat Gallery was indeed the genuine article. He also arranged for testing of a fragment from the Ballarat Historical Society and his own fragment from the Gallery by the School of Textile Technology at the University of New South Wales, repeating the 'acid test' that Withers had performed in 1896 and obtaining the same results.

The author with Len Fox, Sydney, 1997, with a copy of The Strange Story of the Eureka Flag.

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32 Fox, Broad Left, Narrow Left, p. 174-82.
34 Courier, 10 January 1963; interview with Len Fox, Sydney, 1997.
36 Letter from School of Textile Technology to Len Fox, 19 November 1963, reporting on testing of fragments of the flag, copy in BFAG. Frank Cayley, Flag of Stars, Sydney, Reed, 1966, pp. 72-5
From 1963, probably resulting from Len Fox’s interest, the Secretary of the Gallery, Austin McCallum, locked the flag away in a safe at the Public Library. On one occasion, McCallum was horrified to discover that the safe had been broken into, but was mightily relieved to find the flag, in its brown paper wrapping, had been ignored by the robber. After this, he placed the flag in the vault of the National Bank. The appointment of the first professional director of the Ballarat Gallery in 1967 revolutionised conservation and exhibition procedures. The condition of the Eureka flag became a concern, and in 1971 Gallery President and Ballarat Mayor Jack Chisholm, a keen local historian, spearheaded a move to bring the flag out of its hiding place, conserve it and put it back on exhibition. Under the watchful supervision of the director Margaret MacKean, it was carefully washed, then stitched to backing material by accomplished Ballarat seamstress Val D’Angri. Next it was mounted behind glass, as R.S. Ross had recommended back in 1914 when he visited the Gallery and commented on its poor conservation in his book on Eureka.

It was unveiled by Prime Minister Gough Whitlam on Eureka Day, 1973, with no possibility of any further excisions by misguided custodians. The flag was mounted above the stairwell at the Gallery, a location which Thomas Keneally called ‘not-quite-prime, not-quite certain’. To mark the unveiling, two publications appeared, a brochure by Austin McCallum, and an expanded book by Len Fox.

When the Gallery was extended in the 1980s, a special Eureka Gallery was constructed near the main entrance to display the flag. Its position was now quite certain, reflecting a change in public thinking about the flag. It received further special conservation and remounting in an improved display case in 1995, thanks to a grant from the Victorian Government, and was once again ‘unveiled’, but this time by Liberal Premier Jeff Kennett. Thus the left and the right of the political spectrum had both contributed to its conservation. When the Gallery underwent further extensions in 2001, assisted by a Commonwealth Centenary of Federation grant, the flag moved again, this time to its own gallery in the heart of the building, with improved lighting and a truly

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37 This story was told to me by Jack Chisholm, a friend of McCallum’s.
reverential place of honour. In September 2001, a legal process finally saw the flag given to the Gallery by the King family. On 11 November 2001 it was unveiled again, this time in the presence of many members of the King family, with speeches by Professor Weston Bate and myself, in the presence of a large crowd of interested members of the public.

In terms of conservation and display, the Eureka Flag leads the world. During the conservation process, the Gallery Director Margaret Rich had discussions with the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC, where the Stars and Stripes is housed. There are some interesting parallels between the Eureka flag and the Stars and Stripes. This huge flag, measuring nine by thirteen metres, was made by a mother and daughter for the commandant of Fort McHenry in Baltimore in 1812, and flown as a symbol of independence in a war against the British. It was kept by the Armstead family until 1907, when it was loaned to the Smithsonian, the loan later converted to a gift. Apparently many pieces had been cut from it as mementoes in the nineteenth century. Since 1999 it has been undergoing a US$18 million conservation program, and it is due to return to public exhibition later this year. Its popularity was much enhanced by the success of a song written about it, The Star Spangled Banner, which became the national anthem.

Holy Relics – The Puzzle Of The Pieces

One of the most fascinating aspects of the history of the flag is the way that pieces periodically return to the Gallery. The first to return was the Billings fragment in 1993, sent from Kyabram, in northern Victoria, where it was found in a secret compartment of a family sea chest that had originally belonged to Dr J.D. Williams, camp surgeon in Ballarat in December 1854. He had been given the piece as a souvenir at the Ballarat Camp when he was attending the wounded after the Stockade, and his descendants kindly returned it to the Gallery. In June 1996 Brother Laurie Collins, Principal of St. Patrick’s College in Ballarat, presented a fragment of the flag he had found in a safe at the College. Later that year I was researching and writing a script for a video production on the flag, which led me to Sydney to meet and interview Evelyn Healy and Len

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43 The Stars and Strips web site is maintained by the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institute at http://americanhistory.si.edu/ssb. I am grateful to Lonnie Bunch, Associate Director for Curatorial Affairs, at the Smithsonian for sending me information about the conservation program.
44 Courier, 22 March 1993.
45 Courier, 22 June 1996.
The most extraordinary story concerns Evelyn Healy. As mentioned above, she had been instrumental in the making of a replica flag for the Artists Branch of the Communist Party in 1938. She moved to Sydney in 1940 and lost touch with her friends, especially with the leader Rem McClintock, who had never returned her piece of Eureka flag. She had asked him a number of times to return the fragment with her mother’s letter, which was precious because it was evidence of her mother’s affection for her daughter. In July 1997 a piece of the Eureka flag came up for auction at Christie’s in Melbourne, with a reserve price of $10,000. It came from the collection of Alex McClintock, the son of Rem, whom Evelyn remembered seeing as a child at Communist Party meetings in 1938. The blue fragment was in a frame with an accompanying pencil sketch of the flag and the design on the cover of Raffaello Carboni’s 1855 book, *The Eureka Stockade*. Also in the frame was a double-sided piece of plain paper, written in ink, as follows:

I inquired from Mr Spielvogel, who has charge of, is responsible for, the Historical Museum here. He showed me a book by a man Raffaello written in 1855, 6 months after the Eureka riots. On the cover was a reproduction of the first flag I have drawn, which Mr S. feels certain is similar to the original. However, there has been quite a bit of controversy over the whole thing, as another flag, claimed by many to be the real one, is at the Art Gallery... I went to Mr Keith who produced it for me. It is a huge flag, hand-made (he said it was supposed to be made from the petticoats of the women, which it easily could be, as this material, which he tore off for me, is similar to what was used then. It is tattered, and also smothered with small holes, lots of which have a slight burnt edge. I would almost certainly say bullets had made them. Mr K. thinks it is the real flag.

Mr S. said the original flag was silk, the Gallery one, bunting. However Mr K. says it is not bunting: I don’t think I’d call it bunting. It has a silk texture and sheen.

This is the letter from Mrs Myrtle Shaw in Ballarat to her daughter Evelyn in Melbourne, circa March-April, 1938. This is the letter and piece Evelyn gave to Rem McClintock, and never saw again, until, to her amazement, she saw it reproduced in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 2 July 1998.
1997, with the announcement that it would be auctioned. This was the piece that Len Fox wrote about in his 1986 article on ‘Women and the Eureka Flag’, published in Overland in December 1986. Evelyn expressed ‘deep emotion’ on picking up her newspaper and being confronted with her mother’s handwriting after nearly 60 years. She felt ‘the need to rescue it from the mercenary and ironic role of helping sell a piece of the Eureka flag’.48

This set off a train of events, with the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery determined that the piece should not be auctioned. With the financial support of the Ferry Foundation, Healy took out an injunction against the sale, on the grounds that the letter rightfully belonged to her. She had carefully kept copies of her mother’s letters and was able to produce these as evidence that the handwriting in the 1938 letter was indeed her mother’s. After lengthy legal proceedings, her claim was recognised. She presented the piece of the flag and her mother’s letter to the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery in March 1998.


In the Gallery's new Eureka Gallery, these pieces are displayed near the flag, with their stories. There are other fragments in the collections of the State Library of Victoria and the National Library. The Bradford fragment, from the Ballarat Historical Society's collection, is now on display in the Eureka Centre.

Len Fox has been a worthy champion of the flag since 1944. Thanks to his painstaking research, he established the authenticity of the flag in the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, and through his writing about the flag he has made many Australians aware of its existence and of its importance as a national symbol. In December 1997 his efforts on behalf of the flag were recognised when the Mayor of Ballarat presented him with the Eureka Stockade Memorial Trust's illuminated address of commendation. In the following year Evelyn Healy received the award. For my part I am deeply grateful to the beautiful flag that was the means of being able to learn the stories of two great Australians and life-long campaigners for social justice - Evelyn Healy and Len Fox.

Design And Making of the Eureka Flag

One of the great mysteries of the Eureka story is the question of who designed the Southern Cross flag. One of the many controversies concerns the question of who made the flag. Contemporary accounts such as Carboni's suggest that the designer might have been the Canadian Henry Charles Ross, who died at the Stockade defending the flag. Unfortunately Ross left no records, and as a young, unmarried man had no family to speak for him. Ross came from Toronto, and certainly there are some similarities to the flag of Quebec, which has a white cross on a blue ensign. The Ballarat Times reportedly carried a story shortly after the Stockade referring to two women making the flag from an original drawing by a digger named Ross. Unfortunately no complete set of the Ballarat Times exists, and it is impossible to locate this intriguing reference. The story is echoed in the 1893 book From Tent to Parliament, which stated that 'the flag was made by a couple of ladies, and the order to make it was conveyed by Ross, who was one of the first to die under it'. Father Tom Linane, a respected local historian of the 1970s, subscribed to

49 Raffaello Carboni, The Eureka Stockade, Melbourne, the author, 1855. On front cover, below the illustration of the flag, the caption reads 'When Ballarat unfurled the Southern Cross, the bearer was Toronto’s Captain Ross. He later refers to Ross as the 'bridegroom of the flag' (p. 68 of 1975 edition).
50 Sun, Sydney, 5 May 1941, p. 4, refers to issues of the Ballarat Times in the Mitchell Library. Referred to by Len Fox, The Eureka Flag, p. 49.
51 From Tent to Parliament, Ballarat, Berry Anderson, 1893, reprinted 1934, p. 11.
the idea that it was women from St. Alipius who might have made the Eureka flag. This theory is supported by the fact that the priest at St. Alipius would fly an ecclesiastical flag—blue cross on a white background—to signify when services were about to begin. One fascinating piece of evidence is a sketch in the Ballarat Historical Society collection, which is inscribed ‘found in a tent after the affair at Eureka’. With it was a piece of the Eureka flag. It appears to be the design sketch for the flag, but gives no clue of authorship.

The flag of the Ballarat Reform League was a huge one, and must have entailed many hours of careful sewing. The stars are eight-pointed rather than the usual seven points, and seamstress Val D’Angri suggests that the logic of cutting out a large star is best done by folding a piece of paper twice and then cutting it—hence the eight points. Oral tradition pointed to the ‘romantic story’ of women making the stars of the flag out of their petticoats. Novelist Eric Lambert has a character called Jenny Light giving up her blue silk dress for the making of the flag, and amazingly this fiction has been represented as fact in a publication called the Eureka Research Directory. The blue woollen material certainly bears a marked resemblance to the standard dressmaker’s length of material for making up one of the voluminous dresses of the 1850s. However there is also a men’s flag story, related by J.W. Wilson, that a group of men made the flag out of tent materials. Others have claimed ownership of the flag, including William Fraser of Ballarat, whose obituary in 1898 described him as ‘the maker and hoister’ of the Eureka flag.

Inspiration for the use of the Southern Cross may well have come from the Australasian League. This flag is described in the Argus of 3 February 1851 as ‘deep blue, with the union Jack in the corner, the broad field displaying four stars, the Southern Cross’. The symbolism of the banner is...

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52 Father Tom Linnane, articles in Light, Ballarat Catholic Diocese, 1974, especially December 1974.
55 Sun, Sydney 5 May 1941, p. 5, mentions this oral tradition. Withers also discusses the issue in his article in the Ballarat Star, 1 May 1896. A number of descendants who are members of Eureka’s Children claim their ancestors were involved, including Anne Duke, Anastasia Withers and Anastasia Hayes. See Eureka Research Directory, Ballarat, Ballarat Heritage Services, 1999. An example of the way oral history becomes accepted as fact is evident in a recent book by Barrie Sheppard, Eureka Rebellion, which has Anastasia Hayes given as one of the makers. (p. 25)
57 This suggestion was put to me by the supervisor of the costume factory to Sovereign Hill.
59 Courier, 28 July, 1898.
potent - ties to Britain represented by the Union Jack, but the unity and growing sense of national identity represented by the stars. A very similar design with a large white star under the union jack was adopted as the Australian Flag soon after Federation.\footnote{P.L. Brown, ‘Whence the Eureka flag’, \textit{Victorian Historical Journal}, August, 1981.}

Flags were very important visual markers on the goldfields, used to identify the location of key buildings such as stores and public offices. From the beginning of the gold rush, and the first protests against the licence fee, flags would fly at public meetings. David Tulloch sketched the scene at Mount Alexander in December 1851 where the diggers’ flag can be seen. In one corner was a pick and shovel, representing labour; another has a bundle of Roman sticks, representing unity, a third a set of scales, and in the fourth the kangaroo and emu.\footnote{Alan McCulloch, \textit{Artists of the Australian Gold Rush}, Melbourne, Lansdowne, 1977, p. 52, 49.} In August 1853, at the Red Ribbon protest at Bendigo, a very similar diggers’ flag appeared, its design ascribed to William Dexter, a leader of the movement, who painted it with brightly coloured clays mixed expertly by himself.\footnote{William Howitt, \textit{Land, labour and gold}, Kilmore, Lowden, 1972 (reprint of 1855 edition). p. 224.} However there is no hard evidence to disclose who designed the Eureka flag and who made it. The mystery however only adds to the legendary qualities of the starry banner.

\section*{Authenticity}

As Len Fox has shown in his discussion of the flag, the authenticity of the flag has been continually questioned. Even at the treason trials in March 1855, when spy Henry Goodenough was shown the flag and asked if the flag produced by Trooper King was the rebel flag, he replied ‘it was a blue flag with a white cross. I could not say that was it’.\footnote{50 Queen vs John Joseph, \textit{State Trial}, Melbourne, Supreme Court, 1855 (transcript in Supreme Court Library), p. 12.} Many people were misled by the design on the cover of Raffaello Carboni’s 1855 book, \textit{The Eureka Stockade}. W.B. Withers made minute enquiries into the authenticity of the flag when it was given to the Gallery in 1896, and a friend of his, a fellow journalist who had followed the events of 1854-5 closely, quipped: ‘What I wonder is that you have not now extant a dozen such, if not more, each as authentic as the other?’\footnote{W.B. Withers, ‘Some Ballarat Reminiscences’, \textit{Austral Light}, June 1896.} Such cynicism infected Ballarat historian Nathan Spielvogel, who doubted the authenticity of the flag until his death in 1955. But in 1996 an exciting new eyewitness view of the flag appeared in the guise of Charles Doudiet’s sketchbook, which came up for auction at Christies in Melbourne. The Swiss-Canadian Doudiet had been at the Bakery Hill meeting in 1854 and at the Stockade, and had made two brilliant watercolour sketches that clearly show the
Eureka flag, exactly as it is in the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery. Fortunately Ballarat was able to obtain the sketchbook after a lively bidding duel, assisted by a public appeal and generous support from the Kennett government’s Community Support Fund. These sketches proved a cornerstone in the case to finally establish the authenticity of the flag.

Even in 1998 the issue burst into the public domain again, when speculation arose about a Eureka flag that had been discovered in Bury St. Edmunds, in Cambridgeshire, England. It was even suggested that this was the genuine Eureka flag, because it was in the possession of the Suffolk Regimental Museum. The 12th Suffolk Regiment were in action at the Eureka Stockade and a claim was made that the flag had been torn down by members of the regiment and it had returned to England as a regimental trophy. This discovery was made just as the new Eureka Stockade museum was about to open, and the Centre enthusiastically investigated obtaining this English flag. But the mystery was solved when Peter Tobin, Chairman of Sovereign Hill’s Board, visited Bury St. Edmunds and pronounced ‘it’s a dud’. The flag was a gift to the regiment from Ted Millett of Montrose Cottage in Ballarat in the 1970s! Claims about it being an original flag had been fuelled by a misleading caption affixed to the flag. It is machine sewn, and in poor condition considering its age, but nevertheless an important Eureka relic given its English context.

![Eureka Flag. The Suffolk Regiment flag, Bury St. Edmunds. Photographed by the author, September 2000](image)

65 Courier, 10 July, 21 Aug. 1996.
67 Courier, 11 Feb. 1998
There are many other interesting and historically important replicas. In 1942 the Ballarat Trades Hall's caretaker Tom Ellis commissioned a replica Eureka flag, copied from the original in the Art Gallery, which flew from the Trades Hall on Eureka Day 1942, causing locals to wonder what was the strange flag flying in Ballarat. This flag was subsequently used in trade union marches during the 1940s, then lost until the early 1980s, when it was found by David Miller. In 2001 it was returned to the Ballarat Trades' Hall following conservation and framing courtesy of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union.

In August 1962 the Ballarat Old Colonists' Association commissioned a replica of the Eureka Flag in the Gallery, wanting to make sure that an exact replica is preserved on display in its Ballarat club rooms, in view of the 'perished' status of the original. Mr George Lemke, canvas goods maker of Doveton Street, made the flag and it was hung on the wall of the Reading Room, where it has remained ever since. Although the Association had failed to secure the original in 1891, it finally had a very special replica.

**Uses of the Eureka Flag.**

The first reference to the flag came in the *Ballarat Times* of Friday 24 November 1854, when an article alerted readers to the monster meeting of the Ballarat Reform League on the following Wednesday. It announced that at the meeting 'the Australian flag shall triumphantly wave, a symbol of Liberty'. With much colourful language, the report ends by urging the readers 'Forward! People! Forward!' It was very revolutionary, very emotive language, and the writer - either Henry Seekamp or John Manning - was obviously privy to the making of the flag.

The Eureka flag was first hoisted at the Bakery Hill meeting on 29 November 1854. The *Ballarat Times* recorded that 'there is no flag in old Europe half so beautiful as the Southern Cross of the

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69 This flag was exhibited in the *Eureka 140* exhibition in 1994-5, which travelled to NSW, South Australia and Victoria. It was in the possession of David Miller of Ballarat, who looked after it from 1980 till 2001, when he returned it to the Trades Hall. The restored flag, mounted above the stage of the Trades Hall, was unveiled on 11 July, 2001. Dean Mighell of the CFMEU spoke about his passion for Eureka, and the support his union had given to the restoration of the flag.

70 *Courier*, 27 July 2001, supplement.


72 W.B. Withers mentions his attempt to obtain the flag for the Old Colonists Association in his article published in *Austral Light*, May 1896.

73 *Age*, 28 Nov. 1854, which carries a report from the *Ballarat Times* of 24 Nov. 1854.
Ballarat miners'. Raffaello Carboni used the same description in his history, remarking that the new flag gathered 'round itself all the oppressed of the world'. What the flag symbolised has been debated since that day. As discussed in an earlier chapter, contemporaries saw it as a flag of insurrection, 'the national flag of Australia for all future time'. After Peter Lalor made his men swear an oath to 'stand truly by each other' under the flag, and 'to fight to defend our rights and liberties', it acquired special meaning for the men of many nations who were prepared to die for the Southern Cross, which united them as citizens of a new republic. In Sydney the Freeman’s Journal saw this flag with five stars as a signal to the five colonies to join together 'in setting up an Australian Republic of five united states'.

At the Eureka treason trials in 1855, the flag was the most important piece of Crown evidence for the charge that the diggers 'maliciously and traitorously did raise upon a pole a certain flag as a standard and collect round the said standard and did then solemnly swear to defend each other with the intention of levying war against our said Lady the Queen'.

The Eureka flag and derivatives of it have been used by radical groups since the time of the Stockade, intriguingly by members of both the Left and the Right side of politics. The cause of the Ballarat diggers was taken up by the Victoria Land League, in 1857 with its emblem the Southern Cross, and its motto 'Advance Australia'. This movement really began the tradition of radical working-class use of the flag in the fight for improved working and living conditions, rather than for more esoteric nationalist uses. In this context the use of a flag derived from the Eureka flag at Lambing Flat, New South Wales, in 1861 can be understood. The Miners’ Protection League was formed to protest against the Chinese infringing their working conditions. They may have proclaimed the values of ‘equality, fraternity and glorious liberty’, but their motives were to remove the Chinese from the goldfield so that they had less competition in their gold seeking. This evocation seems far removed from the principles of democracy that had been proclaimed at Bakery Hill. But a tradition had been born, and in 1878 Eureka flags were

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74 Ballarat Times, 30 November 1854.
75 Carboni, The Eureka Stockade, p. 56.
76 From Tent to Parliament, p. 11.
78 Freeman’s Journal, Sydney, 23 Dec., 1854.
79 Queen vs Joseph, Supreme Court Library, Melbourne, p. 12.
apparently carried at a Seamen's Union strike against the use of cheap Asian labour - again the race card was being played. 82

The early years of the 1890s saw the rise of the labour movement, with a number of trade union-led strikes, and derivatives of the Eureka flag appeared as a banner of trade union solidarity and protest against capitalists who would not negotiate a fair deal. At the trysting ground of political protest in Melbourne, the Yarra Bank, 30,000 people gathered in August 1890 under a platform decorated with the Eureka flag to demonstrate union solidarity with maritime workers. 83 The protesting shearsers at Barcaldine, Queensland in April 1891 were reported to have flown a Eureka flag over their camp, and on May Day to have marched wearing blue sashes in deference to Eureka. 84 Henry Lawson wrote his famous poem Blood on the Wattle about the incident. 85 This poem, more than anything else, has, I believe, been responsible for the trade union movement's love affair with the flag.

During the 1890s a Federation flag, white stars on a blue cross against a white ground, with the Union Jack in the top left hand corner, became a de facto Australian flag. 86 It bore strong similarities to the Eureka flag. With the formation of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901, a competition was held by the Commonwealth Government to design a national flag, and the winner was almost exactly the same as the 1851 Australasian League flag. The Southern Cross was now incorporated into the national flag. However as Elizabeth Kwan argued, this flag was an ambiguous symbol, unclear whether its statement was of Imperial federation, or national pride. 87 Australians were also divided about the protocol of flying the Union Jack or the Australian flag, or indeed the socialist red flag, which caused controversy at May Day marches. And during the

82 I have been unable to find direct evidence of this use – it is referred to in a National Republican's website, www.alphalink.com.au/~eureka, accessed January 2000.

83 Fox, The Strange Story of the Eureka Flag, p. 17; W.A. Spence, Australia's Awakening, p. 95., who describes the meeting on Sunday 31 August 1890. E.J. Holloway, writing in the Sydney Daily Telegraph, 14 March 1963, said that the platform on 29 August was decorated with the Eureka flag.


85 Worker, Brisbane, 16 May 1891 for a copy of Lawson's poem.

86 Whitney Smith, Flags through the Ages and Across the World, Maidenhead, McGraw Hill, 1975, p. 78; Elizabeth Kwan "The Australian Flag; ambiguous symbol of nationality" Australian Historical Studies, no. 103, October 1994, pp. 282 sees the Federation Flag as based on a New South Wales flag designed in 1831.

87 Kwan, 'The Australian flag; ambiguous symbol of nationality', p. 280.
anti-conscription demonstrations of World War One, socialists added the symbolism of the Eureka flag to the red flag to protest against Australian involvement in an imperialist war. 88

Against this political background, coloured by the events of World War One and the Great Depression, the Eureka flag made a reappearance in the public domain during the 1930s when it was adopted by the radical left wing of the Australian Labor Party and the Communist Party. I have earlier described the CPA’s use of the flag at May Day marches from 1938. 89 The most notable Communist group to use the flag as its symbol was the Eureka Youth League, which began in Melbourne in 1941.

The Eureka Youth League was formed out of the rump of the banned League of Young Democrats following the Menzies’s government banning of the Communist Party in June 1940. 90 The League of Young Democrats, formed in 1938 in Melbourne, in turn grew out of the Young Communist League, which had started in the late 1920s, with Sydney as headquarters, but Melbourne an active centre of activities. 91 Harry Stein suggests that the EYL was the idea of Malcolm Goode. 92 The former leaders of the LYD supplied the leadership for a new, broad left coalition of young people, representing trade unionists, high school students and service personnel. According to Stein, someone at a LYD leaders’ meeting had the bright idea of giving it the historic name of Eureka. 93 Bob Walshe suggests that the name was linked to a direction from Moscow, that the CPA should form popular fronts, which linked in to national sentiments within particular countries. 94

At the end of 1942 the EYL opened its headquarters at North Melbourne, and a camp at Warburton in the Dandenong Ranges near Melbourne. 95 By 1943 the League was established in every state, and in 1944 the Labor Club at Melbourne University affiliated with it. At its peak,

88 See for example the poster ‘Australians! Your fathers defeated militarism on the blood-stained hills of Eureka’, printed by Labor Call, in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia.


91 Blake, A Proletarian Life, p. 74.


93 Harry Stein, A Glance Over the Old Left Shoulder, Sydney, Hale & Iremonger, 1994, p. 64.

94 Bob Walshe interviewed by the author, April 1997.

95 Stein, A Glance Over the Old Left Shoulder, p. 73.
which lasted into the fifties, it was, according to Audrey Blake, the most influential and effective youth organisation in Australia. Blake was the driving force behind the League. She had been greatly impressed as a young woman by a discussion with Kuusinen, a Finn who was in charge of youth affairs in the Communist International, while she was in Moscow attending the Sixth Congress of the Young Communist International in 1937–8. He suggested to her that rather than forming an organization restricted to Party members, it would be better to develop a broad youth organisation that would include non-Communists. Blake took this advice to heart, and also the words of George Dimitrov, in building the Eureka Youth League. She was concerned with abstracting Eureka from time and place, making it part of an international ideological orientation. Because of its range of sporting and cultural activities, the EYL had wide appeal, and it also gave excellent opportunities for young women to become organisers. During the war the League was tireless in supporting the war effort, ran campaigns to reduce absenteeism from work, helped bring in the harvests and supported Victory loans. It also circulated a newspaper *Eureka* among members in the armed services. For this patriotic work the League was praised by members of the Curtin government.

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97 Ibid., p. 73.
The flag was now strongly associated with Left-wing political protest. But more than that, the story of Eureka and the symbolism of the flag were used in the campaign leading up to the 1951 referendum when Menzies tried to ban the Communist Party. The League campaigned strongly against the proposition, and in the event it was narrowly rejected by the Australian people.\textsuperscript{98}

According to Val Noone, the League was amongst the first to protest against Australian involvement in the Vietnam war in the early 1960s.\textsuperscript{99} From the 1940s until the early 1970s, the League strongly affirmed in the public sphere the radical symbolism of the flag.\textsuperscript{100}

From the 1960s the flag became strongly associated with the Builders' Labourers Federation and was used by Jack Munday in Sydney and Norm Gallagher in Melbourne, with Eureka flags carried at militant trade union demonstrations. Union members also wore the flag on their hard hats and tee-shirts, making it a popular item of personal clothing. While people knew little about the historical origins of the flag, it was readily identified as the symbol of the militant wing of the trade union movement. Following the demise of the Builders' Labourers Union, it was taken up by the Electrical Trades' Union and the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union. The secretary Dean Mighell is a passionate advocate of the flag, which he sees as 'a symbol of struggle and unity'.\textsuperscript{101} The flag always appears at trade union demonstrations: for example at the waterfront protests at Weipa in October 1995, and the Melbourne docks in 1998.\textsuperscript{102}

Ken Mansell, a member of the Eureka Youth League from 1967, believed that the League was eclipsed in the 1970s by a new Maoist student organisation, the Australian Independence Movement, which also used the flag as its emblem. To members of the AIM, the Eureka flag symbolised 'the struggle for Australian independence, raised to stop racism, Nazism and super-

\textsuperscript{98} Tribune, Sydney, 31 March, 1954.
\textsuperscript{100} See the documentary film Red Matildas, made in 1984, featuring Audrey Blake, which includes some footage of marches where the flag appears. The Museum of Victoria has an example of a Eureka Youth League badge in its social history collection, no. 90-1779. The Eureka Youth League published a newspaper, Challenge: Voice of Australian Youth. (copies in the Mitchell Library).
\textsuperscript{101} Dean Mighell spoke at the Ballarat Trades Hall on 11 July 2001 at the unveiling of the restored Trade Union Eureka flag.
\textsuperscript{102} Overland, no. 151, Winter 1998, which features a Eureka flag on the cover of its tribute to the MUA protest in Melbourne, April 1998.
power dominance'. When the Whitlam government was dismissed by the Governor-General in November 1975, Eureka flags were prominent at mass rallies that protested at the actions of the imperialist Governor-General and demanded a republic of Australia. Australians of many political hues, including author Donald Horne, joined with members of the AIM in their protest and proudly wore their badge with the Eureka flag and the words 'Independence for Australia'.

This radical Left-wing group split into the Blue Maoists (symbol a blue Eureka flag) and the Red Maoists (symbol a red Eureka flag) on ideological grounds. AIM member Eric Pedersen summed up this division when he wrote about Eureka, and was scathing about the motivation of the diggers. Like Humphrey McQueen, he characterised the diggers as middle class, and argued that the flag of the working class movement should be red, not blue. Blue Marxists were more likely to see the Eureka flag as a symbol of the fight for independence from foreign imperialism. Hence the logic of raising Eureka flags at the S11 protest in Melbourne in 2000, which was seen particularly as a protest against American economic imperialism. One of the flags of the Australian Independence Movement is preserved in the National Library collection.

The Australian Independence Movement was infuriated when extreme Right wing groups adopted the Eureka flag as their standard. Organisations such as the neo-Nazi Australian National Socialist Party, National Action, National Front (Australia) and the National Alliance have used the flag. These shadowy groups, discussed in an earlier chapter, draw on a (white) Australian historical tradition to link the Eureka Stockade to white-Australian trade union movements of the late nineteenth century, and thence to the anti-immigration movement of the late twentieth century. David Greason has written amusingly of his involvement with the National Alliance, a student organisation in Sydney and Melbourne, which saw the Eureka flag as a symbol of white
Australia and Australian independence. To its members, this meant freedom from Communist infiltration. In 1998 Pauline Hanson used the symbol of Eureka as part of her ‘One Nation’ publicity.

A plethora of organisations have used the flag. In 1974 opal miners at Lightening Ridge flew a huge Eureka flag made by women of the town in protest against the New South Wales government’s proposal to abolish the Miners’ Right. For many years the Minerals Council of Australia used to celebrate the Eureka anniversary at its headquarters in Canberra, draping the foyer of its building with Eureka flags. This provided a spectacular foil to the trade unions, but the Council venerated Eureka because the miners objected to an unfair gold licence which they saw as an unwarranted intrusion upon free enterprise. In a similar way the Small Business Association staged a rally of 6000 people at the Stockade monument in 1990, waving Eureka flags as a protest against Federal taxes. It is more difficult to understand the interest of bikies in the flag, but the Eureka Centre gift shop in Ballarat reported that bikies were the best customers, buying flags to fly from their motor bikes, and especially the silver belt buckles that incorporate the Eureka flag.

It was the spectacle of these very different groups using the flag for such conflicting purposes that led Ballarat’s Peter Tobin to re-claim the flag for its original meaning and for Ballarat when he engineered its re-appearance on Bakery Hill in 1979. A full page advertisement in the National Times on 30 March 1980 expressed a similar sentiment when a widely representative group of citizens called for the flag, ‘symbolising the aspirations of Australians for a just and humane society’, to be used as a national symbol instead of its appropriation by racist and fascist groups. By the 1990s, the flag gained official respectability when it was incorporated into the emblems of the City of Ballarat and the University of Ballarat. John Molony made an

112 David Greason, I Was a Teenage Fascist, Melbourne, McPhee Gribble, 1994. See also web sites of these organisations.
114 Common Cause, 13 May 1974, reported in Fox, The Eureka Flag, p. 28.
115 Information from Michael Piggott, Archivist of University of Melbourne, who was struck by these commemorations while working in Canberra in the 1970s and 1980s. See also Minerals Council of Australia website www.minerals.org.au fact sheet on gold.
117 Information from Heather Hunt, manager of the Eureka Centre shop, October 2001.
118 Courier, 4 Dec. 1979; interview with Peter Tobin in Flying the Flag video
119 National Times, Sydney, 30 March 1980.
impassioned plea in 1994 for the flag to be freed from political connotations, because he saw it most of all as a symbol of hope and liberty, of the quest for human rights.¹²⁰

Since the 1970s there have been calls for a new national flag, Gough Whitlam raised this issue when his government reviewed national symbols such as the anthem and honours system. The lobbying power of the RSL ensured that no government action eventuated, but the organisation Ausflag has lobbied for a change. The Eureka flag is often mentioned in these discussions, but the Australian Republican Movement, led by Liberal member Malcolm Turnbull, dismissed it in 1999 as a flag that carried too much partisan baggage. Yet since the end of the Cold War, the association of the flag with Communist groups has become much weaker, and the ‘average citizen’ is happy to carry a Eureka flag sticker on their car. The Eureka Stockade Memorial Trust made an approach to the Federal Government in 1997 to have the Eureka flag accorded official status under the Flags Act. The Prime Minister’s office rejected the request, arguing that the Eureka flag was an historic flag, rather than a living flag, although the decision seemed to contradict itself with the following statement:

I can advise that the Eureka Flag is included in the official publication Australian Flags, as an historic flag. This gives a degree of official acknowledgement to a flag which, in reality, is so well known that it needs no formal act by Government to secure its place in Australia’s history.¹²¹

This issue was central to the travelling exhibition Eureka - the First Australian Republic? staged by the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery and the Public Record Office of Victoria in 1997, and is frequently aired in the pages of Crux Australis, the journal of the Flag Society of Australia.¹²² And the Eureka Flag has waved over the parliament houses of Victoria and the Commonwealth on Eureka anniversaries.¹²³

That these questions have been raised with such passion testifies to the enduring resonance of the Eureka story. The controversy about the proper home for the flag has been broadly canvassed in Ballarat, and to a lesser extent in Melbourne and nationally. The opening of the Eureka Centre in


¹²¹ Letter to Hon. Michael Ronaldson from Hon. Chris Miles, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, 5 December 1997.


March 1998, which I will discuss later, really focused the discussion. Premier Jeff Kennett went public on the issue, stating that the original flag should be in the Eureka Centre. Jan Penney, the manager of the Centre, also espoused this sentiment - after all it was in the interests of the Centre to have the flag as a major drawcard for tourists.\textsuperscript{124} In December 1999 Paul Murphy, a descendant of Stockaders, claimed that the flag was stolen from its rightful owners, the Ballarat Reform League, and that he would 'launch civil action in the Supreme Court to have the flag handed over'.\textsuperscript{125} He was quoted in a newspaper report that the flag should be in the Eureka Centre where it was needed to boost visitor numbers. Gough Whitlam added his voice to this call in June 2001 when he came to Ballarat to receive an honour from the Eureka Stockade Memorial Trust.\textsuperscript{126} This controversy led Owen King, a descendant of the King family that lent the flag to the Gallery in 1895, to transfer legal ownership of the flag to the Gallery in October 2001.

The opening of the National Museum in Canberra during 2001 raised another custodial issue. If the flag is so important as a national symbol, should it be in the National Museum? This issue would also apply to the 1851 Australasian League flag in the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in Launceston.

The Ballarat Fine Art Gallery sees itself as the devoted custodian of the flag, which it has looked after for over 100 years on behalf of the Australian people. The Gallery provides the best possible conservation for this precious and beautiful national icon, close to the site where it first flew at Bakery Hill as a symbol of protest. Whether that protest represented the spirit of democracy, republicanism, or free enterprise has been disputed. So too the responsibility for the design and making of the flag, and its authenticity. At the end of the twentieth century, a lively contest has arisen about the appropriate location of the flag, and about whether it should become the Australian national flag when/if Australia becomes a republic.

However, there is no doubt that the beautiful, stark and simple design of the flag had been the basis of its enduring appeal, endearing it to the diverse array of organisations that have adopted it as their symbol of protest.

\textsuperscript{125} \textit{Courier}, 11 Dec. 1999.
\textsuperscript{126} \textit{Courier}, 4, 5 June, 2001.
CHAPTER FIVE

THE APOTHEOSIS OF PETER LALOR:
CREATIVE USES OF EUREKA

News of Peter Lalor’s death on 9 February 1889 caused an outpouring of emotion around the continent. Lalor would be feted as a hero and patriot in poetry, novel, sculpture, film and song. Hume Dow argued in 1954 that although not much great literature had been written about Eureka, it had been a central inspiration for the development in the 1880s and 1890s of an Australian literature with a ‘temper democratic; bias offensively Australian’.¹ In this chapter I want to examine creative productions stemming from the Eureka story, which began immediately after the Stockade and continue to this day. The figure of Peter Lalor has been central to most of these productions, his character increasingly clothed in mythical robes. But at the same time as this ‘hero myth’ has been developing, artists and writers have also been busy embroidering the labour and nationalist aspects of the Eureka legend.

Norman Lindsay, Peter Lalor Swearing the Oath of Allegiance, watercolour, Ballarat Fine Art Gallery

¹Hume Dow, ‘Eureka and the Creative Writer’, Historical Studies: Eureka Supplement, 1965 edition, p. 87. The allusion is to Joseph Furphy, who presented the manuscript of his novel Such is Life to J.A. Archibald in 1897, using these words to describe his work. See Patricia Rolfe, The Journalistic Javelin: An Illustrated History of the Bulletin, Sydney, Wildcat Press, 1979, p. 167.
The death of Lalor marked a turning point for the place of Eureka and the place of Lalor in Australian history. Obituaries and biographies revered him as a patriot, the leader of the diggers behind the Stockade. He was remembered as a democrat and a leader of men, and less savoury aspects of his career were conveniently glossed over. Most of all, he was remembered for his dramatic appearance at Bakery Hill, when he ordered those present to kneel and take an oath to defend their rights and liberties. It was a grand, romantic gesture, appealing to literary and visual artists alike. In oral tradition, Lalor’s courage under fire at the Stockade lived indelibly in popular memory, especially because of his shattered arm and dramatic escape. There was the romantic interest of his sweetheart Alicia Dunne in Geelong, and his remarkable transformation within a year from outlaw to Member of Parliament. He was tall and handsome - even the wanted poster issued for his capture after the Stockade described him as ‘rather good looking and a well-made man’. Thus Lalor was cut out for the role of hero. These qualities have been remembered and celebrated, and the less attractive aspects - his failure to attend Eureka anniversaries, his role as a mining capitalist and strike breaker, his siding with the squatters in parliament – mostly forgotten. His life epitomises the complex motives of the players in the Eureka drama, and its subsequent treatment shows how myths are manufactured.

Biography of Lalor

Peter Lalor was the youngest of eleven sons of Patrick and Ann Lalor, proud members of an old Catholic family of County Laois, Ireland. Family tradition claims that Peter wanted a military career, but his father could not afford to buy a commission, so he was trained as a civil engineer. Lalor later claimed that he was a graduate of Trinity College Dublin, but his name does not appear on the roll of graduates. His father sat in the House of Commons with Daniel O'Connell in the Reform Parliament, and the family became involved with the movement for repeal of the Act of Union, and for land reform in Ireland. The eldest son James Fintan became a Young Irisher in 1848, one of the intellectual leaders of the nationalist movement and according to Charles Gavan Duffy, a leading theorist for land reform. He was imprisoned by the British
government, and died in 1849, his health broken by incarceration. In a foreword to Lillian Fogarty’s biography of James Fintan Lalor, Arthur Griffin reflected on his lonely death and contrasted his modest tombstone in Glasnevin Cemetery to his brother Peter ‘who was awarded honours by Queen Victoria and has a statue’. The nationalist leader Griffin makes it quite clear that he preferred the politics of the older brother over the youngest.

Such were the family influences on Peter Lalor when he came to Australia with brother Richard and his wife Margaret, and Margaret’s sister Alicia Dunne in 1852. They were attracted to Australia by Caroline Chisholm, who visited Cork in May 1852 promoting her Family Colonisation Loan Scheme. The Lalors sailed on Chisholm’s ship the *Scindian* and arrived in the height of the Victorian gold rush. At first the Lalors were involved in the lucrative, and illegal, trade of delivering wine and spirits to the goldfields, where alcohol was banned until 1854. When Richard was recalled to Ireland by his father, Peter succumbed to gold fever, moving around several fields before settling at Ballarat early in 1854.

By October 1854 Lalor was being drawn into the protest movement against the unjust and corrupt administration of the Ballarat goldfields. His indignation was excited by flagrant breeches in the administration of justice. As a man with some standing in the Irish community because of his family background, he took a leading role in a popular committee formed to press the Governor for an enquiry into the decisions of the local court. At this stage his role was entirely constitutional, his lack of credentials as a rebel having been earlier illustrated when he refused to actively support the Young Ireland cause. But when the constitutionalists, led by the Welsh Chartist J.B. Humffray, failed to win any concessions from the government, the popular movement took a physical-force direction. On 30 November 1854 Lalor drew on his Irish nationalist heritage and stepped forward to lead the radical arm of the movement on Bakery Hill. Lalor mounted a stump under the Southern Cross flag and called on those present to swear to defend their rights and liberties, an oath that would ring passionately down the generations.

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6 Ibid, p. xxxviii. The inscription (in Gaelic) on James Fintan’s grave reads in part ‘A Faithful Irishman who gave his life seeking the freedom of our country and improving the state of the Irish people in their native land’.
7 Lalor Papers, National Library, Dublin, MS 8564, 8565, 8566, 8569.
10 Lalor Papers, National Library, Dublin.
This was the moment of truth for those men seeking reform and political rights. Lalor's oath inspired men with revolutionary fervour. They marched away to form a defensive stockade and commence collecting arms. Lalor was elected their Commander-in Chief. The conservative youngest son had suddenly stepped into his elder brother's shoes and become a rebel.

When the military and police made a secret pre-dawn attack on the Stockade on Sunday morning 3 December 1854, the defenders were caught napping and after a brief and bloody battle, the Stockade was overrun. Lalor was severely wounded during the battle, but was saved by comrades who hid him until a secret operation could be arranged to amputate his shattered left arm. This operation took place in the presbytery of the Catholic chapel of St. Alipius, evidence of his support-base amongst the Irish community.

When Lalor had regained some strength, he was spirited away to Geelong, where his fiancée Alicia Dunne nursed him back to health. Although there was a reward of £200 on his head, nobody betrayed him. On 10 April 1855, Lalor published a long letter in the Melbourne newspapers, justifying his actions to his fellow colonists and to the world. He ensured his account reached the House of Commons, and he wrote to his brother Richard in Ireland on 14 June 1855, enclosing the newspaper cutting from the Argus and commenting 'if you see my letter published in the newspapers you shall see it is the true account'. This is a remarkable public letter, akin to Ned Kelly's Jerilderie Letter. Lalor makes it clear that it was the general ills in society that spurred him to action:

For a considerable time before that event, the people were dissatisfied with the laws, because they excluded them from the possession of the land, from being represented in the Legislative Council, and imposed on them an odious poll-tax.

This statement could equally apply to the native Irish whose cause his brother Fintan had championed. He proceeded to give his account of events at Ballarat, making it clear that the military had acted unconstitutionally by firing on the diggers without reading the Riot Act. In concluding his letter, his rhetoric rises to a crescendo as he asks why the government did not agree to reform before the Stockade:

Is it to prove to us that a British Government can never bring forth a measure of reform without having first prepared a font of human blood in which to baptise that offspring of their generous love? Or is it to convince the world that where a

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11 Lalor Papers, Dublin, MS 8564.
large standing army exists, the Demon of Despotism will have frequently offered
at his shrine the mangled bodies of murdered men?12

Lalor’s resort to arms was caused by the government’s unconstitutional and vicious ‘digger-hunt’
following the mass protest meeting on Bakery Hill. This attack reminded him of Ireland’s age-old
wrongs, and stirred his anger and his blood. This was his justification for accepting
leadership of the physical-force wing of the protest.

On 5 May 1855 with a price still on his head, Lalor boldly attended a land sale at the Ballarat
Camp. With £1000 raised for him by supporters, he successfully bid £260 for 160 acres of land
near Clunes.13 Four days later on 9 May 1855 the government declared an amnesty, and Lalor
was at last a free man. He married Alicia Dunne at St Mary’s Catholic church in Geelong on 10
July 1855.

In the first taste of democracy for the diggers of Ballarat, Lalor and Humffray were nominated
for the Legislative Council on 10 November 1855. The rebel and the constitutional reformer were
the heroes of the Ballarat community, for through their actions all of the democratic demands of
the diggers had been won. This began a long parliamentary career for Lalor, who always
commanded respect for what Geoffrey Serle called ‘his straightforward bluntness’.14 On 2
October 1856 he was appointed Inspector of Railways at a salary of £600 a year, and
henceforward would always manage to hold a position where he was well remunerated.

Following the commencement of the new Victorian constitution, he was elected unopposed on 3
October 1856 for North Grenville in the first election for the Legislative Assembly. The artist
Ludwig Becker produced a series of portraits for his book Men of the Times which placed the two
leading Irish characters of the Eureka events, conservative Crown prosecutor William Stawell
and rebel Peter Lalor, in the same august company. His election to parliament made Lalor
suddenly respectable, although his missing arm was a constant reminder of his past.

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Shortly afterwards, Lalor confounded his supporters by voting in favour of an electoral bill that maintained property qualifications, and he defended himself in a statement published in the Argus on 31 December 1856:

I would ask these gentlemen what they mean by Democracy?

Do they mean Chartism, or Communism, or Republicanism?

If so, I never was, I am not now, nor ever will be a democrat.

But if democracy means opposition to a tyrannical press,

a tyrannical people or a tyrannical government then I ever have

been, I am still, and will ever remain a democrat.\(^\text{15}\)

\(^{15}\) See also Ballarat Star, 1,3,5,10, 12 Jan 1857.
For Lalor democracy meant opposition to tyranny, not equality for the people. It was the tyranny of a corrupt magistracy and a brutal police force that drove him to arms at Eureka, not belief in the Chartist democratic points. Thus it was not surprising that Lalor would vote with the landed interests, his own class, in Parliament. His democracy did not extend as far as his brother James’s credo.

On 10 January 1857 a meeting was convened at the Ballarat Town Hall to challenge Lalor.\(^{16}\) A local committee was formed to seek his removal as the local member after he was one of the only members to vote against manhood suffrage, and vote with the squatters on the Lands Bill. By then he was classified as a 'conservative'.\(^{17}\) He was totally out of step with the democratic temper of Ballarat, and on 16 September 1857, the Ballarat City Council supported a public meeting called by the Lalor Resignation Committee.\(^{18}\) Within two years his popularity had been totally eroded, so that at the next elections, in 1859, Lalor stood for a neighbouring rural electorate, realising he would not win in Ballarat. By that time he had taken up residence in Melbourne, and henceforth had very little to do with Ballarat. Significantly, he never appeared at any Eureka commemorations.

W.B. Withers in the 1870 edition of his *History of Ballarat* adopted a sceptical attitude to Lalor, questioning his parliamentary voting record that exhibited the 'mutability of human feeling', earning him the epithet 'the recusant member for North Grant'.\(^{19}\) This antagonism increased in 1873, at the Clunes barricade incident, when Lalor as a director of the Lothair mine, attempted with his fellow directors to bring in coach loads of Chinese labourers to break a strike for improved working hours.\(^{20}\) Withers mounted an extraordinary tirade against Lalor in his 1887 edition, lamenting the passing of the old Lalor, to the one whose course is now simply 'to fight for money and political position'. Lalor 'had become a mining capitalist' using his parliamentary position to gain advantage in mining deals at Creswick and Clunes. He did admit, however, that Lalor made a fine Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.\(^{21}\) The *Courier*, in its obituary of Lalor, was more generous, noting that Lalor as Speaker had repeatedly refused the offer of a knighthood, saying that no higher honour could be bestowed on him than being 'first commoner

\(^{16}\) Blake, *Peter Lalor*, p. 122.

\(^{17}\) Serle, *Golden Age*, p. 279; *Argus*, 21 Nov. 1856; *Punch*’s classifications 6 Nov. 1856.


\(^{19}\) W.B. Withers, *History of Ballarat* 1870, reissued by Ballarat Heritage Services, 1999, p. 113-4.

\(^{20}\) *Creswick Advertiser*, 10, 12, 15, 17, 20, 24 December 1873

of Victoria'. In fact his family's strong Irish nationalism ensured that even though he sought social advancement, there was at least one glittering prize he would not countenance.

Clive Turnbull wrote the first full biography of Peter Lalor in 1946. Turnbull pointed out that Lalor was an ordinary man before and after Eureka, but for a brief moment he rose to magnificent heights to become a symbol of courage, determination and comradeship. Ian Turner's entry on Lalor in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* is a careful assessment, which weighs up the positive and negative aspects of Lalor's character, concluding that though 'neither a profound thinker nor a skilful politician, Lalor was a good fighter and a man of rectitude' who earned the grudging respect of those whom he opposed. Patrick O'Farrell comments on the Australian lack of understanding of Lalor and Irish history in 1948 when the ALP was denounced in some circles for naming the new Federal electorate Lalor 'after a class traitor'. O'Farrell points out that Lalor was never a democrat. As a member of a distinguished Irish family, his passion was for justice, not democracy, and he accepted his family's mantle of leadership when he was needed. This is also the assessment of William Dennis in his entry on Lalor in the biographical collection *100 Famous Australian Lives*. Les Blake published the latest biography in 1979, a popular account, written for the general reader, which does not attempt any assessment of the contradictions of Lalor's character. The most thoughtful perspective on Lalor was offered by Barry Jones, Member for Lalor in the House of Representatives. Jones reflected on the contradictions of Lalor's parliamentary career. Whilst he voted with the conservatives on some issues, he espoused advanced policies on protection of local industry, civil rights for Chinese migrants and state aid to education. Peter Lalor was a man of contradictions who still awaits his biographer!

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22 *Courier*, 11 February 1889, p. 3.
28 Blake, *Peter Lalor: The Man From Eureka*. This work has no footnotes, so sources of statements cannot be checked.
29 Barry Jones, MHR, ‘Peter Lalor’, Address to Eureka Celebrations Committee, 1982. Copy of the address in the Australiana Collection, Ballarat Public Library.
Making the Lalor Legend

Two lavish national publications of the 1880s, prompted by the centenary of white settlement, were important in bringing the story of Eureka to a national audience. The *Picturesque Atlas of Australasia* included a sympathetic account of the Eureka Stockade, with a handsome 'head and shoulders' portrait of a youngish Peter Lalor. Mary Gaunt in *Cassell's Picturesque Australasia* gave a full and exciting account of the events of 1854, highlighting the role of Lalor. The death of Lalor on 9 February 1889 was a metrical moment in the translation of Lalor from local personality to national hero. Obituaries appeared in all the leading daily and weekly papers: for example the *Australasian, Freeman's Journal*, and *Boomerang* of 16 February 1889, and even *The Times* in London noted his passing.

William Lane wrote about Eureka in the *Boomerang* of 16 February 1889, after an old Eureka man came into his office in Brisbane lamenting the death of Lalor. As part of the article Lane reproduced the portrait of Lalor and the engraving of the battle scene from the *Picturesque Atlas*. Lane stored in his brain this account of a rebellion that provided him with material for many future articles. The *Bulletin* of 16 February 1889 noted Lalor's death, with a striking cover portrait by cartoonist Phil May. The caption read simply 'The Late Peter Lalor.'

Henry Lawson may well have read both these newspaper tributes, and dashed off his own tribute to Lalor to the *Bulletin*, the poem 'Eureka' published on 2 March 1889. A week earlier there was an unsigned poem called 'Peter Lalor'. It has some awkward rhymes, but the message is clear - the poet pays tribute to the rebel, not the later speaker of the house:

They laid old Peter in his grave,
That honest hearted "traitor"
He took his place beside the Throne,
Not as a former speaker
Only the rebel God had known,
And angels sang "Eureka!"

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31 Mary Gaunt in E.E.Morris (ed.), *Cassell's Picturesque Australasia*, London, Cassell, 1889, Chapter on 'The Eureka Stockade'.
What would Lawson have made of Lalor had he known of his attempts to break a strike at Clunes using Chinese labourers? But that knowledge was limited to the Ballarat-Creswick district, and Lawson's image of Lalor was of the rebel leader of 1854. Archibald Forbes, a British military historian and journalist, published a story 'A Forgotten Rebellion' in the Gentleman's Magazine, January-June 1889. He said it was a report of Lalor's death which caused him to write the article, which was subsequently published in his book Barracks, Bivouacs and Battles, published in London in 1891 as part of Macmillan's Colonial Library series. By placing the story of the Eureka Stockade in the context of famous battles from around the world, Forbes was taking Eureka beyond its local context and significance and bringing the story to an international audience. Mark Twain did the same thing in his travel book Following the Equator, when he compared the Eureka Stockade favourably to the American War of Independence in terms of its political significance. An account from the military perspective was later published by the Methodist minister W.H. Fitchett, famous for his internationally circulated adventure stories Deeds that Won the Empire.

Following Lalor's death, there were a number of artistic projects to engrave his image permanently on the public mind. A portrait of Lalor in Speaker's robes, by Tennyson Cole, was commissioned by Lalor's son Dr Joseph Lalor and presented to the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery. Dr. Lalor later presented his father's wig and speaker's chair to the Ballarat Historical Society, and his revolver is in the collection of the State Library of Victoria. James Oddie was inspired to commission the bronze statue in Sturt Street Ballarat to his friend, which was unveiled on 26 January 1893. With unusual open mindedness, it was the Lancashire-born Wesleyan who erected the monument to the Irish-born Catholic.

A few days before the unveiling of the Lalor statue, a small book From Tent to Parliament was published anonymously in Ballarat, giving a glowing account of Lalor's life. The statue also moved a more sanguine Stockader John Lynch to reflect:

The absence of a large muster of Peter Lalor's surviving comrades in arms can be accounted for. They could see nothing in the mere glorification of a Speaker to kindle their enthusiasm; but in the sculptured effigy of Peter Lalor, habited in his red shirt

34 Mark Twain, Following the Equator, Hartford, Conn., The American Publishing Company, 1897.
35 Dr. W.H. Fitchett, 'Eureka Stockade', Cornhill Magazine, July 1909
36 Table Talk, 6 March 1891, p. 5.
37 From Tent to Parliament: The Life of Peter Lalor and His Coadjutors, Ballarat, Berry Anderson, 1893. Republished 1904, 1934. Les Blake attributes authorship to James Vallins in his Peter Lalor: The Man From Eureka, p. 145. Father Tom Linane also thought it was the work of James Vallins.
with gun in hand...they would discover their leader and rend the welkin with the thunders of their applause.\textsuperscript{38}

Lynch's reminiscences led W.B. Withers to take up his pen for \textit{Austral Light} and to reflect that whilst the 'mortuary rites' had ceased, the dead were now remembered in poetic legends that continued to grow. The Lalor statue suffered two serious attacks, the second occurring in April 1916, around the time of the Easter Rising in Dublin. Sadly the motives of the bomber were never discerned.\textsuperscript{39}

Another facet of the Lalor myth revolves around Peter Lalor's sword, which was inherited by his grandson Captain Joseph Lalor, who led his Battalion at the Gallipoli Landing on 25 April 1915. Against army regulations, Lalor carried his grandfather's sword, until he died leading his men in an attack on the highest point of the peninsula. The sword was dropped, later turned up in a Turkish museum with Lalor's identification tags, and was subsequently returned to the family in Australia by a Jesuit priest. It is now on display in the Montrose Cottage Museum in Ballarat.

\textbf{Myths About Lalor - 'My Family Sheltered Him After Eureka'}

The legendary status of Peter Lalor is best summed up in the way he is remembered in oral traditions passed down through the families of Eureka's Children.\textsuperscript{40} An impossibly large group of people claim to have helped Lalor escape, by a widely conflicting variety of methods. Truth has been massaged and twisted to allow many to bask in the glow of association with the great man. Very few recall negative aspects of their association with Lalor. A list of these stories, and the source of each, is included in Appendix Two.

Many stories revolve around helping Lalor after his left arm was shattered during the battle. Lalor told his own story simply in a public statement to the \textit{Argus} and the \textit{Age} on 10 April 1855. As no amnesty had been declared, Lalor deliberately did not name any of his helpers:

\begin{quote}
I was assisted by a volunteer out of the enclosure and placed in a pile old slabs. I remained there about an hour, when, thanks to the assistance of some friends, I was
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{39} \textit{Courier}, 28 August, 1894 reported that statue was damaged by vandals and Council decided to erect a fence around it. \textit{Courier}, 7, 16 April, 1916, reports two attempts to blow up the statue. The foot is in the Gold Museum collection as a result of this attempt.

enabled to leave it and find my way to the bush, where I remained during the day. On the approach of night, I returned to the diggings, and, through the kindness of a friend, procured the assistance of surgeons, who next day amputated my arm.

From Lalor’s bare bones, it is possible to conjure all kinds of stories. W.B. Withers gave a more specific account in his address to the Ballarat Mechanics’ Institute in June 1860. As a good journalist and historian, Withers had checked his sources carefully before giving his lecture, and no one challenged his account. He said that Lalor was hidden under a heap of slabs after being shot twice in the left arm. He was ‘furnished by Father Smyth with a horse and change of apparel’, escaping to the bush to a tent where a woman tended him. At nightfall he went to the tent ‘of a trusty friend’, and from there moved to St. Alipius where his arm was amputated. ‘Lalor was shifted from tent to tent to evade the police until at length he was removed to Geelong’.

First, who helped him when he fell? The Stockaders James Ashburner, John Dalton, Thomas Gaynor, John Lynch and Abbott Lewis all claimed to have placed him under slabs. Smith O’Brien claimed that Father Smyth got him down a six-foot hole. John Dunlop, according to his daughter, ‘helped him to escape by pulling him in a barrel with the lid on, and with other goods, got him away in a dray’. Dunlop’s partner in the discovery of gold at Ballarat in 1851, James Regan, also claimed to have assisted Lalor. James Heffernan said he carried Lalor to a place of safety. Mrs James Young allegedly hid Peter Lalor under her dress during his escape from the battle. She said that Lalor told her he had escaped from the Stockade with the assistance of a man called Dalton. Phoebe Scobie recalled that after the battle she went to investigate the barking of her dog. She found Peter Lalor lying in the bushes. She bound his arm with strips from her petticoat and concealed him in a barrel before going for help. She found George Scobie, who agreed to take Lalor in his dray to a friend’s camp at Warrenheip, and then she went to ask Anastasia Hayes to convey an urgent message from Lalor to Father Smyth. Next day the troopers came by her tent and asked about the blood stained rags, but she refused to tell. O’Brien further claims that it was George Scobie who took Lalor to Geelong, concealed in a load of Patrick Carroll’s farm produce.

Bill Gove, a Stockader interviewed by R.S. Ross in 1914, told Ross that Lalor was removed to a dairymen’s cellar about a mile away. Amy Cail, who ran a store near the Stockade, claimed to have hidden Lalor. Withers interviewed Steve Cummins, Lalor’s old friend, in 1889 and he told of the escape in detail:

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After the soldiers and police retired, Lalor was put upon Father Smyth’s horse, and he rode into the ranges and got shelter in a tent near Warrenheip... On Sunday evening he saw Lalor coming to his tent, 'a strange figure wearing a bell topper - a most unusual thing in those days - and a long tailed coat. Sure enough it was Peter disguised in Father Smyth’s clothes.42

Cummins and his wife assisted Lalor, and dressed his arm. Cummins then went to Father Smyth’s abode and made the arrangements for an emergency operation in the priest’s tent. He secured Drs Doyle, Gibson and Stewart to perform the surgery. Later Cummins arranged for Lalor’s transfer to Michael Hayes’s ‘nice large tent at the foot of Black Hill’. He stayed there till he got a carter named Carroll and young Tommy Marks to take him to Geelong.

There are a number of variations on this basic story. The miners Breen, Burke-Finn, O’Brien and Sutherland all claim to have sheltered Lalor. Hanrahan claims to have fetched Father Smyth’s horse. Several people claim to have fetched the priest, as well as Cummins, notably James Ashburner, Shannahan and Anastasia Hayes. James Ryan conveyed news of the battle to Alicia Dunne in Geelong. The details about the operation are filled out by Anastasia Hayes, who said that she assisted at the operation, performed by Drs Doyle and Stewart, and assisted by Drs Sutherland and Gibson. Dr. Clendinning provided his surgical instruments. Bill Gove recalled that Dr. Harrington amputated the arm. And Nancy Quinane claimed that she assisted with the amputation of Lalor’s arm.

There is an interesting story about the arm. Anastasia Hayes said that after the operation the arm and the blood-soaked clothes were put in a sack and she saw the schoolteacher McGrath and Phelan bury it down a deep hole near the junction of Wills and Princes streets.43 Another story, recorded by Les Blake, is that Father Smyth later sent his servant Gregorius to retrieve the arm and give it a decent burial.44 Withers had a little fun over the question of the arm. ‘Only a year or so ago, when Lalor was, in fact, still living, a group of men were disputing as to which arm he lost at the Stockade, and men who had been accustomed to see him frequently had to cudgel their memories for a longer or shorter time before they could positively say which arm it was’.45 The arm continues to excite interest in Ballarat. In the 1990s there was a story that it was buried under

45 Withers, *History of Ballarat*, 1999 edition, pp. 237-8. As noted in Chapter One, both McCombie and Sir Ernest Scott got it wrong in their histories, writing that Lalor lost his right arm.
an oak tree at Dalton's flat, and that a certain tourist entrepreneur attempted to include the site in a tourist bus tour. However, local historian Bert Strange firmly put that myth to rest. 46

A number of men and women claimed to have sheltered Lalor after the operation, which is quite possible as he was probably moved frequently to avoid suspicion. For example Katherine Connolly said Lalor hid under her baby's cot. Michael O'Brien said he was deputed by Father Smyth to move Lalor from tent to tent. Joseph Barberis said he took food to Lalor. A number of people then claim to have assisted in his escape to Geelong - George Scobie, Michael Hayes, Tommy Burns, Patrick and Michael Carroll, Tommy Marks and Martin Farrelly. James Murphy, blacksmith and pike sharpener, said that he was part of a group who helped Lalor escape to Geelong. When he met Lalor years after, Lalor could not remember him, and Murphy was enraged. In Geelong a number of people claim to have sheltered Lalor - Gleeson, Moore and Stewart, and of course his fiancée Alicia Dunne. The most unusual story is that John Stewart, a prominent member of the Presbyterian Free Church in Little Mallop Street, sheltered Lalor. While there Lalor asked Stewart for the hand of his daughter Isabella, but permission was not granted because he was a Catholic. Lalor was said to have given Isabella a small nugget, which she had made into a brooch-locket, and wore it pinned to her collar until the day she died. This is an unlikely story given that Lalor was already betrothed, but it is quite likely that the Stewarts could have sheltered Lalor as he moved around to a number of 'safe' houses in the Geelong area, and that he would give a token of thanks to his nurse.

These are a sample of stories garnered from reminiscences of participants and stories handed down through the families of participants. They show one of the problems with oral history - contradictory testimony - but also demonstrate the legendary status of Peter Lalor that so many people would want to be associated with him.

**Embroidering the Myth: Fictional Representations**

Historian Weston Bate, who has written one of the very best accounts of Eureka in *Lucky City*, speculated on the role of fiction when addressing a seminar about the work of Henry Handel Richardson in 1970. He rates Richardson's introduction to *Australia Felix* as the most satisfying description of the early Ballarat experience, 'because of its immediacy and because, I suppose, of my frantic longing as a prisoner of the historical discipline to be able to do what the novelist is able to do - make individuals breathe, think and feel through a series of experiences which one

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46 Paul Williams, a friend of Bert Strange, told me this story.
knows were there, but which, historically, one can only apportion between numbers of people.47 The personalities, the issues and the events of Ballarat in 1854 have appealed to many writers as a source for a dramatic historical saga and as an opportunity to flesh out the bones of history.

The first to make use of the events of the Ballarat goldfields was the adventurer Charles Beach who published Lost Lenore in London in 1864.48 This book was part of a cheap, popular series with wide distribution throughout the Empire and purported to be the story of a man who traveled the world looking for adventure. He found himself behind the barricades at the Eureka Stockade, and gave a vivid account that was sympathetic to the diggers. Harold Stephen’s The Golden Yankee, published in Sydney in 1877, also draws on Eureka for its plot.49 One of Australia’s most enduring novels is Marcus Clarke’s For the Term of His Natural Life, first published in a serialised version in the Australian Journal in 1870-2. The latter chapters involved the hero in the events of the Eureka Stockade, but these chapters were excised from the original book version: the editor apparently thought the novel was too long. Clarke also published a lively account ‘The Story of the Eureka Stockade’ in the first issue of the Melbourne Review in 1876. T.A. Browne (Rolf Boldrewood) published The Miner’s Right: A Tale of the Australian Goldfields in London in 1890, following its earlier serialisation.50 Although it is set in New South Wales at the Lambing Flat riot of 1861, the Eureka Stockade is an important background to the story.

James Middleton Macdonald wrote his novel Roll Up: A Tale of the Eureka Riots for a colonial audience.51 The author claimed in his preface to be a ‘real Australian’ and to have written ‘a real digger’s yarn about real downright diggers who created Australia, the peaceful, Southern daughter of old England...the most loyal citizens of the British Empire’. The novel portrays the diggers and their cause with sympathy, with most of the names of people changed, but real events are described. Intriguingly, in the last paragraph of the book the author refers to a rioter who lent him his sketches and that the artist was a famous clergyman in Canada. This has to be a reference to Charles Doudiet, whose Ballarat sketchbook came to light in 1998.

Edward Dyson’s *In the Roaring Fifties* was published in Melbourne and London in 1906. Eureka features strongly in this popular account, which Hume Dow found satisfying for its depiction of the battle and the aftermath. In similar vein John Sandes wrote *The Call of the Southern Cross*, a romantic tale that has two brothers fighting on either side of the Stockade.

Henry Handel Richardson’s powerful trilogy, *The Fortunes of Richard Mahoney*, is one of the great Australian classics. The first volume, *Australia Felix*, was published in London in 1917 and draws on the Richardson family experiences in early Ballarat. The novel begins with a marvelous evocation of the experience of deep sinking on Ballarat, a description that brings the reader to understand the difficulty of underground mining and why the diggers hated the system of licence inspections, which interfered so much with their work. Dr Mahoney becomes involved in the meetings of the Ballarat Reform League, but is not prepared to take up arms for the cause of reform. With his young wife Polly he watches the attack on the Stockade, and takes up his surgical instruments to the wounded, one of whom is their friend Purdy. This led him back into the practice of his profession. Mahony, and presumably the author, lack sympathy for the diggers.

William Thomas Hill wrote *The Golden Quest: A Story of the Eureka Stockade*, the first of a number of children’s stories about Eureka, in 1926. The illustrated work has as its hero the thirteen year-old English boy Joe Bray, whose father takes him to Ballarat in 1854. He is a witness to the events, and his father’s mate Tom Curnow is at the stockade and helps Peter Lalor escape. The tale ends with Joe discovering gold and leaving on the coach for Melbourne. The book contains a glossary of terms, with explanations of historical terms, and Hill uses his historical sources well.

According to Jennifer Strauss, ‘most of the fiction writers of the 1920s and 1930s shared a rather loosely formulated notion that realism required a sober description of Australian experience as it could be historically documented’, and most wrote from a socialist perspective. This summary certainly applies to the work of Leonard Mann, whose novel *Human Drift* was published in

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Sydney in 1935. Mann belonged to a school of nationalist, social realist novelists, who had experienced the horrors of war and depression and been politicised by those experiences. *Human Drift* is a powerful depiction of goldfields life, authentically set around the diggings of central Victoria, and culminating at the Eureka Stockade. The central characters are Deborah Kail, a Cornishwoman, and the convict's son Bill Skelton. The novel evokes the fever for wealth that inspired people as they followed the rushes, the discomforts of life under canvas, and the difficulties of deep sinking at Ballarat. The hero is Bill, 'the colonial', who has all the best qualities of Russel Ward's national type. He is determined, quiet, tough, and resentful of pomp and authority. Bill became one of the leading figures in the protest movement at Ballarat, and his character and motivations are strongly and convincingly portrayed. The realism comes from having Bill join in a mining venture with Westerby, the man charged with burning Bentley's hotel. At this point history takes a stronger hand, and historical characters enter the story - Humffray, Lalor, Tim Hayes, Seekamp, George Black, Hotham and Commissioner Rede. Like Henry Handel Richardson, Mann is able to evoke the difficulties of deep sinking:

> And then they came on the worst of the sand. If the patches in the clay had been wet and oozy that was that. This sand seemed to flow like a river. A few times before there had been syndicates that had struck this sand, and given up. But gradually the syndicate conquered it. They widened the shaft a couple of feet and stuck the timbers down into it with cross pieces to hold them, and they shovelled. They built little chambers out of which they shovelled the sand. And twice when they were in the sand they had to come up and show their licences. Each visit to the surface the sand flowed, and it cost them half a day's work.

The superb description of difficulties of alluvial mining allows the reader to experience the digger’s hostility to the system of goldfield’s administration. Bill leaves his licence in his jacket, cannot produce it, and is hauled off to the logs at the Camp by a trooper whom we have already met as a nasty type - a thieving digger-cum-bushranger, with a brutal streak. At one of the Bakery Hill meetings, Bill has a presentment of his life and purpose; suddenly this ‘colonial’ can see not just Ballarat, but all the diggings he had worked on, the land he had traversed, and ‘he could feel the deeper passion they all had in common, which united them all’, and ‘we’ll walk over them yet, the convicts and their breed will walk over them, one by one, with the thousands

59 Ibid., p. 256.
of diggers. And we’ll hold up our heads then'. \footnote{Ibid., p. 257.} This is the radical-nationalist tradition writ large. The hero attends the Bakery Hill meeting of 29 November, and the resolutions are reproduced verbatim. He is skeptical of Lalor, the Irish and the foreigners. He has his own plan, motivated by an old Chartist, that the diggers should bide their time and unite in a mass front against the government. He sees the Stockade as a diversion, some hot-heads breaking ranks with the general protest. But after the last license hunt on 30 November, Bill tears up his licence and goes to the Stockade, to try to convince Lalor to leave it and drill in secret, in the bush. The last chapter describes the battle, told from the viewpoint of Debbie, summoned by her Irish neighbour, Mrs Logan. They watch the battle, then go in to help, and Debbie finds Bill badly wounded. With the help of a sergeant, an old soldier, she binds his wounds and carries him away on a stretcher to a doctor. The book ends with Bill recovering two months later, realising that Lalor ‘has made a revolution after all’. It is done with great economy, but drama and tension. It is an excellent realisation, sympathetic to the diggers, but giving some good qualities to Rede and the military, who were just following orders. Mann gave no indication of his historical sources, but he must have read well.

The Marxist writer Jack Lindsay, son of the Creswick-born artist Norman Lindsay, wrote \textit{Rebels of the Goldfields} in 1936 as a boys’ adventure story, with a skilful balancing of fiction and history and with illustrations by George Scott. The book was much admired by Dr Evatt. \footnote{Jack Lindsay, \textit{Rebels of the Goldfields}, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1936; Hume Dow, ‘Eureka and the Creative Writer’, pp. 91-2, noted that Evatt liked the book.} In similarly action-packed style is Rex Rienit’s \textit{Who Would Be Free}. \footnote{Rex Rienits, \textit{Who Would Be Free?} Melbourne, Truth, 1944.} This novel is set in Ballarat in 1854 and he claimed it was based on meticulous research. In fact it came into the hands of filmmaker Harry Watt, who used it as the basis of his 1949 feature film \textit{Eureka Stockade}. Rienits published another novel \textit{Eureka Stockade} in London in 1949, illustrated with stills from the film. \footnote{Rex Rienits, \textit{Eureka Stockade}, London, Convoy Publications, 1949.}

Nathan Spielvogel, schoolteacher, writer and local historian, wrote his racy account of events, \textit{The Affair at Eureka}, for the \textit{Lone Hand} in 1912 and it was reprinted in the \textit{Victorian Socialist} on 8 May 1914. As an aspiring novelist, Spielvogel knew how to write for dramatic impact, with the characters brought to life with actual dialogue. Spielvogel’s interest in Eureka grew out of his passion for local history, and he wrote a number of newspaper articles about Eureka, blurring the boundaries between fiction and non-fiction. In this story, Peter Lalor is lionised as a hero, a ‘new
Washington standing on his stump, swearing in his army’, and his failings in the cause of democracy are not explored. The account was published as a slim monograph by the Bread and Cheese Club of Melbourne, and went through many editions. Significantly, the most dramatic part of the story – the battle scene – was anthologised in a popular school text, *An Austral Garden: An Anthology of Australian Prose*, which went through many reprints. Another novelist of the period was E.V. Timms, whose historical sagas enjoyed great popularity, and whose work may well have been the basis for the later ABC television series *Rush*. Timms explored the Ballarat goldfields and Eureka in his novels *Red Mask* and *The Challenge*.66

The centenary of Eureka was the spur to many creative efforts by writers and artists of the Left, who drew inspiration from Australia's traditions. Richard Nile describes this as a time of ‘aesthetic nationalism’, when writers of the Left ‘assumed the responsibility of preserving culture against the false consciousness of the masses’.67 It was also a time of heightened political tension, with the onset of the Cold War affecting literature as much as the politics. Many Australian writers were drawn to the Communist Party in the 1940s and 1950s, dedicated to ensuring their novels accurately represented social issues.68 These novelists congregated around the journals *Meanjin* and *Overland*. The Communist Party launched the journal *Overland* in 1954 under the editorship of Stephen Murray-Smith, with its motto ‘Temper, democratic, Bias, Australian’.69 One of the *Overland* group was the novelist Eric Lambert, who wrote *The Five Bright Stars*, illustrated with the drawings of Ambrose Dyson.70 Lambert was a Communist who introduced his novel with a foreword in which he explained that he had taken some liberties with the facts ‘to render the truth more eloquent, so that we may look back and understand the world we have gained; so that we may look forward and perceive the worlds we have yet to win’. He acknowledged the sources of his research, which was extensive, including time spent in Ballarat.

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reading books, newspapers and talking to people. His main characters are Patrick Shannahan, an
Irish ex-convict, and Jonathan Blake, an English Chartist who had been transported to Van
Diemen’s Land. This is very much a Chartist novel, using the character of Jonathan to explain
Chartist objectives and the role of the Ballarat Reform League. It also has a strong nationalist
element, through the character Patrick, who expounds his republican vision for ‘a land with a soul
of its own – Australia’.71 Lambert fleshes out the character and motivations of Peter Lalor,
contrasting his role to the ‘passionate partisanship’ of his brother James Fintan.72 Yet Lalor rises
to the moment at Bakery Hill, where Lambert brilliantly evokes the importance of the Eureka
oath:

A forest of work-stained hands stretched upward to the flag. Faces ruddy and brown
and withered and young, bearded and beardless, rank upon rank. In that moment all
were united: Chartist and adventurer, Republican and rebel, anarchist and conformist;
those who loved England and those who hated her. Irishman and Scotsman, Briton,
American, Frenchman and Negro; Italian, Canadian and German. The shining proud
flag with its five white stars stirred over their heads, and there came on them a silence
that was greater than all the sounds they had ever heard.73

In the story he has a Scottish woman, Mary McLeod, provide her blue dress to make the Eureka
flag. Lambert would use the same device in his later novel Ballarat, only the next time he had an
Irish girl, Jenny Light, providing her dress. Whilst The Five Bright Stars makes a hero of Lalor,
his later novel Ballarat continues the plot beyond the Stockade, where Jenny Light is killed, and
ends with Lalor’s involvement in the Clunes strike.74 This is the only novel that refers to Lalor’s
capitalist enterprises.

The second novel produced for the centenary was Helen Palmer’s book for children, Beneath the
Southern Cross: A Story of Eureka, illustrated by the Communist artist Evelyn Walters, the
woman who had first bought the Eureka flag to the notice of the Party.75 The central character is
the fictional David, a twelve-year-old born in the Australian bush, who goes to Ballarat to work
for his uncle who is a storekeeper on the Eureka Lead and finds himself in the middle of the
reform movement. Palmer gives the historical facts based, probably, on a reading of Carboni. She

72 Ibid., p. 203. For other descriptions of Lalor see pp. 146-7, 188-9, 237ff.
75 Helen Palmer, Beneath the Southern Cross: A Story of Eureka, illustrated by Evelyn Walters,

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writes with a deliberate didactic aim of inspiring young people with the importance of Eureka. The novel was dramatised by ABC radio as part of its children's programming in 1955.\textsuperscript{76} Another children's story with a strongly educational purpose was \textit{The Revolt at Eureka}, a comic-book style presentation with marvelous illustrations by Ray Weban.\textsuperscript{77} Since then there have been a number of juvenile productions - a picture-story format for young children by Alan Boardman and Roland Harvey, the intriguingly titled \textit{Eureka! You Made It! Peter Lalor}, by Brian Mackness, Vashti Farrer's \textit{Eureka Gold} that has a teenage girl as the heroine, Barry Sheppard's \textit{Eureka Rebellion} and Nadia Wheatley's \textit{A Bold Banner: The Diary of Rosa Aarons}, published in 2000, which also places a girl at the centre of the action.\textsuperscript{78}

Some very pedestrian romantic fiction appeared from the late 1950s. Kathleen Lindsay's \textit{The Road to Ballarat} was written for British readers by an author living in South Africa.\textsuperscript{79} She acknowledges her sources, which included the Dolphin edition of Carboni. As a good daughter of the Empire, she is at pains to stress that the military were only doing their duty, and the diggers are always at risk of falling into some sort of pit of brutality and riot. The story is told from the perspective of a young Englishwoman who falls in love with an Irish digger, but neither character is developed, and the reader does not become engaged with the cause of the diggers. In similar vein, though more historically correct, is Catherine Gaskin's \textit{I Know my Love}.\textsuperscript{80} It belongs to the genre of romantic historical fiction, with the story told from the perspective of Emma, a young English girl who joins up with an Irish family going to Ballarat, and they establish their camp on the Eureka Lead. Their lives become intertwined with the American Langley family, merchants and seamen. The men of the group take up arms at the Stockade, and most improbably Emma, the heroine, is at the Stockade and shoots a soldier who is about to shoot her American lover. Mary Talbot Cross also brings women into the action in her novel \textit{Fortune's Fool}.\textsuperscript{81} It is a mixture of obvious fiction and factual historical detail, with characters such as Charles Hotham and Robert Rede, but also the heroine Julia Stephen watching the death of her lover at the Stockade. It is a sign of the times that the novel makes a single woman, who is

\textsuperscript{76} Information from Evelyn Healy (formerly Walters) of Sydney.

\textsuperscript{77} \textit{The Revolt at Eureka}, Sydney, Australian Visual Education, 1958.


\textsuperscript{79} Kathleen Lindsay, \textit{The Road to Ballarat}, London, Hurst & Blackett, 1958.


an astute businesswoman, the principal actor in the drama. It is also evidence of the continuing appeal of the Eureka story that novelists continue to exploit the event as the basis of their plots. There are three distinct strands to the novels: rollicking adventure stories, romances, and ideologically inspired social realism.

**Plays**

The dramatic incidents in Ballarat in 1854 have appealed to a number of playwrights, and Sovereign Hill’s *Blood on the Southern Cross* can be seen as standing in this dramatic tradition. Edmund Duggan was a Melbourne actor who wrote *The Democrat, Or Under the Southern Cross*, which was performed in Sydney on 19 September 1891. The characters bore fictional names and the play had a strongly Federationist theme, with the central character Walter Lisle wrapping himself in the Eureka flag and proclaiming that it would one day wave over a ‘free and united Australia’. The play exists in a manuscript in the National Archives. Another version was produced in Adelaide in 1897, then another revival in Newcastle and Sydney in 1907, renamed *The Southern Cross*, and produced by William Anderson. This play was produced in Melbourne at the New Bijou Theatre in November 1908, and was the play remembered by Monty Miller, writing in the Melbourne *Truth* in 1917, who recalled that Anderson gave free tickets to old Stockaders.

Edward William O’Sullivan, the NSW Labor parliamentarian who had written about Eureka’s contribution to trade unionism, wrote a play *The Eureka Stockade*, with a fictional hero and real characters such as Peter Lalor. There is a strongly nationalist and republican tone to the play. The manuscript, in the Mitchell Library, indicates that the play was written in 1875. It was staged in June 1907 as an outdoor performance at Sydney’s Hippodrome.

Louis Esson, who moved in a literary circle attached to the Victorian Socialist Party in the early years of the twentieth century, was a friend of R.S. Ross, Bernard O’Dowd, Vance Palmer and Katharine Susannah Pritchard. Although born in Scotland, Esson aimed to foster a genuinely Australian dramatic tradition, and he drew on Australian history for his chronicle play *The

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83 Ibid., p. 42.
84 *Truth*, 11 November 1917.
85 Mitchell Library, B1129.
86 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 June 1907.
Southern Cross. It is based on Raffaello Carboni’s story, with some of the dialogue taken straight from Carboni, and the characters are all historical. The play ends with the acquittal of Carboni after the treason trials, and his exhortation to the crowd to ‘pledge our faith in the future ... to the Southern Cross of Victoria, ... to a free land and a free people’. Esson founded his own theatrical company, the Pioneer Players, which produced naturalistic Australian drama between 1922 and 1926. The Southern Cross was written after the demise of the company, and was published after Esson’s death in 1944. There is no indication that it was ever performed in his lifetime.

About the same time, Les Haylen’s play Blood on the Wattle was published. Haylen was a journalist and Labor politician who mixed fictional and historical characters in his dramatization. No evidence of performance has come to light. The chief significance of the publication is the preface by Prime Minister J.B. Chifley, where he reflected on the significance of Eureka. During the 1940s and 1950s very little Australian drama was staged, with theatres controlled by the international touring circuit organized by J. C. Williamson. But in the tradition of the short-lived Pioneer Players, the New Theatre in Sydney and Melbourne had a radical nationalist agenda as part of an international workers’ theatre movement that aimed to bring theatre to the people and remove it from its elitist image and superficial themes. Dick Diamond’s Reedy River was a musical performed by New Theatre in 1953, in both Melbourne and Sydney. It aimed to bring to life the struggles of the ordinary worker of the 1890s, with a strong socialist basis. The play had strong elements of the Communist ideology of making ‘common cause’ with local communities and locating the cause of political struggle in national tradition. Helen Palmer’s Ballad of 1891 was written for the play, which was built around ten Australian folk songs. It was much performed in Australian folk music circles and Currency Press published the script. In the same tradition was Len Dowdle’s Song of ’54, a musical play written and produced by New Theatre in Melbourne to celebrate the centenary of Eureka in 1954.
Ken Cook’s musical play *Stockade* was first performed at the Independent Theatre in Sydney, opening on 13 March 1971. After a successful season, it toured to the Adelaide Festival, and Canberra, and various country centres. A recording was produced from the play, and it was published by Penguin as part of its Australian Drama series in 1975. Cook noted that he used original documents, especially Carboni’s book, and Hotham’s despatches and the play ‘is based on fact.’

John Romeril of the Australian Performing Group wrote *Carboni*, performed as a one-man play by Bruce Spence at the Pram Factory in Carlton in February 1980, with music composed by George Dreyfus. The APG developed in the tradition of the Pioneer Players and the New Theatre, having a commitment to Australian writing, but also alive to the new aesthetics of the 1970s. Never published, the manuscript was passed around amongst old APG actors and NIDA graduates. Bruce Widdop has performed the play several times in Ballarat – for example in 1994 at the Victoria Theatre, Sovereign Hill as part of the 140th anniversary celebrations. In 2000 Renato Musolino, a young actor from Adelaide who had been taught at drama school by a Pram Factory graduate, received an Australia Council grant to put on Romeril’s play in Urbino, Carboni’s birthplace, in Italian. This required Musolino obtaining an Italian version of Carboni’s text. He will perform the play in Urbino in April 2002, and hopes to bring it to Ballarat for the Eureka anniversary celebrations.

The appeal of Eureka has always been to non-mainstream theatre. Committed individuals wrote plays with an eye on effecting social change, rather than box-office success. This is exemplified by David Young’s *Eureka*, a theatre-in-education project in 1974. Young, an English migrant to Australia, chose to use Eureka as the subject of his play not because of historical or educational reasons, but because ‘the anti-authoritarian battle of the oppressed migrants of the mid-nineteenth century had something to say to the sons and daughters of the largely disadvantaged migrants of the mid-twentieth century’ who predominated in the primary school audiences of inner-Melbourne in 1974. The play is very improvisational, involving the audience – preferably a small class-based one - in the action. Alex Hood, an original member of the Reedy River crew and an original Bushwhacker, wrote another play for primary school children. The musical play *Eureka; Beneath the Southern Cross* was commissioned by the ABC Education unit in 1984.

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93 *Stockade*, RCA Sydney, CAMS-161.
95 Colligan, ‘The Eureka Stockade in Entertainment’, p. 43.
96 Conversation with Renato Musolino on Eureka Sunday, 2001 (musolino@senet.com.au).
Hood wrote seven original songs in ballad style for this play, which was distributed to schools as an educational kit.\(^9^8\)

The flow of productions continues, indicating the continuing appeal of the subject for drama. Chris Dickens wrote *Rebellion Inca Ballarat* in 1994 for the Barnstorm Theatre Company, performed in Ballarat in 1994, which connected the experiences of the miners in Ballarat to the Incas in South America following the arrival of the Spanish.\(^9^9\) Christine Gillespie, a descendant of Peter Lalor, wrote and performed *White Stars*, a play about the women who sewed the Eureka flag. It was first performed at the Courthouse Theatre, Carlton, by the Melbourne Writers Theatre Ensemble on 12 May 1997. For Rod Quantock, Eureka provided the perfect setting for his attack on the Kennett Liberal Government in 1998. *Eureka: A Blueprint for the Revolution* was a one-man show at the Capitol Theatre as part of the Melbourne Comedy Festival in April 1999. Quantock was inspired by the 1998 image of Pauline Hanson draped in the Australian Flag to develop this political satire, which had a large Eureka flag as a backdrop, and at one stage he appeared draped in the Eureka flag. He invoked the spirit of revolution against tyranny seen at the Eureka Stockade, and urged the audience to rebel against the tyranny of the Kennett government. Shane Howard, a musician with Aboriginal and Irish heritage whose ancestor fought at the Stockade, won an Australia Council grant in 2000 to write a musical play about the Eureka Stockade, showing that artistic interest, and patronage, remains high.\(^1^0^0\)

**Songs**

Vance Palmer made the comment in 1954 that ‘the gold era did not leave any great legacy of songs, though most of our popular traditions had root in this time’.\(^1^0^1\) Although there are no contemporary folk songs about Eureka that have survived, the goldfields entertainer of the 1850s, Charles Thatcher, was singing about contemporary events in his theatrical performances.\(^1^0^2\) He was performing in Bendigo at the time of the Red Ribbon anti-licence protest in 1853, and gave occasional performances in Ballarat. His amusing satire ‘Captain Bumble’s letter’ is a biting commentary on the maladministration of the goldfields and his song ‘Where’s Your Licence?’

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\(^9^9\) Colligan, ‘Eureka in Entertainment’, p. 43.

\(^1^0^0\) Martin Flannigan, ‘Shane Howard’, *Tain*, no. 16, December 2001, pp. 32-3.


must have been a great favourite with the diggers. Recently the folklorist Ken Mansell has published a compact disc collection of songs from the Central Victorian goldfields, which brings to life some of Thatcher’s tunes, and other songs gathered from old newspapers and songbooks.

Apparently the stirring notes of a brass band were heard at the Stockade, after performers at a Circus in Main Road were dragooned by the Tipperary Boys to march up to the Stockade and entertain the miners whilst the Stockade was being built. Raffaello Carboni included his song ‘Victoria’s "Southern Cross"’, in his book *Eureka Stockade*. He said he wrote the anthem in prison awaiting trial, to be sung to the tune of ‘The Standard Bearer’. It includes a chorus for Lalor:

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\begin{align*}
  &\text{For brave Lalor,} \\
  &\text{Was found ‘all there’,} \\
  &\text{With dauntless dare;} \\
  &\text{His men inspiring:} \\
  &\text{To wolf or bear,} \\
  &\text{Defiance bidding,} \\
  &\text{He made them swear} \\
  &\text{Be faithful to the standard, for victory or death.}
\end{align*}
\]

Carboni’s song does not appear to have gained any popularity. Although he had theatrical aspirations, he was never successful, as illustrated by his attempt to write an opera-ballet *Gilburnia*, an obscure work published in Italy in 1875 and only translated into English in 1992 by Tony Pagliaro. The drama relates to Carboni’s time spent with some Aboriginal people near Maldon in early 1854.

At the International Society for Folk Narrative Research Conference in Melbourne in July 2001, I discussed the question of the lack of folk songs about Eureka with Dr Graeme Seal, Keith McHenry and Hugh Anderson, three of Australia’s foremost folklorists. McHenry had heard on
one song called *The Cherrywood Gun*, which Declan Affley had said was about Eureka, but no one had collected it. McHenry speculated that Eureka had not resonated with the ordinary working people because there were no ballads about it, as there were about Ned Kelly. John Molony reflects on this issue, arguing that Eureka belonged to a more educated, established community, who favoured poetry over ballads.¹⁰⁸ Perhaps there were folk songs, but by the time Banjo Patterson began collecting, they had been forgotten. After Vance Palmer wrote in the 1950s, Hugh Anderson’s research and the work of Ken Mansell tend to show that there were in fact many songs sung around the campfires of the diggings.¹⁰⁹

The living folk tradition of Eureka stems from Communist artists in the 1940s, culminating in the centenary celebrations. Jack Blake was the Secretary of the CPA in Melbourne before he moved to a leadership position in Sydney in 1949. He tried to widen the appeal of the Party, and he was interested in the promotion of culture, especially Australian culture, to resist the onslaught of American culture. He wanted especially to make the working classes conscious of their own culture. A poet and musician inspired by Left wing principles was John Manifold, a member of the old squatting family of Purumbete, in the Western District. As a young man Manifold thought about Eureka, and felt irritation that the diggers had started their revolution before the Western District had been roused. He became a Communist while studying at Cambridge in the 1930s, and on his return to Australia was a key figure in the renaissance of Australian folk music, editing the first *Penguin Australian Song Book* in 1964. He was a leading organiser of the Youth Carnival for Peace and Freedom in Sydney in 1951, and a strong influence on Helen Palmer and Dorothy Jacobs and the newly formed Bushwhackers Band and New Music group in Sydney in 1953.¹¹⁰ Helen Palmer and Dorothy Bridges became members of the Communist Party in the 1940s and developed a great interest in Australian culture, especially music. Bridges went to London to continue her musical studies, and in England became involved with English folk musicians who were developing workers music groups through trade unions. In England she met John Manifold. Palmer, as well as writing her children’s book *Beneath the Southern Cross*, wrote two ballads, which highlighted key events in Australian history - *The Ballad of Eureka* and *The Ballad of 1891*. She wrote the *Ballad of Eureka* in 1951, wanting a song for the Unity Singers, the choral group trained by Dorothy Bridges, to take to the International Festival. The group included Alex Hood, John Meredith, Chris Dempster and Faith Bandler. Bridges set the words to


¹⁰⁹ Hugh Anderson has published many books on Australian folksong since 1954, when he contributed a piece on Thatcher to the second issue of *Overland*. He has published the songs of Thatcher and William Coxon, and collected the songs of Simon McDonald of Creswick.

music, insisting that the Ballad of 1891 be sung by unaccompanied male voices. The Ballad of Eureka was written for voice and piano accompaniment, but has become a beautiful song for solo female voice and guitar. So successful were the ballads that they became accepted as 'traditional'. The Ballad of Eureka was sung at a special concert in Sydney and reproduced by Bob Walshe in a souvenir publication for the centenary of Eureka. It was also sung before a large audience at the opening of the Eureka Centre in 1998.

In Sydney a group called The Bushwhackers was formed for the 1953 musical play Reedy River and popularised the lagerphone and the bush base. The later Bushwackers modeled themselves to some extent on the original. In 1956 an LP recording and a songbook were produced. This was one of the first recordings of Australian folk songs. At the same time in Melbourne renowned musician Percy Jones set Mary Gilmore's poem Men of Eureka to music as part of the centenary celebrations. From this folk renaissance has sprung a new ballad tradition for Eureka. Later Alex Hood wrote seven original ballads for his musical play Eureka: Beneath the Southern Cross and the group Red Plus Black wrote the music for Ken Cook's play Stockade in 1971, the year in which the Bushwackers Band was established. This group has always included songs about Eureka in its repertoire, including Helen Palmer's ballads, and their own song, 'Beneath the Southern Cross'. They also promoted the songs of Henry Lawson, and republican ideas on their 25th anniversary album, recorded at Tamworth on Australian Day 1996. I chose the song 'Beneath the Southern Cross' as the theme music for the video Flying the Flag: The Story of the Eureka Flag because it captures the essence of Eureka's appeal to late-twentieth century Australia. A piece of music written specially for Ballarat was Vincent Plush's Bakery Hill Rising, a trumpet fanfare composed and performed in December 1980 as part of an Australian musical series at the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery.

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111 I interviewed Doreen Bridges on 20th April 1997 at her North Sydney home; interview with Helen Palmer published in The Singing Roads by Hugh Anderson, 1966. These songs were included in the Eureka Youth League songbooks.
113 Len Fox, Australians on the Left, Sydney, 1995, p. 100.
116 The Bushwackers Jubilee, ABC Music, CD, No 489232.
117 Vincent Plush gave the manuscript to the Gallery.
Eureka Suite, by John Munro, produced in Adelaide between October 1998 and February 1999, is an ambitious and evocative suite of twelve compositions telling the story of Eureka in music, featuring Eric Bogle, John Schumann, Kat Kraus, Mike O’Callaghan, Dave Moss and the Goldrush Band. Munro is passionate about the significance of Eureka, and includes a strong republican thread, especially in the song ‘Republic: Of the Chartists’. In a different musical vein, drawing on country music, the singer songwriter Trevor Best’s recent ‘Ballarat Mines’ also shows Eureka’s appeal to a variety of musical tastes, recalling an earlier country version, ‘Eureka Stockade Song’, recorded by the American singer Buddy Williams in 1948.

The rebirth of the Australian musical tradition was led by Communists in the 1950s. Because of its political message, Eureka was a favourite source for Communist musicians, and their work led to a new popular musical tradition for Eureka songs in the late twentieth century.

Musicals/Operas

There have been a number of large-scale musical and operatic presentations of the story in the latter part of the twentieth century. Following the success of Reedy River and Ken Cook’s Stockade, the Victorian government gave sesquicentennial funding to an outdoor extravaganza The Eureka Stockade, the work of Robert King Crawford. It was performed at the Fitzroy Gardens in Melbourne on Australia Day 1984, and in Ballarat as part of the Begonia Festival in 1985. Its large cast of singers and actors, with 56 musical numbers, made production an expensive business and during the 1990s Crawford approached the Eureka Stockade Memorial Trust and the City of Ballarat for funding to present his pageant again, claiming that it could be bigger than Les Misérables with the potential to tour the world. He described it as ‘a musical for the nation’. He did not convince the City Council, and it is unlikely such an expensive production will be staged again.

An unusual promoter of the legend was the Italian Community of Perth which commissioned an opera in three acts Eureka Stockade, as part of the Bicentenary celebrations in 1988. It was composed by the Italian Roberto Hazon, with libretto by John Picton-Warlow and Carlo

119 Trevor Best, The Little Country Shop, CD, Albury, c. 2000. Trevor Best saw me speaking about Eureka on an ABC Lateline TV programme in 2001, and sent me his CD to show that he was passionate about Eureka. The sheet music for ‘Eureka Stockade song’, by Roy Darling, sung by Buddy Williams, was published by Boosey and Hawkes in 1948, copy in the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery collection.
120 Colligan, ‘Eureka in Entertainment’, p. 45.
121 Courier, 7 July 1997.
Stransky, and performed at Her Majesty's Theatre in Perth by Opera Australia from 24-29 October 1988.\textsuperscript{122} The production cost $500,000, but was not deemed a success. It gave a very fanciful story of Eureka, with Carboni as the star, and an invented wife and daughter to add romantic interest.\textsuperscript{123}

**Artistic Works**

The discovery of the Swiss-Canadian Charles Doudiet's long-forgotten sketchbook in 1996 caused great excitement in Australian historical circles. Charles Doudiet arrived in Victoria in 1852 and tried his hand at gold digging. He was on hand to record the exciting events of 1854 in his sketchbook. He was present at the burning of Bentley's hotel. Until the sketchbook came to life, there had been no image of this hotel. Doudiet captures the moment with all the drama of the angry crowd and the brilliant colour of the flames as the timber building was quickly consumed. Novels, plays, films and re-enactments have made much of Bentley's Hotel as a dramatic ploy, with characters speaking to the crowd below from an upper-storey verandah. Eric Lambert in *The Five Bright Stars* went so far as to make it a three-storey hotel with elaborate pillar-supported verandah.\textsuperscript{124} Doudiet's watercolour shows a rudimentary timber building, with no verandah, and the bowling alley behind it. This was particularly relevant to a legal case which is pending in the Victorian courts. In 1994 a descendant of Bentley began proceedings to sue the Victorian government for $30 million damages over the destruction of the hotel.

Doudiet captures the seminal moment when the diggers took their 'Eureka Oath' under the Southern Cross, and he depicted the battle scene in *Eureka Slaughter*.

He recorded many other interesting perspectives of the goldfields, including views of women and the Chinese, before completing his sketchbook in September 1855, and returned to Montreal, where he became a protestant clergyman. His sketchbook was discovered in an attic by a descendant and auctioned by Christies in Melbourne in August 1996. The fifteen watercolours created great interest because they provide the most authentic view of the events associated with Eureka.

\textsuperscript{122} *West Australian*, 28 Oct. 1988; Colligan, 'Eureka in Entertainment', p. 45.

\textsuperscript{123} *Recorder*, no. 154, December 1988, p. 18. A copy of the libretto was published by Pellinor, Sydney, in 1988, and a copy is in the Music Collection of the State Library of Victoria.

The Eureka flag can itself be considered as an artwork. When art critic Alan McCulloch saw it at the Gallery, it struck him as a 'giant collage by some modern master of the Ecole de Paris'. 124

There were other eyewitness artists. S.D.S. Huyghue was a clerk at the Ballarat Camp. His sketches were used by Withers and published in his History of Ballarat and the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery was presented with a large finished watercolour based on his sketches in 1891. J.B. Henderson was probably mining in Ballarat in 1854, and his dramatic watercolour of the battle shows the Stockade being breached by the soldiers. 125 The illustrated newspapers of the day reproduced some images, notably Nicholas Chevalier’s cheeky cartoons for Melbourne Punch in 1855.

As mentioned earlier, the Picturesque Atlas of Australasia was renowned for the quality of its engravings, and it included a portrait of Peter Lalor and a depiction of the Stockade by Smedley.

125 McCulloch, Australian Gold Rush Artists, p. 121. Henderson’s painting is in the Mitchell Library.
This is in the classic battle scene tradition, which shows the soldiers, rather than the diggers, falling. It is a powerful image because it portrays the heroism of the diggers and it was seen by such a large audience.127 Other artists took up Eureka as a subject—for example J. Swinton Diston’s large oil painting The Attack on the Eureka Stockade, now in the Gold Museum, and young Carl Archibald, brother of J.A. Archibald of the Bulletin, who submitted a series of illustrations of the Stockade to the Juvenile Exhibition at Ballarat in 1890, where a model of the Eureka Stockade was exhibited, made by two young men from Ballarat East, Henry Gates and Herbert Thornton. Apparently young Archibald was inspired by the cyclorama ‘currently being made’ and his father noted that Mr Chuck, the photographer, was preparing a photographic panorama of the Eureka Stockade.128

Eureka has had a continuing influence on artists, often in collaboration with writers. Norman Lindsay had illustrated Spielvogel’s work for the Lone Hand in 1912 and in 1942 the cartoonist Walter E. Pidgeon (WEP) provided illustrations for the beautiful and very rare Sunnybrook Press edition of Carboni’s Eureka Stockade.129 Richard Haese examined the role of social realist artists during the 1930s and 1940s, describing these years as revolutionary ones for Australian art, when artists including Sidney Nolan, Albert Tucker, Arthur Boyd, John Percival, Russell Drysdale and Noel Counihan expressed the deep malaise brought on by the crises of the times.130 Nolan, who spent time in Ballarat in 1942, painted his Eureka series in 1949, after his famous Ned Kelly series. He was apparently inspired by reading Carboni’s book, and in 1965 completed a large Eureka mural for the foyer of the Reserve Bank in Melbourne.131 Charles Merewether studied this art of social commitment, where Communist artists such as Vic O’Connor, Herbert McClintock, Ambrose Dyson and Noel Counihan used Eureka as a source of political inspiration.132 Noel Counihan painted a large oil painting On Bakery Hill for the centenary celebrations in 1954 and he exhibited the painting in Ballarat.133 Another centenary project was a folio of linocuts, including the work of Counihan, Ray Weban, Alisa O’Connor and Peter Miller.

128 Age, 17 January 1891, Joseph Archibald’s letter to the editor.
129 Raffaello Carboni, Eureka Stockade, Mosman, NSW, Sunnybrook Press, 1942.
130 Richard Haese, Rebels and Precursors: The Revolutionary Years of Australian Art, Ringwood, Allen Lane, 1981.
131 Nolan exhibited 66 paintings on glass at the Macquarie Galleries in Sydney in June 1949. The Ballarat Fine Art Gallery bought Digger Hunt from this exhibition. Mary Alice Evatt also purchased two paintings. Nolan undertook the commission of the vast copper mural for the Reserve Bank in 1965.
133 In the Gold Museum Collection.
This folio made social realist art available to the general public at a modest price, in exactly the same way as the 1947 Dolphin edition of Carboni's book, also a Communist production.  

At the Eureka Centre is George Browning's Eureka battle scene, a large oil painting that dramatically captures attention as the visitor enters the Centre. Browning was familiar with battle scenes, as he worked on many of the dioramas for the Australian War Memorial, and his diorama of the Eureka battle is held by the Museum of Victoria. Browning said that he was inspired to paint 'a great moment in Australian history' after visiting the Louvre. He chose Eureka as his subject, and donated the painting to the Victorian Government, which in turn gave it to Sovereign Hill. In the Eureka Stockade Reserve is a real diorama, the work of Ballarat artist Ken Palmer. Palmer also produced exterior murals for the Peter Lalor Hotel in Mair Street Ballarat. These paintings were a feature of the streetscape for many years.


The huge flags were raised by the Australian Independence Movement.

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135 Museum of Victoria, 1Id number 94 433.

136 Painted between 1985 and 1989. Gael Shannon, who worked as an education officer at the Centre, likened the painting to Tom Roberts's Federation painting, seeing it as a group portrait painting.

137 The exterior mural panels were removed in 1999 when the hotel was repainted. The owner has them in storage.
The appeal of Eureka continues, especially for sculptors and printmakers. Charles Aisen's *Red Coat* in the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery is unusual in taking a soldier as its main subject and Ann Foster Newmarch makes a powerful anti-American statement with her *Eureka – Jake* screen print, dated 1975.

Richard Harding's laserprint *Stockade Au-Go-Go* of 1994 is a playful evocation of famous republican paintings. The Ballarat Fine Art Gallery attempts to collect all artistic works with an Eureka reference, including illustrated books, and it arranges occasional thematic exhibitions, such as the important *Eureka* exhibition in 1994, and the *Eureka: the First Australian Republic?* touring exhibition with the Public Record Office of Victoria in 1996. The Gallery lent its large sculpture of the Eureka Flag by Tony Bishop to the Eureka Centre in 1998 on long-term loan. The new Eureka Gallery, opened in November 2001 as part of major extensions to the Gallery, displays a range of art works relating to Eureka, adjacent to the Eureka Flag.

**Cyclorama**

The cyclorama (or panorama) was a popular nineteenth century experience, somewhere between visiting a play and an art gallery. Mimi Colligan describes it as 'a kind of pre-cinematic picture show'. In 1891 two cycloramas were erected in Victoria Parade, Fitzroy - the larger one featured the Battle of Waterloo, and a smaller one featured the Eureka Stockade.

The cyclorama was a huge oil painting extended around the edge of the circular building, and viewers stood on an elevated platform in the centre for a 360-degree view of exciting historical moments. Anita Callaway argues that panoramas became popular on the Australian goldfields in the 1850s when their 'extravagant dimensions, ambitious goals and flattering predictions' for Australia's future served as a metaphor for the buoyant spirit of the times. This exuberance appeared again in 1891 at the Melbourne cyclorama that presented the largest pictorial representation of the Eureka Stockade ever produced, measuring 610 by 915 centimetres. The artists - Alfred Izett Watson and Thaddeus Welsh - spent eight months making the picture, including some time spent in Ballarat. The promoters of the venture were Americans who styled themselves the Melbourne Cyclorama Company. They commissioned R.P. Whitworth to write a

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138 The Powerhouse Museum has a matching sculpture by Aisen called *The Legacy of Eureka*.
139 Colligan, 'Eureka in Entertainment', p. 38.
brief history to accompany the work as a pamphlet.\textsuperscript{141} The work of both artist and writer is a model of excellent historical practice. Time was spent in Ballarat reading newspaper reports of the event, walking the ground and taking photographs and interviewing all available eyewitnesses. Whitworth concluded his pamphlet with his clear interpretation of Eureka - 'the most important event that has ever occurred in the history of this great land Australia'.\textsuperscript{142}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image}
\caption{The Eureka Cyclorama, Melbourne 1891, cover of Whitworth's booklet, State Library of Victoria.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{141} R.P. Whitworth, \textit{A Short History of the Eureka Stockade}, Melbourne, Cyclorama Publishing Co, 1891 copy in SLV.

\textsuperscript{142} Whitworth, \textit{A Short History}, p. 18.
We do not know the fate of the huge painting, which was seen by admiring crowds. However Beryl Ireland painted a watercolour based on the original. She was a Melbourne artist who was the granddaughter of Richard Ireland of Eureka trial fame. Ireland’s watercolour was reproduced as a print for the 50th anniversary of Eureka in 1904. 143

This cyclorama can be seen as a predecessor of the theatrical experience of Blood on the Southern Cross, a truly popular entertainment that brings the story of Eureka to a very wide audience. By 2001 this entertainment had been seen by 750,000 people, and was awarded a $1,200,000 grant by the Victorian government to allow an upgrading of the presentation to include a language conversion for the many overseas visitors who come to the show. 144

Significantly, the only live character who appears in the show is Peter Lalor, who appears on the verandah of the United States Hotel as guests leave the production, and addresses the audience on the gains won by the diggers.

Films

The cinema grew out of the cyclorama tradition, and one of Australia’s earliest feature films was The Eureka Stockade, made in 1907 by the Cornwell Brothers for the Australasian Cinemotograph Company in Ballarat. 145 In 1915 another feature film, The Loyal Rebel, linked the diggers of Ballarat to the fortunes of Australian soldiers fighting in the Great War. 146 It met critical acclaim for ‘the coherence of the narrative, the capital acting, together with excellent photographic effects’, and underwent a name change to The Eureka Stockade. 147 Film historian Eric Reade made the tongue-in-cheek comment that whenever Australian filmmakers were stuck for a subject, they turned either to Ned Kelly or the Eureka Stockade for inspiration. 148 This is what Harry Watt did in 1947, when he wanted to make another film with the Australian star Chips Rafferty following the success of The Overlanders. This British production for Ealing Studios of Eureka Stockade starred Chips Rafferty as Peter Lalor and Peter Finch as J.B. Humffray and was filmed at Singleton in NSW. Harry Watt and Walter Greenwood wrote the

144 Courier, 12 October 2001; About the Park Sovereign Hill Members’ Newsletter, Dec. 2001
145 Herald, Melbourne, 19 Oct. 1907; stills from the film are reproduced in the video Living Ballarat, produced by the National Film and Sound Archive; Reade The Australian Screen, p. 31.
148 Ibid., p. 31.
screenplay, based on research by Rex Rienits. Rienits noted the revival of interest in the Eureka story during the 1940s, suggesting that the danger of invasion that faced Australia during World War II had strengthened the feeling of nationalism in Australians, causing them to look to their national tradition. The film presented the Stockaders as heroes of democracy, linking the Stockade to great international events such as the signing of the Magna Carta, the French and American revolutions. The film opened in London in January 1949, and when it opened at Ballarat’s Britannia Theatre (Mechanics’ Institute) that showed British films, it was a huge hit, running for three weeks instead of the usual one-week, with crowds queued all the way down into Bridge Street to see the film.

Author’s collection.

Chips Rafferty was at the height of his popularity as a movie star, and although he seemed uncomfortable in the role of Lalor—played with his broad Australian accent—the film had some great action shots and some fine acting from the bevy of British and Australian actors and left a lasting impression on all those who saw it. While the film offers an accurate account of the events, it features a totally misleading reproduction of the Eureka flag, showing how little-known the design of the flag was at that stage.

In 1971 Hans Pommerantz made a film of Ken Cook’s play Stockade for Spectrum Films. This was the first film to be subsidised by Commonwealth government money following John Gorton’s championing of the re-birth of an Australian film industry. The film starred Rod Mullinar as Peter Lalor and had its premiere at the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery on 3 December 1971. It had some notoriety when it was denounced in Federal parliament for its ‘immoral’ brothel and seduction scenes, but was not successful due to distribution difficulties.

Rex Rienits had described Eureka as ‘perhaps the most colourful page in our generally drab history’ in the foreword to his 1944 novel Who Would be Free. This line of thinking may well have inspired Crawford Productions in 1983 when the studio made a mini-series for television called Eureka Stockade, starring Bryan Brown as Peter Lalor. Strangely it was filmed at Bendigo. It was broadcast in March 1984, and like the 1949 feature film, made Peter Lalor the heroic central character. The same fascination with Lalor inspired filmmaker Peter Kennedy to attempt yet another feature film which he hopes to bring to the screen. Kennedy, whose great, great grandfather fought for the 40th Regiment at the Stockade, announced his project in 1999 when he commissioned historian Bob Reece to assist with script development, and speculated that actor Russell Crowe would be an ideal choice for the role of Peter Lalor. The Bracks Labor government supported the film with a $20,000 script development grant in November 2001. Kennedy has gained tax deductibility for the film, and should he be able to raise sufficient capital, and lure a major star like Crowe, he could complete the apotheosis of Peter Lalor.

150 Interview with John Morris, lecturer at the University of Ballarat 2001, who saw the film in Ballarat as a young man.

151 Pike and Cooper, Australian Film, p. 236; Reade, The Australian Screen, p. 270.


154 Courier, 28 November 2001, p. 3. There is a Web Site for the production company at http://www.eurekastockadefilm.com
Poetry

Historians John Molony and Patrick O’Farrell have commented on the fact that the Eureka tradition flourished in poetry rather than song. O’Farrell reminds us Timothy Hayes exhorted the meeting at Bakery Hill with lines of Irish revolutionary poetry. 155 While Hayes drew on his Irish heritage, the eyewitness Thomas Pierson was moved to write the first Eureka poem The Diggers’ Dirge - Toll the bell for the slain diggers in his diary immediately after the event. 156 This was an era when verse was very popular, as Douglas Stewart and Nancy Keesing point out in Old Bush Songs. 157 Within weeks of the event, newspapers were publishing poetry written as an expression of popular feeling about events in Ballarat. 158 A year after the event Mary Fortune’s poem Song of the Gold Diggers was published in the Mount Alexander Mail, a poem full of republican sentiment. 159 The Martyr’s Grave was published in the Ballarat Times on 3 December 1856, on the second anniversary of the Stockade:

Yes! weep for the martyrs, who bravely defying
The tyrant, his forces so boldly withstood,
Who surrounded, out-numbered, in Freedom’s strife dying,
Our charter of liberty sealed with their blood.

The editor affirmed the sentiments of the poem with an exhortation to readers to make a vow to ‘renew their exertions and their labours in the cause of human Freedom’. From that point, poets would draw inspiration from the Stockade. Even the government official, S.D.S. Huyghue, wrote his sympathetic poem The Miner of the Stockade in November 1857. 160 When the Eureka monument was being built in 1884, J.G. Smith produced a poem, which was sold as a pamphlet to raise funds. 161

Henry Lawson had his first poem, Song of the Republic published by J. A. Archibald in the Bulletin on 1 October 1887. The young Lawson arrived in Melbourne on 29 November 1887, and stayed in Melbourne for some weeks. He made a visit to Ballarat and visited the graves of the diggers in the old cemetery and the Eureka Stockade monument, which he called ‘the grandest

155 O’Farrell, The Irish in Australia, pp. 91-3.
156 Thomas Pierson’s diary, La Trebe Library.
158 The Age, 30, 31 March 1855 – A Song of Deliverance and The People’s Victory.
159 Mount Alexander Mail, Castlemaine, 14 December 1855, published under her initials M.H.F. The poem is included in Ken Mansell’s Music of the Diggings CD.
160 Reproduced in O’Brien, Massacre at Eureka, p. 148.
monument in Australia’. According to Len Fox, he wrote the poem *Flag of the Southern Cross* in 1887, with its recurring couplet ‘Let us stand out like the gallant Eureka men, Fling out the flag of the Southern Cross’. 

It was signed ‘Joe Swallow’ and Lawson indicated in a note that his historical source was David Blair’s *History of Australasia* published in Glasgow in 1878. Blair, who had followed events closely from the *Age* office in Melbourne, described the insurgents as ‘the forces of the Republic of Victoria’. Blair used italics, which may be where Lawson got his idea about the republican turn of the Stockade. Lawson wrote *Eureka: A Fragment* in response to news of Lalor’s death and *The Fight at the Eureka Stockade* was published in the *Freeman’s Journal* on 27 December 1890. The impetus for the poem was probably news of the death of James Esmond, on 3 December 1890. An obituary to Esmond appeared in the *Freeman’s Journal* of 20 December 1890. This is a very long poem, later set to music as a ballad, where the muse places himself imaginatively within the Irish republican tradition, and writes a stirring battle cry for political action - ‘it’s pretty near time that you lifted the flag of Eureka again’. Peter Lalor is beatified in the following lines:

> I looked it was he Peter Lalor who stood with his face to the skies  
> But his figure seemed nobler and taller and brighter the light in his eyes  
> The blood to his forehead was rushin’ as hot as the words from his mouth  
> He had come from the wrongs of the old land to see those same wrongs in the south.

In early 1891 William Lane asked Lawson to come to Brisbane to work for the *Boomerang*, and Lawson was there to cover the Barcaldine shearers’ strike. He wrote for Lane’s other paper, the *Worker*, where on 16 May 1891 his stirring trade union poem *Blood on the Wattle* was published. Lawson’s short story *An old mate of Your Father’s* illustrates how the Eureka story was kept alive in the discussion of old diggers as they travelled through the inland and met up with each other, ‘and their voices would get low and mysterious, and their eyes brightened’ as they discussed old times on Ballarat. The story was first published in the *Worker* of 24 June 1893. It was included in the collection *While the Billy Boils* in 1896, making it one of Australia’s

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162 Mansfield, *Ballarat Times*, pp. 72-3.


165 *Bulletin*, 2 March 1889.

166 Sung by Shirley Jacobs, set to music by Ade Monsborough in the 1970s. I have a recording in my possession.

best-known short stories.\footnote{Hume Dow, ‘Eureka and the Creative Writer’, p. 88.} Another Lawson poem was \textit{Australia’s Forgotten Flag}, also called \textit{The Flag of Eureka}, written in 1911. In a note to this poem, he suggested that Eureka would make an excellent film.\footnote{Fox, \textit{The Eureka Flag}, p. 27.} Thanks to the work of Lawson, Archibald at the \textit{Bulletin} and William Lane at the \textit{Boomerang} and the \textit{Worker}, Eureka began to move onto the national stage.\footnote{Serle, \textit{The Creative Spirit in Australia}, p. 60.}

Mary Gilmore was part of the William Lane-Sydney literary circle of the 1890s, and her poem \textit{The Men of Eureka} is permeated with nostalgic admiration:

\begin{quote}
I was a child while still we talked of them,
And when there came one walking lame, I ran
To my father, and, my hand in his, cried,
Eager for stories, “Here comes a Eureka man!”
And the men who had been at Eureka
Made me a flag of stars, and gave me
A name, and the name they gave was Eureka;
For the child” they said, “is one of our kin.”\footnote{D. Cusack, T. Inglis Moore and Barrie Ovenden, \textit{Mary Gilmore: A Tribute}, Sydney, Australasian Book Society, 1965, p. 199.}
\end{quote}

Gilmore’s reference to naming the child ‘Eureka’ is interesting. A check of the \textit{Victorian Pioneers Index} revealed that a number of parents did give the name ‘Eureka’ to their children in 1855.

Locally-born poet J. Gavan Reilly of Creswick wrote \textit{For Freedom at Eureka}, published in the \textit{Courier} on 3 December 1895. It is a long balled, which centres on Peter Lalor, who makes a long speech for liberty:

\begin{quote}
Too long have we stooped to oppression,
To outrage, and villainous laws,
The hour is at hand- we are ready
To conquer or die for the cause
\end{quote}
Withers praised the ballad, which he saw as the first of the ‘poetic legends (which) will gather about the day and its deeds and its dead’.\textsuperscript{172}

John Neilson, the Scottish-born father of John Shaw Neilson, wrote a fine poem about Eureka in 1896, which was published in the \textit{Courier} and quoted by W. B. Withers, who thought it an even better poem than Gavan Reilly’s effort.\textsuperscript{173} The poem has never been published, but is kept alive in the repertoire of reciter Jim Smith of Melbourne, who recited it at the Eureka Day celebrations in 2001 in Ballarat.

\begin{verbatim}
You have read how the diggers broke and fled,
The battle lost, but the cause was won;
How Lalor escaped with a price on his head,
And how, when the evil days were done,
The vote of the miner sent him forth
Their chosen man and none but he
Whose shattered arm had held aloft
The flag of democracy.\textsuperscript{174}
\end{verbatim}

An American veteran George Hartley published his \textit{The Eureka Stockade} in 1893.\textsuperscript{175} He noted the names of Robert Burnett and Bill Melody of the California Rangers deliberately in his poem, because Withers had ignored them. After he attended the 1904 anniversary, he was dubbed ‘The Stockade Poet’, and a short verse by him was published in the \textit{Courier} on 3 December 1906 that begins:

\begin{verbatim}
How many of the old Eureka boys
Their blue ribbons will flaunt today
\end{verbatim}

The poem makes the point that though their ranks are thinning, their efforts will live until the end of time. The reference to ‘blue ribbons’ is intriguing, given that the diggers wore red ribbons as a sign of protest against the gold licence.

\textsuperscript{172} Withers, ‘Some Ballarat Reminiscences’, \textit{Austral Light}, January 1896. The poem lived in local memory, and was published by the Eureka Improvement and Progress Association when it was formed in 1912, and was reproduced in an educational kit by the short lived Eureka Museum in Eureka Street in the 1990s.

\textsuperscript{173} Withers, ‘Some Ballarat Reminiscences’, \textit{Austral Light}, February 1896.

\textsuperscript{174} John Shaw Neilson, \textit{Autobiography}, introduced by Nancy Keesing, Canberra, National Library of Australia, 1978, p. 56. Neilson says it was written for a competition

\textsuperscript{175} Printed as a pamphlet by Berry Anderson, Ballarat.
Victor Daley’s *Ballad of Eureka* was written in 1901 and sent to the *Bulletin*, but not published till after his death on 19 January 1911. The full 29 verses appeared in *Creeve Roe* (Gaelic for ‘Red Branch’) in 1947.\(^{176}\) The folklorist Keith McHenry thinks this is the finest verse about Eureka, and I agree.

The early years of the twentieth century saw the continued popularity of poetry, with John O’Dwyer’s poem on Eureka published in the *Advocate* on 12 June 1909. Marie Pitt’s *Reveille* was published as a frontispiece to R.S. Ross’s *Eureka: Freedom’s Fight of ‘54* in 1914. It is a rallying cry for socialists:

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Up! comrades, up! the night has flown,
The dawn breaks dim and grey:
Arm! Arm you for the fray.
O’er hills which man’s injustice smote,
The people’s hymn we’ll raise:
Shout, every throat a major note,
Australia’s Marschallaise!
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E. S. Emerson’s evocative poem *Gum Leaves on the Fire* was included in the collection *An Austral Garden of Verse*.\(^{177}\) This collection, published from the early 1900s for schools, informed the reader that Ernest Sando Emerson was born in Ballarat in 1870, the youngest child of William Emerson of Bristol, who might well have been at the Stockade. E.S. Emerson was a journalist who became editor of the *Westralian Worker* at Kalgoorlie, another of those Ballarat men who spread the story of Eureka around the continent. The poem is based on the reminiscences of his ageing father, who retells the story of Eureka to his sons around the campfire:

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Again Eureka voices ring,
From blazing bivouacs of night
Dead comrades! but the gold of Time
Death washes into History
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\(^{177}\) M. P. Hansen and D. McLachlan (eds), *An Austral Garden of Verse*, Melbourne, Robertson & Mullens, n.d.
And such as Lalor, Burke and Syme
Are wealth for all posterity.178

Bartlett Adamson wrote The Oath of Eureka at the Port Kembla workers' strike in 1939, another example of the inspiration provided by Eureka to the labour movement.179

Following the Second World War a number of poems appeared. Nathan Spielvogel's Eureka was published in his book The Affair at Eureka in 1945.180 Harry Hastings Pearce published his poem Tom Kennedy's March from Creswick's Creek for the centenary celebrations,181 and Len Fox and John Manifold wrote poems for Overland.182

As the century waned, so did Australian interest in poetry, and there are few examples from the 1960s. Exceptions are William Beard's Eureka: a Narrative in Verse published in 1967,183 and Barry Dickins was inspired by the Eureka Dawn Walk of 1999 to write a poem for the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery called Heaven Threads, paying his tribute to the women of Eureka who 'wove it (the flag) from hope and petticoats', and to 'Peter Lalor’s ghost'.184

Conclusion

The memory of Eureka was nourished by creative writers and visual artists from the time of the event, and the production of work continues to this day. The tragic nature of the event led participants to turn to poetry as a means of expression of their grief and remembrance. As the generation who had witnessed the Stockade grew old, they wrote down their memories in newspaper articles and books. The death of leading actors in the drama provided metrical moments when this recording turned from local and personal to something mythic and national. Chris Healy reflects on this process and the way that writers like Lawson and Gilmore, writing

178 The poem was printed as a frontispiece to William Hill's novel Golden Quest, and was quoted in the Courier on 3 December 1954.
179 Printed in Gold (ed.), Eureka, p. 99; Fox, Australians on the Left, pp. 108-116 gives a portrait of the work of Adamson, a leading member of the Fellowship of Australian Writers.
181 Harry Hastings Pearce, Tom Kennedy's March from Creswick's Creek, Ferntree Gully, Ram's Head Press, 1954.
about old Eureka men and their meetings with mates, infused the story of Eureka with legendary qualities by writing about its resonance in popular memory. 185 Noel McLachlan in his history of nationalism remarked on the important role of poets in developing the national myth of Eureka. 186 This is very much the view of Vance Palmer, who explored the process of myth-making in The Legend of the Nineties. He argued that 'the two most fruitful subjects for the myth-maker were the episode at Eureka and the figure of the bushranger.' Although the achievement of the diggers might be dubious, 'an oath had been taken and a flag raised'. 187 In the same year he wrote that whilst sober historians had been inclined to 'pooh pooh' the importance of Eureka, the balladists like Lawson and Daley had 'warmed the popular imagination'. 188 Later metrical moments nourished the legend with further creative productions, especially during the centenary year. The approach of the sesquicentenary anniversary in 2004 is likely to trigger another outpouring.

Writers, musicians and artists have all contributed to what Max Crawford and Russel Ward called 'The Australian Legend', a national tradition born out of oral folklore and nurtured by the nationalist impulse of the 1880s and 1890s, most particularly by J.A. Archibald and the Bulletin. 189 Healy makes another important point about the work of Lawson and Gilmore and Manifold. Through poetic imagination, Eureka is freed from time and place and moves 'towards much more general categories of the character, heritage and tradition of Australian men' which affirm Australian mateship and hatred of tyrannies. 190 He quotes some correspondence between the Australian filmmaker Ken Hall and Lalor's granddaughter Judith Lalor, when Hall was planning to make a film about Eureka in the 1930s. 'The film will present Peter Lalor as a hero', he wrote confidently. Healy comments that Lalor has become for Hall 'a new version of the story of men - the story of a great man', which is what stirs the public imagination. 191 This sentiment had already been expressed by ex-Stockader John Lynch, who although critical of aspects of Lalor's

185 Healy, 'Battle Memories', p. 150.
191 Ibid., pp. 157-8.
career, concluded his account with a summation of Lalor as ‘the Bayard of her initial revolution, the first place amongst the patriotic phalanx that won back the sacred heritage of liberty.’\footnote{Lynch, Story of the Eureka Stockade, p. 40.} This is most intensely demonstrated in the reaction to the death of Peter Lalor, and his apotheosis into heroic status.

Other characters in the story have had relatively little attention. Carboni has been the most appealing character, with a biography by Desmond O’Grady, a play and an opera centering on his role and Shirley Roberts has produced a sympathetic biography of Charles Hotham.\footnote{Desmond O’Grady, \textit{Raffaello! Raffaello! A Biography of Eureka Stockade’s Raffaello Carboni}, Sydney, Hale & Iremonger, 1985; Shirley Roberts, \textit{Charles Hotham: A Biography}, Carlton, Melbourne University Press, 1985.} But nothing beyond \textit{Australian Dictionary of Biography} entries have been written about Humffray, Vern, Kennedy, McGill, Ross, Smyth or that heroic woman, Anastasia Hayes. Apart from Lalor, interest has been in the characters as a group, as members of the Ballarat Reform League, or men behind the Stockade. There is substance here for many creative projects.

At the beginning of the twenty first century Lalor stands as a legendary hero, in the company of Ned Kelly and the Anzacs. The unpleasant past that Withers hinted at in his 1887 \textit{History of Ballarat} has been forgotten. Geoffrey Blainey suggested in his Boyer Lecture in 2001 that Lalor would be a greater hero if he had been killed at the Stockade.\footnote{Geoffrey Blainey, \textit{This Land Is All Horizons}, Boyer Lectures 2001, Sydney, ABC Books, 2001, p. 70} Certainly Ned Kelly’s fame grew from his death and Blainey has a gentle dig at John Molony when he points out that Molony chose to write about Ned Kelly rather than Lalor in a biographical collection of Australians who shaped the nation.\footnote{The Greats: The Fifty Men and Women Who Most Helped To Shape Australia, North Ryde, NSW, Angus & Robertson, 1986.} Novelist Peter Carey has done great things for the popular knowledge of Ned Kelly with his Booker-prizewinning \textit{True History of the Kelly Gang}. I wonder if Peter Kennedy’s new film can do the same for Peter Lalor?

Many families nourish their own personal myths about Peter Lalor the hero, and in 2001 the Irish Government issued a series of stamps to mark Australia’s Centenary of Federation that featured Peter Lalor and Ned Kelly. Lalor’s dramatic gesture, when he stepped into the breach at the Bakery Hill meeting on 30 November 1854 and became the leader of resistance to tyranny, was a vital one in the making of a legend. As Hume Dow commented in 1954, whatever the literary or artistic merit of the creative outpouring based on Eureka, there is no doubt that the artists display
an intense belief on the significance of the Stockade.¹⁹⁶ There is no doubt from the evidence of this chapter that artists of social commitment – whether to the cause of Labour in the 1890s or to the cause of Socialism and Communism in a later generation – are the ones most likely to have used the Eureka story for polemic as much as aesthetic purposes.

¹⁹⁶ Dow, 'Eureka and the Creative Writer', p. 88.
CHAPTER SIX
COMMEMORATIONS AND CELEBRATIONS

'We are obsessed by remembering'. So comments Paula Hamilton in her analysis of the debates about history and memory. Memory has become a subject of serious academic study in a number of disciplines, often appearing to challenge the discipline of history. Pierre Nora once used the dramatic metaphor of historiography as a knife, ruthlessly separating the 'tree of memory and the bark of history'. David Lowenthal has also investigated the twentieth-century interest in the concept of memory, its link to identity and how the intensely personal idea of memory draws on history as the synthesised collective analysis of memory. Tom Griffiths argues in Hunters and Collectors that public history repairs the fractures between history and memory. In this chapter I examine that proposition as manifested in the public memory of Eureka. The changing meaning of the Eureka legend will be traced in this chapter through examining the history of museum collections, public commemorations and monuments that remember the Eureka Stockade.

This study reveals a kaleidoscopic range of organisations and people who have sought 'ownership' of the public memory of Eureka - from the very private need to mourn and remember, exemplified by Stockade veterans, to the later descendants' organization, Eureka's Children; from the national agendas of governments to the commercial imperatives of tourism bodies; from the local pride of immediate community groups to the cultural ambitions of arts organisations; and from the academic programs of university organisations to the ideological motives of political and trade union organisations. Throw in for good measure a goodly supply of individuals with personal obsessions about the meaning of Eureka, and we begin to appreciate the contested nature of the Eureka story.

There are differences between the perceptions of members of the public who consume public experiences, and historians and other professionals who attempt to create the experiences. The

1 Paula Hamilton, 'The Knife Edge: debates about memory and history', in Kate Darian-Smith and Paula Hamilton (eds), Memory and History in Twentieth-Century Australia, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1994, pp. 9-32.


activities of collecting and commemorating are subjected to pressure by organisations that attempt to exercise some kind of moral ownership and leadership rights over the activities, whilst the developing commercialisation of heritage through the tourism and antiquarian trades have added another arena for questioning and contest.

To add a further complication to this study, the conflict between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' has bedevilled celebrations of Eureka. Weighing up the relative importance of local considerations against national and international interest in the event has created a continuing tension since Karl Marx commented on the significance of events at Ballarat from Europe back in 1855.

Chris Healy’s ‘speculative map of social memory’ provides a methodology for examining the relationship of the past to the present through public performances involving speaking, re-enactment and representation. His study of history as social memory examined commemorations, museum displays, statues, historic houses, history books and films. Tom Griffiths pursued a similar project in his study *Hunters and Collectors*, examining the antiquarian imagination in Australia and finding it manifest in the public arena rather than in the academy.

Graeme Davison contributed to the discussion of public history in 1988, the year of the Bicentenary Celebrations, with an essay on the ‘use and abuse of Australian history’, which later became the title essay for his book on public history. Davison postulated Nietzsche’s taxonomy of history as a model for exploring the formation of popular historical consciousness. Nietzsche argued that antiquarian history, which is conservative and reverential, manifested itself in the developing interest in collecting historical relics; monumental history manifested itself in marking national progress through celebrations and public monuments; and critical history (the ‘outsiders’ critique of prevailing narratives) was expressed through the process of critical reflection on events of the past. Davison argues that as monumental history has declined at the end of the twentieth century, so critical history and more particularly antiquarian history has grown in popularity. The best representations of the past are achieved by ‘academically trained historians engaged in a bold attempt to permeate the forms of antiquarian history with a more

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5 Healy, *From the Ruins of Colonialism*, pp 7-8.
8 Davison, *The Use and Abuse of Australian History*, p. 11.
9 Ibid., pp. 13-14.
critical spirit. This is, however, a difficult path to tread, risking the alienation of the general public in a clash between subjectivities and objectivities.

David Lowenthal has also taken a great interest in ‘heritage’ at the end of the twentieth century. He shows how and why heritage has changed since the Enlightenment, from something personal to something collective, and how, since the rise of nationalism in the nineteenth century, heritage has been put to the service of patriotism. Treasures that had once belonged to the personal treasury of ruling families came under state control – ‘from emblems of persons and property, flags became symbols of the national soul’. He contends that this was the beginning of the use of heritage as state propaganda - Nietzsche’s monumental history. He also looks at the rise of family history, folk museums and tourist theme parks - Nietzsche’s antiquarian history, which illustrate the translation of heritage from a spiritual to a materialist emphasis.

Another theoretical position emerges from a consideration of ‘what is the past?’, with differences between the understandings of policy makers and professionals on the one hand, and the general public on the other. An American study by Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen set out to examine the extent of ‘popular history making’ in the United States of America. The authors designed a survey that engaged a cross section of 1500 Americans in a discussion about what the past meant to them. In the process the study matched popular perceptions of history against professional historians’ preoccupations and found some startling differences. The study found that Americans were engaged with their past, most especially in a personal and familial sense. Their perceptions of history as experienced at school were negative, but their trust in museums and historic sites was high.

A very revealing part of the survey examined perceptions of nationalist narratives - how national pasts are constructed and how individuals fit into group pasts. Participants did not recall

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10 Ibid., p. 10.
11 Michael Roe asks this question of the possible incompatibility between the passion of the family historian and the scepticism of the academic in ‘Nietzschean types of history’, Australian Book Review, May 2000, pp. 18-19.
14 Ibid., p. 122.
17 Ibid., p. 32.
(although they may have assumed) constructed nationalist narratives sanctioned by the state; rather, they saw national events through a personal lens.\textsuperscript{18} The general public rather saw history as ‘what people do, not what nations do’.\textsuperscript{19} A similar study is being undertaken in Australia by the ‘Australians and the Past’ research project at the University of Technology, Sydney, which in its early stages seems to be coming to the same general conclusions, as do both Graeme Davison and Tom Griffiths.\textsuperscript{20}

The American survey detected a very definite decline of nationalism in the younger generation - attributable to globalisation, the absence of unifying events like World War Two, and the socially divisive effects of the 1960s. John Gillis notes the same phenomenon in his study \textit{Commemorations}, noting that by the late 1960s the era of national commemorations was drawing to a close and that ‘the nation is no longer the site or frame of memory for most people’.\textsuperscript{21} Gillis makes the point that national memory is a product of the American and French Revolutions; it sought to create a new hegemonic national identity by obliterating the ancient past. The demand for commemoration was then taken up by the middle classes and expanded until today we are ‘obsessed with recording, preserving and remembering’. According to Gillis, the construction of national identity, and hence nationalism, led to the disasters of the two world wars in the twentieth century, and the 1960s saw a turn against national commemoration, a questioning of the whole project of commemoration, and a critical investigation of memory itself.\textsuperscript{22} The practice of national commemoration was revived from the 1970s, but in a more measured and critical fashion, influenced by Foucauldian ideas of analysing the exercise of power and hegemony, and deconstructing the grand purposeful narrative to see history simply as random events rather than controlled by destiny.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., p. 116. \\
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., p. 125. \\
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., pp. 7, 16. See also special issue of the \textit{Journal of American History} on ‘Memory’, March 1989. \\
Collecting Eureka Memorabilia

On 4 December 1854 S.D.S. Huyghue, the clerk at the Ballarat Camp, wrote to his friend Reynell Eveleigh Johns in Bendigo describing the dramatic events in Ballarat and enclosing a tiny blue fragment of the rebels’ flag. The day after the event, he has begun the trade in mementoes of the battle - the flag, pikes and guns:

A large quantity of arms... have been taken and are preserved by the victors as mementoes of an event which, deplorable in itself, has taught a salutary lesson to the turbulent miners of Ballarat and crushed in the bud it is to be hoped, the incipient growth of this first attempt at rebellion in the Australian colonies.24

The fascinating story of R.E. Johns has been told by Tom Griffiths in his book *Hunters and Collectors*. From this piece of Eureka flag which he acquired as a 20-year-old, Johns went on to become Victoria’s major nineteenth century antiquarian, his search for the past through relics and objects anticipating Lowenthal’s ‘heritage industry’ of the late twentieth century.25 Johns added to his growing collection in 1858 ‘a trophy of the Ballarat riots’ - a pistol with which a policeman was killed.26

In 1859 the Ballarat Mechanics’ Institute was established.27 Its objects were to form a library, a museum and offer lectures for the populace. John Basson Humffray, leader of the Ballarat Reform League, was the first President. From its foundation in a prime location in the heart of Ballarat, it would be an important source of public education and repository for memories of Eureka. Indeed, one of its first lecture series was given by Ballarat journalist W.B. Withers in June-July 1860, when he explored the events in Ballarat in 1854.28 At this time a suggestion was made to form a museum.29 The Institute was the first public body in Ballarat to organise art exhibitions and Eureka relics (including ‘a revolver, loaded at the Eureka Stockade’) were included in a bazaar to accompany its first exhibition in August 1863.30 With its foundation

24 R.E. Johns Papers, MS10075, Manuscript Collection, La Trobe Library, State Library of Victoria.
25 Griffiths, *Hunters and Collectors*.
26 Quoted in Griffiths, *Hunters and Collectors*, p. 205.
28 *Star*, 27 June, 11 July 1860.
29 *Argus*, 4 June 1860, p. 5, column b.
30 Healy, *From the Ruins of Colonialism*, p. 146; Catalogue of an exhibition of Arts and Sciences, Ballarat Mechanics Institute, 1863. (SLV Collection)
following very soon after the historical event, it became an important storehouse of relics of Eureka, Ballarat's first manifestation of the antiquarian spirit.

In October 1867 the suggestion of erecting a monument to the soldiers who died at Eureka caused public discussion of how the events could be memorialised at the cemetery. A citizen suggested that there were many relics of Eureka scattered around Ballarat, including a 'Declaration of Independence'. The writer suggested that they should be given to the Mechanics Institute, or the Melbourne Public Library.31 About the same time the Ballarat East Public Library moved into its new building and announced its intention to form a museum which would include 'relics connected with the early history of the colony'.32 This public discussion prompted the donation of some Eureka relics to the Ballarat Mechanics’ Institute: for example on 27 April 1870 S.D.S. Huyghue presented a pistol found at the Stockade.33 The Institute adopted a policy of collecting museum objects, including Eureka memorabilia.34 After the foundation of the Ballarat School of Mines in 1870, the Institute handed over its museum collections to the new institution, which operated an important museum until 1959.35 Thus Ballarat can lay claim to the mantle of having the earliest social history collections in Australia documenting the life of the community, rather than the curiosities of the Empire. Because of its birth as a golden city, Ballarat had from the very beginning a tremendous civic pride, which was reflected in the rapid development of a planned urban landscape, public institutions and an early interest in a social history museum. A Carnegie Corporation study of museums in 1933 found only three such local history museums in the nation.36

When the Eureka monument was constructed in Ballarat in 1884, there was great discussion in the local newspapers. A Roll Book of Old Pioneers was produced, containing the signatures of all old diggers who could be contacted locally. Discussions in the press called for Eureka artefacts, pikes and flags to be returned to Ballarat.37 About the same time, former digger James Oddie founded the Ballarat Fine Art Public Gallery and plans for the new Eureka monument were

31 Star, 8 Oct. 1867.
32 Ballarat East Public Library, Annual Report, 1867 (Australiana Collection, Ballarat Public Library).
33 Star, 2 Nov. 1867; Ballarat Mechanics Institute Letter Book, 1870. Was this the same pistol that his friend R.E. Johns had collected in 1858, I wonder.
34 Ballarat Mechanics Institute, Annual Report, 19 May 1868.
37 Letter by W.B. Perry in Courier, 30 July 1884, p. 5.
displayed at its first exhibition in June 1884. From this point the Gallery began to collect Eureka items - for example, in 1891 it accepted the gift of Huyghue's painting of the Stockade. Although the Gallery concentrated most of its efforts on collecting European paintings, it also acquired local works, thus demonstrating an early and unusual interest in Australian art. When Oddie obtained custodianship of the Eureka flag for the Gallery, it became a magnet for Eureka artefacts.

Another antiquarian institution, the Ballarat Old Colonists' Association, was established in 1883 'to gather...those who survived...the memorable and sanguinary struggle for Freedom and Constitutional Liberty in 1854'. As Tom Griffiths points out, these Old Colonists' associations appeared in Victoria from 1869, evidence of a growing nostalgia and a wish to preserve the relics and the memories of the past the participants had made. Members began donating memorabilia - for example in December 1892 Mr.T. Ellis presented 'a sword found at the Eureka Stockade'. This nostalgia for the 'good old days' of the golden 1850s was reinforced with the establishment of the Australian Historical Record Association at the Old Colonists Hall in Ballarat in January 1896, with forty leading citizens present. Its aims were to collect memorials and historic records, to give public recognition to significant historical events, and to record the memories of old pioneers of Ballarat before they passed away - it was in fact an early oral history project. As it was located in Ballarat the emphasis would be local, although its title claimed much more. W.B. Withers, who was present at the meeting, suggested it form a museum. This was Australia's first provincial historical society, the only precursor being the short-lived Historical Society of Australasia formed in Melbourne in 1885 by David Blair. The AHRA celebrated the Eureka

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38 1884 Catalogue in SLV Collection.
39 Letter from E.S. Huyghue, Hawthorn, sister of the artist, to the Ballarat Gallery, 16 Nov. 1891, presenting her brother's painting of the stockade, providing 'it be hung in a good light, or altered in any way' (BFAG Archives).
41 P. Abson, A Brief History of the Old Colonists Association, 1975, p. 2.
43 Abson, A Brief History of the Old Colonists Association, p. 8.
anniversary in the year of its formation with a cricket match against a team from the Old Colonists with all players over 60 years of age.

Over the next decade the Association received many valuable donations of books - for example, a copy of Carboni's *Eureka Stockade* and artefacts associated with the Stockade. It also collected memories through papers delivered by members. James Oddie, a pioneer of Ballarat, left a valuable eyewitness account of Eureka in his reminiscences, which were carefully transcribed and placed in the collection. But as the pioneers of the 1850s died, so did the interest in their golden times. The next generation was absorbed in establishing new careers, and the imperial rhetoric of the end of the nineteenth century saw Ballaratians described as 'the best of Britons'. Eureka did not resonate easily in such an atmosphere, and the memory of the rebels fighting against the Queen became a troublesome one. The new, youthful spirit of the age was manifested in the Australian Natives Association, which looked forward rather than backward. The Australian Historical Record Association became defunct in 1906 as its members died, and its collection was placed in two cases in the City Hall, out of sight and memory.

The interest in relics did resurface, in what Tom Griffiths calls 'seasons of memory, waves of nostalgia...prompted by loss, depression or disruption'. By the late 1920s there was a growing interest in Eureka coming from the ALP in Melbourne, but also a local awakening of interest through the work of the Eureka Stockade Memorial Park Committee, formed in 1912. In 1927 the Park Committee built a substantial brick hall at the Eureka Stockade Reserve at the cost of £1,700. There was a suggestion from local historian Nathan Spielvogel that this hall should form the basis of a Eureka museum, but the Park Committee did not see this as part of its role. Its concerns were much more practical and oriented to improving the grounds and providing facilities for meetings and entertainment.

Instead, Nathan Spielvogel established the Ballarat Historical Society in 1933. He was a schoolteacher and writer, the son of a Jewish pioneer of Ballarat. Spielvogel was born in 1874, educated at the Dana Street school in Ballarat, where he began his career as a schoolteacher. He took up the torch of memory from the founding generation, probably enthused by the *Bulletin's*
championing of nationalism and labourism of the 1890s, and a visit to Europe that kindled his interest in history. He was interested in Eureka as part of his interest in local history, and wrote many articles and was an early user of the radio to broadcast history programmes. When Spielvogel provided the impetus for the new historical society in 1933, he established a Historical Museum at the Ballarat East Library, and retrieved some of the relics stored at the City Hall from the defunct Australian Historical Record Association, although he found that the cases had been robbed of their most valuable treasures. For the next 23 years, he would be president and powerhouse of the society. Egon Kisch visited the museum in 1935 and left a warm impression of his meeting with Spielvogel and the Eureka relics he saw at the museum. Kisch also visited the Art Gallery, and remarked the impartiality of the display that juxtaposed the diggers’ flag with the sabre of Captain Wise.

The museum of Ballarat’s history survived until the 1970s, run by other members of the committee after Nathan Spielvogel’s death in 1956. I visited the old museum in 1974, when I came to work in Ballarat. I came direct from Canberra, schooled in the latest techniques of museum and archival storage and display. I recall being horrified at the sight of drawing pins and sticky tape on the exhibits, but at the same time I was caught up in the atmospheric web of history that pervaded the building. It was antiquarian, reverential and conservative in the Nietzschean sense, but certainly the volunteer members of the society had done a remarkable job of collecting relics and artefacts that would have been shunned by the State museum. Local pride was still strong in the Ballarat citizenry. The Federal government’s 1975 report Museums in Australia made this very point, praising the work of amateurs in the local museum movement, for the state museums had been entirely oriented towards anthropology and technology, rather than social history.

Shortly after my visit the museum closed when the Ballarat Historical Society agreed to hand over its collection of artefacts to the new Gold Museum, developed as part of Sovereign Hill,

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52 Mansfield, ‘The Australian Historical Record Society’, p. 30; Spielvogel Papers, v.1, p. 11.


54 I undertook a Diploma of Librarianship and Archives at the University of NSW in 1970, subsequently working at the Manuscripts Section of the National Library of Australia, and the Australian Archives between 1970 and 1974.

which opened in 1981. Some of the Society’s executive did not support the resolution, suspicious that the Society was handing control of its collection to ‘outsiders’, professionals trained in the museum business who did not understand local history, and above all, did not understand Eureka. Many exhibits disappeared during the transfer of the collection, including important Eureka items such as weapons used at the Stockade. This loss is impossible to document, but well known, and lamented, around Ballarat. An article in the *Courier* of 16 January 1965 shows Councillor Bill Roff holding James Oddie’s pistol, which had been donated to the Ballarat Historical Society with other Oddie items. After the transfer of the collection to the Gold Museum, these items could not be located. Items from the former Ballarat Historical Society collection subsequently came up at auction in Melbourne, as the passing of time placed a value on antiquarian relics. For example in August 1997 Sovereign Hill purchased nine Ballarat items at Christies auction, for a price of $35,000. Some items found their way back to the collection after the death of former committee members. Their attitude highlights the gulf between the views of ‘professionals’ and ‘amateurs’.

Meanwhile documentary collections of Eureka materials were developing haphazardly. Under regional librarian Austin McCallum, the Ballarat Public Library developed a strong Australiana collection, which from 1980 included the Ballarat Historical Society’s collection of documentary materials. McCallum was a World War Two veteran, who had spent the war as a prisoner-of-war. His love of literature and history, together with his kit bag of books, kept himself and his fellow prisoners sane during their long ordeal. After the war he built up a remarkable history and literature collection at the Ballarat Public Library. He gravitated to leading positions in the Art Gallery, the Historical Society, and Sovereign Hill, and became an enthusiast for the Eureka story. Hence the Library collection is strong in Eureka materials, both fiction and non-fiction works.

Collections developed in other parts of the nation - at Sydney’s Mitchell Library, the National Library in Canberra and at the State Library of Victoria in Melbourne. As noted earlier, the State Library had rejected the offer of the Eureka flag in 1877, and was not interested during the

56 *Courier*, 12 November 1975, p. 4.

57 Undertaking my MA thesis at Deakin University on James Oddie, I was anxious to see these items, but they could not be located in 1985-8.


59 William Benson’s painting of Lydiard Street, Ballarat, which had been in the collection of the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, and which had been lent to the Ballarat Historical Society, was re-sold to the Gallery in the 1980s!

60 Bate, *Life After Gold*, p. 196.
nineteenth century in collecting manuscript resources relating to Victoria. The centenary of the State of Victoria in 1951 led to a change in policy, and the establishment of the La Trobe Library. It began at last to collect Victorian history enthusiastically. Margaret Anderson points out that from the 1970s social history began to become important for Australia's state museums. Hitherto they had concentrated on ancient history, geology and palaeontology, these collections forming a 'cabinet of curiosities'. The Whitlam Government of 1972-5 was a champion of all things Australian. It fostered Australian culture through its policies, such as the Museums Inquiry and the development of the National Gallery.

By the year 2001, a new museum opened - the National Museum in Canberra. It began collecting material from the early 1980s, and given its stated interest in social history, its interest in Eureka will be a test of whether the national capital perceives Eureka as an event of national significance. The Museum approached the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery in 1999 to discuss its opening Gold and Civilisation exhibition. The Museum wished to borrow the Eureka flag, but the Gallery refused on conservation grounds, saying the flag was too fragile to travel. The Ballarat Gallery, however, lent a selection of its most important Eureka paintings, including Eugene Von Guerard's painting of Old Ballarat and Charles Doudiet's sketches.

Thus the collecting of Eureka relics and artefacts has followed a rocky path. Attempts have been made to form collections, but all have been impaled on the horns of the dilemma of public memory - sacred memory to be reverently commemorated, or dis-loyal memory best forgotten. As well, a new element emerged during the twentieth century, which W.B. Withers signalled in his 'Eureka Reminiscences' in 1896 - the emerging market for historical relics, particularly after the attempt by the King family to hawk the Eureka flag to the highest bidder. With the rise of Australian interest in auction houses such as Christies from the 1970s, Eureka items have appeared from time to time at public auction and have brought high prices. Charles Doudiet's

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62 Anne Glover, Victorian Treasures From the La Trobe Library, South Melbourne, Macmillan, 1980, p. 3.
63 Tony Bennett uses this term, which comes from seventeenth and eighteenth century Europe. It means exotic artefacts collected by the aristocracy. See Bennett, The Birth of the Museum, pp. 59-60.
65 W. B. Withers, 'Some Ballarat Reminiscences', Austral Light, January, May 1896; Healy in 'Battle Memories' notes an earlier auction of Eureka memorabilia at the Mechanics Institute Bazaar on 19 August 1863, p. 146.
66 Christies Australia, Catalogue 10 April 1996 (Lazarus Diary), 20 August 1996 (Doudiet Sketchbook), 28 November 1996 (Eureka items). The Lazarus diary sold to a private collector in Brisbane for $36,500, reported in Courier, 11 April 1996.
sketchbook is a case in point.\textsuperscript{67} By the 1990s, thanks to political developments described elsewhere, a public profile had well and truly been established for Eureka memorabilia, which in turn established a market. In an age of economic rationalism, publicity generated by Christies auctions created a new significance for Eureka.\textsuperscript{68} The commercial market fed off political interest in Eureka, using its media contacts to build national interest in the topic.

\textbf{Public Commemoration and Celebration} \textsuperscript{69}

The issue of control and ownership of public memory is paramount in the practice of commemoration. There exists a contest between government bodies, family and professional bodies, local, state and national bodies, each endeavouring to extend their own version of hegemony over the ceremonies.

At the first anniversary of the Eureka Rebellion there was no anniversary commemoration, only the sight of Garibaldi’s Italian pupil, Raffaello Carboni, selling copies of his account of the events of the previous year. The first public ceremony to honour the memory of those who died at Eureka occurred on 3 December 1856 when 300 diggers marched two abreast, wearing black crepe ribbon on their left arms, from the Stockade to the new memorial at the Ballarat cemetery. The new cemetery monument had already become a hallowed spot where, as the \textit{Star} reported, the diggers ‘could cherish the memories of those martyrs to tyranny and injustice’.\textsuperscript{70} But the ceremony was not repeated, for the annual horse racing carnival at Dowling Forest had become established as an early December event. In 1858 only five Germans and two Englishmen attended the cemetery.\textsuperscript{71} By 1864, the tenth anniversary of Eureka, only a tiny notice in the \textit{Star} recalled the anniversary.\textsuperscript{72} Throughout the 1860s, there was no mention of Eureka anniversaries in the \textit{Argus Index}.

In the years immediately after the Stockade, there was public discussion in the local newspapers about which site was the most appropriate commemorative place - whether it should be the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Courier}, 21 August 1996
\item \textsuperscript{68} Christies sales generate wide publicity, in local, state and national newspapers and television. The Doudiet sketches received TV coverage on Win-TV, and national Channels 7, 9 and ABC, as well as all Victorian state newspapers and the \textit{Australian} on 21 August 1996.
\item \textsuperscript{69} A version of this section was published as ‘Remembering Eureka’, \textit{Romancing the Nation}, an issue of \textit{Journal of Australian Studies}, no. 70, 2001, pp. 49-56.
\item \textsuperscript{70} \textit{Star}, 4 December 1856.
\item \textsuperscript{71} Nathan Spielvogel, ‘History of the Monument’ \textit{Courier}, 3 December 1936, p. 7.
\item \textsuperscript{72} \textit{Star}, 5 December 1864, p. 2.
\end{itemize}
Stockade itself, ‘Lalor’s stump’ on Bakery Hill, or the burial site at the cemetery.73 From the beginning there were debates about whether the event belonged to Ballarat or had wider interest, debates about whether political groups should use it for propaganda purposes, about public versus private remembering.

In the ensuring years, the cemetery became accepted as a private place where a few participants would gather on anniversaries to remember dead comrades, away from the glare of publicity. As Chris Healy points out, these gatherings continued quietly as an anniversary service that ‘did not announce itself as an historic occasion because its historicity was known and assumed by those involved’.74

In 1867 James Oddie organised a reunion of Golden Point pioneers. Thus began a tradition of reunions on the anniversary of the discovery of gold, a tradition that also evoked the pioneers of democracy in Ballarat - the men of 1854.75 From this point on, Ballarat men tended to blend remembrance of gold discovery with remembrance of Eureka. The need to mark permanently the role of the founders became pressing in the 1860s as the first settlers moved away or died. On 3 December 1872 the first celebration of the Old Pioneers of Ballarat was held at Lake Wendouree, attended by ‘some 2000 to 3000 people’.76 Significantly the date was the anniversary of Eureka. Robert Lewis was the president of this new organisation, and the newspaper report noted that the old men from the Benevolent Asylum attended to revive old memories. The tone of the event was celebratory rather than sombre, with sporting events and dancing in the gardens for all ages. The gathering immediately developed into an annual occasion, evoking nostalgia for the ‘good old days’ of the past, the glorious alluvial days of the first half of the 1850s, which culminated at the Eureka Stockade when old comrades met a violent death. During this period of the 1860s to the 1880s, James Oddie was a leading citizen of Ballarat, a successful banker and estate agent, who brought a measure of public respectability to the remembrance of the rebels.77

The Courier of 4 December 1874 reported the third anniversary meeting of the Ballarat Pioneers Association, held on the twentieth anniversary of the Stockade. The pioneers visited the

73 Michael Evans, ‘From a hallowed spot to a miniature marathon: remembering Eureka 1855-1886’ in Anne Beggs Sunter and Kevin T. Livingston (eds), The Legacy of Eureka, Ballarat, Australian Studies Centre, University of Ballarat, 1998, p. 44.

74 Healy, ‘Battle Memories’, p. 146.

75 Star, 5 Oct. 1867, p.2.

76 Star, 4 Dec. 1872.

attractions of Ballarat, including the cemetery, and dined at Craig's Hotel. The chairman for the evening was H.R. Nicholls, who proposed the solemn toast to Eureka.  

The pioneers continued to celebrate the anniversary of Eureka until in 1883 a new organisation was formed - the Old Identities' Association. J.W. Graham, the Ballarat Trades Hall secretary, was the first President. This Association formalised the informal meetings of the pioneers. It held a social gathering on the first Sunday of December that it dubbed 'Charity Sunday', with money raised for old pioneers in financial trouble. But it was not a solemn commemoration, as was the gathering at the new Eureka monument and at the cemetery on 3 December 1884.


The thirtieth anniversary in 1884 was a chance for the old Stockaders to install themselves publicly as the old pioneers of the gold generation. They met and decided to erect a monument at

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78 Star, 4 Dec. 1874.
80 Star, 2-4 Dec. 1884.
the Stockade. They held meetings, and argued about the exact location of the battle in the editorial columns of the local newspapers. This public discussion again brought controversy to the fore, with some correspondents arguing that reviving memories of disloyal events would cast a slur on Ballarat, which saw itself by this time as 'a foundation stone of Empire'. The *Bulletin*, championing its new brand of nationalism, shone its spotlight on Eureka in 1888, the year of centennial celebrations in Sydney, when it suggested that rather than foundation day, 26 January, Australians should celebrate the anniversary of Eureka as a national day. Nothing came of the suggestion, but the *Bulletin* had opened a discussion that continues to the present.

The death of Peter Lalor on 9 February 1889 caused a resurrection of Eureka locally and around Australia, as newspapers and journals remarked the passing of a notable Australian. The Irish committee, which erected a statue to their national poet, Thomas Moore, in Sturt Street Ballarat, chose 3 December 1889 for the unveiling ceremony, thus underlining a link between Irish nationalism and Eureka.

But interest soon wavered again, and the fortieth anniversary of Eureka in 1894 did not even rate a mention in the Ballarat *Star*. However, the issue of 3 December 1894 gives a lengthy report of the Old Colonists' Association Annual Charity Service the previous day at the Eastern Oval. There was a procession from the Old Colonists' Club to the Eastern Oval, with bands, Fire Brigades and members of the City and Town branches of the Australian Natives Association. The emphasis was on collecting money for needy old pioneers and providing for them, rather than marking the anniversary of an historic event.

W.B. Withers took up his pen on Eureka Day 1895 to write an article for the Catholic journal *Austral Light*. It was a piece full of reverie, as he gave a roll call of deceased comrades. 'The hot emotions of the days that followed close on the fatal day have cooled down, and garlands and processions, and orations at the graves are no more'. Withers noted that whilst the 'mortuary rites' have ceased, the dead were now remembered in poetic legends that continued to grow, and the *Courier* of 3 December 1895 carried a column of verses composed for the occasion. The

83 Withers, 'Some Ballarat Reminiscences', *Austral Light*, January 1896.
Courier of 19 December 1896 recorded a gathering of old pioneers of Eureka at which John Lynch, veteran of the Stockade, gave a lengthy address, which was later printed as a booklet.  

The fiftieth anniversary in 1904 saw a new twist to the practice of commemoration. Given the rapidly thinning ranks of the old participants in the battle, the torch of commemoration was passed to the next generation. The themes of labour and nationalism came to the fore, with the involvement of trade unionists and Australian Natives Association members. A weekend of celebrations was held, and thanks to the suggestion of the labour parliamentarian Scott Bennett, free railway passes were provided to veterans so they could travel to Ballarat. A new political note was sounded by the Political Labour League, the emerging Victorian branch of the ALP, which organised events throughout Australia, seeing 'the Eureka Stockade incident as a purely labour movement'. Hence on this special occasion the grand procession started from the Eight Hours monument at the bottom of Sturt Street, winding its way to the Stockade memorial. No wonder the few old diggers, exhibited almost as historic relics, arrived at the Stockade feeling fatigued. Behind them were young native-born Australians, dressed up as diggers, showing that a new generation had taken up the duty of commemoration.

The Ballarat Trades and Labour Council was very involved in the celebrations. On the Sunday prior to the anniversary, the local branch of the Political Labour League heard an address from Mr T.C. Carey entitled 'The Eureka Stockade and its Lessons', at its Pleasant Sunday Afternoon at the Trades Hall. In his address, Carey drew a parallel between the struggle of the miners in 1854 and the workers' struggle for labour reform at the beginning of the twentieth century. Because of Eureka 'the franchise was given to the people'. Workers must use that franchise to change laws for the benefit of workers, especially to help improve pay for deep-lead miners reduced to half-pay by mine owners. A notice in the Courier on Thursday 1 December declared that the Ballarat East Political Labor League would not hold its usual Sunday service on the anniversary day so that members could attend the celebrations at the Stockade. Labor representation was also strong on the Eureka Stockade Demonstration Committee. The attitude of the Australian Natives...
Association was ambivalent. Ballarat was the stronghold of its membership and organisation, yet the ambitious young men of the Ballarat West Branch in Camp St. were reluctant to join in the public celebrations. Although a strongly nationalist organisation, its nationalism encompassed loyalty to the Empire, and for a majority of members, Eureka still had some anti-imperial connotations. Hence the Ballarat West branch, which represented the upwardly mobile young men of the city, refused the request to take an official part in proceedings at the Eureka monument. The Ballarat East, and Newington branches, representing working-class areas of Ballarat, had no such qualms, and entered enthusiastically into the public celebrations.

Alfred Deakin, one of the fathers of the nation-state, was pleased to accept his invitation to the celebrations and gave his impressions to the Courier reporter in the issue of 5 December 1904. In terms of significance, he called Eureka ‘an important constitutional advance in the history of the country’ and he highlighted the contribution of the gold rush to that development. 89

The anniversary evoked many letters from old Stockaders in the press around this time. There was absolutely no discussion of the site, but there was much discussion of the meaning and perceived significance of the event. One of those who strove to keep the memory of the Stockaders green was James Oddie. Although by 1904 he was a man of modest means, having lost his fortune in the bank crash of 1893, he enthusiastically arranged his own anniversary celebration. In late November he placed large advertisements in the press inviting people to attend a special Historical Fiftieth Stockade Meeting he had arranged at the Albert Hall. 90 He informed the public that he had arranged the publication of a book about Peter Lalor and the events of 1854, and he would give a copy of the book, upon receipt of a silver coin, to the first 1900 people who attended the meeting. 91 It proved an effective means of gathering an audience for the meeting, where five Stockaders joined Oddie on the dais - the poet George Hartley from Mt. Egerton, John Manning, T. Marks, M. Carroll and A.T. Arthur, who had come from ‘beyond Omeo’ to attend and speak. Oddie had arranged gramophone records and lantern slides to use the latest technology for the proceedings. He also arranged for resolutions to be moved after speeches had been made. The first called for a fund to be established to repair the diggers’ graves; the second called on the State government to grant a pension to the widow of James Esmond, who was in difficult financial circumstances; the third called for the reform of the Victorian police. The motions were all passed unanimously, according to the lengthy report in the Courier of 2

89 Courier, 5 Dec. 1904.
90 See for example Courier, 28 Nov. 1904, p.8.
91 From Tent to Parliament.
December 1904. According to R.S.Ross, Fred Spielvogel was the stage manager, and Bernard O'Dowd, 'the Australian poet, was a visitor'.

On Saturday 3 December 1904, a sports programme at the Eastern Oval was poorly attended, but in the evening people enjoyed an unusual entertainment at the Alfred Hall, in the form of a Eureka diggings' camp meeting. The Hall was artistically transformed into the diggings of the 1850s, so that citizens of 1904 could experience the drama of 50 years earlier. According to the Courier, 'upwards of 70 rollicking fellows occupied the stage and made merry with song, jest and dance'. In the days prior to the weekend, ladies had been busy making wreaths, which were laid at the cemetery and at the Eureka monument.

The centrepiece of the anniversary came on Sunday. The day began with a procession from the Galloway monument in Sturt Street to the Stockade. Bands, friendly societies and old pioneers participated, including the Ballarat East and Newington branches of the ANA, the Catholic Young Men's Society, the Druids and the IOOF and the MUIOOF. It was reported that a crowd of 15,000 gathered at the Stockade reserve to hear addresses from people such as Peter Lalor's son Joseph, James Oddie and local parliamentarians, both federal and state. The speakers employed nationalist rhetoric, with the Federal MP for Corio, Richard Crouch, calling it a revolution.

The Courier was less enthusiastic in its lengthy editorial of 3 December, showing that there were some elements of public opinion that still looked askance at the actions of the diggers. The editor inflated the role of foreigners, especially Carboni, whom he implied was mentally unhinged. He dwelt on the revolutionary aspects of the events, particularly in relation to the indictment at the treason trials. The editorial showed that two competing versions of history were being fought for in the community, and that even at this time of great celebration, not all citizens were prepared to join in with enthusiasm. The editor, R.E. Williams, was commander of the local militia and an enthusiast for the Boer War, and his Imperial loyalty coloured his attitude to Eureka.

Celebrations extended beyond Ballarat, particularly to Broken Hill, Perth and Kalgoorlie. There must have been an ex-Stockader in the Western Australian branch of the Australian Natives Association, for it held a national essay competition for the best essay on 'Eureka'. The prize was

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92 R.S. Ross, Eureka! Freedom's Fight of '54, Melbourne, Fraser & Jenkinson, 1914, pp.159-60.
93 Courier, 2, 5 Dec. 1904.
94 Michael Evans 'Dreams they are living under', pp. 38-39.
95 Courier, 5 Dec. 1904, p. 2; Argus special supplement, 3 Dec. 1904, p. 17; Ballarat Evening Echo, 5 Dec. 1904; R.S.Ross's Eureka: Freedom's Fight of '54, Ch. 23.
won by someone from Melbourne.\footnote{Courier, 1 Dec. 1904.} The Ballarat \textit{Star} of 7 December 1904 reported the celebrations held in Perth, including a procession of ANA and friendly societies through the city. Mr Carpenter, an MP from Western Australia, was quoted in the \textit{Courier} of 5 December, describing the Stockade as a fight for liberty and political freedom that was now enjoyed as a result of the diggers' actions. He thanked the ANA in Perth for organising the anniversary procession in Perth, which helped foster a national spirit amongst young Australians. Two bearers of the legend to the West were Henry Daglish, born in Ballarat in 1866, who was Labor Premier of the State in 1903-4, and Monty Miller, socialist activist and Eureka veteran, both of whom came to the West in 1893 following the gold rushes. Miller was one of a dozen Stockade veterans in the procession. In his writing he often linked Eureka with the fight for workers' rights.\footnote{Monty Miller, \textit{Eureka and Beyond}, edited by Vic Williams, Willagee, W.A., Lone Hand Press, 1988.} In Kalgoorlie there was a large public demonstration, with brass bands and speeches from three Stockaders - J. O'Brien, J. Knucky and A. Macpherson. The event was organised by the ANA and the Goldfields Trades and Labour Council, with a resolution approved to approach the Government 'to have an authentic account of the Eureka Stockade placed in the school books of the state'.\footnote{Western Argus, Kalgoorlie, 6 Dec. 1904, p. 30.} The anniversary was also celebrated in Broken Hill, thanks to R.S. Ross, who was then editor of the \textit{Barrier Truth}.\footnote{Stephen Holt, \textit{A Veritable Dynamo}, St. Lucia, University of Queensland Press, 1996, p. 10.}

Interest in celebration ebbed again, causing the Eureka Stockade Memorial Park Committee, formed in 1912, to organize a small, deliberately non-partisan, memorial service at the Stockade monument each December. Interest soared with another metrical moment in 1917, when Ballarat celebrated its first 'Back to Ballarat'. The celebrations were held during the awful carnage of World War One, organised as pure public theatre, relief from the bad news of the war front. The celebrations concluded with a pageant at the Eureka Stockade. The \textit{Argus} report of 11 April says the 'crowd in the streets was the largest seen at any function of the kind in Ballarat'. At the Stockade reserve, an estimated 20,000 people gathered to watch a re-enactment of life at Eureka of the early 1850s, complete with digger hunts and the feature of the afternoon, the burning of Bentley's hotel. Nathan Spielvogel estimated an attendance of 50,000 people.\footnote{Nathan Spielvogel, \textit{History of Ballarat}, Ballarat, 1934.} The fire succeeded in keeping back the crowd, who otherwise seem to have rather hampered the performance by over-running the stage. The organisers had removed any political connotations, and the public came to enjoy the theatre of the day. This event would seem to be the precursor of
Sovereign Hill's *Blood on the Southern Cross*, although unlike Sovereign Hill's performance, the original was a free public performance, a public entertainment rather than a commercial one.

Labour interest in commemorating Eureka continued to grow after the 50th anniversary celebrations. The Melbourne Trades Hall invited W.G.Spence, Federal Postmaster General, to speak at their anniversary celebration in 1914.101 Spence had lived near Ballarat in 1854 as a boy, and became a leading member of the union movement in the 1880s. He was an important link in carrying the story of Eureka from a local context to a national context. The Australian Workers' Union had its state headquarters in Ballarat in the early part of the twentieth century, with William McAdam a leading official. In 1924 he won the seat of Ballarat in the Legislative Assembly, and brought a band of parliamentary colleagues to the 70th anniversary celebrations on the Sunday before the Eureka anniversary. Labour members were horrified when they found a local by-law prevented them from speaking at the Stockade on a Sunday afternoon, except as part of a religious service.102

William McAdam, a Ballarat man, wanted to emphasise the national importance of the Eureka Stockade site, an idea that was brought clearly into public discussion during important anniversary celebrations of the 1930s. The Centenary Celebrations of white settlement of Victoria in 1934 posed a dilemma for the organising committee. The centrepiece of the celebrations was the opening of the Shrine of Remembrance on 11 November 1934 by the Duke of Gloucester, a member of the Royal family. The event was carefully orchestrated to place emphasis on the heroic nation-building deeds of the World War One diggers.103 The Centenary Council organised a spectacular pageant of Victorian history through the streets of Melbourne on 8 June 1935. It had no representation of Eureka for, according to the secretary, 'no single entry could do justice to its historical importance'.104 This was a lame justification for the exclusion of an event that did not fit into the quasi-military and imperial view of Victorian history endorsed by the Victorian government. More likely the Eureka Stockade was excluded because it was coming to be identified with socialist and communist critiques of government policy towards the growing numbers of unemployed as the Depression bit deeper.

102 *Courier*, 1,2 Dec. 1924.
104 *Herald*, Melbourne, 10 June 1935.
But if Eureka was ignored in official circles, interest grew amongst peace and trade union groups. For the 80th anniversary of Eureka 3000 people gathered at the Stockade on Sunday 2 December 1934. A printed programme was produced, which stated that ‘Eureka won Australia’s liberty and freedom’. After decades of neglect, the story of Eureka was beginning to stir imaginations again. In an era of economic depression and unemployment, the message of communism was attractive to thoughtful young people, who were also concerned about the growth of fascism in Europe. The Communist Party of Australia was advised by Moscow in 1935 to develop ‘popular fronts’ with other anti-fascist groups, and to demonstrate how the peace movement grew out of Australia’s radical tradition. So Eureka was written into the communist tradition.

In 1936 the Labor Sports and Cultural Federation of Victoria held its first pilgrimage to the Eureka Monument, involving special trains and buses from Melbourne. The ALP added further depth to the event by organising a political school in Ballarat as part of the day’s events. Two years later representatives of the ALP and Trades Hall Councils, making their now annual pilgrimage to the Eureka Monument, laid wreaths at the Miners’ graves and called for 3 December to be a national holiday.

1938 marked the sesquicentenary of White settlement in Australia, which was celebrated, mainly in Sydney, on 26 January. Julian Thomas has analysed these celebrations, showing how the ‘March to Nationhood’ pageant had strong elements of ‘fantasy and allegory’, which eschewed all discordant elements such as the convicts and Eureka to concentrate on the imperial vision of Governor Arthur Phillip. On May Day the NSW Labor Council held a people’s celebration in Sydney, which included a Labour Pageant of Australian history that did represent Eureka. Lloyd Ross, an underground communist and son of Bob Ross who had written stirringly of Eureka in 1914, was in the Sydney area at the time and was probably the force behind the tableau.

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105 Courier, Ballarat, 3 Dec. 1934, p.5.
109 Julian Thomas, ‘1938; Past and Present in an Elaborate Anniversary’ in Susan Janson and Sturat Macintyre (eds), Making the Bicentenary, special issue of Australian Historical Studies, v. 23, no. 91, p. 81.
Stephen Holt's biography of Lloyd Ross gives an insight into this remarkable family.111 Bob Ross, born in 1876 in Brisbane, grew up reading William Lane's *Worker* and *Boomerang*, from which he learnt about Eureka as an inspiration for the trade union movement.112 He made sure his sons were inculcated with the legend. Lloyd, after studying history at Melbourne University, became a trade union teacher who expounded the Marxist view of the working-class struggle in Australia, which highlighted the place of Eureka.113 In 1933, while working in Newcastle, he staged a pageant to celebrate the centenary of the arrival of the Tolpuddle Martyrs in Australia and his tableau vivant featured Tom Paine, Karl Marx and the diggers of Eureka alongside the English Martyrs. Lloyd Ross guided Egon Kisch in his visit to Australia in 1934.114

Remaining aloof from this growing political use of Eureka, the local Eureka Stockade Park Committee continued to arrange its strictly non-political anniversary services at the Stockade monument. The Ballarat City Council were concerned about the politicisation of Eureka by outside bodies and in 1939 instituted a ban on anyone speaking from the monument at the ALP pilgrimage.115 This coolness on the part of local government did not deter the ALP, which held its pilgrimage on Sunday 8 December 1940 with special trains from Melbourne.116 The event was not reported by the Ballarat Courier, which described only the Eureka Stockade Park Committee's official commemoration on the previous Sunday. But the labour movement was taking Eureka into the national arena, with Dr. Evatt writing in the ALP's *Golden Jubilee Souvenir* in 1940 that 'the Stockade was of crucial importance in the making of Australian democracy'.117

During the early part of World War Two, Prime Minister Menzies banned Communist Party organisations, which led to the formation of a new communist youth group, the Eureka Youth League, in 1941. This organisation began a tradition of marches using the Eureka flag as its highly political symbol.118 Although the communists enjoyed a surge of popularity after Stalin joined the Western powers in prosecuting the war against fascism, the end of the war saw the end of 'popular fronts' and the beginning of the Cold War. In December 1945 the Ballarat City

111 Holt, *A Veritable Dynamo*.
112 Ibid., p. 3.
113 Ibid., p. 10.
115 City of Ballarat. Correspondence Files VPRS 2500, 39, Eureka File, Unit 180.
116 VPRS 2500, Unit 184, Eureka Stockade file, 1940.
117 *Golden Jubilee Souvenir of the ALP, 1890-1940*, Sydney, ALP, 1940.
Council banned a Trades Hall Council Eureka demonstration. Undaunted, the trade unionists marched behind their replica Eureka flag from the Eight Hours monument to the Stockade.\textsuperscript{119} Three years later, 3,000 members of the Eureka Youth League and trade unionists marched through Melbourne to mark the 94th anniversary of Eureka.\textsuperscript{120}

\textbf{EUREKA FLAG AT BANNED BALLARAT PROCESSION.}

Ve\textsc{t}e\textsc{e}\textsc{a}n Trade Unionist, 73-year-old Mr. Jack Lavars, was flag-bearer in the banned Ballarat Industrial Sunday procession. He carried the Southern Cross raised at Eureka. Left: "Equal pay for the sexes" was the slogan on the banner carried by Mrs. G. Conn (right) and Mrs. M. Sargeant, of the Textile Union. The parade was held in defiance of the civic ban on Sunday processions.

Jack Lavars carries the Eureka Flag at banned Trade Union March in Ballarat, 1945, private collection.

\textsuperscript{119} Argus, 10 Dec. 1945, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{120} Argus, 6 Dec. 1948, p. 5.
When the time came for the centenary celebrations in 1954, political tensions were running high, with Prime Minister Menzies beating the anti-communist drum, and anxiety in Irish Catholic circles about communism. In the light of these tensions, it is surprising to observe the participation of both the Communist Party and the Catholic Church in the official Eureka celebrations. Once again a local committee orchestrated a week of celebrations and once again a pageant was held, this time staged on an amphitheatre below the Sovereign Hill lookout, where a crowd estimated at 5,000 came to cheer and boo. Young men from the RAAF Radio School played the Redcoats, and members of the Ballarat Trades Hall Council played the miners. Again the burning of a dilapidated reproduction of Bentley’s Hotel was a popular highlight. The report in the *Courier* notes disapprovingly that members of the Communist Party and the Eureka Youth League used the occasion for propaganda purposes, which the reporter felt was in bad taste given that this was ‘an historic occasion of considerable importance’. 121 Irish Catholics were not deterred by the young communists, and claimed Eureka as part of their Irish heritage at a Solemn High Mass celebrated at St Patrick’s cathedral, where the oration expounded how Eureka had ‘set the pattern of Australian democracy and the development of the Australian character’.122 In fact, two rival versions of the Eureka story were being presented to the people of Ballarat, one by the young communists and one by the Catholic Church.

Eureka was celebrated in Sydney that year, through the efforts of the communist Bob Walshe and the Sydney Writers Group. The Sydney group examined the cultural significance of the ‘historic occasion’, and produced plays and musicals that re-evaluated the story. Because Catholics were also producing a new and conflicting analysis of Eureka, controversy and contest for ownership of the legend would continue. The prevailing Liberal Party hegemony of the Menzies era ensured that the communist version of Eureka was discredited in the public mind, as the republican version had been in the nineteenth century. Left wing groups would continue their anniversary celebrations quietly, away from the media spotlight. This was true of the Melbourne Connolly Society, which has held a small annual gathering at the Stockade every year since 1954.123 After the excitement of what Greg Dening calls a ‘metrical moment’, when the logic of the calendar conditions a celebration,124 interest in Eureka died away everywhere, even in Ballarat. The City Council was dominated by Liberals, who ensured there would be no official support for Eureka commemoration. And the great local champion of Eureka, Nathan Spielvogel, died in 1956.

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122 *Courier*, 4 Dec. 1954, p. 11.
123 Connolly Society file, Ephemera collection, La Trobe Library, State Library of Victoria. Also information from Martin McGettigan of Ballarat, son of founder of the society.
124 Greg Dening quoted in Davison, *The Use and Abuse of Australian History*, p. 79.
A generation later, interest in Eureka was re-kindled when Prime Minister Gough Whitlam came to Ballarat on 3 December 1973 to unveil the restored Eureka Flag at the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery. Immigration Minister Al Grassby spoke at the Eureka monument in front of a large crowd of migrants he had transported to Ballarat to help him celebrate the Eureka anniversary. The sacking of Whitlam and his government on 11 November 1975 caused Eureka flags to be waved in a protest meeting outside Parliament house. The ALP organised a rally at the Stockade for the 121st anniversary of Eureka. Speakers invoked Eureka as the 'birthplace of democracy' and urged Ballarat residents 'to vote for the restoration of democracy' at the coming election. It was the largest gathering at the monument since the centenary celebrations, and it created a new interest in the anniversary gatherings. In 1977 the Maoist student organisation, the Australian Independence Movement, joined the Connolly Association and the Park Committee at the monument. Peter Lumsdon recalled the excitement of these gatherings in the 1970s. He was a recent graduate of Melbourne University, living in Ballarat. He was strongly committed to the environmental movement, which led him to the Eureka Stockade on the first Sunday of December as a representative of Friends of the Earth. He felt that the many groups who came to the park shared one common motivation - opposition to imperialism - whether British (Connolly Association, Aboriginal rights group), or American (Australian Independence Movement, Socialist Party, Friends of the Earth). The banner of the Eureka flag accommodated a common thread of protest.

The Connolly Association and the Australian Independence Movement (Maoist-Leninist) were reasonably tolerant of each other, and would travel from Melbourne in the same hired bus, which allowed them to indulge in alcoholic beverages during the outing. But as the afternoon wore on, some vituperative exchanges could take place between all the groups attending under the broad church of anti-imperialism. The Australian Independence Movement accused the Connolly Association of being preoccupied with Irish 'IRA' issues, whilst it in turn reviled the Moscow-oriented Socialist Party of Australia. Manning Clark coloured his account of the original rebels as being intoxicated by strong liquor. Perhaps the same spirits operated at the Stockade on early summer afternoons in the 1970s - as the day wore on, the speakers who seized the microphone upon the grand 'soap box' of the monument sought to convert the audience of anti-imperialists to their particular ideological position. The participants listened to speeches, which could be divisive, then adjourned to the hall for a dance with music provided by an Australian bush band. Sandwiches would be served, and copious quantities of beer. These were congenial and

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126 Eureka Stockade file, Riley Collection, State Library of Victoria.
sometimes explosive gatherings of the left. Radio 3CR covered the speeches at these gatherings, giving a direct broadcast from the Stockade.\textsuperscript{127}

But what did Ballarat make of these celebrations? After all, most of the participants were outsiders, come from Melbourne in a bus. The old establishment of Ballarat looked askance at the ‘long-haired students’, who were seen as inheritors of the labour and communist tradition of the 1930s. Young rising stars of the local community, like Peter Tobin and Doug Sarah, enshewed the Left tradition, which they felt had debased the true meaning of Eureka. As young businessmen, members of Rotary and Apex, they were alive to the possibilities of using the Eureka story as a tourism opportunity for Ballarat, following the growing success of Sovereign Hill.

In 1979 the Eureka Commemorative Society was formed by a group of businessmen keen to reclaim Eureka for Ballarat from what they perceived as the misuse of the Eureka flag. They resuscitated the old gravesite commemoration, paying due respect to both the diggers and the soldiers. The moving spirit in the society was Peter Tobin, a Ballarat funeral director and Vietnam veteran with a theatrical bent, which found an outlet in his involvement at Sovereign Hill. He

\textsuperscript{127} Interview with Peter Lumsdon of Buninyong, June 2001.
added colour to the commemoration by dressing up as a redcoat with his friends, and firing a volley over the graves of the soldiers who died at the Stockade. His mission was to make Eureka respectable in the eyes of the middle class, to emphasise it as a colourful historical event, rather than emphasise its political importance.

The 1988 Bicentenary Celebrations caused public and political controversy about what aspects of Australian history should be celebrated, and whether celebration was the appropriate term. At the Federal government level, the theme ‘Celebrating a Nation’ was changed to ‘Living Together’ in response to criticism that the original theme did not reflect the multicultural nature of our society. In this context another Eureka organisation was born. Eureka’s Children was the brainchild of Melbourne advertising man, Paul Murphy. The aim of the organisation was to bring together all descendants of those who fought at the Eureka Stockade, thus emphasizing the multicultural character of the Ballarat goldfields of the 1850s. Murphy, a descendant of the Canny brothers who fought behind the Stockade, was inclined to include only the descendants of the diggers, but he was persuaded by journalist Bob O’Brien and Peter Tobin to include descendants of all who were involved. The new organisation fitted the official temper of the times, ostensibly celebrating diversity. However, at a practical level it would generate squabbles over ideological, if not racial, issues. Some descendants of diggers still harboured old hatreds against the military, and the descendant of James Bentley was still intent on suing the descendant of J.B. Humffray for loss of property when Bentley’s Hotel was burnt down in 1854!

On Eureka Day 1988 hundreds of descendants gathered in Ballarat to march to the cemetery and to the Stockade Monument for a commemoration service. Although the organisation claimed to be open to the descendants of those who fought on either side at the Stockade, some descendants of diggers took exception to the local Eureka Commemorative Society paying homage at the soldiers’ monument. The old private commemoration at the cemetery had suddenly become publicly contested.

By the latter part of the twentieth century Ballarat institutions began to realise the tourist possibilities of remembering Eureka. With its interest in dramatisation and activation, Sovereign Hill had occasionally presented re-enactments of the burning of Bentley’s Hotel, in the style of

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130 Ibid., p. 138.
the 1917 homecoming celebrations. It formalised this performance in 1993 when it introduced its sound and light show, *Blood on the Southern Cross*, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

When the Eureka Commemorative Society decided to disband in 1993, its role having been assumed by other groups such as Eureka’s Children, the Ballarat academic Jack Harvey invented a new commemoration on the morning of 3 December 1993. He had a scientific interest in establishing the exact location of the Stockade, a question that created much emotion in the letters-to-the-editor columns of the local newspaper. He invited interested members of the public to join him on a dawn walk, which would follow as closely as possible the route taken by the soldiers from the government camp in the centre of town to the Stockade. Along the way primary evidence for pinpointing the location of the Stockade was read and discussed. The following year, 1994, saw a number of Ballarat’s organizations, both government and commercial, get together to promote the 140th anniversary celebrations. Harvey again organised his dawn walk, this time with considerably more participants.

A new tradition was in the course of invention, its characteristics described by Eric Hobsbawm in 1983 as ‘a set of practices with a symbolic content which seek to inculcate certain values by virtue of repetition, suggesting that this set of practices has a continuity with the past’. The ALP had tried in the 1930s and 1940s, but its tradition died out. Peter Corcorane suggests that republicans ‘invented a heritage’, using Eureka in the late twentieth century. He describes how groups may select events and infuse them with current social concerns, and such a scenario would seem to apply to Al Grassby and the Australian Independence Movement in their use of Eureka. The reasons behind the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery taking over the organisation of the dawn walk in 1998 are more difficult to tease out. Gallery Director Margaret Rich was a convinced republican, but her choreography of the dawn walk showed more concern with art than politics. Walkers would follow the route the military took on the morning of 3 December 1854, carrying beautiful paper lanterns made by school children in the preceding weeks. Where police and soldiers had once marched, families now walked. National publicity put the event on the map, and re-kindled the *Bulletin’s* old suggestion of 1888 that Eureka Day should be a national day. The City of Ballarat was so impressed that it announced henceforward the Sunday after Eureka would be ‘Eureka Sunday’. The City’s designation was more concerned with promoting the city than promoting the political significance of the event.

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There was almost a ‘New Age’ spiritual quality about the Eureka dawn procession, with the twinkling lanterns serving as a metaphor for the stars that fade as dawn approaches. As recent Anzac Day ceremonies have shown, Australians seem hungry for some replacement for traditional religious rituals and observations. Muriel Porter pointed out recently that ‘Australians are seeking identity and meaning in past events and old rituals’.133 While attendances at church on Sunday mornings were declining, families willingly made sacrifices to be at the Mining Exchange in the centre of Ballarat at 3.30 a.m. Furthermore, they entered into the experience with great enthusiasm and reverence. The press reported that over 300 people participated in the dawn walk.

As dawn breaks on Eureka Sunday, the procession reaches the Eureka Monument. The simple obelisk built in 1884 becomes poignant in the red light of early summer dawn. The walkers gather to listen to an oration by a public figure.134 There is a deliberate multicultural emphasis to the proceedings - a careful consideration of political correctness. The new tradition calls upon some of the old practices of commemoration, but makes the experience relevant and enjoyable for a current age.

In spite of careful attempts by the organising committee to be ‘non-political and non-sectarian’, controversy flared. In 1999 and again in 2000 threats were made by Paul Murphy, the stockader’s descendant, to disrupt the dawn walk because it was following the soldiers’ route. A leaflet handed out by Murphy described the walk as ‘offensive in the extreme because it commemorates the march and attack by soldiers on innocent men, women and children’. He further threatened that if the walk was held again, he would get the combined union forces of the Melbourne Trades Hall to barricade any attempt to enter the battle site.

With Peter Lalor, a detective sergeant in the Victorian police force and descendant of the original Peter Lalor, Murphy claimed to re-establish the Ballarat Reform League that would push to remove the Eureka flag from the Ballarat Art Gallery. They argued it had been stolen from its owners and was housed ‘on contested ground’ - the Gallery is situated in Lydiard Street on part of what was the original police camp for the goldfields.135 The ‘local versus outsiders’ issue was alive again. Murphy and Lalor, both from Melbourne, were seen by many Ballarat people as outsiders, who offended some conservative members of the Ballarat community by their attempt to raise divisive ideological issues.

133 Muriel Porter, ‘Why do the Anzacs do better business than God?’ Age, 29 April, 2000; also Davison, *The Use and Abuse of Australian History*, p. 155.

134 The speakers have been chosen by the Eureka Stockade Memorial Trust. Speakers have included Don Chipp, Senator Tsien Tsen, Phil Cleary and Al Grassby.

The threats were serious and worrying enough for police protection to be sought for Margaret Rich. In the event the only physical manifestation of the threats were leaflets handed out to walkers, and publicity gained in the media by the protesters.\textsuperscript{136} After all, Eureka Sunday was celebrated congenially in Ballarat. Commentator Bob Ellis best described the experience of the dawn walk of 1999 when he wrote in the \textit{Bulletin} that ‘it took your breath away it was so simple and sincere’.\textsuperscript{137} Eureka Sunday proceeds with a full programme of activities. The practice of public commemoration has proved emotional and physically exhausting.

Most of all recent celebrations have borne out the words of Brian Fitzpatrick who had written in \textit{Meanjin} back in 1955 of ‘the contentious Eureka legend’.\textsuperscript{138} As Kate Darian-Smith and Paula Hamilton have pointed out, the greatest opportunity for contest and controversy comes in collective memory exercises, where one group will attempt to determine how all remember and commemorate. These anniversaries can become the forum for heated debates about the event that is being remembered. Participants have different interpretations of the event and seek to have their version approved as a means of reinforcing their own security and identity in the present.\textsuperscript{139} Graeme Davison makes a similar point in relation to national commemorations, where the use of history is determined by the politics of the present rather than the ideals of the past.\textsuperscript{140} It seems certain that Eureka will continue to be remembered at these anniversary celebrations, which highlight the contested meanings that an historical event may have. John Gillis offered the best hope for the future with his reflection that whilst the old national holidays and commemorations have lost the power to sustain a unified celebration, they remain useful as times and places where diverse groups can negotiate, communicate and appreciate their differences. In an era of plural identities, such civic times are essential to democratic societies so that they can negotiate the past and define their future.\textsuperscript{141}

During planning for the 2001 Eureka celebrations, this process of negotiation continued, with trade unions and descendants of Stockaders planning their own miners’ march on the day before the dawn walk. This review of the Eureka anniversary celebrations certainly demonstrates great shifts in both the practice of and the reasons for commemoration.

\textsuperscript{137} \textit{Bulletin}, 1 Feb. 2000, p. 31.
\textsuperscript{139} Darian-Smith and Hamilton (eds), \textit{Memory and History in Twentieth-Century Australia}, p.15.
\textsuperscript{140} Davison, \textit{The Use and Abuse of Australian History}, p. 57.
\textsuperscript{141} Gillis, \textit{Commemorations}, p. 20.
Monuments to Eureka

The practice of commemoration requires sites of significance, emotional ‘milieux de memoire’ (environments of memory) in Pierre Nora’s words, for gathering, and it is the role of interested bodies to mark these sites in some way. The first site to be marked was the burial place of the diggers.

On 10 January 1856 J.P. Fawkner proposed in the Legislative Council that a memorial to Sir Charles Hotham be constructed at the Melbourne cemetery following his death on 31 December 1855. Peter Lalor objected, saying the memory of 30 slain men at Eureka was sufficient monument to the late Governor. In spite of the objection of goldfields members, Parliament voted to approve a sum, and an elaborate monument designed by the English sculptor George Gilbert Scott was erected. It was not a popular memory site. Even so, it led to a public meeting in Ballarat to discuss the need to erect a monument to the men who fell at Eureka. The meeting was inconclusive, but it might have prompted James Leggat of Geelong to donate a diggers’ memorial at the Ballarat Cemetery, unveiled on 22 March 1856. The memorial, with its classical Green urn, uses the terminology ‘Sacred to the memory of those who fell on the memorable 3 December 1854 resisting the unconstitutional proceedings of the Victorian Government’. On 3 December 1856 there was a march from the Stockade to the new monument at the cemetery. The cemetery became from that time ‘a hallowed spot’, where the death of martyrs was commemorated. Locals and visitors recall visiting the graves where flowers and garlands were laid every December. Agnes Bland of Western Australia recalled in 1944 how, as a child growing up near Minyip, ‘we always made a pilgrimage to the Ballarat cemetery on holidays and paid our devoir to the graves. They lay in two arbors either side of the path - the arbors were covered with climbing roses and jasmine, always a riot of bloom and perfume, and the graves were carefully and reverently tended’.

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143 In 2002, the National Trust Cemeteries Advisory Committee was concerned about the deterioration of this monument, seeking $200,000 to restore and re-erect the monument, which is in storage at the Necroposis, Springvale.
144 *Star*, Ballarat, 9 Feb. 1856.
145 Illustrated by Inglis in *Australian Colonists*, pp. 315; Inglis points out in *Sacred Places* that this was Australia’s first civic memorial to the fallen p. 18.
146 *Ballarat Times*, 4 Dec. 1857, p. 3 uses this phrase.
147 Agnes Bland writing to Len Fox, 21 Dec. 1944, following his article about the Eureka flag published in the Sydney left-wing newspaper, *Progress*. (BFAG collection).
Another hallowed spot was the site of the battle. It was only after 15 years had elapsed that the Borough of Ballarat East instructed its engineer ‘to inform himself of the site of the Stockade’, which led to an application to the Victorian Government to gazette the abandoned mining area as a public reserve.\footnote{Eureka Stockade Reserve File, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Ballarat Office.} There was talk of erecting a memorial at the site, but according to Nathan Spielvogel, one Councillor objected that ‘to erect a memorial in honour of this pack of rebellious curs would disgrace the patriotic citizens of Ballarat’.\footnote{Spielvogel Papers, vol.1, p. 35.}

A long-discussed Soldiers’ Monument was finally constructed at the old cemetery in 1879, not far from the Diggers’ Monument. It was funded by the Colonial government. The wording on the monument had been carefully composed by none other that W.B. Withers, the Ballarat \textit{Star} journalist and historian who had told the diggers’ story sympathetically in his 1870 \textit{History of Ballarat}. The wording praised the soldiers for devotion to duty, while still allowing a note of admiration for the ‘courageous but misdirected endeavour’ of the diggers.\footnote{Inglis, \textit{Sacred Places}, pp. 18-19.} Ken Inglis points out that the monument was erected after the American Civil War, which presented a salutary lesson about civil rebellion, and the wording was carefully crafted to reinforce this lesson with the populace.

Michael Evans argues that a monument to Eureka at the battle site was possible in 1884 because by that time the event had been publicly forgotten, and could now be rediscovered as an ‘historic event’, a place of patriotic pilgrimage.\footnote{Michael Evans, ‘From a hallowed spot to a miniature marathon’, pp. 43-50. Chris Healy makes a similar argument in ‘Battle Memories’, p. 147.} The advocates of the Stockade monument certainly ensured that it was reticent in its recollection, with a simple plaque stating ‘Eureka Stockade, Sunday morning, 3rd December 1854’. 1884 marked the beginning of ‘statuemania’ in Ballarat, with a few philanthropic old diggers leading the way in beautifying Sturt Street, the main boulevard of the city. A number of groups were busy raising funds for statues to Robbie Burns, Thomas Moore and Queen Victoria. The Eureka Stockade Memorial Committee, formed at a meeting of 24 citizens at Craig’s Hotel on 16 April 1884, was careful to present the monument as marking an historic event; hence it should be erected at the site of the battle.\footnote{\textit{Star}, 17 April 1884.} In the spirit of
history and majesty, the incongruous gift of four cannons was accepted from the Victorian government.153

But Eureka was still contentious in the popular mind, as the stream of correspondence in the local newspapers from April to August 1884 demonstrates. Many were highly critical of the project as a blot on Ballarat's fair imperial garment. Old Stockaders were equally passionate in upholding the rights of the diggers. The difficulty of raising funds for the project, compared to some other memorial projects in Ballarat, emphasised the fact that Eureka was still not publicly respectable.

The actual choice of the site for the monument was also a cause of contest, with old Stockaders writing to argue vigorously for their preferred site. To settle the arguments, Cr Morrison convened a meeting of the old Stockaders and Ballarat East Council members at the reserve on 25 July 1884 to determine the exact site. After much discussion, it seems from press reports that James Esmond, a respected captain at the Stockade, settled on a spot on the highest point of the reserve, near Eureka Street, which he thought the 'best and proper place on which to fix a monument'.154 The gruff and practical Cr Roff of Ballarat East Council, determined to end time wasting, gathered everyone into a circle and got them to agree that Esmond’s site was the best compromise site 'within a stone's throw' of the 'hallowed ground'. So a peg was driven into the ground, three rousing cheers given, and the site fixed. Nearly a century later, this issue of the exact site of the stockade would again be a subject of heated debate in Ballarat, led most publicly by local historian and former politician Tom Evans. Jack Harvey considered these disputes, and the topographical evidence, in his 1994 study of the issue.155

In August 1884 work began on building a granite obelisk on a bluestone plinth, designed by H.S. King of Ballarat East, winner of the design competition.156 Donations were very slow in coming in, and it was only half finished on Eureka Day 1884 when the pioneers gathered on the site. However, a generous donation from Irish speculator Martin Loughlin would allow a Stawell sandstone monolith to be carved, to replace the piece of granite that had been cut but not erected.157 On 27 August 1886 the still unfinished monument was handed over to the Town Council of Ballarat East. In 1887 Mary Gaunt, researching her article on Eureka for Cassell’s

153 Also Spielvogel Papers, vol. 1, pp. 35-6.
154 Star, 26 July 1884.
156 Courier, 26 May 1984, p. 33; Evans 'From a Hallowed Spot to a Miniature Marathon'.
157 Courier, 3 Dec. 1884.
Picturesque Australasia, described the stockade reserve as neglected and overgrown, the monument unfinished and the guns not mounted, but lying covered by long grass. The obelisk was finally mounted on the base in March 1889.

In Pierre Nora’s terms, the Stockade had now become a 'memory place', an historic site, re-remembered not as a partisan place, but a civic memory place, its investiture with cannons helping to turn it into a patriotic shrine. The neglect of the site for the previous 30 years, so that fixing the exact location of the battle was no longer possible, had allowed old memories to be replaced with a new civic commemoration. The park committee would later add to this patriotic remembering by adding further emotional and nationalist memory triggers; in 1914 a cutting from a willow growing on Napoleon’s grave at St. Helena was planted by Lake Penhallurick, and in 1917 a tree honouring the soldiers who fell at the Lone Pine charge at Gallipoli was planted to honour the memory of a new breed of diggers who had fallen heroically in service of the Empire.158

As mentioned above, a bout of ‘statuemania’ started in Ballarat in 1884, when statues of Greek goddesses and ethnic heroes began to appear in the streets and gardens. The 1880s marked Ballarat’s emergence as a metropolis of the south, a ‘city of statues’, self-proclaimed ‘jewel in the crown of Queen Victoria’s Southern dominions’.159 After the Scots had saluted Robbie Burns in 1887, and the Irish Thomas Moore in 1889, James Oddie, the former artisan from Lancashire, then decided to honour not an Englishman, but the hero of the Eureka Stockade, Peter Lalor, the Irishman turned Australian patriot. The bronze statue was unveiled on Australia Day 1893, prominently located in the centre of Sturt Street between the Catholic cathedral and the Presbyterian kirk.160 It was Ballarat’s first bronze monument, and it was the first to honour a local Ballarat man. What would Peter’s brother Fintan, imprisoned Young Irelander of 1848, have made of the irony? Oddie commissioned the bronze when he was still a wealthy man. It was after he had established the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery in 1884 that he talked to Peter Lalor about the possibility of having a statue to honour both Lalor and the Eureka incident. In 1885 Peter Lalor agreed that the best site for such a monument would be in Sturt Street rather than at the Stockade. Did Lalor recall that in 1856 he had opposed funding a monument to Governor Hotham, saying

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158 City of Ballarat, Mayor’s Annual Report 1941 mentions the unveiling of two plaques on 27 April 1941, to mark the two trees.

159 Read the editorials of the Courier on any important day of celebration to catch the vein of local patriotism, which Weston Bate describes in the last chapter of Lucky City. See especially the editorial of 14 May 1901, following the visit of the Duke of York.

160 Courier, 1, 26, 27 Jan. 1893; Star, 27 January 1893.
that the diggers’ graves were sufficient monument? 161 By 1885 Lalor obviously felt that the cemetery monument was not sufficient. It was probably after Oddie’s return from an extended visit to England in 1890, when he heard of the recent death of his old friend Peter Lalor, that he was moved to commission the sculpture. The London sculptor Norman McLean undertook the work, using a photograph of Lalor as his model. The eight feet high statue depicts Lalor as a conservative and authoritarian figure, dressed in his Speaker’s gown and wig. Around the base there are four bronze panels, which represent scenes from the Eureka Stockade; one panel lists the names of the diggers who died at Eureka.

The statue was unveiled with much ceremony. The major figures of the Victorian Parliament were there, including Tommy Bent, Sir Graham Berry, and Duncan Gillies, the former partner of Lalor on the goldfields, who unveiled the statue. A large crowd attended in the afternoon of what had recently become a public holiday, thanks to the efforts of the Australian Natives Association. Cheers were given for Oddie, who signed a Deed of Gift, giving the statue to the City and citizens, providing the bronze was maintained and kept in the place where it then stood. 162

A booklet, *From Tent to Parliament*, marked the occasion. It begins with the words: ‘The erection of a statue to the memory of Peter Lalor revived the subject of the Eureka Stockade and created a diversity of opinion as to the motives which actuated its leaders’. 163 The statue also moved John Lynch to write a series of articles for *Austral Light* from October 1893. He clearly admired Lalor’s bravery at the Stockade, and that is the Lalor he would remember - ‘habited in his red shirt with gun in hand, or round the holocaust of burning licences administering the oath of fidelity and allegiance’. He did not appreciate the bronze likeness of the Speaker of the Victorian Parliament that James Oddie raised in Sturt St - neither Lynch nor his old comrades in arms wanted to have a part in the ‘mere glorification of a Speaker.’ But he ended his reminiscences on a high note. He saw the Eureka story ‘brighter growing with length of days’, as the new nation develops and looks back to the bright page of Eureka and Peter Lalor, thankful for ‘the sacred heritage of liberty’ which will be ‘a monument worth having’. 164

Lynch’s reminiscences led W.B. Withers to contribute his thoughts to *Austral Light* in January 1896. He speculated on Lalor’s statue, believing as Lynch did that it would have been better to

161 Quoted by Inglis, *Australian Colonists*, p. 314.
162 *Courier*, 26, 27 Jan. 1893.
163 *From Tent to Parliament*.
represent the athletic young rebel than the care-worn Speaker. Egon Kisch studied the statue in 1935, and made the same observation as Lynch and Withers.\textsuperscript{165} Agnes Bland recalled her feeling of awe in front of the statue with its ‘inscrutable face gazing eternally over the beautiful city’\textsuperscript{166}

The Sydney Catholic paper, the \textit{Freeman's Journal}, reported on the death of James Esmond, discoverer of gold in Victoria, in its issue of 20 December 1890. The tribute reminded the reader that Esmond was a true and good man, an Irishman, a Catholic, and died in poverty, and that he had fought at Eureka. It reported on the burial, and the presence of James Oddie whom, it hoped, will erect a memorial to Esmond. But it was W.H. Withers who took up the task of erecting a memorial over the grave of Esmond, and he reported a year after Esmond’s death, on 3 December 1891, that ‘a dutiful work has just been done’ at the cemetery. ‘Whilst the Stockade chief is to have an effigy in bronze pedestalled on one of the most conspicuous spots in this city, the remains of the humbler gold discoverer whose adventure brought that chief and tens of thousands besides to these colonies, should not be suffered to lie in an unhonoured grave’\textsuperscript{167} Hence Withers organised an appeal to buy the gravesite, fence it and erect a simple memorial - a marble tablet at the foot of a Roman cross and wreaths of shamrock, bearing the words ‘Sacred to the memory of James William Esmond, the gold discoverer’. Withers wrote that the ‘work is strong and plain, like the man himself’. His admiration for Esmond, rather than Lalor, is evident in the closing sentence of his \textit{History of Ballarat}, where he concluded the glorious city of Ballarat is ‘homage to Esmond of Clunes...discoverer of this the first and richest gold-field, and battle ground of political freedom in Victoria’\textsuperscript{168}

Meanwhile the Eureka monument at the Stockade was slow to develop a presence. In 1896 the Creswick poet and stockader’s son J.G. Reilly wrote to the \textit{Courier} and to \textit{Austral Light} with his fervent thoughts on the need to promote Eureka in a national context, and the need for an appropriate national monument, ‘a grove of beauty, carefully tended and watched by the patriot hearts’. Reilly was also concerned about the flag, which he saw as a national emblem he had read about in the \textit{Bulletin}\textsuperscript{169} An organisation that did care about the monument was the Eureka Improvement and Progress Association, formed in 1912 to rectify the disgraceful state of the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[165] Kisch, \textit{Australian Landfall}, p. 204.
\item[166] Agnes Bland to Len Fox, 21 Dec. 1944, BFAG Collection.
\item[167] \textit{Star}, 3 Dec. 1891.
\item[168] Withers, \textit{History of Ballarat}, the last sentence of both the 1870 and 1887 editions.
\item[169] J.G. Reilly, quoted by W.B. Withers in ‘Some Ballarat Reminiscences’, \textit{Austral Light}, May 1896
\end{footnotes}
Park. It began a tradition of annual anniversary services at the monument and an annual Foundation Day carnival to raise funds for further improvements to the park.¹⁷⁰

In 1923 the Committee decided to interpret their monument at the Stockade by adding a plaque to the obelisk, which honoured the names of the fallen at this 'sacred spot'. Thanks to the use of Eureka by the Trade Union movement, the monument was beginning to grow in significance. The Stockade Committee, which included the President Mr McGregor M.L.A. and the Secretary Mr Carey (from the Trades Hall Council), sought funding to improve the reserve and the monument, for 'the stockade was known all over Australia, was an historic spot...and it was their duty to guard and preserve such a monument to freedom' and it should be more attractive to visitors. The Committee gradually gained funds, but also controlled the use of the monument at anniversaries by the decree that no person should address any assembly at the monument without permission from the Committee.¹⁷¹

The austere monument, with its confusing cannons, was difficult for visitors to interpret. So from 1970 movements began to tell the story of Eureka at the reserve site through a diorama, a mock stockade and an interpretative centre. This forms the subject of another chapter.

When Minister for Immigration Al Grassby came to Ballarat on 3 December 1973, he made encouraging comments about the proposed 'national shrine', the concept of a commemorative centre put forward by the Eureka Stockade Park Committee.¹⁷² Grassby's commitment to the cause was real and alert to the possibilities of international promotion - on 4 February 1974 he unveiled a plaque to Raffaello Carboni in Urbino, Italy, birthplace of Carboni,¹⁷³ and later he was instrumental in placing a memorial plaque to Peter Lalor at his Irish home Tenakill, near Abbeyleix in Ireland.¹⁷⁴ His passion for Eureka led him to publish the speeches made at Ballarat by himself and Whitlam, and to have a documentary film Flag of Stars produced by his Department. He also deputed staff in his department to carry out an international search to uncover press reporting of Eureka in newspapers of 1855.¹⁷⁵

'New nationalism' was defeated in November 1975 with the overthrow of the Whitlam government. Eureka flags appeared at protests against the 'sacking' of the ALP government by

¹⁷⁰ Eureka Stockade Memorial Park Committee, Minutes, 1912 -
¹⁷¹ Eureka Reserve File, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Ballarat Office.
¹⁷⁴ The Australian Ambassador unveiled the plaque, attached to the house, in 5 April 1987.
the Queen’s representative. Eureka flags also appeared in Ballarat in April 1977 when McDonald’s proposed to tear down a group of old shops on Bakery Hill, and build their ubiquitous American hamburger restaurant. A small group of locals rallied against the multinational company, calling themselves the Save Bakery Hill Action Group. I was the historian of the group, deputed to write articles about the historic importance of Bakery Hill. Research showed that one of the old buildings had been used by the Ballarat Times, the crusading newspaper of 1854. Our argument for saving the buildings turned on the association of the area with the events leading up to Eureka, that it was one of the ‘sacred sites’ of Eureka. Locally there was little interest, for the City Council saw the old buildings as derelict and approved a demolition permit. But the national media was very interested in the story. Through press and television coverage, we gained the help of Norm Gallagher and the Builders’ Labourers’ Federation. Members of the Eureka Youth League and the Australian Independence Movement also pitched into the battle, writing letters of support to the Ballarat City Council. When Gallagher declared that his union would black ban every McDonald’s site in the nation if anything happened to the old buildings on Bakery Hill, McDonald’s came to the negotiating table. The company agreed to develop their restaurant within the historic buildings, and to include an exhibition depicting the history of the site. It was a world precedent, the first time McDonald’s had recycled rather than erected its standard restaurant building. This battle for Ballarat’s history represented a victory of localism over the global imperialism of McDonald’s, a belated victory for the diggers! It also represented a victory of the ‘outsiders’ (trade unionists from Melbourne) over the local disinterest in history (City Council). But once the victory had been won, and McDonald’s enthusiastically promoted history in its restaurant, a new interest in heritage emerged in Ballarat. The attitude of the City Council was transformed, and within two years it was carrying out one of the first urban heritage studies in Australia.

Some of the issues raised in the ‘Battle for Bakery Hill’ might have influenced the next attempt to mark a Eureka site. When Peter Tobin established the Eureka Commemorative Society in 1979, he came up with his idea of marking ‘the old spot’ on Bakery Hill as an historic site with a huge flagpole from which the Eureka flag would fly. Tobin was very conscious of wanting to reclaim the Eureka flag for mainstream forces, to reclaim it from the desecration he felt it had suffered at the hands of the BLF. He did not seem to notice the irony of his ‘depoliticised’ Bakery Hill flag waving above the site which had been saved as an historic spot thanks to the efforts of Norm

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177 Bate, Life After Gold, pp. 190-1.
Gallagher’s BLF! Now there was another memorial site, at a very public and central location in the heart of Ballarat.¹⁷⁸

Photo courtesy of Courier.

Meanwhile efforts to obtain a better monument at the Eureka Reserve continued. Following the launch of Weston Bate’s history of nineteenth century Ballarat, Lucky City, in November 1978 and the stimulus of the 125th anniversary celebrations, the City Council discussed in 1980 the idea of creating some kind of ‘replica of a monument’.¹⁷⁹ In 1981 local Lions Clubs combined to build an imagined replica of the Stockade in treated pine logs. Though their attention to historical detail was questionable, the success of their project was evident, as children and film crews enjoyed the ‘historic’ backdrop to the monument.

Finally the Kennett Government’s Commissioners seized the initiative. Acting on the recommendations of a tourist survey by students from the University of Ballarat, the City prepared a submission to register the site with the National Heritage Commission. This was

¹⁷⁸ *Flying the Flag* (Video) 1997, includes an interview with Peter Tobin at Bakery Hill.

successful in December 1994, and led Wendy McCarthy, chair of the Australian Heritage Commission, to comment at a 1995 conference on monuments that the Eureka battle site was 'embedded into our folk heroism and sense of national identity, ...a monument, a symbolic landscape dedicated to democratic government'. In 2000, Heritage Victoria assessed the Eureka Reserve, and added it to its Heritage Register of places of state significance.

The saga of the drummer boy provides one amusing twist to the story of Eureka monuments. Most accounts of Eureka have referred to the death of the drummer boy of the 12th Regiment at Eureka on the night of 28 November 1854. In 1988 Tobin's Eureka Commemoration Society won approval from the cemetery trustees to place a memorial plaque near the soldiers' monument in the cemetery. However local historian Dorothy Wickham proved by careful research into army records that the drummer boy certainly did not die at Eureka, and that reports of his death had been used as propaganda by Camp officials to gain sympathy for their cause. The historian John Molony was relieved to learn in 1998 that the Tipperary Boys did not kill the drummer boy, and he was pleased to edit out the mistake from his new edition of his history of Eureka, freed from a distasteful story that had always troubled him in his writing about the diggers. The plaque was removed from the old cemetery in May 2001, to be re-located to the Eureka Stockade centre.

The newest monument is a bronze statue of the Pikeman's Dog, placed in the courtyard of the Eureka Stockade Centre on 3 December 1999. Paul Williams of the Eureka Stockade Memorial Trust had fought valiantly to bring to life the poignant story of the little mongrel that would not desert his dead master who fell at the Stockade. The statue was erected by the Eureka Stockade Memorial Trust, with financial support from Irish benefactors, including the Irish ambassador Richard O'Brien, who took a keen personal interest in the Eureka story.

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182 Personal discussion with John Molony, Ballarat, when a new edition of his book Eureka, was published on 3 December 2001, with the correction.
183 Courier, 14 May, 2001, p. 3.
Conclusion: The Relationship of Memory to History

In examining these public uses of Eureka, evidence has emerged that bears on some theories already alluded to in this thesis - the way traditions can be 'invented' for particular purposes, the importance of 'metrical moments' in crystallising and galvanising public memory, the Nietzschean (and Foucauldian) concept of hegemony and control, the operation of memory and the formation of historical consciousness.

This analysis of the commemoration of Eureka has revealed a number of contests; between history and memory, between the analytical style of history and the subjective, emotional style of heritage and folklore; between locals and outsiders, with their different rationales for remembering Eureka.

The commemoration of the Eureka Stockade has progressed from antiquarian dilettantism to carefully constructed echoes of the event, resonant with post-Foucauldian sensibility. There have been many historiographical twists and turns since 1854 - from the sharp and painful emotion of eyewitnesses in 1856, to the official forgetting of a disloyal occasion, to the low-key but determined remembering of the old pioneers of 1884, the ideologically charged anniversaries of the 1930s, the 'new nationalism' of the 1970s, to the commercialised tourism-driven celebrations of the 1990s.

These changing visions of Eureka have influenced the collecting of relics and the construction of monuments. David Lowenthal examined the relationship between history, memory and relics and concluded that each 'offer routes to the past best traversed in combination.' For him relics are important as memory triggers, appealing directly to our senses, although they have to be interpreted through history. History provides substance, whilst 'relics vitalise history by retranslating it into memory'.185 Paula Hamilton also argues for the essential interdependence of history and memory, for as memory is gradually lost, history steps in to re-write the stories.186

Pierre Nora argued that historians have constructed sites (lieux) of memory to replace environments (milieux) of memory, thus creating a gap between history and memory. Chris Healy offers the positive suggestion that monuments can be spaces where the possibilities between history and memory can be acted out, where ritualised memories can be performed and the site can be transformed into an environment of memory.187 Arguing along similar lines, Davison points out that memory is intensely personal, and it influences the way we use history,

185 Lowenthal, The Past is a Foreign Country, pp.245-9.
186 Hamilton, Memory and History, p. 12.
which should combine antiquarian, monumental and critical approaches.\textsuperscript{188} Certainly in Ballarat, public history has repaired the fracture between history and memory, as historian Michael Frisch suggested. Memories have come alive - some would say too alive - rather than being mere ‘objects of collection’.\textsuperscript{189}

Memory, history, relics have all contributed to the development of national identity and the gradual development of the Eureka Stockade as a national rather than a purely local event. The question of the development of a sense of national consciousness, and the accompanying development of a critical historiographical consciousness, provided fertile ground to debate the rationale for an exhibition dedicated to explaining and interpreting the Eureka story. This is the subject of the following chapter.

\textsuperscript{188} Davison, \textit{The Use and Abuse of Australian History}, p. 7.

CHAPTER 7

THE PUBLIC INTERPRETATION OF THE EUREKA STOCKADE: THE ROLE OF MUSEUMS AND INTERPRETATION CENTRES IN TELLING NATIONAL STORIES

The essence of a museum...is in being a place that stores memories and presents and organises meaning in some sensory form. It is both the physicality of a place and the memories and stories told therein that are important.

Elaine Heumann Guirian

For me, the great thing about museums is the collections they hold, and it’s the real objects.

Tim Flannery

National commemorations use the events of history but the stories they tell are determined more by the politics of the present than the ideals of the past.

Graeme Davison

These three quotations express three important understandings of the role of museums in our society, and succinctly highlight the issues that arise in presenting the story of Eureka in public. There is the importance of memory, of contextualising objects that are presented for display. There is the issue of real objects, and how important they are for an exhibition. Thirdly, there is the issue of control of the story. When the Ballarat City Council announced in 1995 that it would build an interpretation centre/museum to tell the story of Eureka to locals and visitors, these issues became the subject of earnest and sometimes bitter debate.


2 Dr Tim Flannery, Director of the Museum of South Australia, speaking on an Insight SBS-TV forum on museums, 22 November, 2001.

3 Graeme Davison, The Use and Abuse of Australian History, St. Leonards, NSW, Allen & Unwin, 2000, p. 57.
The public commemoration of the Eureka Stockade through museum collections of relics, public ceremonies and the building of monuments has demonstrated the aptness of Nietzsche's taxonomy of history as an analytical guide. Graeme Davison suggests in *The Use and Abuse of Australian History* that monumental history - the official, national celebration of progress by those in power - is declining, that decline offset by the rise of antiquarian and critical history. Each type of history has had its users and abusers. Monumental history has tended to present a simplified narrative to glorify or justify those in power, at the expense of minority groups. Antiquarian history has been indiscriminate in giving everything equal value, and critical history, under the influence of Foucault, risks becoming totally destructive. Davison advocates the use of all three forms as a corrective to the abuses of each other, so that historians can take a 'watching brief on the varieties of history...that circulate in the wider community'. In this process museums have been chameleons. Where in the nineteenth century the museum was used by governments as an instrument of public propaganda, it has become at the end of the twentieth century an instrument of public critique of ruling elites. The opening of Australia's new National Museum in Canberra in 2001 is a pertinent example of this critique, with museum curators defending their exhibitions from the criticism of the government (or its champions) that those exhibitions were biased. At issue here is the question of whether the museum should be telling a national story, or documenting the social history of the people. The rise of new historical perspectives and methodologies - the use of memory, oral history, people's history, cultural studies in the late twentieth century - have transformed the world of museums and the public presentation of history. This chapter considers how far the 'new museology' has influenced the public interpretation of the Eureka story. By throwing everything into question, this new museology has added fuel to the already heated debate about the meaning of the Eureka story.

Governments and many citizens believe in the 'true version' of history that celebrates national achievement, as it did in the nineteenth century when history was being written

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4 Davison, *The Use and Abuse of Australian History*, p. 18.
by the ‘winners’. That is the finding of studies into the use of the past.7 But what is the true version? The historian’s role in representing public memory can be controversial. A huge outcry arose in the USA in 1993-4 over the Enola Gay exhibition at the Smithsonian Institute, which was withdrawn after Congress criticised it for being too anti-American in its representation of the Truman government’s decision to use nuclear weapons to end World War Two.8 The complaints of veterans’ organisations and members of the general public galvanised Congress to enter into the hitherto sacrosanct corridors of museum curators. Suddenly the professionals were accountable for their exhibitions, which were carefully scrutinised for ideological bias.

This debate raged in Ballarat over the exhibition at the new Eureka Centre, taking up the same kinds of issues that had been argued in Washington, and the issues that would be debated at the new Melbourne Museum and National Museum in Canberra. There were questions of content, of real objects versus reproductions, of the context in which objects would be displayed, of permanent versus changing displays. At heart here are differences in the objectives of funding bodies, management, professional curators, citizens, tourists and descendants. If Eureka really is the birthplace of the Australian spirit, then the Eureka Centre should be seen as a national shrine, a popular destination of tourist pilgrimage, like the War Memorial in Canberra. If it fails to attract visitors, there are two possible explanations. Either the Eureka Stockade is not seen as nationally significant, or the centre fails to capture the importance of the event and fails to enthuse the general public.

To test my hypothesis about the perceived national significance of the Eureka Rebellion, I want to examine the public presentation of the Eureka story, and to examine the content and context of the displays, the technical aspects of presentation, and the public reaction to the displays.

Three areas will be considered: the public historical sphere, the dilemma between content and style in museum presentation, and the conflicting role of museums in our society.

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The Public Historical Sphere

On a spectacularly beautiful Autumn morning in March 1998, the Victorian Liberal Premier Jeff Kennett flew into Ballarat in his ministerial helicopter to open the new Eureka Stockade centre in Ballarat. A large audience had been invited. As well as the usual list of civic and political dignitaries, those present included sworn enemies in the two hostile camps who had battled every step for their version of history in the gestation of the new museum.

Chris Healy uses the metaphor of 'history as memory training' to consider different forms of historical consciousness in Australia. He proposes that museums 'do the work

9 Chris Healy, From The Ruins of Colonialism: History as Social Memory, Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 1997, Chapter 3. An earlier version of Chapter 3 appeared as 'Histories and Collecting' in Kate Darian-Smith and Paula Hamilton (eds), Memory and History in Twentieth-Century Australia, pp.33-41.
of collective memory by remembering for us'. This suggests why the stakes were high in Ballarat in attempting to control the story that the new Eureka centre presented to visitors. Originally it had been called the 'Eureka Interpretative Centre', but the word 'interpretative' led to such heated debates in the local press that the word was dropped. Premier Jeff Kennett was quoted in the souvenir publication as saying 'most importantly, it must leave the visitor with no questions unanswered'. However, on the next page, the Centre Manager Dr Jan Penney is quoted as saying 'I'd like them to go away with a whole lot of questions.' This difference in understanding summed up the historiographical debate that raged in Ballarat since the announcement in September 1995 that the Liberal state government would give $2.4 million from the Community Support Fund to develop a new interpretative centre on the site of the Eureka Stockade.

In his influential book *The Birth of the Museum*, Tony Bennett discusses the concept of the 'public historical sphere'. Jurgen Habermas first used the concept of the 'public sphere' to refer to the realm of social life where public opinion is formed. It included those places that allowed meetings and conversations open to all citizens in a spirit of free assembly and expression, and he saw the coffee houses of London in the eighteenth century as the first instance of such spaces. In the nineteenth century the new meeting-place of the museum or exhibition offered possibilities for discussion stimulated by the objects on display. In practical terms Gramsci asserts that this 'public sphere' is likely to be controlled by ruling classes through the process of cultural hegemony. Bennett examines the political uses that governments have made of museums as 'reformatories of manners' and carefully constructed public historical spaces through which state public policy objectives are achieved.

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10 Ibid., p. 78.
11 Eureka Stockade Centre souvenir, produced by the Ballarat Courier, 27 March, 1998
12 Letter from Janet Dare, Chief Executive Officer, City of Ballarat, 12 Sept. 1995, to interested parties, announcing grant. The letter speaks of the challenge before us 'to develop an Interpretative Centre which is a world-class attraction that draws visitors to Ballarat and gives them a greater appreciation of the significance of the Eureka Rebellion in our nation's history'
This public historical sphere includes heritage sites, museums and galleries, and extends to television documentaries - in short the production and circulation of meanings of the past. Within this sphere Michael Bommes and Patrick Wright argue that we find a 'publicly instituted structuring of consciousness' or, as David Brett would have it, 'the power of manipulated spectacle over history, ...the commodification of experience'. Questions of historical truth become peripheral as the past is presented in the context of present social meanings. In Australia this public historical sphere has been expanded in recent decades, taken back in time by archaeological discoveries about Aboriginal culture, and broadened by a post 1971 multicultural perspective.

Nietzsche reflected on the uses and abuses of history made by governments seeking popular support for their regimes. Hence history was presented in the public sphere as a monumental story of progress and national glory, through monuments, museum collections and commemorations. Graeme Davison suggests that Nietzsche is a useful guide to the analysis of public history. Nietzsche's plea for critical history has been met by texts and exhibitions that critically examine national myths, with Humphrey McQueen leading the way in 1970 with his challenging book, A New Britannia. The critique has been broadened by post-modernists and post-structuralists who have called into question the very structures of knowledge.

In addition to the public place where discussions can take place, there is also Ann Curthoys's notion of the 'public arena', the virtual space offered by communications media in which discussion takes place, a space which Curthoys claims is dominated by those in power. Her challenge made historians more aware of the need to represent the experience of women and ethnic minorities in the public sphere of museums, which in many cases, according to Margaret Anderson, were dominated by corporate Anglo-Saxon,

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16 Quoted in Bennett, The Birth of the Museum, p.132.
19 Davison, The Use and Abuse of Australian History, pp. 9-17.
male viewpoints - the ‘big toys for the big boys’ syndrome. However, recent developments at the National Museum, the Melbourne Museum and the Migration Museums in Adelaide and Melbourne show that this masculinist domination of the display cases is very definitely declining. Putting women into the Eureka story, traditionally a very masculine story, became a task in the gestation of the Eureka centre, although the 1850s gold story has proved difficult for feminists. Margaret Anderson was one of the curatorial team behind the National Museum’s *Gold and Civilisation* exhibition in 2001, her brief being to include women’s stories in the exhibit.

Earlier attempts to ‘remember for you’ (to use Chris Healy’s suggested description of museums) had mostly failed, as I have suggested in the last chapter when looking at Eureka relics in local history museums. Initiatives had been too dependent on individuals, and had died with their antiquarian curators. But with the growth of a sense of national identity unleashed by the blood sacrifice of the Anzacs at Gallipoli and in France and Egypt during World War One, the Australian War Memorial began the process of telling a national story. This was, as Benedict Anderson suggested, where a clearly delineated national past emerged, severed from Europe, describing a people who shared the same time and space.

Bennett, echoing Nietzsche, sees the museum emerging by the end of the nineteenth century as part of the state’s apparatus of mass public education (and social control). Pierre Nora also pinpoints the end of the nineteenth century as the time when constructed sites of memory, such as museums and archives, emerged as the old rural culture of memory was breaking down and a new memory needed to be artificially constructed by historians. While museums were intended for the people - to replace traditional memory as well as to inform the public of the power of its rulers - they were not ‘by’ or ‘of the

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people'. As Foucault explained in *The Order of Things* and *The Order of Discourse*, the presentation of knowledge was carefully shaped by those in power.\(^{28}\)

The move to represent the social history of the ordinary people only came in the latter part of the twentieth century - for example at the Beamish Museum in County Durham, England, or the Hyde Park Barracks in Sydney, these being museums that look at the history of all classes, both sexes and all ethnic groups. Bennett emphasises the role of the Whitlam government of the 1970s and its promotion of 'new nationalism' through the Inquiry into the National Estate and its Inquiry into Museums in Australia.\(^{29}\) Bennett recognises the importance of the Whitlam government’s inquiry into museums as giving a major impetus to the establishment of a 'museum consciousness' in Australia.\(^{30}\) Davison questions this interpretation, crediting the role of UNESCO in the 1960s and a redefinition of the term heritage from a spiritual to a materialist sense.\(^{31}\) I think the Whitlam government took up the ideas coming from Europe, particularly the concept of the 'national estate', and incorporated them into its new policy.

An important manifestation of the new socially conscious museum was the formation of the Sovereign Hill Historical Park Association at Ballarat in 1967. The historian of Ballarat Weston Bate, in describing the birth of Sovereign Hill, observes a union of entrepreneurial businessmen with local people possessing a deep sense of Ballarat’s history, who came together in the mid 1960s to lay plans to 'cash in on great beginnings', Ballarat's nineteenth century goldfields history.\(^{32}\) Such a new development was important for the regional city of Ballarat as its traditional manufacturing base was beginning to succumb to the winds of globalisation and the end of government protection of industry. A smaller manifestation was Ted Millett’s Montrose Cottage Eureka Museum, opened in the same period, which collected and borrowed some Eureka material, including Peter Lalor’s Eureka sword.

Ballarat’s businessmen were involved in Apex and the new Ballarat South Rotary Club, whose President Jack Redman came up with the idea of ‘a permanent historical display


\(^{29}\) Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, p. 124.


\(^{32}\) Weston Bate, ‘Cashing in on Great Beginnings’, in *Life After Gold*, pp.196-207.
for all to recall the national impact of the happenings at Eureka on Sunday, 3 December 1854'. The idea of a diorama developed. The club wanted it to 'serve the public as an historical record' and also be a lasting memorial to the men of Rotary. The Rotary clubs of Ballarat and Wendouree joined in, and held a walkathon to raise $3,500. They then approached Premier Henry Bolte, who agreed to give a two for one government grant, making $10,500 available. Weston Bate was asked to prepare the script, and Channel Nine newsreader Eric Pearce recorded it onto audiotape. Local artist and designer Ken Palmer designed the diorama. It was officially opened on Sunday 9 August 1970 by the Mayor of Ballarat, Councillor Alec Mills, in the presence of Rotary members. A twenty-cent coin was needed to activate the lights and tape, and the Rotary Club set up a Diorama Trustees group to look after the building and distribution of funds.33

Visitors to the Park fondly remember the diorama at the Eureka Stockade Reserve, near the 1884 Stockade Memorial. But it was modest in scale, and soon bred larger and grander proposals. In 1973 the Eureka Stockade Park Committee put forward a proposal for a Eureka Museum with a series of life-sized scenes surrounding the climactic event of the battle.34 Prime Minister Whitlam was shown the proposal when he visited Ballarat in December 1973 to unveil the Eureka flag at the Art Gallery. He gave in-principle support to the idea of the $450,000 museum, although his government was not prepared to make any financial commitment unless there was guaranteed support from the State government. While Premier Dick Hamer gave a warm reception to a delegation from the Eureka Stockade Park Committee, the message came through loud and clear from local member Murray Byrne that the government was committing all its Ballarat funds to the development of Sovereign Hill, and that there would be no funding for a Eureka museum.35

In 1980 the Mayor of Ballarat, Ian Clarke, was responsible for adding a log replica of the stockade, with assistance from local Lions clubs, in order to add some visual impact to the reserve. This was much enjoyed by film crews and by children, who enjoyed climbing over the treated pine logs as a kind of adventure playground. But tourists remained

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35 Interview with Alex Barnett, member of the Park Committee since 1946, who holds the records of the Committee, 11 June, 2001.
baffled and disappointed when they visited the park and learned little of either the events or the legend.

This odd re-creation stimulated further interpretations. A local businessman developed his own Eureka Electronic Exhibition over the road from the Stockade monument, incorporating the latest in audio-visual technology.\(^36\) It was, however, a small-scale exhibition compared to the more professional attempts at the Gold Museum incorporated into Sovereign Hill, where some of the genuine relics collected by the old Ballarat Historical Society were put on display and interpreted into a story for visitors.

In the early 1980s the Eureka Celebrations Committee was working on a submission to government for funding for a full-scale museum on the Eureka site. Peter Hiscock, the Director of Sovereign Hill, when asked about the proposed museum, replied that he would ‘welcome the participation of Ballarat people in our work, through their contribution of ideas and perspectives on the story and through the provision of memorabilia’.\(^37\) It was clear at that stage of Sovereign Hill’s development that it did not want any competitors in the field of interpreting goldfields’ history.

A severe hailstorm in November 1989 caused great damage throughout Ballarat. The begonia glasshouse at the reserve was one of the buildings to suffer. This act of God led the City Council to take stock of the park, and set in train a series of project committees to look at the re-design of the park and the whole question of interpretation of Eureka. The Council resolved to pursue a national design competition to develop a concept ‘that encapsulates the dignity, sacrifice, social and political impacts of the Eureka Rebellion...at the Eureka Memorial Park as a site of truly national significance’.\(^38\)

The question of how to interpret an historic site was raised by those with a professional interest in heritage, such as Peter Hiscock, who had visited many battle sites around the world. Hiscock was inclined to the naturalistic interpretation, arguing that the ideal would be to remove all built elements of the reserve, and take it back to a natural state, much as had been done at Culloden in Scotland. But even a natural site, such as Vinegar Hill outside Enniscorthy in Ireland, the site of a famous battle of the 1798 Rebellion, needed


some form of interpretation, as did Lexington Green in the USA, or Gallipoli. This was the issue Nora raised, that a 'milieux de memoire' (environment of memory) must have the emotional impact of the natural site and also some interpretation to explain its historical significance to those who did not share its oral tradition. Battle sites over the world have confronted this issue, balancing the emotional impact of the natural site with the lure of commercial development. At Enniscorthy a happy solution has been to leave Vinegar Hill, just outside the town, totally unchanged from the time of the battle, but to build a very modern visitor centre across town that tells the story of the battle with the use of a powerful multi-media presentation. It also has a strong element of critical history, as the display evaluates the very different histories that have been written about the rebellion, leaving the visitor with questions to explore as the tourist journey continues.\footnote{The Vinegar Hill battle site, just outside the town of Enniscorthy, Ireland, is untouched, except for a granite marker at the base of the hill. The marker was placed there in 1998, to mark the bicentenary of the battle. The 1798 National Visitor Centre is housed in the former Christian Brothers' Monastery, itself a building with some contentious history. The central experience is a 15 minute audio-visual presentation of the Battle of Vinegar Hill. There is a modest entry fee, and a wide selection of material to purchase from the gift shop. There is no official brochure about the exhibition, apart from a typed A4 sheet of paper. I visited the centre in September 2000.}
There was a strong divergence amongst leading Ballarat citizens about how the Eureka site should be interpreted. On 1 February 1990 the City formed a Eureka Project Committee, but it was daunted by the costs of holding a competition to envisage the future development of the reserve, and the idea waned. The use of the flag by numerous groups had divided the public about the 'relevance or importance of the Eureka Rebellion and its commemoration'. Council decided to commission the University of Ballarat's Tourism Department to carry out a survey of community attitudes, and provide background for a new submission to government. This was done in 1992 and the data was incorporated into a submission for a $4 million centre to Prime Minister Paul Keating on 4 December 1992, in the lead-up to the 1993 Federal election. Keating promised a better hearing, as he espoused his desire for an Australian republic. With Ballarat a marginal electorate, there were high hopes that Keating would promise funding, but when he caught a wiff of local disunity over the issues of the location of the true site of the battle and the best place for displaying the Eureka flag, the proposal was rapidly dismissed.

Sovereign Hill has been very successful in interpreting life on the goldfields of the 1850s. The Gold Museum did not have the same drawing power, and few visitors saw its Eureka exhibition. Steve Crabb, Minister for Tourism in the Cain Labor government, suggested to Sovereign Hill director Peter Hiscock that he should capitalise on the Eureka story by setting up a sound and light show. Board Member Peter Tobin admitted that he was skeptical of the idea of an outdoor performance at night in Ballarat, and spoke against it, but was delighted that it succeeded. According to David Lowenthal, such 'son-et-lumiere performances dramatise the past, setting it off from surrounding nearby excrescences and modern obtrusions', presenting the possibility of changing the past. This dramatisation of events has been seen by hundreds of thousands of visitors from throughout Australia and the world. According to Sovereign Hill’s market research, audiences were inspired with the wish to visit the actual site of the stockade and learn

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40 Parks and Recreation Department Report to Ballarat City Council, 29 June, 1991.
43 Lowenthal, The Past is a Foreign Country, p. 271; Raphael Samuel comments that the idea was imported into Britain in 1958 from France, the idea of floodlighting historic sites, combining visual sensation with dramatic entertainment, Theatres of Memory, vol. 1, London, Verso, 1994, p. 179.

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more about Eureka and its impact on Australia. This finding appears to have made Sovereign Hill interested in the possibilities of interpreting the site itself.  

1994 was the year of reconciliation for the many protagonists, for the 140th anniversary was too good an opportunity to waste. The unification process began with a proposal to place a Eureka Precinct on the Register of the National Estate. This went forward from the City on 6 December 1993, based on extensive research by a University of Ballarat Tourism student, Stuart Toplis. The City set up a Eureka Broad Interest Group, which brought together all those people and organisations interested in promoting Eureka to plan the anniversary celebrations. It also encouraged Paul Williams, Secretary of the Eureka Stockade Park Committee, in his idea of forming the Eureka Stockade Memorial Trust.

The City of Ballarat formed this Trust in 1994 with representatives from the City of Ballarat, Sovereign Hill, the University of Ballarat, the Trades Hall, the Art Gallery, the Ballarat Historical Society, the Eureka Stockade Park Committee, the Eureka Commemorative Society, Eureka’s Children and a Federal parliamentary representative. Dr Frank Hurley from the University of Ballarat became the initial chairman of the organization that would raise funds for works or activities associated with the commemoration of Eureka. The Trust Deed identified its aim ‘to be a catalyst for the promotion of the Australian spirit’ and to raise funds for ‘a Eureka education and interpretation centre of national significance dedicated to the ideals of Australian democracy and peaceful democratic reform’. Although it was not mentioned at the time, Williams’s plan was to re-invigorate the Park Committee’s early 1970s idea of a museum, but with the addition of an educational role for the new Trust, which was strengthened through the involvement of Associate Professor Kevin Livingston and myself from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Ballarat, and Dr Rod Lacey and Dr John Molony from the Australian Catholic University. Professor Weston Bate also became a member, and the aim was progressively to appoint national figures to the Trust. Within a year Gough Whitlam and Malcolm Fraser accepted the invitation to become patrons of the Trust, a strong symbol that the Trust was not party-political, and

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46 Charter of the Trust, first meeting 28 October, 1994. I was appointed as a Trustee at this first meeting. Minutes relating to the formation of the Trust are in the City of Ballarat Archives.
that its interests were national. In 1995 the Eureka Rebellion Historic Precinct was added to the Register of the National Estate as a site ‘of National significance for its association with one of the most influential events in Australia’s history’. Initially there was almost total agreement with the ‘heritage precinct’ concept and united support for revised submissions for Federal and State government assistance for the development of a master plan for the reserve and for the design and building of an interpretative centre.

The Eureka Centre Submission

As the Trust was being established, the City was putting together a submission to Canberra for funding of a Eureka Trail, which would include an archaeological dig at the Eureka site, the construction of an observation tower at the Stockade, an orientation centre at the cemetery and a walking track following the route which the military had taken in their attack upon the Stockade in 1854. The funding was sought under a Federal Tourism initiative, and the submission seems to have been somewhat arbitrarily put together in a desperate attempt to secure something from the Federal kitty. The City also asked Sovereign Hill to prepare an application to the State Government’s Agenda 21 Community Support Fund for $2.4 million for a Eureka Interpretation Centre. The proposal, entitled ‘The Eureka Heritage Precinct’ spoke about building an ‘interpretation centre (museum)’, showing confusion between the roles of an interpretation centre and a museum. It specified that ‘a large-scale version of the Flag of the Southern Cross’ would fly from a tall flagpole. The proposal spoke of a gallery space with changing exhibitions of material on loan from institutions like the Art Gallery and Gold Museum, and an exhibition hall containing a Timeline passage that would re-create, in life-size scale, the battle at the Stockade. A ‘discovering Eureka’ hallway would allow exploration of the controversies surrounding Eureka, allowing visitors to assess information and make their own discoveries about Eureka - showing an acknowledgment of recent historiographical debates. The proposal made quite clear the importance of linkages with other heritage

47 Michael Ronaldson, the Liberal MHR for Ballarat from 1990 to 2001, was a committed and valuable member of the Trust.
49 Submission to Regional Tourist Development Program, submitted 17 November 1994 by City of Ballarat, seeking $468,000. An application for funding for a Sovereign Hill project went to Canberra at the same time.
50 Eureka Stockade Memorial Trust, Minutes, 9 December 1994.
sites in Ballarat that held original Eureka memorabilia. In the business plan, it was estimated that a centre would attract 78,000 visitors a year, including 10,000 school children. (This worked out at just over 200 people every day.) The figure was based on the fact that *Blood on the Southern Cross* attracted 68,000 people in its first year of operation.\(^{52}\)

A number of contentious issues arose from the submission. Thinking was muddled between the role of an interpretation centre (for tourists) and a national monument, between an audio-visual centre that re-created an experience against a museum displaying the surviving artefacts of the historic event. The proposal was a tourism-based one, aimed at promoting Ballarat and complementing other Ballarat attractions such as the Gold Museum and the Art Gallery. Significantly, it made no mention of the original Eureka flag. Its estimate of 78,000 tourists seemed amazingly optimistic, given that the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery had just achieved a record attendance for 1994 of just over 40,000!\(^{53}\)

Most of all, the submissions for Commonwealth and State funding were confused about the issues of what Davidson and Spearritt in their study of the tourist industry in Australia called 'sacralisation and simulacrum'.\(^{54}\) The authors examined the imprint of travel and tourism on the landscape in the wake of changes to travel and taste. The history of tourism is a branch of social history, reflecting the change in Australia’s dependence on sheep as a basis of the economy to a dependence on tourism. With this new emphasis on tourism, the authors argue that ‘sites’ become ‘sights’, which go through a process of ‘sacralisation’ - of being marked off, framed, enshrined, mechanically and socially reproduced. They use the example of the Eureka Centre to illustrate their argument - the huge representation of the Eureka flag above the Centre and the fragment displayed in the ‘reflective space’ drawing parallels to a religious experience. Here is a confusion between ‘sacralisation and simulacrum’. As Smithsonian director Stephen E.Weil pointed out, museums that hope to sustain themselves ‘as both a meaningful and viable institution will have to find that point on the spectrum (between market and mission) where they can

\(^{52}\) Ibid., p. 35.


comfortably accommodate both.\textsuperscript{55} The 1994 Eureka submission was not clear on its mission or its market.

**Who Owns History In Public?**

According to the Welshman Pyrs Gruffudd, the interpretation of heritage is at its most potent when it admits the mythic element in the construction of identity and engages with the debates about identity. It is at its most dangerous when it hides the construction, and attempts to inculcate a hegemonic view of history.\textsuperscript{56} This sums up the furious debate unleashed in Ballarat by the submission. Who owns history in public and how should the Eureka story be told in the proposed centre? A majority of Eureka Trust members had misgivings about some aspects of the submission, which had been prepared by Sovereign Hill and indicated ownership of the centre would be with Sovereign Hill. The Trust asserted, through its chairman Professor Frank Hurley, that ‘the Trust expects to play a central role’ in public consultations to develop the concept.\textsuperscript{57}

Another group wanting a role was Eureka’s Children, who claimed to represent the descendants of those who fought on either side at the Stockade. The group, drawing on the estimated 10,000 descendants, has been influential in working to collect stories, documents and myths and to preserve the cultural memory of the Stockade with the hope that these can be made available to all Australians.\textsuperscript{58} Susan Crane has written about the problem for museums of the lack of congruity between personal memory and expectation on the one hand, and institutional representation on the other.\textsuperscript{59} She argues that museums have played a key role in the formation of historical consciousness, which she describes as ‘a personal awareness of the past and a desire to understand experience with reference to time, change and memory’. Because historical consciousness exceeds the bounds of texts and institutions, it complicates and distorts the expectations of museum visitors.\textsuperscript{60}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{57} Press Release, Professor Frank Hurley, 24 March 1995 (attached to minutes, 17 March 1995)
\item \textsuperscript{58} The idea of ‘cultural memory’ was espoused by the Australian Heritage Commission in 1995.
\item \textsuperscript{59} Susan Crane, ‘Memory, distortion and history in the museum’, *History and Theory*, v. 36, no. 4, 1997, pp. 44-63.
\item \textsuperscript{60} Ibid., pp. 45-6.
\end{itemize}
Crane's thesis is certainly borne out by the vociferously critical stance taken by Eureka's Children.

Then there were the academics, historians and creative artists who took a more detached view of the events and their consequences and who re-interpreted the legend with each generation. In December 1994 Kevin Livingston and I arranged a conference at the University of Ballarat, which examined the issue of how interpretations of Eureka's significance have changed from generation to generation, and looked ahead to the centenary of Federation, examining the growth of nationalism and republicanism. At the same time exhibitions were held by the Gold Museum and the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, which presented a wide range of materials for review and discussion. The conference and the exhibitions stimulated debate about the issue of interpretation of a contested historical event.

In May 1995 the Federal government announced funding for the Eureka Trail proposal. This led to a series of public focus group meetings, held at the Eureka Stockade Hall, where the concepts were discussed and refined, with agreement on the need for a Master Plan for the Eureka Reserve. So far, so good for Habermas's concept of the 'public sphere', with a robust but productive exchange of views in the Eureka Hall. These meetings were chaired by the Chief Commissioner of Ballarat, Cr Vern Robson, who had been appointed by the Kennett Government following its dissolution of the elected councillors in the re-organisation of local government in Victoria. This perceived attack on local democracy provided an undercurrent to discussions in Ballarat. However Robson commented optimistically in the local newspaper that whilst 'over the past 140 years this topic has frequently produced controversy and polarisation, the present proposal had attracted a degree of unanimity and goodwill not previously seen'. Fateful words - for the war was about to erupt!

On 12 September 1995 the State government announced that the application for finding for the Eureka Interpretative Centre had been successful. (A Victorian election was

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62 Courier, 24 May 1995 reports the $318,000 funds boost. The archaeological dig was not funded.

63 Courier, 5 July 1995.

64 Courier, 13 Sept. 1995 reports the $2.4 million from State government.
looming within the year, and Barry Traynor held the seat of Ballarat East for the Liberals by a margin of just 23 votes!) Two weeks later Commissioner Robson addressed a public meeting, outlining funding details, and he announced that the Minister for Tourism had appointed a Eureka Project Special Committee, which would develop the project. Although called as a ‘public meeting’, Robson referred to it as a ‘public briefing’. The Eureka Trust, which had been driving the development of the Centre, found itself gazumped by this new, government-appointed committee. Instead of having a national vision for Eureka, the new committee was made up entirely of Kennett government appointments with a very local focus. The Liberal Party clearly dominated both State and local government at this time, holding all local parliamentary seats and having appointed the three commissioners to replace the elected local Council. Hence the special committee consisted of two commissioners, local MLA Barry Traynor and former Liberal MLA Tom Evans. Community representatives were Paul Stephens (a lawyer), Lydia Aitken (Australia Day Committee), Keith Bartlett (representing Service Clubs) and Peter Butters (Ballarat Historical Society). Professor Frank Hurley was the representative of the Eureka Stockade Memorial Trust and Peter Tobin of the Eureka Commemorative Society.

Significantly there was no academic historian on the committee. Historical expertise was provided by the former Liberal member of the Legislative Assembly for Ballarat North, Tom Evans. Evans was not an academic, but had invested much time since his retirement in reading about Eureka and his particular passion was the ‘actual’ site of the Stockade, which he argued was some distance from the Eureka monument. From his study of records in the Parliamentary Library he also believed that there was a ‘one true facts’ version of the Eureka story. He was an avid writer of letters-to-the-editor in the local newspaper, and also in a number of full-page advertisements that he paid for in order that the ‘myths’ of Eureka would be demolished. Most of all he attacked the Eureka Trust members and their belief in the national significance of Eureka. Evans travelled to Melbourne frequently to visit Government Ministers, and he had a strong influence over the make-up of the committee that was appointed by the Minister for Tourism. His influence is obvious in a curious condition of the grant, that ‘funding is conditional upon the City of Ballarat confirming that having regard to public debate on the actual location

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66 Eureka Project Public Meeting, 27 September, 1995, Minutes. Janet Dore, Chief Executive Officer of the City of Ballarat, was appointed Chairperson. Vern Robson and Bruce Clark, Commissioners of the City of Ballarat, were appointed members.
of the Stockade, the chosen site is an appropriate site to establish such a project.  

This was confusing because the issue of the site had been satisfactorily solved by the registration of the heritage precinct, which had satisfied everyone but Evans. The statement seemed to deliberately ignore all the other debates about Eureka.

The new committee’s first initiative was to invite expressions of interest from architects, landscape and exhibition designers for a design competition for a centre that would ‘commemorate, educate and interpret’ and which would give ‘a fair go’ to all community views. At a heated public briefing on 14 December 1995, there was much criticism of the haste of the process, its tourism-driven nature, and lack of opportunity for public involvement. This probably led to the City exhibiting design concepts at the Art Gallery in February, and inviting comments, which were passed on to the panel of five members of the Eureka Project Special Committee who chose the winning design. At another public briefing on 29 February 1996, Commissioner Robson announced that the architectural firm of Phillip Cox, Sanderson and Partners had been appointed. Their imaginative design was a circular form that nestled into the earth, with a huge 50-metre high mast carrying a representation of the Eureka flag. The project director, Patrick Ness, saw the concept as a landmark building that paid respect to the ‘sacred site’, for he believed firmly that the Eureka Stockade had made a fundamental contribution to Australian democracy. The huge banner, to be seen all over Ballarat, would be a powerful symbol of Australian identity. The circular building form represented the Stockade and much of the building would be underground to symbolise the importance of mining to Ballarat. Within the building would be exhibition spaces, a commercial area and a commemorative space. The winning design concept was universally acclaimed.

However, the building needed a display, a narrative and images within the architectural and landscape spaces. Deciding on the interior of the centre highlighted all the problems of popular history, lying according to David Brett between chronicle and scholarship, seeking the ‘truth’, but not claiming critical self-reflection. From his Northern Irish

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68 The Committee ratified a ‘Call for Expressions of Interest for Professional Design Services for a Eureka Interpretative Centre’, on 11 October, 1995. Eureka Special Committee Minutes, 9 November 1995; Courier, 11 November 1995, advertisement for expressions of interest; Public Briefing meeting, 14 December 1995, at Town Hall.


70 City of Ballarat Public Briefing, Notes of meeting, 29 March 1996. See also Courier, 1, 7 March 1996, p. 3.
experience, Brett found that problems of national representation rise to the surface where there is no 'agreed' national narrative around which an unproblematic heritage can be constructed. This proved to be the case in regard to Eureka.

**Gestation of the Narrative**

The Eureka Special Projects Committee appointed a Historic Content Sub-Committee, which met for the first time on 11 December 1995 and which would be responsible for the interior exhibition. There was no information available publicly about the terms of reference or membership of this committee, although it gradually emerged that local Member of Parliament Barry Traynor had appointed the members under the influence of Tom Evans. The members appointed to this most important committee were Professor Geoffrey Blainey (chair), Tom Evans, Peter Butters and Lloyd Jenkins, the last three all amateur local historians. Butters and Jenkins were also Board members of Sovereign Hill. Professor Blainey had recently been appointed by the Kennett Government as foundation Chancellor of the new University of Ballarat. Conspicuous by their absence were Professors Weston Bate and John Molony, both Trust members and academic historians who had written acclaimed histories of Eureka. Bate had been commissioned by the City Council to write Ballarat's history and was an obvious choice, and Molony was acknowledged as a Eureka expert, writing from a Catholic radical-nationalist perspective. Evans had been highly critical of these two historians for peddling myths about Eureka, as opposed to his 'colourful, exciting story' based on the 'true facts'. His story would allow no discussion of republican ideas or democracy, for he was adamant that the Victorian constitution had been formulated before Eureka. He characterized the stockaders as a band of drunken rioters with not an ideological bone in their bodies.

The composition of this sub-committee was attacked at the public meeting held at the Ballarat Town Hall on 14 December 1995. Although the City appeared to be taking pains to consult and to listen to the views of the public, there was an uneasy feeling coming from both the Eureka Trust and Eureka's Children that their contribution was being deliberately ignored so that the Evans version of the Eureka story would be told in the new centre. The City seemed to be following a 'fair go' policy when it called for public

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submissions to Professor Blainey. However, unease was reflected in the letters-to-the-editor column of the *Courier*, which alleged that these submissions received scant attention. The public consultation appeared to be token.

The issue was of such concern to Eureka Trust members that Professor John Molony gave a stirring Public Lecture on the 'Significance of Eureka' at the Aquinas Campus of the Australian Catholic University in February 1996, and my article 'Eureka: The Search for Meaning' was published as a feature article in the local newspaper and in the *AHA Bulletin*. Trust member Kevin Livingston, wrote to academic historians throughout Australia, urging them to comment to Professor Blainey. Livingston organised a public seminar ‘Eureka Centre: Historical Content and Context’, which was held at the Ballarat Mechanics’ Institute on 12 August 1996. The seminar examined the ‘story line’ prepared by Mary Akers, recently retired from Sovereign Hill, who had been commissioned by the Historic Content Sub-Committee. Her script, very similar to the ‘Timeline’ mentioned in the original funding proposal, was a basic chronology of events between 1851 and April 1855. It was well supported by primary source references, but gave no overall direction to the designers of the final exhibition content, of the ‘feel’ and ‘tone’ of the exhibition. Weston Bate attacked the script, questioning why the City should appoint professionals to design the centre, but leave the content in the hands of amateurs. It was a simple chronology of 20 events, divided into three sections - Preamble, Central Story and Aftermath, but there were no themes indicated. ‘The Aftermath’ occupied just ten percent of the chronology. This was the gist of comments made to Professor Blainey by

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73 On 3 Feb. 1996 there was a call from Historic Content Sub-Committee for public submissions, due within two weeks. 19 submissions were received. I was asked to speak to the Sub-Committee, along with Jack Harvey, which I did on morning of 27 March, stressing the political importance of Eureka, especially in terms of changes to administration of goldfields. Submissions were considered at 27 March Historic Content meeting, and all submitters received a form letter thanking them.

74 John Molony, *The Significance of Eureka*, Ballarat, Eureka Trust in association with the Australian Catholic University, 26 February, 1996; reported by John Lahey in *Age*, 27 February 1996.


76 Kevin Livingston, ‘Eureka Centre’, *Australian Historical Association Bulletin*, no. 82, May 1996, pp. 64-68.

77 Mary Akers was given six weeks to complete a 60-page script. The Enola Gay script took 12 months, and the script for the Holocaust Museum in New York took 7 years!

78 *Courier*, 15 August 1996.
experts such as Dr Linda Young from the University of Canberra, Dr Alan Mayne and Dr Don Garden from Melbourne University.\(^79\)

In the middle of this heated public debate, some new 'content' came to light, in the guise of the Charles Doudiet sketchbook. The Canadian sketchbook was to be auctioned at Christies in Melbourne and there was great competition to acquire these fresh new views of the pivotal events of 1854. Such sketches would be important for any exhibition seeking to interpret the Eureka story. There was some discussion as to whether the new Eureka Centre should bid for the sketches, but Peter Hiscock reminded the public that the centre was not envisaged as a museum. The Ballarat Fine Art Gallery took up the running on the issue, galvanising local support and finally winning the backing of Premier Kennett, so that the Gallery acquired the sketchbook after a heated bidding war in the auction room on 20 August 1996.\(^80\)

The Historic Content Sub-Committee met to consider public submissions. Ruan Maud, a retired lecturer in political science from the Ballarat College of Advanced Education, was becoming a critical observer of the process, writing letters to the editor and attending meetings, and he felt that the sub-committee was beginning to feel threatened by criticisms about the lack of professional historical expertise. The committee moved to meet 'in camera' and project manager Eugene Kneebone remarked that even historians may not reach 'the true interpretation'! All substantive criticisms of the historic brief, such as the considered comments of Drs Young, Garden and Mayne, were ignored, apart from Mary Akers being asked to 'tidy up' a few factual errors.\(^81\) Weston Bate reacted passionately to this, arguing that the Centre should be concerned with offering explanations, rather than narrative – it should be about 'making meaning'.\(^82\) Bate later used the simile of the bricklayer - you do not leave him a pile of bricks and expect him to build a house, if he has no building plans. This was effectively what the Sub-Committee was doing - giving the designers a large number of facts, and asking them to construct a

\(^{79}\) Kevin Livingston to Geoffrey Blainey, Historic Content Sub-committee, 1 September 1996. Letter attaches the comments of Garden, Mayne and Young.

\(^{80}\) The sketchbook was sold to the Ballarat Gallery at a Christies Auction on 20 August 1996, for $245,000, with the Kennett Government contributing $100,000 from the Community Support Fund. *Courier*, 21 August, 1996. I first drew attention to the sketches in my letter to the editor of 2 July 1996.

\(^{81}\) Historic Content Sub-Committee, *Minutes*, 2 September 1996

\(^{82}\) *Courier*, 3 September 1996.
story. That same evening the Eureka Trust met and passed a vote of ‘no confidence’ in the Historic Content Sub-Committee and called for the appointment of ‘nationally significant’ historians to develop the content.

On 14 September 1996 the debate reached its zenith, with feature-length letters-to-the-editor from John Molony, Kevin Livingston and Tom Evans printed in the Courier. The tune was the same one that had been played all year - on one hand Molony and Livingston argued the need for any exhibition to reflect changing uses of Eureka over time; on the other, Evans reiterated his demand to tell the ‘one true, colourful story’.

The Eureka Special Project Committee reacted at its meeting on 19 September 1996. In the public gallery were Ruan Maud, Paul Murphy and John Ireland of Eureka’s Children and the Courier reporter. Evans stated that the draft had not yet been formally approved, and Blainey said the Historic Content Sub-Committee ‘welcomed public discussion’. This seemed unlikely, as this committee met ‘in camera’ and resisted distribution of its minutes. Blainey said that an overwhelming majority of the 20 replies to the Akers briefing paper had been completely constructive. In fact, critical observer Ruan Maud, who followed the meetings of the Sub-Committee closely and wrote many letters-to-the-editor criticising the process, found that the majority of the 20 replies had been highly critical. Blainey suggested, rather surprisingly, that key decisions about what would be left out or included should be left to the designers. The designer, McGee, pleaded for a basic message, asking what do you want people to come away with? Jenkins replied there should be no basic message, repeating Butters’s idea that visitors should make up their own minds. In a concession to community criticism - the ‘public sphere’ represented by the letters-to-the-editor columns of the local newspaper – the sub-committee agreed that Professors Bate and Molony, John Ireland of Eureka’s Children and Peter Hiscock of Sovereign Hill be invited to provide their views as ‘guest consultants’.

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83 Weston Bate, reflecting on the Eureka Centre at a history seminar at the Ballarat Mechanics’ Institute, 10 August, 2001
84 Courier, 3 September 1996.
85 Courier, 14 September 1996.
86 Sadly he died suddenly in September 1997, while he was working on a manuscript unravelling the historical process.
87 Eureka Project Special Committee, Minutes, 19 Sept. 1996. See also Courier, 26 Sept. 1996, letter from Cr Geoff Howard.
Just when the Eureka Trust was congratulating itself on a victory, came a crippling blow. The Eureka Special Committee, now intent on fundraising, realised a problem for its fundraising campaign existed because the Trust had been granted tax deductibility status not long after its formation in 1994. Tom Evans said (ominously) at the 19 September meeting that the Trust’s tax deductibility was ‘in Barry Traynor’s hands’. What he meant is that he had put pressure on Traynor to find a way of invalidating the Trust’s tax deductibility status. On 6 December 1996 the Trust members were called to the Town Hall where the Mayor told them that the Trust has lost its tax deductibility status because the Tax Office had decided it did not meet the definition of a museum under the act. This was a severe blow to the national aspirations of the Trust, and a victory for Evans. Tax deductibility status was awarded instead to the Eureka Special Committee, which would conduct an appeal for funds for the Centre. At one fell swoop Evans had decimated the aspirations of the Trust of raising money for scholarships and educational projects.

Heated public debates about the content of the centre continued throughout the autumn of 1997, so much so that the editor of the *Courier* issued a ban on all further letters about Eureka after giving the chief protagonists, including myself and Tom Evans, a last opportunity to write a 700 word piece for a special feature published on 12 May 1997.

Just after this, it was announced that Sovereign Hill had won a publicly advertised tender to manage the centre. From this point control over the exhibition, though not the script, was handed over to Sovereign Hill staff, so that it came to resemble the original Sovereign Hill submission. Trust members continued to write to the City emphasising the importance of exploring the issue of national significance, but the exhibition content still ignored events after 1855. In a sudden change of tack, Sovereign Hill suggested in mid 1997 that the centre should include air-conditioning so that original artefacts and art works could be displayed. The State government indicated that extra funding would not be forthcoming.

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88 Eureka Special Committee, Minutes, 19 Sept. 1995, p. 11.
89 Letter to me from Bruce Morgan, editor of the *Courier*, 11 April 1997, signalling a moratorium because letters have become personalised over point and counter-point. The Eureka experts invited to submit were myself, Peter Butters, Tom Evans and Martin McGettigan.
90 City advertised tender on 15 February 1997; *Courier*, 14 May 1997, p. 5, announces Sovereign Hill as winning tenderer.
91 Eureka Historic Content Sub-committee, Minutes, June-Sept, 1997
The Trust, through Professor Kevin Livingston, won funding from the Australia Foundation for Culture and the Humanities and Visions Australia to make a film *Flying the Flag* about the Eureka Flag, which would explore larger national issues.\(^{92}\) I wrote to the City and the designers suggesting that this film should be shown at the centre. The film examines the myths of Eureka, in a fashion totally at odds with the Tom Evans view. However Sovereign Hill’s professional historian, Dr Jan Penney, had now been installed as manager of the center, and she approved of the film.\(^{93}\) At last the proponents of the ‘national significance’ of Eureka had won a victory, because the film reflects on uses and significance, an example of Nietzsche’s critical history.

John Molony’s suggestion for a name change to the Centre was also accepted about this time. The Eureka Interpretative Centre became the Eureka Stockade Centre, with the contentious word ‘interpretative’ dropped. Molony had argued passionately that the word ‘stockade’, resonant with memories of human sacrifice, must be used.\(^{94}\)

The sudden death of Ruan Maud, an articulate public critic, shocked members of the Eureka Trust, but also stiffened their resolve to ensure that more than Evans’s story of Eureka was told. On the day of Maud’s death, 29 August 1997, a large paid advertisement was inserted in the *Courier* by Evans, headed ‘A Message of Truth’. Maud read it over breakfast and cut out the advertisement, phoning the newspaper office to find out how much it cost, before he went off for his game of golf, where he suffered a fatal heart attack. Perhaps he was composing his next letter to the editor when he died.\(^{95}\)

Trust members Molony, Ireland and Bate were consulted about the text being developed for the exhibition and expressed acceptance, if not enthusiasm, about the finalisation of the ‘timeline’. The opening date for the centre had to be delayed because of the disputes over content. There was still a perception that women and children were being left out of the exhibition.\(^{96}\) Around this time too the flag issue was reignited, when Premier Kennett was quoted in the *Courier* saying that the flag should be moved to the new centre because

\(^{92}\) *Courier*, 11 Nov. 1996. The video was completed in March 1997, part of the Eureka: The First Australian Republic? exhibition, which opened at Manly, NSW, 21 March 1997.


\(^{95}\) *Courier*, 4 Sept. 1997, for an obituary of Ruan Maud.

\(^{96}\) Eureka Trust Meeting, 5 February 1998 John Ireland reported that women and children were still left out. On 20 February I wrote to Dr. Penney, expressing this concern. I received a reply, with her reassurance that I would be happy!
it would become ‘a tourist icon and you ought to be able to come and pay homage to the flag on technically the site’. 97

After the opening of the centre in March 1998, a Eureka Stockade Advisory Committee was established to advise the Sovereign Hill Board on its future development. During 1998-9 there was a campaign to correct an incorrect chronological sequence in the Timeline, which was finally amended. 98 The advisory committee, which operated from April 1998 to July 1999, was largely ineffective, because it was simply an advisory committee without access to Ballarat City Council. It was dissolved, and a new Eureka Special Committee, chaired by the Mayor of Ballarat, was established on 29 July 1999. Although its deliberations have been stormy, this committee has been robust and democratic, allowing all of Eureka’s interested parties to have their say. In late 2001 it began to consider the issue of a second stage for the Centre and whether it should seek museum status so that it could house original artifacts. 99

From ‘Cabinets of Curiosities’ to ‘Theatres of Knowledge’

A second important issue in ‘remembering for us’ revolves around the contest between historians and designers in presenting an historical exhibition in the modern museum. Sherman and Rogoff examined museums as ‘an intricate amalgam of historical structures and narratives, practices and strategies of display, and the concerns and imperatives of various governing ideologies’. 100 They distinguish between ‘exhibited culture’- what is displayed - and ‘exhibition culture’ - the ideas and values that shape the practices of exhibiting. This distinction opens up an inquiry into modes of cultural construction.

By collecting, classifying and exhibiting objects, museums construct categories and establish significance. Hence they may both sustain and construct national narratives. Drawing on the cultural analysis of Michael Foucault, these commentators suggest that museums present objects as signifiers within an artificially created institutional frame. In

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98 Eureka Special Committee, 29 July 1999. Correcting the text was one of the first issues agreed by this new committee under the management of the City of Ballarat.
99 Eureka Special Committee, Minutes (held quarterly). I was a member of the committee from the beginning.
100 Daniel J. Sherman and Irit Rogoff (eds), Museum Culture: Histories, Discourses, Spectacles, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1994, especially Introduction.
doing this they also construct the viewer, the audience. Sherman and Rogoff suggest there are four structuring concepts in the study of museums - the object, the context, the public and the reception. The discipline of Cultural Studies argues that culture operates through spectacles and through the ceaseless reproduction of mass-media practices. Thus the spectacle becomes a form of cultural legitimacy. This is even truer of an interpretation centre, where the story is carefully scripted, as such centres rely on storytelling rather than displaying objects. This was very true of the Eureka Centre, which was envisaged as a carefully constructed story, because it would not house original objects.

Exhibitions and festivals are deliberately engineered to promote an image of the nation to international audiences. Since the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* in 1978, scholars have become more broadly aware of the fact that identity is constructed through cultural representations. The American anthropologist Flora Kaplan makes a similar point, arguing that exhibitions 'are kinds of collective rituals, enacted to assert and perpetuate power'. According to Kevin Walsh, 'museums and heritage have promoted an uncritical patriotism which numbs our ability to understand and communicate with other nations'. Ann Curthoys sounded a similar warning in her address to Museums Australia in 2001 shortly after the opening of the National Museum in Canberra. This criticism applies to the exhibition in the Eureka Centre, which fails to raise questions about the nature of our democratic process.

In structuralist terms museum artefacts are signifiers that can give different meanings depending on the modes of their combination and the contexts of their use. Meaning depends upon their relationship with the past (the time dimension) and the political ideologies in which they are presented. Such a critique gives a valuable entree into analysing the interpretation offered by museums. The demands of the tourism industry ensure that a museum like Sovereign Hill will reconstruct the past in a particular fashion,

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101 Sharman and Rogoff (eds), *Museum Culture*, p. xiv.
which is politically acceptable - acceptable to the ruling social standards of contemporary society.\textsuperscript{107} The more a museum caters for tourists rather than locals, the more it is likely to present an idealised nineteenth-century past, remote from the experience of the metropolis, so as to be ‘authentic, exotic and eccentric’.\textsuperscript{108} As Nietzsche, Lowenthal, Bennett and Davison suggest, museums should not relegate the past to a foreign country, but should strive to develop a more critical national consciousness, ‘cutting into’ those national narratives that currently enjoy the greatest official blessing.\textsuperscript{109} 

The ‘new museology’ flowed over into the museum world as curators looked to new ways of engaging their visitors.\textsuperscript{110} This critique was expanded by Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, whose survey of American attitudes to history concluded that Americans were extensively and passionately engaged with their past - a useable past that helped answer questions about relationships, identity, immortality and responsibility. Significantly, their survey found that for Americans museums were their most trusted source of historical information.\textsuperscript{111} The authors found that museums were admired because they used the best of primary sources, including eyewitness accounts, which encouraged interaction with the resources and artefacts. The displays were the result of collaborative research, yet they encouraged visitors to draw their own conclusions from the artefacts.\textsuperscript{112}

Rosenzweig and Thelen concluded that the role of historians was not to ‘repeat the past, but to make use of it’.\textsuperscript{113} Historians and curators will be most effective where they engage the public in ‘shared authority’ for productions - whether these be oral history programs, exhibits, walking tours or documentary films. The greatest contribution of the historian is being able to introduce people to experiences of the past that extend beyond the personal and familial, thus extending the ‘imagined possibilities’ of experience beyond the private

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\textsuperscript{108} Davison, \textit{The Use and Abuse of Australian History}, p. 162

\textsuperscript{109} Bennett, \textit{The Birth of the Museum}, p. 162.


\textsuperscript{111} Rosenzweig and Thelen, \textit{The Presence of the Past}, p. 91.

\textsuperscript{112} Ibid., p. 105.

\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., p. 178.
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and parochial. Historians at the University of Technology, Sydney, have been engaged in a similar study as part of the ‘Australians and the Past’ research project, coming to similar findings. Museums play a very important part in shaping historical consciousness, in ‘remembering for us’.

The ‘shared authority’ for the Eureka Centre exhibition was very limited. It was exclusively the work of the Historic Content Sub-Committee, chaired by Professor Blainey, and it took no account of the ‘new museology’. It did not try to extend experiences beyond the personal and familial. In stressing the need for facts, it ignored imaginative representation and the possibility of exploring and challenging myths and legends.

The task of the exhibition designers, Mother’s Art/Bracegirdle Cargill Magee, was to work with the final text to develop an experience for visitors. The budget was their bottom line. The lack of original artefacts also meant that they had to construct experiences to match the ‘timeline’. They chose to use soundscapes, a realistic (over-realistic) video recreation of the death of James Scobie and the public meeting which ended in the burning of Bentley’s hotel. Text panels tell the story of the Ballarat Reform League, then lead the viewer into the core of the exhibition, the ‘larger than life sand sculptures’, which represent the battle. These large white figures have been much favoured by exhibition designers over the last decade of the twentieth century. Gourievidis comments that such ‘wax figures reminiscent of Madame Tussaud’ are a common feature of British heritage centres. Most of the design budget was spent on these huge white figures of miners and soldiers, each five metres tall, made of steel and styrene.

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114 Ibid., p. 188.
117 Laurence Gourievidis, ‘Representing the Disputed Past in Northern Scotland’, History and Memory, v.12, no.2, Fall/Winter 2000, p. 127: Davison, The Use and Abuse of Australian History, p. 172. These figures are prominent in the 1798 Centre at Enniscorthy, Ireland, and in recent displays at Ararat and Bendigo in Victoria.
In the contest between ‘exhibited culture’ and ‘exhibition culture’, the medium is the message. The spate of new museums in Australia, and indeed the world, have all manifested a pre-occupation with form and style over content, with technology over history and anthropology. Architects and designers have ensured that the modern museum is no longer a ‘cabinet of curiosities’, but instead a ‘theatre of knowledge’. The large, imposing and beautiful spaces, designed to express figurative meanings, are brimming with technology, but empty of the traditional display cases. David Dunstan found the new Melbourne Museum a failure, and berated the architect John Denton for being interested only in exterior and surface. The $290 million building, with ‘its vast glass and spaces to heat, air-condition, protect, light and fill make it a gift that keeps on

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118 The public debate was waged in the media throughout 2001. An excellent example was an Insight documentary on SBS television, 22 November 2001, called ‘Museums - Relevant or Relic’, which brought together leading museum staff and critics. Keith Windschuttle and Dr Tim Flannery, of the South Australian Museum led the defence of the traditional museum, while Dawn Casey of the National Museum and Martin Hallett of Museum Victoria led the attack.

taking'. Similar criticisms apply to the new National Museum in Canberra, and to the Eureka Stockade centre in Ballarat. The Cox Sanderson Ness design is a beautiful sculptural space, but large areas are impractical for exhibitions because of curved wall surfaces and exposure to direct sunlight. It has proved a nightmare to maintain, with continual water problems and even a humble light globe costing $300 a pop, and requiring the hire of expensive scaffolding to change the globe. These problems led Sovereign Hill to hand back management of the center to the City of Ballarat from September 2002.

**Interpretation Centre versus Museum**

Robert Hewison coined the term ‘heritage industry’ in 1987 to describe the huge development in ‘heritage centres’ and modern (non-government) museums in Britain in the past two decades. Underpinning this growth has been a rise in popular interest in the past and desire to be informed by the tourist experience. By 1984 international tourism had become the second largest item of global trade. Rosenzweig and Thelen identified this interest in their study. Duncan Light writes about the enormous educational potential of interpretation centres, such as the Jorvik Viking Centre in York in northern England, which have to balance education and entertainment. In such centres the interpretation must be entertaining in order to hold the interest of the visitor, at the same time taking account of the great variety of educational, age and ethnic backgrounds of visitors. Because interpretation centres are part of the heritage industry, they must also be commercially successful. Urry in *The Tourist Gaze* identifies interpretation as being the central corollary of the tourist gaze. The rise of leisure and travel in the late twentieth century led to the need for tourists to gaze upon history, but through the mediation of


121 Eureka Stockade centre Special Committee. Minutes of monthly meetings frequently refer to maintenance problems with the building.

122 *Courier*, 21 March 2002, retaining wall problem highlighted.


124 Duncan Light, ‘Heritage or informal education’, pp. 124-5.

some kind of interpretation.126 Gourievidis discusses the rise of heritage (interpretation) centres in Northern Scotland, asserting the interest of such centres in telling stories, rather than displaying objects.127 Robert Lumley argues that our globalised, postmodern world has seen the collapse of old cultural canons, and that in such a context 'heritage' becomes a sign of postmodernity. The differences between heritage centres, museums and theme parks dissolve, and all become focused on offering 'an experience' to the visitor, 'a simulacrum' of the past'.128 Kevin Walsh looked at the same issue, commenting how British museums, under threat from the rise of the 'heritage industry', incorporated many of the features of the new heritage centres.129 Museum consultant Elaine Heumann Gurian sees this blurring of roles as a positive trend, because both museums and interpretation centres are concerned with 'the physicality of a place and the memories and stories told therein'.130

Sovereign Hill manages to achieve a balance between education and entertainment at its open-air museum. Dozens of volunteers, the Friends of Sovereign Hill, dress in period costume and are expected to assume a character from the 1850s in their interaction with visitors. Davison comments that visitors want 'to be immersed in the past rather than being informed about it'.131 He describes Sovereign Hill as a 'theatre without walls in which patrons and museum staff conspire in an elaborate game of historical make-believe'.132 Volunteers, carefully trained for their roles by curatorial staff, are a vital part of Sovereign Hill's success, for the organisation places a high value on historical accuracy. To this end Sovereign Hill employs a number of historians with museum qualifications, who maintain the balance between informing and entertaining.133

While Light talks about the balance between education and entertainment, a very important element in the equation is commerce - making money out of history. This was a

128 Roger Lumley, 'The Debate on heritage revisited', pp. 57-69, esp. p. 66.
129 Kevin Walsh, *Museums and Popular Culture*, p. 11.
132 Ibid., p. 168.
very important element in the establishment of Sovereign Hill, and it has been brilliantly successful in that aspect, becoming one of the major contributors to the Ballarat economy. A 1999 tourism survey showed that Sovereign Hill was more recognisable than Ballarat itself, thanks to its marketing. That publicity machine invites the tourist to ‘wake up in the 1850s’, to re-enter the past, and prides itself on its authenticity - as do its successful counterparts like Colonial Williamsburg in the United States and Ironbridge Museum in England. Hooper-Greenhill stresses the commercial role, suggesting that in the new museum ‘visitors as lookers and learners are repositioned as consumers’. Replicas are often presented in lieu of the authentic object, and museums have been redesigned to resemble shopping malls, with the most prominent space allocated to shops and cafes.

On a more intellectual level, a forum conducted by the National Museum of Australia under the title Museums; An Argument With Their Own Society examined the role museums can play in developing a greater awareness of their social, cultural and physical environment, as a means of increasing their capacity for meaningful citizenship. The forum agreed on the importance of the educative and interpretative roles of the museum, rather than the traditional curatorial role. It emphasised the importance of designing exhibitions that arouse curiosity and intellectual challenge. It emphasised too the importance of real objects as the heart of any exhibition.

Role of Objects

Since the first discussions about interpreting the Eureka site in the 1970s, the question of ‘interpretation centre’ or ‘museum’, and the issue of artefacts, has been a central topic of debate. When government funding was finally forthcoming in 1995, it was definitely ‘tourism’ money, and the emphasis was on the commercial aspects of the representation rather than the educational or inspirational. Weil’s careful balance between mission and market became an issue. The Ballarat City Council required that the centre be a low-

137 Museums; An Argument With Their Own Society, Clayton, National Centre for Australian Studies, Monash University, 1994. (Discussion paper from a forum conducted by the National Museum of Australia as part of the ‘Ideas for Australia’ program.)
overhead operation, with minimal staffing, no professional curatorial staff and no museum collection. As an interpretation centre, it would rely on audio-visual technology for its effects - on sound, sculptural bodies, and film. As a tourist experience, it should mix education with recreation through telling a dramatic story, in the same way as heritage centres in Britain and Ireland. As Gourievidis points out, interpretation centres by their nature present a highly scripted, controlled visitor experience. Commercial and political imperatives coalesced in the interpretation centre, allowing Tom Evans to have his ‘one true story’ version of Eureka. The Eureka Stockade centre presents a highly structured presentation of fixed knowledge, using new media, but very dogmatic in both its design and execution. In fact the display ignores all the possibilities of the new media - the possibility of interactivity, of questioning, of the ‘adventure game’ mentality, which opens itself up to multiple interpretations. The viewer has no opportunity to negotiate a path - the path is very much set by the interpretation, and it is one way only. The role of the new media in opening up the public sphere has been ignored in the current display, except in the video that begins to address the legend and its sometimes contradictory uses. The control of public memory by the Historical Content Sub-Committee ensures that the exhibition narrative is open to only one reading. It ignores the possibilities opened to the new museum of challenging the old certainties of monumental history by presenting variant histories. Lowenthal suggests that these can be explored using new sources such as ‘furtive media, oral history and vernacular usages’.

Reactions to the Eureka Stockade Centre

David Brett lists three criteria for analysing the ideal historical exhibition. The first is visualisation - the modes of pictorial convention that are employed. The second is simulation - the accurate replication in three-dimensional form - using people, sounds, smells etc. The third is the narrative topology - the arrangement of spaces and connections.

138 Gourievidis discusses centres in Scotland; Brett those in Northern Ireland; see also ‘Unsavoury Histories’, Australian Museums Online Journal, v. 2, 2000, which discusses some centres in Australia and Ireland; Richard Gillespie, ‘Making an Exhibition’, Meanjin on Museums, p. 120 coins the term ‘edutainment’.

139 Gourievidis, ‘Representing the Disputed Past in Northern Scotland’, p. 127.

140 Gay Hawkins and Julian Thomas, ‘Museums and the new media’, Media International Australia, no. 89, November 1998, p. 8

suggested between them - the circulation pattern. This topology is a form of rhetoric, which seeks to persuade the viewer.  

Both Blood on the Southern Cross and the Eureka Stockade Centre are strong on visual images, simulation through sound, and both employ a strict narrative topology. Judith Kapferer, a sociologist, examined Blood on the Southern Cross and saw it as a commercial activity with a didactic function. In reinforcing the radical nationalist myth, it legitimised the commercial enterprise by the shaping of community consciousness about civic duty. Davison saw its function rather differently:

By emphasising the imagination of the visitor, rather than the ingenuity of the museologist...it has taken an important step away from the notion of history is a set of facts to be presented and towards the idea, now current amongst historians, that it is something constructed by the reader or viewer.  

He then reflected on the Eureka Centre, reacting positively to the large white figures that ‘reinforce the heroic, even mythic character of the event’, and he concluded that the centre ‘skilfully negotiates’ the dilemma of telling the true story as against exploring interpretations, and he notes the importance of the video and the Hall of Debate which ask questions of meaning and significance.  

Many visitors have not reacted so positively. Children particularly can be frightened and overwhelmed by the huge figures. Peter Hiscock, who had a key role in the final stages of the design brief, reflected that ‘the display medium of the visitor wandering past giant figures, whether upright or prostrate, demeans Eureka. They seem rather reminiscent of fallen statues of Lenin or Stalin which litter the Russian landscape’. Hiscock had undergone a dramatic change of opinion from the time when he had a major influence in the design phase of the project.

The sculptures might be heroic in scale, but they are cold and lacking in emotion. The display panels that present the chronology are very text based, yet they make little use of

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143 Judith Kapferer, ‘Heritage Tourism and Identity Construction’.
144 Davison, The Use and Abuse of Australian History, p. 171.
145 Ibid., p. 172.
146 Discussion with my own history students, and Education Officer Gael Shannon, June 2001.
original sources, some of which 'make your hair stand on end', according to Weston Bate.\textsuperscript{148} Despite the heated controversy about the construction of the time-line and the narrative that would be presented, Peter Hiscock suggests that few people read the text.\textsuperscript{149} Hiscock argued, surprisingly in view of his earlier involvement, that the centre needs more real objects. If it was upgraded to museum status, he suggested it could have items from the Public Record Office, the Art Gallery and the Gold Museum. Alex Barnett of the Eureka Stockade Park Committee had the same reaction: the centre needs to display relics to bring its story to life.\textsuperscript{150}

The most important relic that people such as Barnett, Hiscock, Gough Whitlam and Paul Murphy all come back to is the Eureka flag. In 2001 the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery opened a new gallery to house the flag. Its subdued light serves two important functions - excellent conservation, and creation of a reverential atmosphere. The Gallery firmly believes that it is the appropriate home for the Eureka flag, in terms of providing the best possible conservation and because it is an art work, but the debate will continue.\textsuperscript{151} If the Eureka Stockade centre is to aim to collect original artefacts, it must concentrate on the 'available items' that might be donated or come up at auction. Deciding to collect original artefacts would require design decisions for the building to include conservation and security, and would require a commitment to supervision by trained curatorial staff, and a budget for purchase of materials. These are the very concerns which the Ballarat City Council rejected in the original brief for the centre, but were revisited in 2001 in the discussion of a second stage for the Centre.\textsuperscript{152}

The truth was that the Eureka Stockade centre had failed to reach its very optimistic visitor projections.

\textsuperscript{148} Weston Bate, ‘Tell Warts and all of Eureka story’, \textit{Courier}, 3 September 1996
\textsuperscript{149} \textit{Courier}, 5 June 2001.
\textsuperscript{150} Interview with Alex Barnett, Eureka Street, Ballarat, conducted by the author, 11 June, 2001.
\textsuperscript{151} \textit{Age}, \textit{Courier}, 26 October 2001.
\textsuperscript{152} Eureka Special Committee, Minutes, September-November 2001
## Visitations To Tourist Attractions In Victoria, 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attraction</th>
<th>Visitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sovereign Hill</td>
<td>587,458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood on the Southern Cross</td>
<td>92,847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Museum, Melbourne</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum</td>
<td>73,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballarat Fine Art Gallery</td>
<td>48,275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eureka Centre</td>
<td>43,584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool Museum, Geelong</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Sovereign Hill Annual Report 1999-2000, p. 7. The visit by Queen Elizabeth to Sovereign Hill on 24 March 2000 had a very positive affect on visitations.)

The 1994 business plan’s estimate that the centre would attract 78,000 visitors a year proved wildly over-optimistic. The figure was based on the fact that Blood on the Southern Cross attracted 68,000 people in its first year of operation, and many visitors expressed an interest in going to the Stockade to find out more about the event. That interest has not translated into actual visitations. Whilst Blood on the Southern Cross has been enormously successful in telling the Eureka story, especially to international visitors, less than half of those visitors go to the Centre. Very often visitors are on packaged tours that preclude them from spending time in Ballarat. The appeal of the Eureka Centre is much more to Australian citizens than to international visitors, who make up just 5% of visitations. At the other end of the scale, less than 5% of the Ballarat population visit the Centre.

### Possibilities

The Eureka Stockade centre has become a new ‘lieux de memoire’, but it lacks emotion. Like the huge white statues, it is devoid of humanity. Some people have claimed it needs relics, but that is not the role of an interpretative centre. Gourievidis suggests a solution in the example of Scottish heritage centres. Successful exhibitions there engage visitors as participants and developers of the exhibitions. This is true of several recent Irish

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153 'The Eureka Heritage Project, 1994', p. 35
154 Figures come from the report of the Eureka Centre Manager, 2002.
exhibitions, representing contested political events. The Collins Barracks campus of the National Museum of Ireland in Dublin has an exemplary exhibition, which was set up for the bicentenary of the 1798 Rebellion, called 1798 - Fellowship of Freedom. It places the Rebellion within the context of European events, and critically examines the contested versions of its history. The exhibition includes many interesting objects - pictures, documents, uniforms, swords and pikes - drawn from the National Museum collection. But is the questions the exhibition asks that make it memorable. It includes a section titled '98 After '98 - The Politics of Memory', showing how the story of the 1798 rebellion was appropriated as part of the Catholic nationalist story. By 1898 the Protestants - both Ulster Presbyterians and Dublin Anglo-Irish - had been written out of the story. Especially influential was the Rev. Patrick Kavanagh’s History of the Insurrection of ‘98 (published in 1870), which was immensely popular and placed Father Murphy and fellow Catholic priests as the central protagonists. The exhibition argues that what had originally been an organised rebellion became understood as a provoked insurrection. The exhibition explains how Kavanagh’s story left out the Protestant nationalists and reflects on the conflicting memories of the event, concluding that there were atrocities perpetrated by both sides.

Following the example of Collins Barracks, Eureka’s Children could be asked to contribute to the exhibition at the Eureka Stockade centre. They could pose questions through examples of personal memorabilia, provoke the historiographical debate, bring passion to the Centre and contribute to Lowenthal’s ‘variant history’. Gaynor Kavanagh offers a number of ways for incorporating oral testimony as both product and process in her study Dreamsplaces, which draws on the example of social history museums such as the Edinburgh ‘People’s Story’, the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, and the pioneering work of the Irish Folk Lore Commission. Her argument supports the importance of objects as memory triggers, and the importance of collecting and presenting memories of the objects. ‘The object remains mute, yet its meanings are battled out between the lives, feelings of self and identities of a range of people’. Her reference here is to the Enola Gay dispute in America in 1995, but she could equally be speaking of the Eureka flag. A very informative exhibition could be created around the

156 I visited Collins Barracks in September 2000, and was immensely impressed.
contest over the flag, which would raise important questions about identity, and engage
visitors in issues of personal and social memory. Part of the exhibition would be a
mechanism for collecting the stories and reactions of visitors. Such an exhibit could also
engage in the question of who made the flag, thus bringing women’s stories into the
Centre.

A very important issue which the Centre avoids is the site itself, which can be thought of
as the most important relic. There is no interpretation in the centre to discuss the heated
public debates about the location of the battle site, or the construction of the 1884
monument, or the commemorative practices that have taken place in the reserve.

Conclusion

It is timely to reflect on Pierre Nora’s observation that ‘temporal and topographical
memory sites emerge at those times and in those places where there is a perceived or
constructed break with the past’. 158 He was thinking of the French Revolution, and the
way that middle and working classes took up the task of commemoration, as a way of
obliterating the hated past of the ‘ancien regime’. Nora’s study of French history revolves
around ‘lieux de memoire’, locating the ‘memory places’ essential to French memory, a
huge project embarked upon in the Mitterand era. 159 So it is interesting to ask why the
Eureka centre emerged in the 1990s, in the Kennett era? Was it officially perceived as a
break with the past, an attempt to construct a new official version of history, an attempt to
be part of the ‘grand regime’ of Jeff Kennett, who also funded the transformation of the
Museum of Victoria, the State Library and the National Gallery? Or was it more
pragmatically an example of pork-barrelling, a gesture to the always swinging electorates
of Ballarat? Gambling is also important, because it was the Kennett Government’s
Community Support Fund, derived from the unexpectedly high government percentage of
gambling revenues after the introduction of poker machines and casinos, that allowed
generous support for Victorian arts and tourism projects. Kennett took a personal interest
in Ballarat because of his close friendship with Rob Knowles, the MLC for Ballarat
Province. He was genuinely interested in the Eureka flag, and in 1995 spoke of it as ‘a
living symbol of an event which has had an enormous influence on the development of a

158 Gillis, Commemorations, p. 8, quoting Nora.
159 Pierre Nora, Lieux de Memoire, translated into English as Realms of Memory, NY, Columbia
truly Australian democracy and on our sense of nationhood'. He intervened personally at the urging of Rob Knowles to help the Gallery secure the Doudiet sketchbook, and approved funds for the Eureka Centre. I think this is evidence of his genuine interest in Eureka. At the opening of the Centre he said that it 'will be recognised as an international cultural and tourism icon' which 'will commemorate a civil uprising which forever changed the face of Australian history'. Here is a nice paradox, to have a conservative Victorian premier constructing a binding national past out of a rebellion against the Victorian government! His words demonstrate the effectiveness of the 'myths and legends' that Tom Evans had so strongly railed against, and Kennett's own ambition to be part of a nation-building myth. But Evans did ensure that the exhibition avoided any dissection of the myths and legends.

Peter Tobin suggested that the success of Sovereign Hill's *Blood on the Southern Cross* played an influential role in the emergence of the centre. Kevin Livingston suggested that the role of the Eureka Trust was vital in bringing people and organisations together in 1994 when funding submissions were presented to State and federal governments. There is an element of truth in both suggestions. It was also significant that Ballarat was a marginal electorate, and governments were anxious to win favour with the electorate by funding local projects. That the applications for funding were so well prepared in 1994 is a tribute to the professionalism of Sovereign Hill in all avenues of its operation.

The stockader John Lynch wrote his account of Eureka in 1893-4 when he was 65 years old, and he informed the reader that he had set down the details in writing because 'the time is fast approaching when there will be no living witness of those things past'. Paula Hamilton supports this view when she argues that history and memory are essentially interdependent, for as memory is gradually lost, history steps in to write down the stories. Here she echoes the words of Raphael Samuel, commenting on Halbwachs, that 'history began when memory faded'. This then, could be the function of the Eureka

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160 *Courier*, 25 Nov. 1995, p. 3, at the unveiling of the newly conserved flag, made possible by a Community Support Fund grant.
161 Eureka Centre supplement to the *Courier*, 27 March 1998, p. 2.
Stockade centre - to be a place of collective memory which enriches the sacred site of the Stockade, and makes the Reserve an 'environment of memory'.

Susan Crane argues that for museums to be relevant, they must engage personal memories in the production of their histories. Only by this engagement can the irreconcilable differences in understanding 'what is history' be bridged - the divide between the academic conception of 'critical history' and the popular conception of history as 'the true facts' of what has happened in the past. These have bedevilled the remembering of Eureka and been the cause of continuing controversy. However, the possibility arising from this conflict is the use of history to elucidate memory, to enrich the 'sites of memory' with the living oral tradition passed down by Eureka's Children.

Where questions of collective memory are involved, there will always be contest in the public presentation of historical events, as Gourievicis and David Cohen argue. Should it be the memory of the miners, the soldiers, the government of the time, the citizens of the present? The emergence of postmodernist theory in the late twentieth century has profoundly changed museums and interpretation centres, as Lumley and Lowenthal argue, blurring the differences between them, given the collapse of old cultural certainties which have been replaced with a spirit of relativity. This critical history is represented to some extent in the new museums of Melbourne and Canberra, but both give scant regard to the Eureka story or to the importance of gold on Australia's development. There are, however, some thoughtful 'exhibits' available through the Internet, including a Eureka exhibit on the Australian Museums On Line site.

Should heritage sites (lieux de memoire) be represented by simulacrum or sacrilisation? The question has not been resolved at Ballarat. The questions which Robert Lumley posed back in 1988 in *The Museum Time-Machine* are still germane - the role of commercialisation, the question of reality and how to represent it, and the impact of the

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166 Crane, 'Memory, Distortion and History in the Museum', p. 63.
169 In the Australiana Gallery of the Melbourne Museum, 'Gold' appears as the second of eight steps in the 'Making of Melbourne'. There is a fleeting reference to Eureka in the context of Victoria's gold discoveries of the 1850s. The National Museum chose to open in 2001 with a temporary exhibition *Gold and Civilisation*, which did address the issue of political impacts of the gold rushes.
media. Issues of ownership and control have been paramount, both in relation to telling the story (interpretation) and presentation of artefacts (real versus replicas). Because of the nature of the Eureka story, because so many different collective memories have claimed it as their own, the contest is unlikely to be resolved. However the contest should contribute to the development of the full potential of the Eureka Centre.

CHAPTER 8
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EUREKA

Personal Inspiration

On 26 February 1855, a daughter was born to Andrew and Margaret McIntyre at Ballarat. They called her Margaret Eureka. In choosing the name ‘Eureka’ for their daughter, they were making an important statement about the significance of the events that they had recently lived through. In fact Andrew McIntyre was still in gaol in Melbourne, serving a sentence for arson at Bentley’s Hotel, a crime of which he was clearly innocent. His wife spent the last months of her pregnancy in the family tent in Ballarat, with her young daughter, who was the only witness to the birth, without doctor or midwife. Yet the McIntyres were prepared to call their daughter ‘Eureka’, as were a number of other parents of the era. The Ballarat Times of 10 March 1855 thought that the naming of Margaret Eureka McIntyre ‘serves to show the deep root which late transactions have taken in the memories and feelings of our community, when such names are given that they may become “household words” there is an evidence that the events of the last few months are not destined to be forgotten in haste’.2

The events would not be forgotten, although at times there would be attempts to suppress the memory when it conflicted with popular notions of imperial duty. Margaret Eureka McIntyre went to live in Scotland with her family in 1859 and later became Lady Fairweather of Renfrewshire, a member of the British aristocracy. Yet she cherished a letter written by her father to his brother in Scotland in 1855. In this letter McIntyre gave an account of the events in which he was embroiled, justifying the actions of the diggers in reacting to the ‘gross maladministration of the worst laws

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2 Ballarat Times, 10 March, 1855.
McIntyre was no revolutionary, no republican, no Chartist, but having personally suffered from the maladministration of the law, he rejoiced in the courage of the diggers who pledged their lives to fight for their rights and liberties. Hence the naming of his child, which was his attempt to ensure that Eureka remained a 'household word' in his family.

This thesis has examined the historical record of what happened at the Eureka Stockade. It has delved into what the press made of the event and how it was reported around the world. It has looked at how later generations remembered Eureka and what inspiration they drew from it. Gradually a legend was formed, nourished by the poets and writers, filmmakers and artists and musicians. Within families, personal mythologies of the event were nourished and embroidered. Withers described the 'chaos of contradictory descriptions' he had gathered about Eureka and much later Geoffrey Serle discussed the 'bewildering variety of explanations for the causes and significance of Eureka which have often been characterised by over-simplification and biased distortion'. What conclusions can be drawn about the significance of Eureka and its contribution to Australian identity?

My interest in Eureka was prompted in 1966, as a Matriculation student in what was then quaintly named British History, when I read for an examination question on the significance of the Eureka Stockade. A major source was the Historical Studies: Eureka Supplement, which still remains a treasure chest of provocative thoughts. Thirty years later I met Bob Walshe, who made the most thoughtful contribution to that volume. Bob told me that his essay grew out of his own studies in history at the University of Sydney, after World War Two, when he commenced a doctoral study on the subject, but had to withdraw and earn a living as a schoolteacher. Meeting him for the first time was to experience at first hand the power of the legend of Eureka, which had infused his life. Retirement from teaching left him free to dedicate himself totally to the betterment of his community, fighting local 'maladministration of bad laws' in exactly the same way that the Ballarat Reform League had done back in 1854, by organising, holding meetings, collecting petitions, writing pamphlets and policies. Bob

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3 Letter from Andrew McIntyre to his brother, Bakery Hill, 29 March, 1855. Mr A.A. Kerr made a copy of the letter in the 1930s and gave it to the Ballarat Historical Society. Copies now held by the Ballarat City Council and La Trobe Library, State Library of Victoria, MS 8077. Unfortunately the last part of the letter is missing.

Walshe brings together a broad collective of people from different economic and political perspectives, all motivated by the same humanist ethic.

While Walshe works quietly in the southern suburbs of Sydney, fighting for community issues, the spirit of Eureka inspires other people in very different ways. It inspires the nationalists Al Grassby and Gough Whitlam, who did so much in their brief term of office to promote Australian independence and multiculturalism. To Dean Mighell and his fellow members of the CFMEU it gives a different inspiration, as they carry Eureka flags at union demonstrations protesting against the erosion of working conditions, the maladministration of working sites. It inspires former communist Evelyn Healy in Sydney, who accompanies the nuns from her retirement village on their visits to the Villawood Detention Centre, and she paints still, raising money for the asylum seekers whose plight is ignored by government. It inspires the republicans Thomas Keneally and Phil Cleary, who hope that one day soon the Eureka flag will wave over the Republic of Australia. It gives meaning to the lives of descendants of those who were at the Stockade, as they busily collect memories and celebrate in their organisation Eureka’s Children. In Ballarat, it is the driving force for Paul Williams and his Eureka Stockade Memorial Association (formerly Trust), which seeks to promote the Eureka Stockade Centre as a national centre for the study of democracy. All of these people are living witness to the continuing relevance of R.S. Ross’s ‘Stockade Everlasting’.

The complex motivations of the original protestors ensure the same complexity of uses of the tradition of Eureka today. Hence radical Right wing groups, whom Al Grassby would utterly disdain, also draw inspiration from the tradition. Then there is the commercial exploitation of Eureka, with many people and organisations marketing products under the label of the Eureka flag.
Perhaps the most successful marketing has been Sovereign Hill's promotion of *Blood on the Southern Cross*, which since 1992 has taken the story of Eureka to so many thousands of Australian and international visitors. A sound and light show is the most popular way of keeping alive the story, of making new myths. No one has questioned the story that is presented, unlike the long and very public fight that took place in Ballarat over the content of the Eureka Stockade Centre. The sound and light show presents the story as an exciting series of events, leaving the viewer to come to their own conclusions. They may feel, as Tom Evans does, that Eureka is just a colourful event in Australia's otherwise fairly dull history. It lends itself to a good dramatic performance, with a murder mystery, the burning of Bentley's Hotel, the unfurling of a new flag and swearing of an oath to die for it, a vicious licence hunt by police, culminating in the bloody battle on Sunday morning between the redcoats and diggers. Great material for an action-packed adventure.

But it is not the 'colourful event' that inspires people like Len Fox, Bob Walshe, Val D'Angri and John Molony. For them Eureka is remembered because of the cause which the diggers fought for. Although some historians have belittled the place of Eureka in Australian history (Sweetman, McQueen, Manning Clark, Gordon), whenever after December 1854 men felt they were being maladministered, they would talk of erecting the Stockade again. Weston Bate in *Lucky City* interpreted the
significance of Eureka as being ‘the release of radical energies’, which gave people ‘a sense of national purpose and a hatred of English stuffiness’. Australia did not have the baggage of a conservative political tradition as England had; thus Eureka became the beginning of its democratic tradition. The skills and tactics of political organisation used in Ballarat in 1854 passed to other places and other causes. Ballarat diggers spread out across the goldfields, first in Victoria and then across Australia, following the arc of discoveries north and west, as Geoffrey Blainey describes in his history of mining. The tactics of mass political protest would be used in protests against laws relating to mining on private property, both in Victoria in the 1850s and in Western Australia in the 1890s. Miners would organise protests at Lambing Flat, at Clunes, at Barcaldine and at Kalgoorlie where the name of Eureka was invoked. The old Stockaders traveled around the country, telling their story around campfires and in one famous case, to William Lane in his newspaper office in Brisbane in 1889, allowing the story of one of these itinerant diggers to be captured permanently in print. Their story became an inspiration to other groups fighting for causes - seamen in 1870, shearers in 1891, anti-Conscriptionists in 1917, waterside workers in 1939, Communists in 1951, republicans in 1975, waterside workers in 1998.

I have distinguished between immediate political effects of Eureka in terms of changes to political and social life in the 1850s in Victoria, and what later generations thought was the important lesson to be drawn from events. Geoffrey Serle; echoing Vance Palmer, saw the importance of Eureka as lying in the tradition that grew around it, rather than in its direct impact on society during the 1850s. Walshe spoke of two sides to tradition: on one hand the heritage aspect of looking back to our origins to see where we have come from, and on the other hand the ‘active influence of these events in shaping the future.

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8 *Boomerang*, Brisbane, 16 February 1889.
upon the present'. Let me characterize those traditions. But first I want to disagree with Serle and Palmer in emphasising only the tradition.

Immediate Effects

Bob Walshe argued in 1954 that Eureka was directly responsible for the introduction of responsible government, because the chief minister of the government, the Colonial Secretary Foster, resigned on 11 December 1854. Serle later challenged Walshe on this claim, saying that he did not use the term 'responsible government' correctly - namely, dependence of the executive on a parliamentary majority. However Serle himself admits that responsible government could be understood in another way, as a government being responsible to the people. In this sense Walshe is correct, for Governor Hotham reacted immediately to the strength of popular opinion as exhibited in mass protest meetings in Melbourne. The strength of this popular movement from December 1854 through to March 1855 ensured that a Royal Commission conducted a quick and effective inquiry, and that the treason trials should end in farce, with juries refusing to convict any of the thirteen men tried for treason. Although Serle thought Walshe had exaggerated the strength of the popular political movement in Victoria, the popular movement did win a number of important immediate reforms. Serle himself admits that Eureka was a 'dramatic incident that ushered in the first period of great democratic victories in Australia'.

All of the recommendations of the Goldfields Commission were accepted and implemented, with the abolition of the hated goldfields commission and the introduction of the Miner’s Right. For an annual fee of one pound, the holder of the Right was allowed to mine on Crown lands anywhere in the colony, given the right to build a house and garden on a piece of Crown land and the right to vote for parliament. The goldfields gained political representation through the immediate creation of eight goldfields electorates. Honorary magistrates from the mining population were soon appointed, miners' Courts and Mining Wardens appointed to administer the goldfields, and land around the goldfields made available for purchase.

10 Bob Walshe, ‘The Significance of Eureka’, p. 76.
11 Ibid., pp. 62-7, especially p. 67, gives a detailed explanation of events, how they were interpreted by the newspapers, and by later historians including Sweetman.
13 Ibid.
The changes to the administration of the goldfields were incorporated into the Goldfields Act that was passed by the Legislative Council in June 1855. Mining historian Ralph Birrell argues that ‘the political pressure exerted by the miners, and the merchants and shopkeepers who supported them, had forced the Governor and Legislative Council to accept the small alluvial diggers’ control of the processes and scale of the mines’. The new system of local courts, paid members elected by miners, brought thorough-going democracy to the goldfields. The residency clause of the Miner’s Right led to the development of goldfields towns. At one stroke it enacted the utopian dreams of William Cobbett, for men of little capital were able to acquire very cheaply a block of land, and establish a cottage and garden. This regulation facilitated the development of settled communities, of families and of social life in goldfields towns, as J.A. Powell, the secretary of the Ballarat Miners’ Association, noted in 1871. In 2001, many Victorian families can trace their tenure of residential quarter acre blocks of land to the operation of the Miner’s Right.

The Victorian system of goldfields administration was adopted by the other Australian colonies, Westgarth being very early to observe this phenomenon when he wrote in 1864 that ‘the Victorian reforms were taken up in NSW, British Columbia and New Zealand’. Birrell gives an excellent analysis of the new mining laws introduced in 1855, and shows how the Victorian Mining Statute of 1865 was the basis of mining legislation by all other Australian colonies. Blainey sees this mining code as ‘the high tide of Australian democracy’, which gradually adapted to allow ‘the rapid and orderly growth of capitalistic mining’. I would argue that this development of large-scale mining was not an effect of the 1855 mining code, but developed from the further reforms of 1857, which were aimed at the facilitation of large parties of working

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14 An Act to Amend the Law Relating to the Goldfields, Vic. 18, no. 37.
18 My claim is backed up by Weston Bate, Lucky City, p. 91; Peter Butters, The News, Ballarat, 15 February 1995, p. 7.
shareholders developing deep alluvial mines. It was the geology of the goldfields, which often locked gold up with quartz and other ores, requiring large amounts of capital to release the gold, which necessitated the development of capitalist mining.

This 'hard-won democracy'\textsuperscript{21} flowed over into new miners' unions, such as the Diggers' Mutual Protection Society instituted on 27 September 1855.\textsuperscript{22} According to Harry Pearce, the Society started in Creswick, with a membership of 522 and delegates were sent to other goldfields where more branches were formed. Its last activity was a huge meeting on Bakery Hill on 13 March 1857, attended by 4,000 miners, where speakers reminded the crowd of the Eureka Stockade and the possibility of needing to use physical force.\textsuperscript{23} Serle concludes \textit{The Golden Age} by reminding the reader that the diggers' reform movements were the driving force behind the democratic movement in Victoria in the 1850s.\textsuperscript{24}

These changes to goldfields administration were a form of social engineering that revolutionised the development of goldfields communities, leading quickly to the inauguration of local government.\textsuperscript{25} The way was paved for the most important debate the Goldfields Commission signaled, the debate over land. The Land Convention of 1857 had strong ideological links to Chartism and the Ballarat Reform League. I have argued that the movement to 'unlock the lands' through free selection acts was mobilised by the radical energies released at Eureka. However, that is a subject beyond the scope of this thesis.

\section*{Symbolic Effects}

On 10 April 1855 Peter Lalor wrote to the \textit{Argus} and argued 'that a British Government can never bring forth a measure of reform without having first prepared a font of human blood in which to baptise the offering of their generous love'. His rhetoric began the transformation of the Eureka Stockade into legend.

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{21}Birrell's term, \textit{Staking a Claim}, p. 40.
\bibitem{22}Membership card held by Sovereign Hill, in \textit{Gold and Civilisation} exhibition, 2001.
\bibitem{23}\textit{Ballarat Star}, 14 March, 1857.
\bibitem{24}Serle, \textit{The Golden Age}, p. 380.
\bibitem{25}The Ballarat Municipal Council met for the first time on 14 January 1856, just over one year after the Eureka Stockade.
\end{thebibliography}
Geoffrey Serle saw Eureka’s primary significance in terms of ‘its strength as a tradition, a tradition nurtured by three groups - the miners of Ballarat, the labour movement, and Irish-Australians’. 26 Chris Healy examined that tradition in more detail and concurred with Serle, arguing that the event was abstracted into the meta-narratives of labourism, nationalism and Catholicism. 27

Writing for the communist faithful in the Tribune’s Eureka supplement on 1 December 1954, Walshe was less positive about the achievements of the diggers. Whilst Eureka had been ‘immensely progressive in accelerating the establishment of capitalist-parliamentary democracy’, it was ‘only the beginning of the continuing struggle to enstate Socialism in place of Capitalism’. This was the view of Manning Clark in 1954. 29 He attacked the comforters of Australian history, including those of the Left, and the poets like Victor Daley who ‘began to create a pantheon of democratic victories in the past’. 30 He set out to ‘prick the bubble of this conceit’, by asserting the importance of the pre-gold workers’ movement, the pre-gold democracy movement, and thirdly, the strength of the squatters’ hold on the land, which lasted until the 1890s. He claimed that the illusion of a radical tradition had warped the reality of nineteenth century Australia, especially through the myth of mateship, the ‘great comforter of the bushman’. 31

Manning Clark was not the only historian to belittle the significance of Eureka. Blainey thought that ‘in Australia’s quiet history, Eureka became a legend, a battle cry for nationalists, republicans, liberals, radicals or communists, each creed finding in the rebellion the lessons they liked to see’. 33 Writing from a very different ideological perspective, the ‘New Left’ young Marxist historians of the early 1970s vigorously attacked the idea that there might be any significance in the Eureka Stockade. Leading the charge were Humphrey McQueen, R.W. Connell and T.H. Irving, who explain the

29 Ibid., p. 135-6.
30 Ibid., p. 135.
31 Ibid., p. 136.
32 Blainey, The Rush that never ended, p. 56.
33 Ibid.
clash of miners and authority on the goldfields in economic terms, arguing that the alluvial miners were 'acquisitive individuals' to whom economic independence was a key principle. 

McQueen was to some extent echoing Brian Fitzpatrick's 1946 critique, when he said that the gains of the diggers 'were more appearance than reality'.

Stuart Macintyre, one of the New Left historians, similarly suggests that 'rebellion might be too strong a term for a localised act of defiance'.

A recent reiteration of the economic rationalist view came from Governor-General Bill Hayden, in Ballarat to launch Bob O'Brien's book on Eureka in November 1992. Hayden described Eureka as 'the first great tax revolt in Australian history'.

But if Eureka was just 'a localised act of defiance', why does it continue to be commemorated and memorialised, and why do Eureka flags appear at every conceivable protest meeting? An immediate answer could be that the commemoration is just local, confined to Ballarat. However the evidence I have presented shows that the commemoration and uses of Eureka have spread throughout the continent.

The Process of Myth Making

Macintyre accepts that 'the Eureka Rebellion became a formative event in the national mythology'. The oral transmission of stories and the role of memory, both private and public, are central to the Eureka Legend. Vance Palmer was one of the first to describe the process in 1954 when he pointed out that the historical episode at Eureka proved fruitful for the myth-maker. It could easily be woven into the national dream because of the memory of men raising the flag of the Southern Cross and taking an oath.

Ian Turner was aware of Manning Clark's warning not to allow one's socialist

\[\text{References} \]


35 Walshe, 'The Significance of Eureka', p. 123.


37 Speech made at the launch, 28 November 1992, quoted by David Miller, 'The Eureka Tradition', p. 35.


39 Palmer, *The Legend of the Nineties*, p. 51. Manning Clark later used a similar expression in his lecture 'Heroes of Eureka', Austin McCallum Oration to the Eureka Commemorative Society, 'We should be grateful to the diggers who gave us a flag and a hope', Ballarat, 1985, copy in Australiana Room, Ballarat Library.
leanings to make one see significances that did not exist in fact. Turner accepts Clark's warning, but goes on to write of the importance of myth in history - the continuity of historical events leading to the creation of myth. Such is the case with the history of protest and revolt, which goes back to the Spartacists of ancient Rome, the Diggers of 1640 in Cromwell's revolution, to the Diggers of 1854. Turner felt that 'the existence of the myth is itself reality, and it is what men believe to be the case which shapes their actions rather than what is the case'.

The ideas of Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson have been important to this thesis, exploring the place of myth in history and the way in which life stories are shaped by myths and tradition, as people make sense of the past from the standpoint of the present. They argue that national sentiment and identity cannot be studied without reference to the myths that inform those sentiments. In the process of story-telling about Eureka, myths have been shaped in particular ways and for particular purposes.

Paula Hamilton and Kate Darian-Smith have also been illuminating guides, identifying the importance of national myths, which are explanatory narratives giving a historical rationale for our present identity. Rather than giving us a contextualised history, myths leap through time, drawing on a select number of emotionally charged images and 'symbolic moments'. They draw on the example of the Anzac legend, which draws elements from the nineteenth century pioneer legend, to create the basis for a national myth. I would argue that Eureka and the gold digger are fundamental to this national myth.

Vance Palmer lauded the poets and writers of the late nineteenth century who created the 'legend of the nineties'. Palmer's thesis has been attacked by many since then, but there is no doubting the power and emotion of the verses penned by Henry Lawson and Victor Daley, or the influence of the Bulletin, the Worker, the Boomerang and the Tocsin in the 1890s in spreading a working-class culture. The young Russel Ward

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42 Kate Darian-Smith and Paula Hamilton (eds), Memory and History in Twentieth Century Australia, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1994.

43 Ibid., p. 2.
reviewed Palmer’s book in November 1954. Ward pointed to the pithy summary of the book on the dust jacket, which asked whether the genesis of an Australian national tradition manifested itself in the nineties, or whether it was expressed in the period from Eureka to Anzac? Palmer argued that in the nineties ‘the real national impulse came to a head, to create an Australian voice, character and sense of community, without which federation would have been meaningless, perhaps impossible’. Ward drew attention to the many forces that shaped the national tradition, including the ‘vulgar but vigorous flood of gold-diggers providing at Eureka a potent symbol for the future, and strengthening the middle class to threaten the dominance of the shepherd kings’.

He saw Palmer’s achievement as focusing attention on the ‘myth-making’ element of the process of creating a national tradition.

According to Geoffrey Serle, the Bulletin ‘built up a group myth about Australians and their destiny...in seeking a “usable past” it promoted a version of history which glorified the digger and Eureka’. Noel McLachlan agreed with both Palmer and Serle, exploring rebellious events as ‘mythmoteurs’ for the development of nationalism, with ‘legends always stronger, more durable, than pedantic truth’. He argues that the ‘instant mythmaking’ of Carboni’s book had little impact because it went out of print so quickly. For some time it became a new cautionary tale about preventing revolution, ‘but the pantheon had been planted and its ambiguity in the end proved a godsend’. Like Palmer, he attributes the translation of Eureka from a local to a national legend to the work of poets and writers of the 1880s.

I have argued that this translation was triggered by the death of Peter Lalor.

Artists and art galleries have also been important arbiters of national myths. Fiske, Hodge and Turner cite the ‘Heidelberg School’ myth of the 1890s, and Sidney Nolan’s

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48 Ibid., p. 103.
49 Ibid., p. 104.
50 The author makes the revealing aside that in 1950 Keith Hancock had suggested to him that he undertake doctoral research into English reactions to Eureka.
Ned Kelly myth. I have demonstrated the important role that the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery has played in transmitting the Eureka myth through its presentation of the Eureka flag and associated art works.

Chris Healy thought that the translation of Eureka into myth occurred at the end of the nineteenth century, as the old Stockaders died and the event passed out of living memory and was abstracted into the meta-narratives of labourism and nationalism and Catholicism. Bob Walshe offered a different explanation. He believed that it was only in moments of crisis that the memory of Eureka was revived and used. I believe that the process of myth-making started immediately after the event, as in the example of the naming of children. This process was local, and remained linked to the Ballarat region until diggers began to travel to other goldfields where stories about Eureka were shared around the campfire. The process gathered impetus with the death of Stockaders, most notably in reaction to the death of Peter Lalor. Walsh’s notion of times of crisis and Greg Dening’s concept of ‘metrical moments’ have also proved important triggers for dusting off the myths and embroidering them.

The Labour Myth

The Left wing tradition was discussed by Ian Turner, who saw the Stockade as ‘the only armed conflict between people and government on Australian soil, and the diggers who died passed into the Australian radical pantheon’. He recalled historical events such as Eureka and the 1890s strikes as part of ‘a continuing tradition of protest and dissent, of struggle for political rights and social justice, on which we drew to validate our belief in the possibilities of an Australian socialism’. According to Walshe, Victoria had created the most advanced political democracy in the world in the 1850s, but the people had not used it effectively to win democratic reforms. When later crises arose, they called on the achievements of Eureka for reassurance and courage in present battles. Hence the striking trade unionists of the 1890s, particularly the striking shearsers at Barcaldine in Queensland in April 1891, turned to Eureka for

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55 Ibid.
inspiration and flew Eureka flags. There is support for this theory in the words of the New South Wales politician and trade union historian E.W. O'Sullivan who wrote in 1890 that 'the fight at Eureka Stockade laid the foundation of a vigorous democracy ...and sowed the seed of trade unionism'. From that time Eureka appears frequently in trade union calls to radical action. In 1909 W.G. Spence would write of Eureka as 'our first great strike'. R.S. Ross used the identical expression, calling the diggers' action of burning licences 'Australia's first great strike'. Monty Miller in 1917 urged his listeners to 'remember that Sunday morning, when the sheet of musket fire ushered in the light that made a new and better day for the working classes of Australia'.

Spence, Ross and Miller were developing a myth that Karl Marx started back in 1855, when he wrote about 'the revolutionary movement in Victoria arising from the workers'. It was certainly chased by Communist Party members in the 1930s to the 1950s and Eureka was then woven into the communist tradition. Len Sharkey, the leading communist in the 1940s, interpreted Eureka as a victory for the workers against the imperialist state, because they won 'an extended franchise and a new Constitution'.

The communist artist Ambrose Dyson drew the following images in 1951, as part of the campaign to stop the Menzies' Government banning the Communist Party. It links major events in Australian history into the socialist /communist tradition. Eureka is central to this tradition.

56 Ibid.
58 W.G. Spence, Australia's Awakening, p. 20.
61 Published in Neu Oder-Zeitung, Breslau, 1855, reproduced in G. Gold (ed.), Eureka, p. 111.
63 Ibid., p. 34.
The Democracy Myth

Dr H.V. Evatt’s statement made in 1940 that ‘the Eureka Stockade was of crucial importance in the making of Australian democracy’ has become much quoted. Evatt did not mean that it procured a new constitution, as Sharkey and some others have claimed. Serle, Blainey and Ballarat local historian Tom Evans were all adamant that Victoria’s constitution had already been sent to London for approval before

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64 Golden Jubilee Souvenir of the ALP, Sydney, 1940.
Eureka. Writing at the same time as Sharkey, the keen legal mind of Dr. Evatt amplified what he meant by ‘crucial importance’:

It procured for the miners equality in political status, a franchise both in the general government of the colony and in the local administration of mining laws. It accelerated a general movement towards unlocking the Crown lands of the country. It certainly hastened the inauguration of responsible self-government in Victoria. In the end, public opinion and popular agitation prevailed over mere legalism.  

Evatt is in fact writing about the gains won by the Ballarat Reform League, as I have outlined in Chapter 2. That League laid the basis for Australian democracy by ensuring, in Robin Gollan’s words, that ‘the language of Australian politics would from then on be the language of democracy’. Even Evatt’s arch political enemy R.G. Menzies would describe Eureka as ‘an earnest attempt at democratic government’. Later political leaders such as Gough Whitlam and Jeff Kennett would concur. Thus there is a political consensus about the democratic implications of Eureka, which is crystallised by the fact that both Gough Whitlam and Malcolm Fraser became patrons to the Eureka Stockade Memorial Trust. Both the Trust and the Eureka Stockade Centre share the goal of educating the public in the contribution of Eureka to Australian democracy.

The National Myth

From the moment that the banner of the Southern Cross was raised on Bakery Hill, Eureka has been seen as a nationalist and republican awakening, as I have shown in Chapters 2 and 3. Contemporaries were well aware of the nationalist implications of Eureka – most notably of ‘the Australian flag of independence’. It was the Bulletin

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67 Ibid., p. 32.
68 *Sun*, Melbourne, 17 July 1946.
that really took up the nationalist myth in 1888, with its proposal for 3 December to become our national day.\textsuperscript{71} From that time creative writers and political activists invoked the national symbolism of Eureka, none more that R.S. Ross who wrote of \textquote{a great flag flying as emblem of Republicanism, conflict of classes and masses ending in the foundation of Australian Democracy...magical manufactory of the Stockade Everlasting, whose digger builders marched in a deathless army}.\textsuperscript{72}

In 1924 Arthur Lynch, son of John Lynch, one of Lalor’s captains at the Stockade, wrote in his autobiography of the act of defiance of the diggers in \textquote{running up the flag of the Australian Republic}.\textsuperscript{73} When the former Australian Governor General Sir Issac Issacs warned of the growing threat to Australia from Japan in 1939, he praised the Port Kembla wharfies for refusing to send pig iron to Japan, comparing them to the diggers at Eureka in their stand \textquote{against an attack on our Australian democracy}.\textsuperscript{74}

Later Prime Ministers were wont to use Eureka’s symbolism for their national purposes – notably J.B. Chifley in his statement that Eureka was \textquote{the first real affirmation of our determination to be the master of our own destiny}.\textsuperscript{75} Although later writers like Serle were derisive of the republican aspects of the movement,\textsuperscript{76} many writers, politicians and artists have looked back and glimpsed republican elements, which they have linked to their own nationalist ideals.\textsuperscript{77} And Walshe was correct about his \textquote{moments of crisis} theory, for it was at national moments of crisis, such as the threat of attack by a foreign enemy, or the sacking of the Whitlam government, that Eureka flags were flown.

\textsuperscript{71} \textit{Bulletin}, 21 January 1888.
\textsuperscript{72} R.S. Ross, \textit{Eureka Freedom’s Fight of ’54}, p. 178.
\textsuperscript{74} Sir Issac Issacs, \textit{Australian Democracy and Our Constitutional System}, Melbourne, Horticultural Press, 1939, p. 25.
\textsuperscript{76} Geoffrey Serle in Raffaello Carboni, \textit{The Eureka Stockade}, Carlton, Melbourne University Press, 1969, p. xv.
\textsuperscript{77} Russel Ward, \textit{Australia}, Sydney, Ure Smith, 1967, p. 71, \textquote{stockade} defenders then proclaimed the Republic of Victoria'.
The Catholic Myth

Catholics have always felt a special ownership of the Eureka story, especially because of the strong Irish influence on the Australian Catholic Church. The Irish Catholic priest, Father Patrick Smyth, played a central role in the events and has been cited as one of the heroes of Eureka. In fact the Eureka Commemorative Society chose Smyth as the subject for the first of their annual Eureka Commemorative Lectures in 1981. Catholics became involved in the protest movement after Father Smyth and his servant suffered police brutality and rudeness, and leading members of the movement such as Lalor, Kennedy, Carboni, Hayes and Manning were all parishioners at St. Alipius. The majority of those who died at the Stockade were Irish Catholics. Their ancient enmities against English rule made them ready converts to the physical force campaign, which they in fact dominated.

This strong Irish presence meant that the events of 1854-5 would cast a strong web of interest over writers who would seek to turn Eureka into an Irish rebellion against the hated English rule. James Francis Hogan began that process in 1888. He wrote that ‘Irishmen played the most important part in the exciting episode’, a statement that has been used by many, including members of Eureka’s Children and the Irish Community today. The myth has been expounded by Catholic journals like the Freeman’s Journal and many writers of Irish descent - C.H. Currey, Patrick O’Farrell and more recently John Molony. James Murtagh in particular wrote at the time when communists were taking up Eureka as part of their tradition, and he wrote as a priest anxious to put an end to ‘unGodly’ communist influence. The Catholic Church turned defence into attack, staking the Catholic claim squarely during the centenary celebrations. Catholic clergy, ex-clergy and ex-seminarians have been amongst the most prominent advocates of the importance of Eureka - Rev. P.S. Cleary, Rev. James Murtagh, Rev. Walter Ebsworth, Father Tom Linane, John Molony and Thomas Keneally.

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79 Hogan, James Francis, The Irish in Australia, Melbourne, George Robertson, 1888, p. 77.
The Irish themselves have made much of Eureka - Michael Davitt in 1898, the Irish President Eamon De Valera in the 1940s, and Irish Ambassador Richard O’Brien, who was awarded the Eureka Stockade Memorial Association’s Citation of Honour in 2001. The following photograph, taken in 1948, sums up the Catholic meta-narrative of Eureka. The Irish members of parliament and the famous tenor Father Sydney MacEwan specifically asked to visit the monument where Irish blood had been spilt.

Visiting the Eureka Stockade Monument, 1948. Left to right Frank Aiken and Eamon De Valera of the Irish Dail, tenor Father Sydney MacEwan and Arthur Calwell, ALP leader who arranged the visit. Caldwell's ancestors were in Ballarat in 1854, although they were not behind the Stockade. From Arthur Calwell, *Be Just and Fear Not*, Adelaide, Rigby, 1978

In recent years the most important advocate of the Catholic meta-narrative has been John Molony, a former Catholic priest in Ballarat, who explains the significance of Eureka in terms of human rights, social democracy rather than political democracy, the right of every person to be treated with dignity. He echoes the judgment of the old miner Harry Hastings Pearce and of Mary Gilmore, who saw Eureka as a symbol for assertion of human dignity. For Molony and for many Catholics, this is the important message that the flag and the oath conveys.

Tourism and economic concerns

The evidence of this thesis also supports the growing importance of Eureka as a source of economic gain. The heritage industry has become big business internationally, and the great success of Sovereign Hill since its opening in 1970 is a prime example. Tourism operators in Ballarat began to use Eureka for tourism purposes from about the same time. Montrose Cottage, with its Eureka Museum; the restored Eureka Flag in the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery; the Diorama and the Eureka Stockade Centre; interpretation of the Eureka graves at the cemetery; the sound and light show at Sovereign Hill – all have become part of the Eureka experience in Ballarat, vigorously branded and promoted by Ballarat Tourism and the City of Ballarat. In October 2000 the City of Ballarat accepted the recommendation of marketing consultants to market Ballarat nationally and internationally under the slogan Ballarat*Eureka. This slogan highlights Ballarat’s unique historical identity, but also the idea that it is a forward-looking city. This marketing assists Ballarat in tourist terms, for the city’s strong identification with Eureka makes it an important cultural tourism destination in the holiday business, attracting more than 1.7 million visitors to Ballarat each year.

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83 John Neylon Molony, The Significance of Eureka: Two Lectures, Ballarat, the Eureka Stockade Memorial Trust in association with Australian Catholic University and University of Ballarat, 1996.


Conclusion

Father Adrian McInerney is Parish Priest at St. Alipius Catholic church in Ballarat East, just a stone’s throw from the stockade site. He inherits the pastoral role carried out so honourably and bravely by Father Patrick Smyth in 1854. Father McInerney reflected on the significance of Eureka with me before the 147th anniversary, as he prepared to give a blessing to those gathering at dawn at the Eureka monument. He recalled the Old Testament psalm ‘By the Rivers of Babylon’, which is a very pertinent reflection on the operation of memory and the performance of commemoration. The Jews could not sing their songs of remembrance until they were sufficiently removed in time from the terror and sad memories of their experience. At a remove of 150 years from the event, we can sing our glad songs of remembrance at the new commemorative traditions invented in Ballarat.

Chris Healy writes about making tradition from ruins, of the Eureka centenary celebrations, which continued the ‘trajectory of memory’ towards ‘general categories of the character, heritage and tradition of Australian men, of Eureka as an affirmation of Australian mateship and hatred of tyranny’. While I admire Healy’s work, I think that recently Eureka has been embraced by Australian women. The work of Val D’Angri, Evelyn Healy, Margaret Rich and a number of female artists, writers and historians, has brought women very much into the picture.

Peter Cochrane, reflecting on the term ‘heritage’, said it ‘is not something that we are stuck with, … rather it is something that we either choose or construct’. Between Father McInerney, David Lowenthal, Peter Corcorane, Bob Walshe, Paul Williams and Eureka’s Children, I think we can finally make sense of the Eureka legend. As the story passed out of lived experience into human memory and imagination, it gained the possibility to inspire many causes. Eureka has made its contribution to national identity, but it is a confused national identity. So Eureka will continue to inspire activists who imagine conflicting nations, inspired by Right and Left wing ideologies.

86 Healy, Battle Memories, p. 153.
Mark Twain immortalised Eureka in 1897 when he wrote after his visit to Australia;

It is the finest thing in Australasian history. It was a revolution - small in size, but great politically; it was a strike for liberty, a struggle for principle, a stand against injustice and oppression. It was the Barons and John, over again; it was Hampden and ship-money; it was Concord and Lexington; small beginnings all of them, but all of them great in political results, all of them epoch-making. It is another instance of a victory won by a battle lost. It adds an honourable page to history; the people know it and are proud of it. They keep green the memory of the men who fell at the Eureka Stockade. 88

Prime Minister Gough Whitlam added his words to the many uttered before him when he came to Ballarat in 1973 to unveil the restored Eureka flag. Echoing Ian Turner, he said that ‘the importance of an historical event lies not in what happened but in what later generations believe to have happened’. As is the way of prime ministers, Whitlam was using Eureka to promote his own vision of Australian nationalism - control of our own resources, an independent foreign policy, preserving our history and our environment, protecting indigenous culture, cultivating the arts. Thus Whitlam sees Eureka’s importance in the affirmation of these policies. Whilst Australia is deficient in turbulent events, it can use the ‘potent symbolism’ of the Eureka flag ‘to stir the imagination of the Australian people’. 89

Whitlam’s vision was repeated in 2000 by cultural commentator Robert Hughes, asked to write an essay for the Sydney Olympic Games. He reflected on what he saw as the big issues for Australia – the treatment of the Aborigines, resolving the republican issue, replacing the ‘Bushman Myth’. For him all of the issues would be settled by Australia becoming a republic, asserting its independence, under a new flag which might well be ‘the noble and visually excellent’ Eureka flag. 90

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88 Mark Twain, Following the Equato: A Journey Around the World, Hartford, Conn., American Publishing Company, 1897, p. 233. This sentiment is echoed by the statement in the Lone Hand of January 1912, - ‘the one picturesque bloodstain on the white pages of Australian History’.


Is there a common thread here? Was there a common motivation for all the diverse groups who opposed the goldfields administration in 1854? It was opposition to tyranny, and in Bob Walshe’s words it is ‘our own and best tradition of struggle for independence, democracy and economic welfare’. This is why the flag, most potent symbol of Eureka, could be appropriated by so many conflicting interest groups. This is why the tradition of Eureka has lived in the folk memory of so many Australians. This is why I should have been contacted by a diverse group of Australians after my appearance on a national television program, offering their thoughts about why Eureka was important to them.

As we move further and further from the event, and it fades into legend and mythology, it is possible that all of these conflicting groups can come together under the flag of the Southern Cross. The Centenary of Federation celebrated the fact that Australia is one of the oldest and strongest democracies in the world. Eureka laid down the tradition for that democracy. That is why Eureka will live as a ‘household word’ in the hearts of not just the people of Ballarat, but so many Australians throughout the continent.

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92 ABC Lateline Series, 7 May 2001, ‘Legends and Lies’, debate with Geoffrey Blainey about the significance of Eureka, followed by an on-line discussion. I received many letters and comments after the debate.
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APPENDIX ONE

NATIONALITIES REPRESENTED
AT THE EUREKA STOCKADE

(List compiled mainly using the Eureka Research Directory)

IRISH - the majority - Lalor, Quin (killed), Canny, Hanrahan, Lynch, Gleeson, Moore (killed),
Tuohy (tried for treason), Torpy, O'Neil, O'Mahony, O'Brien, Mullins (killed), McGlynn
(killed), Manning (tried for treason), Madden, Lee, Lewis, Hynes, Sheehan, Howard, Hayes
(tried for treason), Gittins (killed), Gilmore, Gavin, Esmond, Dunlop, Regan, Dynan,
Diamond (killed), Dalton, Crowe (killed), Curtain, Callinan, Brady, Donaghey (killed),
Brown (died of wounds), Hynes (killed)

AUSTRALIAN - Quinlan (born NSW). Miller (born Tasmania), Dignam (NSW) tried for
treason, Howes (Tasmania)

ENGLISH - Green (killed), Clifton (killed), Cummins, White, Wiburd (or Wyburd), Wood,
Thomas, Smith, Knipe, Coxhead (died of wounds), Cox, Black, Boase, Bell, Beattie (tried
for treason), Ashburner

SCOTTISH - Kennedy, Robertson (killed), Watson, Sutherland, McLaren, Crowe

WELSH - Rowlands (killed)

ITALIAN - Carboni (tried for treason). Polinelli, Oravalno, Rappacioli, Capuano

CORSIACAN - Romeo

GREEK - D'Angri

GERMAN/PRUSSIAN - Thonen (killed), Henfield (killed), Haffle (killed), Vern

RUSSIAN - Emmerman (killed)

DUTCH - Peters, Vennick (tried for treason)

FRENCH - Priaulx
SWISS - Sublet, Doudiet

SPANISH - Pergo

PORTUGUESE - Nida

SWEDISH - Soranson, Swanson

AMERICAN - McGill, Josephs (tried for treason), Hartley, Ferguson, Carey, Nealon, Burnet, Melody, Shanahan

CANADIAN - Ross (killed), Robinson, Julien (died of wounds)

WEST INDIAN - Campbell (tried for treason)
APPENDIX TWO
LALOR STORIES
GATHERED FROM REMINISCENCES

The major sources for these stories are the *Eureka Research Directory*, compiled by Ballarat Heritage Services, which relies on the database of names collected by Eureka’s Children. It is supplemented by the list compiled by Father Tom Linane, a Catholic priest in the Ballarat area who had a deep interest in local history, and who collected the stories told to him by parishioners in *Names at Eureka*, a manuscript copy of which exists in the McLaren Collection, Baillieu Library, Melbourne University. Bob O’Brien records a number of stories in his book *Massacre at Eureka*, Melbourne, Australian Scholarly Publishing, 1992. He was involved in the original Eureka’s Children project to collect family stories in 1988. Another useful source is *Eureka Reminiscences*, Ballarat, Ballarat Heritage Services, 1998 In the course of my research I have had a number of people contact me with family stories.

JAMES ASHBURNER, an Englishman, wrote in 1904 that he helped hide Lalor under slabs when Lalor asked for Father Smyth, Ashburner, who had been a shipmate of Smyth’s, volunteered to fetch the priest. He found Father Smyth and Tim Hayes, who lived next door, and as the trio came over Bakery Hill, Hayes and Ashburner were arrested as rebels. (*Courier*, 3 December 1904, reporting on his address to the Ballarat Trades and Labor Council).

JOSEPH BARBERIS, an Italian, claims to have witnessed the burial of Lalor’s arm, and taken food to him. (*Eureka Research Directory*).

JAMES BREEN, died 1917, claimed to have sheltered Lalor (*Melbourne Sun*, 9 April, 1917).

MR AND MRS BURKE-FINN claimed to have sheltered Lalor. Mr Burke-Finn died in 1904, his wife at Nurmurkah, September 1909. He is buried at Buninyong. (Linane, *Names at Eureka*).

TOMMY BURNS helped Lalor escape to Geelong with the Carrolls (*Our Own Little Rebellion*, p. 88; Linane, Blake, *Peter Lalor*, p. 100).

CARROLL FAMILY, who claim that Patrick and Michael Carroll took Lalor to Geelong (*People of a Golden Faith*, St. Alipius, Ballarat East 1995, p. 59) Michael Carroll lived a long life and his reminiscences were published in *Investigator*, June 1999. This story is also supported by Withers writing in *Austral Light*, 1896 (Withers *History of Ballarat*, Ballarat, Ballarat Heritage Services,
1999, p. 233-5). Father Tom Linane recorded Patrick Carroll (1812-1899) taking Peter to Geelong in his wagon, in company with Tommy Marks, and his son Michael. (*Tent to Parliament*, p. 30).

AMY CAIL conducted a store on the Eureka Lead and family tradition says she helped hide Lalor after the attack. (*Eureka Research Directory*).

Dr GEORGE CLENDINNING lent his surgical instruments for the operation on Lalor’s arm (mentioned in Martha Clendinning’s Reminiscences, La Trobe Library).

KATHERINE CONNOLLY’s story was that Peter Lalor hid under her baby’s cot (Personal communication from Mary Dryden of Ampitheatre, 2000).

STEVE CUMMINS was interviewed by Withers in 1889, saying that Lalor went to Michael Hayes’s tent at Black Hill, and thence to Geelong with the Carrolls and Tommy Marks, who took Lalor to Alicia Dunne’s house in McKillop St, and thence to the Young Queen Hotel, where his arm had further surgery. According to Carroll, this was in early February 1855. Steve Cummins brought Lalor to Father Smyth’s house (*From Tent to Parliament*, p. 29; *Historical Studies Supplement*, p. 19).

JANE CUMMINS (wrongly ‘Cumming’) in the *Argus*, 1 July 1899, said that on the early Monday morning following the Stockade they spotted Lalor near their hut. ‘We bandaged his arm, and Steve ‘ran across the gully to the Roman Catholic Presbytery and told Father Smyth that Lalor was in my tent and badly wounded and in need of surgical assistance.’ Father Smyth said to bring Lalor over after dark. Stephen assisted at the amputation. (*Women of Eureka*, 1995, p. 39). R. S. Ross in *Eureka! Freedom’s Fight of ’54* says he had interviewed a relative of Steve Cummins who said that he ‘often heard his grandfather tell of Lalor’s escape. He swears that his grandfather said that Lalor’s arm was amputated at the residence of Dr. Stewart, and that after the operation Lalor returned to Steve Cummins’s for some time. (*Bowden, Goldrush Doctors*, p. 29).

JOHN DALTON, Irish, helped conceal Lalor in a hole and covered him with slabs (Linane, p. 4, O’Brien, *Massacre at Eureka*, p. 124)

DOOLAN? - reputed to have sheltered Lalor (Linane, p. 5)

JOHN DUNLOP, aged 75, from Geelong was a friend and supporter of Peter Lalor. Family tradition suggests he scored a bullet in the leg at the Stockade, which gave him a limp for the rest of his life. His daughter, born in 1860, recalled in 1951:
‘The sword he had at Waterloo he brought out here and no doubt he had it strapped to his side on the memorable day. I saw the sword as a girl, my father always said it was to be mine, but I don’t know where it is today. My father was a very staunch supporter and friend of Peter Lalor and helped him to escape by pulling him in a barrel with the lid on, and with other goods, got him away in a dray.’ (Interview with Mrs Fowler, 91 year old daughter of Dunlop, by a staff member for the Courier, planning the 1951 gold celebrations, in possession of Marj Harris, of Elaine)

Oral tradition suggested that Dunlop sailed for London carrying a petition for the Secretary of State for the Colonies in favour of Peter Lalor. (Unassisted immigration records at the PROV do not record Dunlop, although Lalor said in his letter to the Argus 10 April 1855 ‘I have taken measures to have the history of the outbreak and its causes brought before the House of Commons.’) The friendship with Peter Lalor is backed up by the fact that on 4 June 1861 Dunlop went with Lalor to see the Chief Secretary about a reward for the discovery of gold at Ballarat, and later in that year wrote urging his claim. (James Flett, A History of Gold Discovery in Victoria, p. 363). The Rewards Board refused to entertain the claim.

BILL GOVE, a Stockader interviewed by R.S. Ross in 1914, said Lalor was removed to a dairymen’s cellar about a mile away, and amputation by Dr. Harrington. (Ross, p. 117).

MARTIN FARRELLY - lived at Meredith. Helped Lalor get to Geelong. Died Oct. 1908, aged 85 (Linane, p. 5).

THOMAS GAYNOR - helped Lalor and placed him under slabs at the Stockade. (Linane, p. 5; Withers, p. 118) Anne Duke, who said she sewed the stars on the flag, was inside the Stockade at the time of the attack, recalled that her brother, called Thomas Gaynor, saw Peter Lalor fall injured and he called for help. (Women of Eureka 1995, p. 31) Duke family history has Thomas Gaynor, brother of Anne Duke who reputedly sewed the flag, helping Lalor escape. (Eureka Research Directory, 1999).

MARTIN GLEESON has a story that his great, great grandfather sheltered Lalor. This is possible as his brother was the licencee of the Harp Inn, Packington St, Ashby, at the time.

JOHN HANRAHAN recalled in 1904 that ‘I went with another boy to fetch back Father Smith’s (sic) horse after conveying Mr Peter Lalor out to Warrenheip when he lost his arm.’ (Mount Alexander Mail, 25 November 1904).

ANASTASIA HAYES - Obituary in Advocate, 9 April 1892. Assisted at the operation to remove Lalor’s arm. (Withers, Austral Light, 1896).
MICHAEL HAYES sheltered Lalor after the battle and took him to Geelong, to Moore’s Young Queen Hotel. (*People of a Golden Faith*, Ballarat East, St. Alipius, 1995, p. 26-7).

JAMES HEFFERNAN - carried Lalor to place of safety. Died 1909 (Linane, p. 8).

NANCY KINNANE (Linane lists her as Quinane) said she assisted with the amputation of Lalor’s arm (*Johnson, Women of Eureka*, 1995, p. 34) ‘Nursed Lalor’, according to Linane. Her tent was within the Stockade, and she sought compensation.

MR ABBOTT LEWIS and some friendly miners assisted Lalor to hide under slabs, then escape into the bush. Thence he went to the tent of an old mate, Steven Cumming, who took him to Rev. Smyth, where Drs. Doyle and Stewart, assisted by Drs. Sutherland and Gibson, amputated his arm. After that he was hidden in the ranges till following March. (Whitworth’s booklet accompanying his Cyclorama in 1891, p. 17) The story has confirmation in O’Brien’s book (p. 120) from family history that Abbott would relate how he brought the doctor and the priest to Peter Lalor where the rioters had him hidden in the bush.

ROBERT LORIMER recalled that a man named Gaynor with two companions hurried down the Eureka lead with the wounded Lalor and lifted him into a digger hole and covered him with slabs. Shortly after Father Smyth, mounted on his grey horse, spoke to Lalor. (O’Brien, p. 121) Lorimer helped bind Lalor’s wound, then handed him over to Billy Smith to take him to a place of safety (*Blake, Peter Lalor*, p. 85-6). Lorrimer was a boarder at Skarrett’s Victoria Restaurant, near the Stockade. (quoted by R.S. Ross, p. 115-6.)

JOHN LYNCH was a Captain at the Stockade. His *Story of the Eureka Stockade*, published in *Austral Light* between October 1893 and March 1894, makes no mention of helping Lalor, but *Eureka Research Directory* says he helped conceal Lalor under slabs after the battle.

PHILLIP MOORE – ‘my ancestor Edward Moore sheltered Lalor at the Young Queen Hotel in Moorabool St, Geelong’. This story is corroborated by Michael Hayes story, mentioned on p. 26-27 of *People of a Golden Faith* and is also mentioned by John Molony in his *Eureka*, p. 178.

JAMES MURPHY, blacksmith and pike sharpener, helped Lalor escape to Geelong. When he met Lalor years after, Lalor could not remember him, and Murphy was enraged. (*Eureka Research Directory*).

JOHN KENNEDY O’BRIEN (born C. Limerick, 1828) gave an interview to the *Ballarat Star*, 29 November 1904, at the time of the 50th anniversary celebrations. He was present at the events leading up to the Stockade, and said he was at the Stockade, but managed to get away to the
vicinity of St. Alipius chapel, where he was arrested and held for 5 days. He said Father Smyth managed to get Lalor into a hole 6 feet deep. Some little time later Lalor went to Black Hill, where he camped with O’Brien. The Government put a reward of 700 pounds (sic) on Lalor’s head. Soon after he was got away in a cart owned by the three Carroll brothers to Geelong. The next time O’Brien met Lalor was at the Unicorn Hotel, Ballarat, when the sum of 450 pounds was collected for him. The O’Brien family were relatives of William Smith O’Brien, Young Irelander, who knew James Fintan Lalor in Ireland, so it is likely that O’Brien would have known Lalor in Ballarat, especially through the congregation of St. Alipius. Strangely O’Brien does not mention the amputation operation, and shows that it must have been kept secret. He stated in the interview that he wanted to tell his story publicly when Lalor got into Parliament, but Lalor asked him not to (perhaps because Lalor was chairing a parliamentary inquiry into claims for damages suffered at Eureka.) Strangely, there was a J.J. O’Brien who was at the Eureka celebrations in Kalgoorlie at the same time, claiming to be a veteran of the Stockade).

MICHAEL O’BRIEN - deputed by Fr. Smyth to move Lalor from tent to tent (Linane, p. 13).

JAMES REGAN, discoverer of gold with Dunlop at Poverty Point in 1851, also claimed to have helped Lalor escape (Eureka Research Directory).

JAMES RYAN conveyed news of the battle to Alicia Dunn (Eureka Research Directory).

SHANNAHAN said he took Lalor to Father Smyth’s house (Ross, p. 116) But R. Lorrimer said that it was Billy Smyth who took him to safety. (p. 116) Lorrimer was a boarder at Skarrett’s Victoria Restaurant, near the Stockade, who wrote down his reminiscences (R.S. Ross, p. 115).

PHOEBE SCOBIE (Emmerson at the time of the Stockade) recalled that after the battle she went to investigate the barking of her dog. She found Peter Lalor lying in the bushes behind her store which she conducted with her husband on the Eureka Lead. She bound his arm with strips from her petticoat and concealed him in a barrel before going for help. Lalor told her he had escaped from the Stockade with the assistance of a man called Dalton. She found George Scobie, who agreed to take Lalor in his dray to a friend’s camp at Warrenheip, and then she went to ask Anastasia Hayes to convey an urgent message from Lalor to Rev. Smyth. O’Brien states that Fr Smyth then came to Warrenheip to see Peter, and arranged for him to be taken to the presbytery. Next day the troopers came by her tent and asked about the blood stained rags, but she refused to tell. (quoted in Eureka Reminiscences, 1998, p. 16-18) O’Brien further claims that it was George Scobie who took Lalor to Geelong, concealed in a load of Patrick Carroll’s farm produce. (O’Brien, p. 124).
JOHN STEWART, Mount Duneed, has a family story that Peter Lalor was sheltered by his great grandfather, John Stewart, a prominent member of the Presbyterian Free Church (Little Malloph St, near Kirk Place). Stewart’s house was about 500 metres away, in Fitzroy St. The Stewart story is that Lalor sought John Stewart’s approval to marry his daughter Isabella, but permission was not granted because he was a Catholic and Stewarts were Presbyterian. Lalor said to have given Isabella a small nugget, which she had made into a brooch-locket, and wore it pinned to her collar until the day she died. (Letter from John Stewart, Mount Duneed, 22 Feb. 2001) This story seems strange, given that Lalor was supposed to be betrothed to Alicia Dunne (see Withers, Austral Light 1896), and Carroll’s reminiscences. However it is quite likely that the Stewarts could have sheltered Lalor. In fact, seems likely that he moved around to a number of ‘safe’ houses in the Geelong area.

BERT STRANGE said that some Ballarat people thought that Lalor’s arm had been buried under an oak tree at Dalton’s Flat, where Bert’s great-grandfather had lived. A local tour operator in the 1990s had even wanted to bring a coach to the spot and asked Bert to talk about Lalor, but Bert refused, saying the story was untrue.

HENRY SUTHERLAND said he was a mate of Duncan Gillies and Peter Lalor at Forest Creek for nearly a year, then went to Ballarat. on the Eureka Lead. He sheltered Lalor in his tent ‘until all the trouble had blown over’ (Eureka Reminiscences, 1998, p. 63-4) This conflicts with the account in Les Blake’s book, who said that Lalor went to the Ovens, then to Ballarat -Buninyong for a short time, then the Gravel Pits where he teamed up with Duncan Gillies (p. 29) and he had another claim with Timothy Hayes on the Eureka (p. 29).

DR. SUTHERLAND - Goldrush Doctors by Keith Bowden reports the amputation, giving Doyle as the surgeon, assisted by Stewart and Gibson. Neither he nor Anastasia Hayes (Austral Light, May 1896) mention Sutherland, but he could well have been there as he was Stewart’s partner at the Ballarat Hospital on Bakery Hill).

MRS JAMES YOUNG allegedly hid Peter Lalor under her dress during his escape from the battle (Eureka Research Directory).
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