

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT GAZETTES

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Greg Slattery, historian

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VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT GAZETTES

BY CLIVE LUCKMAN

The first Government Gazettes relevant to Victoria were, of course, the NSW Government Gazettes. Until “separation” in 1851, the NSW legislature controlled Victoria then called the Port Phillip District. Examples of Victoria continuing to be bound by the laws of NSW, until they might be changed or rescinded by the Victorian legislature, can be found in the Gazettes. For example the 1861 notice listing legally qualified medical practitioners has “in accordance with the Act of the Governor and Legislative Council of New South Wales” in the preamble.

When reflecting on the value of these Gazettes it is worth remembering that in the 19th Century the majority of the population of Victoria lived in the countryside. When the scale and efficiency of the production of food became sufficiently effective the State’s demographics saw the population of Melbourne increase, to eventually become what it now is.

The scope of Government intervention into the lives of individuals that is revealed in the Gazettes include the sale and leasing of land (gold aside, the most important factor which attracted migration), law and order, licensing, tenders and contracts, and a number of lower profile subjects. The notices include regulations and “Bye Laws” of the municipalities. At least as important was the promulgation of Legislation and Regulations for which the Government Gazettes are the medium. The content of the Victorian Government Gazettes reflects these activities, although they do also include many private notices. There are useful sub headings that indicate the general nature of the notices following.

So bearing in mind these limits to the scope of subjects covered by the Gazettes, they do reflect activities throughout the whole of Victoria.

Volunteers of The Genealogical Society of Victoria are indexing personal names in the Victorian Government Gazettes. Each entry includes the sub heading title. Amongst those completed are the Gazettes for 1861 and it is useful to draw on that sub heading data in order to convey the scope of the Gazettes.

The table below lists the number of personal names under the sub headings used in the 1861 Victorian Government Gazettes. Note that I have deleted sub headings where the number of personal names totalled only one. While the table fundamentally shows the incidence of personal names, it also conveys much of the nature and scope of government in the 2,500 plus pages.

Sub Heading	No of names
Election Result	2
Estate	2
Footscray Municipality	2
Found	2
Magistrate	2
Metcalfe Road District	2
Municipal Bye Laws	2
Road Closure	2
Town Common	2
Disposal of Shares	3
Patent	3
Public Vaccinators	3
Reinstated Licenses	3
Tenders	3
Trustee All Saints' Church Prahran	3
Assessment	4
District Road Board	4
Equitable Jurisdiction	4
Licenses Confectioner's	4
Public Notice	4
Robbery	4
Tenders Accepted	4
Collectors of Imposts	5
Confectioners' Licenses	6
County Court	6
Election Notice	6
Lexton District Road Board	6
Liabilities & Assets	6
Member Maryborough Mining Board	6
Road Board	6
Ararat Mining District	7
Beechworth Mining District	7

Brewers' Licenses	7
Resignation	7
Resignation of Territorial Magistrates	7
Wine and Spirit Merchants' Licenses	7
Circuit Courts	8
Depasture Licenses for New Runs	8
Member of Ballarat Mining Board	8
Application for Letters Patent	9
Carngham District Board	9
Electoral Registrars	9
Ovens Gold Fields Water Company	9
Stawell Road District Public Meeting	9
Avoca Municipality	10
Clunes Municipality	10
Householders Pentridge Rd District	10
Mulgrave Road District Landholders	10
Warrnambool Road District Landowners	10
Alberton Road District	11
District Bye-Laws	11
Heathcote Road District	11
Maryborough Municipality	11
Municipality of Inglewood	11
Nunawading Road District	11
Courts	12
District Board	12
Deputy Registrar	13
Royal Victoria Volunteer Cavalry	13
Election Petition	14
License Fees for New Runs	14
Tenders accepted for New Runs	14
Woodend Road District	14
Custom House Sale	15
Fryers Road District	15

Land purchased by selection	15
Mining Board	15
New Runs	15
Proclamation	15
Sale of Unclaimed Stock	16
Sandridge Municipality	17
Tenders for New Runs	17
Territorial Magistrate	17
Creswick Mining Company	18
East Collingwood Municipality	18
Letters detained for postage	18
Smythesdale Councillors	18
Depasture Licenses	19
Elections	19
Municipal Meeting	20
Sequestration	20
Mining District	21
Taradale Landowners and Householders	21
Applications for Leases	22
District Auctioneers'	23
Orders in Council	25
Publicans' General Licenses	25
Road District	25
Abstract of Births	26
Supreme Court	26
Weekly Abstract of Births	26
Estates of Deceased Persons	28
Public Meeting	28
Bet-Bet Road District	32
Report of Municipality	32
Depasture Licenses Cancelled	33
Brunswick Council	34
Brunswick Municipality	34
Wine and Spirit Licenses	34
Accepted Tenders	37
Wardens	38
Perseverance Mining Co	41
Licenses Brewers'	43
District Publicans' Licenses	47
Intestate Estates	47
Licenses District Publicans'	47
Non-returnable letters	49
Licenses Publicans' General	57
Letters Patent	62
Enumerators for Census	63
Mining Company	64

Reward	64
Auctioneers' General Licenses	67
Applications for Letters Patent	73
Contract Surveys	79
Poundkeepers Monthly Return	88
Licenses Auctioneers' General	92
Personal Information	92
Taking Acknowledgement of Deeds	93
Notices	94
Licensed Surveyors	97
St Arnaud Mining Co	103
Application for Mining Leases	113
Execution	114
Estates of Intestates	120
Insolvent Estate	133
Petition under Municipal Institution Act	155
Licenses Wine and Spirit Merchants	167
Poundkeepers	180
Petition under Municipal Act Malmsbury	190
Accounts	210
Deceased Estates	268
Miscellaneous	285
Government Notices	298
Trustees	327
Government Printer	413
Dissolution of Partnership	414
Contracts	419
Mining Leases	449
Qualified Medical Practitioners	665
Depasture Licenses 1861	678
Contracts Accepted	756
Insolvencies	951
Appointments	1,011
Petition	1,049
Shareholders in Mining Companies	1,577
Assessment of Stock	1,833
Licenses	2,162
Letters detained at Dead Letter Office	2,641
Unclaimed Ship Letters Country Post Offices	2,670
Impoundings	3,205
Private Advertisements	3,552
Title Deeds	3,617
Outstanding Accounts	4,141
Unclaimed Ship Letters Country List	8,455
Unclaimed Ship Letters	18,479
Unclaimed Letters	32,609

One sub heading also excluded from the table above are of shareholders in mining companies. The 1861 Gazettes list shareholders in 46 mining companies (the reason for names of some mines, such as the Hit-or-Miss company and the Robin Hood Gold Mine, could be the subject of a different sort of speculation)

These mining companies were the Ophir Gold Mining Co, New Perseverance Mine, Back Creek Gold Mining Co, Catherine Reef Gold Mine, Dimock's Quartz Mining Co, Eaglehawk Quartz Mining Assoc, Edinburgh Gold Mine Co, Golden Gate Mining Co, Hit-or-Miss Gold Mining Co, All Nations Quartz Mine, Black Hawk Gold Mine, Cairngorm Gold Mine, Carnghan Quartz Mine, Durham Gold Mine, Enterprize Cement Co, Eureka Gold Mine Co, Garibald Gold Mine Co, Golden Gate Mine, Grand Trunk Mine, Gum Tree Quartz Mine, Leviathan Gold Mine, Lucky Gold Mine Co, Norwegian Quartz Mine, Poverty Point Mine Co, Quartz Mining Company, Queen of the South Co, Robin Hood Gold Mine, Shepherds Flat Co, Smythesdale Gold Mine, Try Again Gold Mine Co, Union Quartz Mining Co, Welcome Nugget Co, Yandoit Gold Mine, Little Wonder Quartz Mine, Morning Star Quartz Mine, Morning Star Quartz Mine, Mt Elephant Gold Mine, New Extended Gold Mine, Nightingale Gold Mine, North Linscott's Quartz Mine, Perseverance Quartz Mine, Pickpocket Gold Mine Co, Simmon's Reef Mining Co, Spring Creek Gold Mine Co and the Steiglitz Gold Mining Co

Clearly the searchable nature of this Archives CD Book makes it a most significant resource for genealogists and historians. If the genealogist knows his or her ancestors' names might be in a Victorian Government Gazette then he or she would sensibly search for those names. On the other hand he or she may not expect their ancestors were important enough to attract Government publication in which case indexed names found in a search of a general genealogist index of names would provide the clue and prompt looking at the CD – in other words the searchable option of the CD and an index of personal names in a general index complement each other.

Some notices that do not include personal names are such as legislation and regulations, the promulgation of a public holiday, declaration of election days, places and dates for District Courts and Courts of Petty Sessions, municipal Bye Laws, land sales to be held, sales of goods confiscated by the Police, and many lists of impounded animals. By way of example, here are a few examples of notices that would normally not be in the table above.

“MUNICIPALITY OF PRAHAN

Bye Law No 68. – A Bye-Law for the Suppression of Nuisances Arising From the Keeping of Swine or Cattle Within the Municipality of Prahan” which goes on to say that nobody “shall keep or feed any kind of cattle in any house, building, yard, garden or other place so as to be a nuisance to any other person in the neighbourhood.” The penalty for any breach of the Bye-Law was a fine of not more than “Twenty pounds”.

“Roads and Bridges Office,
Melbourne 26th March, 1861

LEASE OF BENELLA TOLL-GATE

TENDERS will be received until Twelve o'clock on Friday 12 April, for the Lease of Tolls to be collected at the Benalla Toll-gate from 20th of April to 31 December 1861. Full particulars at this office or at the Road Engineer's office at Wangaratta.
The Board may not necessarily accept the highest or any tender.

J. H. BROOKE”

“Treasury Victoria

Transactions During the Quarter Ending 31st March.-1861”

This notice lists one page of financial data, and the following 11 pages document other financial tables.

“RETURNS, ETC, FORWARDED BY POST”

Begins with the exhortation that such “returns” can be sent by post as packets, otherwise they are chargeable at the letter rate (by implication at more cost) and may be detained by the Postal office. It ends with “It is absolutely necessary that the proper stamps should be affixed upon all official letters and packets before they are posted in order to avoid delays and the inconvenience occasioned to this department in giving notice.”

Signed by John Macadam M.D., Post Master General

MARVELLOUS RESOURCE

Dear Editor I had the privilege of being picked as ‘Letter of the Month’ in November last and would like to thank you sincerely for my prize, the *New South Wales Government Gazette 1865*. I always knew they were a fabulous source of information but hadn't had the chance to investigate until I received my prize. It was so much more than I had expected and I have spent many hours sitting at the computer just searching. I have found where a site for a town was picked, when suburbs were formed, the alignment of streets, who got assorted Government appointments, searched intestacies by name, letters not claimed (can I claim one now?), lists of deceased persons of whom creditors have to prove a claim and so much more.

My greatest thrill was to find a list of ‘Insolvent Estates’. Like all family historians I started to go through all the names (not expecting to find any) and who jumped off the page but my great-grandfather, Thomas Reynolds BOTTRELL. Now we know why he left the district of Sofala/Sunny Corner NSW and took his whole family to Elsmore NSW near Inverell in 1871. A family query, solved at last.

I can't express how much information is available on this one CD that allows so much more ‘flesh to the bones’ to be added to any family history, not just names and dates.

Again, I thank Archive CD Books Australia for my *New South Wales Government Gazette 1865* CD and you for a great magazine full of variety for family history readers.

Tricia EVANS, NSW Australia

Testimonial to the value of Government Gazettes—letter to *Australian Family Tree Connections* magazine, April 2005