A COLONIAL CAREER: DAVID MARSHALL ON THE VICTORIAN CENTRAL GOLD FIELDS 1853-1888

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Summary

The history of Scots in Australia has centred on elite Scots, a distinct ethnic and cultural group which has exerted influence disproportionate to its number in a wide variety of occupations and institutions. This thesis investigates the life of David Marshall, one of the invisible majority of Scots, and his contribution to the central Victorian settlements of Maldon and Baringhup during the years 1853-1888. It is structured around the story of one man, but local and general information and wider themes of colonialism and migration will be amalgamated with the personal. In 1853 David Marshall emigrated from Scotland to Victoria with his wife Christian Aitken, who died within a few months of their arrival. David was the son of an agricultural labourer, and was raised on an agricultural estate, Auchenbowie, near the town of Stirling. Christian before her marriage had been a farm servant at Sauchie Mill, not far from Auchenbowie. I began with two central questions. How did a non-elite Scottish immigrant experience the creation of a new society on the other side of the globe, and in what ways did he contribute to that society? A third question is: How does this investigation of David Marshall’s history inform and extend our knowledge of colonial Victoria?

The years of his Victorian working life, 1853-1888, were years of vigorous development for the colony, and in significant ways the range and expansion of his activities reflect its growth. The account is not chronological but will concentrate on four main areas of activity: quartz mining on the Tarrangower (Maldon) goldfield; entrepreneurial ventures such as establishing Malden’s first coaching service and constructing its first public building and first government roads; Municipal and Shire Council involvement and leadership shown in a range of civic activities such as developing the agricultural society, local schools, free libraries, and agitating for railway extension; and farming six hundred acres on the Loddon River flats at Baringhup.
Acknowledgements

Five of my great great grandparents emigrated from Britain to the Victorian goldfields in the turbulent 1850s. They came from Glasgow, Stirling and London and worked as miners, carters, merchants and farmers. I have researched the story of one of these, David Marshall, who arrived with his family from Stirling in 1853, aged 28, and died in 1893, aged 68. I hope this account is as true to his life as the available evidence allows.

Descendants of David Marshall and his wife Christian Aitken who have generously contributed to my research include Bill Froomes, Lurl Froomes, Bill Lord, Betty Lord, Margaret Froomes Galletly and Margaret Froomes Attwood. Also I thank my own family, Erica, John and Sylwia, for their encouragement and practical assistance.

At La Trobe University, I have had excellent support from my supervisors Yolande Collins and Charles Fahey, and also from other History postgraduate students, especially Val Lovejoy, Penny Davies and Wendy Brennan.

Organizations which have provided records include the Victorian Public Record Office and State Library of Victoria. Isabel Kincaid of the Stirling Central Reference Library, Scotland, was particularly helpful, as were the volunteers from the Maldon Museum and Archives Association who have collected and preserved the history of the Tarrangower goldfield and the former Shire of Maldon, especially Lesley Burgoyne, Tom Woolman and Brian Rhule.
Statement of Authorship

Except where reference is made in the text of the thesis, this thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma.

No other person’s work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.
David Marshall 1824-1893
Chapter One: Introduction

The gold discoveries from 1852 onwards had a dramatic impact on the Victorian colony. Thousands of fortune-seekers rapidly arrived from the other Australian colonies, then from Europe and China. The Port Phillip pastoral society would be transformed, and the vast escalation in the immigrant population with its great land hunger and colonizing culture would prove disastrous for the indigenous inhabitants.

The news of the rich Mount Alexander (later Castlemaine) diggings reached England in May 1852, and was quickly followed by six ships carrying eight tons of gold. Enthusiasm escalated and in August the rush of immigrants began.\(^1\) Thirty-three thousand landed in Victoria in 1852, the majority from the United Kingdom. Three hundred thousand would emigrate from there between July 1851 and December 1861.\(^2\) Seventy-five thousand or twenty-five per cent of this three hundred thousand were Scots, who were disproportionate to their number in the United Kingdom, for they constituted only eleven per cent of its total population.\(^3\)

The thesis will focus on the story of one of these immigrants, David Marshall, who arrived in Melbourne on 12 September 1853. He was from Stirling county, Scotland, where he had worked as an agricultural labourer and carter. Travelling with him in this frenzied influx were his wife Christian Aitken and their infant children, Mary Ann and Alexander. They had sailed from Glasgow on May 27 on the *Sophia Burbidge*. They were both aged twenty-eight. A Margaret Marshall travelled on the same ship and it is likely she was David’s half-sister. The majority of married gold seekers did not bring their family with them to the colony. That Marshall brought with him his wife and children aged one and two suggests that the couple intended to settle permanently.

Gold of course was an incentive in 1852, but thousands of Scots had already exchanged the old world for the new in the pre-gold period. For instance, arguably two-thirds of the squatters in the Western District were Scots,\(^4\) and Scots were also significant in exploring and settling Gippsland.

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3 Thirty-three per cent were Irish, constituting twenty-four per cent of the total population.
Histories of Scots in Australia

Historians who have examined Scottish settlement in Australia and contribution to pioneer life include Margaret Kiddle, Paul de Serville, Don Watson, Eric Richards and Malcolm Prentis. Margaret Kiddle’s study of settlement in the Western District, *Men of Yesterday*, and Don Watson’s study of settlement in Gippsland, *Caledonia Australis*, concentrate on the pre-gold period, giving insights into Scottish social and economic background and religious mindset. Kiddle highlights the relatively poor Lowland farmers who in turn secured grazing rights to much of the colony; Watson highlights the dispossessed Highlanders who in turn dispossessed the indigenous inhabitants. Paul de Servilles’s *Port Phillip Gentlemen* was a study of elite society in pre-gold Melbourne, with Scots figuring prominently.

Eric Richards et al in *That Land of Exiles* chart the migration of ‘people, skills, capital and culture’ from Scotland to Australia and outline the achievements of an array of immigrants, such as governors Lachlan Macquarie and Thomas Brisbane, explorers Major Mitchell and John McDouall Stuart, pastoralist and businessman Thomas Elder, clergyman and activist John Dunmore Lang, publishers David Mackenzie Angus and George Robertson, philanthropist Francis Ormond, journalist David Syme and prime minister Andrew Fisher. They also refer to famous children of Scots immigrants, such as John Shaw Neilson, Nellie Melba, Banjo Patterson and Mary MacKillop, and descendents of Scots such as Robert Menzies, Malcolm Frazer and Rupert Murdoch.

Malcolm Prentis in *The Scots in Australia*, an overview of Scottish migration and settlement in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, emphasises the contributions of nineteenth century Scottish migrants to Australian society and specifically to its national character, a contribution he claims has received insufficient recognition compared to that of other groups such as the Irish. For example, he argues that, partly due to the Scottish education system being more egalitarian and universal than that of the English, the Scots rejected English-style deference to one’s ‘superiors’. In the nineteenth century the Scots, Prentis affirms, had all the advantages of being British (and Protestant) with none of the

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disadvantages of being English.

Ian Donnachie points out that historians trying to assess the Scottish contribution to Australia have inevitably concentrated on the successes of an elite – which ‘firmly stamped its mark on many aspects of colonial life and continued to exert influence out of all proportion to its number for many generations’. The term ‘elite’ can refer to socio-economic position at birth and/or achievement and authority within a larger group. David Marshall was ‘non-elite’ according to both definitions. Donnachie uses the latter meaning of ‘elite’. This elite operated in such fields as mining, exploration, agriculture, the church, the law, business, medicine, education and politics. Most major historians, including those mentioned above, have concentrated on the contribution of elite Scots. Eric Richards in That Land of Exiles concedes that the majority have been largely invisible. The Scots ‘evidently supplied a general range of proletarian skills for the benefit of Australian development. This point is often forgotten amid so many stories of outstanding Scottish success in the commercial and professional life of Australia’. One obvious reason for the invisibility in histories is the difficulty in finding source material, a limitation which applies to this thesis.

Two histories of non-elite Irish immigrants

In his study of non-elite Irish immigrants in Oceans of Consolation historian David Fitzpatrick reproduced fourteen sequences of their letters in both directions, Ireland and Australia. He explains that the writers of these letters are ‘drawn primarily from the groups most heavily engaged in Irish-Australian migration, giving appropriate emphasis to those with little education and of poor background’. The letters of each individual or family are preceded by an extended analysis by Fitzpatrick based on genealogical and local sources and he also includes thematic chapters. However, he insists that these letter-writers are not presented as a representative sample. His study does show that the study of non-elite immigrants can challenge easy generalizations, particularly about national characteristics. It also demonstrates the great potential of personal accounts which were not intended for the public domain, as opposed to self-conscious literary accounts.

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Public records will give some insight into Marshall’s thinking and personality but frustratingly without personal letters and a diary/journal many questions will remain unanswered. For example, what were the effects both short and long term of the rapid deaths of his wife and two of his three children within months of arrival in the colony? Did these losses drive him to constantly achieve? What circumstances provoked the apparently petty court case with his business partner and brother-in-law? What reaction at a deep level did criticism provoke? What were his attitudes to other ethnic groups?

SM Ingham’s *Enterprising Emigrants*, an informative study of the Finn family in Australia, is relevant to the recording of David Marshall’s story. Members of the Finn family became figures of status in their own districts, as did David Marshall. Ingham does not in general use personal accounts such as letters and diaries (an exception was the shipboard diary kept by Michael Finn) and relies on public records of their working and public lives.12

**Choice of David Marshall as thesis subject**

Researching my father’s family background, I discovered that five of my great great-grandparents (David and Christian Marshall, William and Ann Froomes and James Andrew, a widower) emigrated to the Central Victorian goldfields during 1853 and 1854. The Marshall and Froomes13 couples brought children with them and James Andrew’s children were sent out later. All their stories were of some interest, but David Marshall’s stood out from the others. The range and expansion of his occupations and interests appeared to reflect the growth of the young colony in a period of rapid change, and, importantly for a researcher, there were frequent references to him in local newspapers. David Marshall was born in Stirlingshire on a farming estate called Auchenbowie, about five miles south of the city of Stirling. His father was an agricultural labourer, and according to the 1841 census, that term included occupations such as ‘shepherd, ploughman, carter or waggoner’. David Marshall in this census (he was then 16) was also listed as an ‘agricultural labourer’. In the 1851 census he was living in the city of Stirling and listed as a ‘carter’. Marshall was in a low socio-economic position in Scotland. This thesis will examine what use he made of his emigration opportunity.

13 William and Ann Froomes brought four of their eight children with them, and another three were already in the colony.
The value of a local history

A local history is important in understanding the development of regional areas. It has the potential to inform posterity about the differences and difficulties of regional life. It can also illuminate the history of a wider society at a time of rapid change, as in Barry Reay’s *Microhistories* which focuses on life in three parishes of Kent during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Reay claims that ‘it is impossible to understand society and culture without … detailed work at the level of the locality’, and that microhistory, ‘historical research on a reduced scale, under the microscope’ can explore the working out of wider social and cultural processes at the local level, and even use the local to challenge perceptions of the nature of these processes. In discussing the value of local histories, Graeme Davison argues:

> Active and ethical citizenship depends, among other things, upon the imaginative capacity to look at the world through the eyes of others. The past is a theatre of human experience. In attempting to understand the people of the past—for attempting is the best we can do—our imaginations are stretched, our moral sensibility strengthened. History is a rehearsal for responsibility.

Biography as an acceptable method to record and examine history

Marshall may have undertaken a larger range of public activities than the typical miner and farmer but thousands of immigrants were engaged in interacting with and creating a life from this new colonial society. This account is an attempt to personalize this larger canvas and make it more accessible. It is a local study focusing on one non-elite Scottish immigrant and is not intended to be a conventional biography. However, because it centres on one man’s story a consideration of the inherent limitations and pitfalls of the biographical form is relevant. Virginia Woolf famously wrote ‘Biography pretends that a life can be told, when experience teaches us that it cannot. We suppress the knowledge, because we have a need for stories, a need to make sense of lives’. We struggle to know ourselves, so how can we know others. The biographer can only write with confidence of the surface.

A common temptation in the writing of biography is over-intuiting what is in the subject’s psyche. For example, how much can the writer speculate on their subject’s motivation?

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Inga Clendinnen, in a critique of Kate Grenville’s *The Secret River*, asks these vital questions: ‘How much ‘culture’ do we really share with British people born 200 years ago? Are we seduced into an illusion of understanding through the accident of a shared language?’ And she reminds us that, in contrast to our own lives, ‘Death, pain and violence were always at their elbow’.

Also, the researcher can trust too much in written evidence such as letters and newspaper reports. Peter Ackroyd, commenting (within the text of his biography of Dickens) on the difficulties of interpreting a letter, asks ‘How is it possible now to guess at what was passed by mouth, by the sudden expression or by the unintentional phrase? The whole meaning of a life may be invoked in such moments, which cannot now be reclaimed – like the life itself disappeared utterly, leaving behind just written documents from which we can only attempt carefully to reconstruct it’.

Nick Salvatore discusses some of the classic objections to biography. It has been traditionally dismissed for its ‘delusional emphasis on great men and their deeds’. He convincingly argues that the resurgence of interest in social history has led to an increased emphasis on the experience of working people and on human agency rather than on abstract or general processes of change.

A second objection is that no one individual can serve as a useful vehicle to explore deeper social tendencies. Salvatore admits that the second objection is not without merit and has forced him into greater self-consciousness when writing his own biographies. However, he argues that ultimately this objection is dangerous to a more humanistic vision that would seek to understand the individuality of those who, to quote EP Thompson, were to be saved ‘from the enormous condescension of posterity’. He is intrigued by a question applicable to the lives of all human beings: ‘How, in what ways, with what success, does an individual interact with, create a life from, and possibly alter a culture and a society not of their own making, one which they largely inherit?’ The value of understanding a particular life in its broad social context is this, he suggests: it examines the process of historical change through an individual who, like other humans, grapples simultaneously with complex forces both public and private. The ultimate test is not whether the subject is representative, but rather what it is that we might learn from the

study of a particular life.

**Structure of thesis**

This thesis will focus on Marshall’s working life and public participation. Chapter Two will relate what is known of his life in Scotland and his transition to colonial life, and will include the wider context of Scottish emigration. Chapters Three, Four, Five and Six will not be chronological but will be shaped around four main areas of his activity, all central to the history of the Central Goldfields: entrepreneurial (such as establishing Maldon’s first coaching service, erecting early buildings and government roads), quartz mining, farming on the Loddon, and involvement in local government and civic development. The thesis will however also include details of his personal and family life in these chapters – for example, limited information on his second wife Agnes Harley and her family will be included in the farm chapter.

**Note on source materials**

There are a small number of photographs, family papers and artefacts passed down by Marshall descendants which give useful information. I was able to interview a family member William (Bill) Froomes who was born in 1908 and remembered well his grandmother Mary Ann Froomes, David Marshall’s daughter, and his step great-grandmother Agnes Marshall.

There is detailed and frequent information on Marshall’s public activities in the *Tarrangower Times* (the Maldon, Walmer and Baringhup paper) from 1858 to 1888, and some material in the *Mount Alexander Mail* (the Castlemaine paper), particularly before 1858. One advantage of using nineteenth century papers is their frankness. A small but telling example is this: ‘In consequence of the auditors having neglected to perform their duties, the half-yearly meeting of the Independent Association was on Tuesday eve postponed until Tuesday next’.21 A disadvantage is that certain viewpoints are totally absent in the contemporary resources; for example, those of Marshall’s wives and his employees.

Newspapers and other contemporary accounts of this period such as the journalist and writer JG Moon’s were dominated by news of white Anglo-Celtic men.22 Women

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21 *Tarrangower Times*, 15 August 1862.
tended not to be involved in public life, and most local reports were concerned with mines, local government, sport, lodges, church management meetings and hospital boards. In the 1860s a Ladies Auxiliary was formed in Maldon to raise money and distribute it to distressed families but the meeting reports are very short compared to those from male organizations, although these brief comments may have been all the paper was given. There is occasional information on female publicans, women suing for child support and those charged with being ‘drunk and disorderly’. As far as newspaper reporting was concerned, a married woman had no separate identity from that of her husband. Even in her death report her birth name was not used, as when the paper announced the ‘death of Mrs Henry Barclay’. Babies were usually born to men as in ‘To Mr Henry Barclay, a son’. Very occasionally in the *Tarrangower Times* we find ‘To Mr Barclay and wife, a son’. Isabella Warnock’s extensive support for children sent to industrial schools was commended in a Melbourne paper but was not referred to in the local paper, which perhaps is also an indication of Maldon’s lack of interest in such matters.\(^23\) Mrs Patrick Cullen in 1876 was praised for her action when her young son set the bedroom curtains on fire: ‘With a presence of mind which very few ladies are capable of exercising she rolled them up and threw them into the back yard’. This is not untypical reporting. The *Argus* in 1857 reported that a miner named George Madder and his wife found a nugget weighing 76 ounces at Green Gully, Muckleford (near Maldon), and that his wife was working as his mate.\(^24\) I have found no instance reported in the *Tarrangower Times* of women working on a goldfield.

In contemporary reporting there was little sympathy for indigenous or Chinese people. They are usually referred to dismissively, as in the description of an Aboriginal as ‘one of the sable gentlemen,’\(^25\) and sometimes with venom as in the editorial comment ‘this [Chinese] individual was a particularly ugly specimen of his race’. The *Mount Alexander Mail* of 12 June 1857 reported that:

> A collision is likely to occur here between the Celestials and the Europeans. Several miners were in court; one of whom spoke very warmly on the subject. It seems that these gentry, where they cannot work the ground, take steps to prevent the Europeans doing so by surrounding them and annoying them while at work. If this does not succeed they spoil the ground for working, and thus secure an immunity to themselves. It is high time something was done to prevent these gamboge-colored individuals preying in this manner on the European miners.

The above report/comment was reprinted in the *Argus* of 15 June 1857. However, the

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\(^{23}\) She was of course known in Maldon as ‘Mrs James Warnock’.

\(^{24}\) *Argus*, September 19 1857.

\(^{25}\) *Tarrangower Times*, 18 July 1862.
Argus omitted the final sentence.

In the 1870s the reporting on the Chinese improved somewhat, although the writer of the News and Notes column in the Tarrangower Times found it tremendously amusing in 1877 when a visiting entertainer impersonated Chinese miners and enraged Chinese patrons filed out of the theatre. JG Moon included in Tarrangower Past and Present a few anecdotes about the ‘doings’ of local indigenous people which he obviously thought would entertain, but they are demeaning and painful to read.

Other sources include public records such as births, deaths and marriages registers, probate inventories, land records, court records and school records. The Scottish Old Parochial Records have some crucial gaps – the most important to this history being David Marshall’s birth/christening record. The Maldon Municipal and Shire Council minutes are available in original form at the Maldon Museum and Archives Association. Marshall’s letters to parliamentarians and newspapers and recorded comments in reports of organizations such as the municipal and shire councils, agricultural society, commons management and railway league give some idea of his preoccupations and personality.

Thomas Dicker’s Mining Record was published to inform shareholders, and the editorials and reports clearly reflect this standpoint. The Tarrangower Times and Mount Alexander Mail mining reports tended to talk up the prospects of the mines (and hence those of their respective towns). The newspapers did report accidents in the mines, and call for reforms such as improved safety practices. Accidents were virtually unmentioned by Dicker unless in terms of holding up mining activity. The reports written by the long-term mining surveyor Robert Nankivell are probably the most objective of the three sources.

The gaps in resources frustratingly limit knowledge of Marshall’s life in the colony, especially his inner and family life. On the other hand, the information available on his occupations, particularly his coaching, mining and farming ventures, and the extensive reporting on civic organisations give considerable insight into the growth of Tarrangower/Maldon and Baringhup and an individual who vigorously contributed to that development.
Figure 1 Maldon and Baringhup, 2011
Chapter Two: From the old world to the new

The Scots have always been a restless people, wonderful at living anywhere but in Scotland.  

*The Long Farewell*, Don Charlwood’s account of immigration which is based primarily on shipboard diaries, begins:

For nearly a century following the first settlement of Australia, every immigrant, bond or free, had in common an experience none could forget: a passage under sail, lasting anything from two months to six, a passage from the old world to the new. Though nearly all had set out as strangers to the sea, they had crossed the world’s most tempestuous oceans by a route not long before sailed by explorers. They had lived during the voyage in a state of limbo, out of touch with everyone but their shipmates, no longer belonging to the old world nor yet to the new. Day by day they had lived under conditions they could scarcely have imagined before their departure. When at last they had landed, they were by no means the same people who had boarded ship months before.  

David Marshall and Christian Aitken sailed from Glasgow on May 27 1853 on the *Sophia Burbidge*, which carried 192 passengers, nearly all Scots. The barque was small, only 435 tons, which gave the 177 steerage passengers minimal living space. In typical steerage conditions, passengers slept in bunks six feet by three feet, in pairs with another two above, and separated from the next by 18 inches. For married people, each bed place might be divided from the next adjacent by stout planks from the deck below to the deck above. Clothes were suspended on pegs. Biscuits, salted meat, rice, dried potatoes and peas comprised much of the diet for the steerage passengers. The *Sophia Burbidge* journey of 109 days was a long one for this period – the new clipper ships were beginning to cut the passage to just under 70 days.

In the absence of evidence, we can only guess at the emotions of David and Christian on arrival, but these might have included relief at surviving a long, uncomfortable and possibly fearful journey, anxiety about their immediate future and anticipation of a better life in this unknown country. This hope was cruelly tested for David Marshall for within seven months, his wife Christian and son Alexander were dead and at an unknown date a third child, also named Christian, died.

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28 The largest vessel powered solely by wind was 5081 tons, the *Preussen*, built in 1902. The slow development of fuel-efficient marine steam engines meant that, in some long-distance trade, sailing ships remained viable until the early years of the twentieth century.
29 Charlwood, p. 112.
30 Broome, *The Victorians: Arriving*, p. 70.
31 The Victorian Government required civil registration records from 1853 but there is no death record for Christian Aitken nor for the third child. The headstone on the mother’s grave in the Melbourne General Cemetery shows that she died in March 1854.
Figure 2.1 Flyer for passengers’ reunion. Courtesy of Margaret Galletly
The accumulation of these horrible events, disastrous for Marshall and his only surviving child, Mary Ann, was certainly not uncommon in this hazardous period and place, and lead to a consideration of the background to Scottish migration.

This chapter will attempt to answer the following questions. What was the background to the Scottish exodus in the 1850s? To what extent did the story of the Marshalls exemplify push-pull factors and stage migration? What skills, experience and cultural values did David Marshall bring to the colony?

What led to this exodus? From the 1830s, Scotland had experienced significant economic and social problems, which provided the ‘push’ half of the ‘push-pull’ equation of emigration. The pulls in the 1840s and 1850s from North America and Australasia were the gold rushes and lure of land and possibility of a free passage.

However, the Scots had a long-term tendency to be global wanderers. This can be linked to their limited natural resources, a climate and topography not suited to the regular production of food surpluses, and also their proximity to England. The stronger the English grew in trade and colonization, the more effectively the Scots were stifled. Since medieval times, the Scots had travelled all over Europe as soldiers, traders, craftsmen and scholars. It had been taken for granted for centuries that emigration was a ‘live option’ and sometimes, a ‘desperate necessity’.

But in the nineteenth century the long-standing and well-attested restlessness of the Scots swept their country almost to the forefront of Europe’s emigrant exporters. Dudley Baines’ statistics of comparative emigrations from sixteen European countries between 1861 and 1913 show that three, Ireland, Norway and Scotland, consistently headed in most years the areas of proportionately most emigrants. The departure of almost two million emigrants in the nineteenth century was equal to 42 per cent of Scotland’s population at the 1911 census, whereas emigration from England and Wales in the same period represented less than 25 per cent of the total population of 1911, and even less, Harper points out, if the false inflation of the English statistics before 1853 are taken into account.

The pushes in emigration in the 1840s and 1850s were the after-effects of the agrarian and industrial revolutions in Scotland. The introduction of sheep rearing in the

34 Harper, pp. 2-3. The largest departures proportionally were from Ireland.
Highlands to supply the Glasgow and Yorkshire textile mills meant the gradual destruction of the Highland way of life. The radical view is that the chiefs greedily cleared the crofts of men, women and children, using police and soldiers where necessary, in order to lease their glens and braes to sheep-farmers from the Lowlands and England. Prentis argues that the chiefs’ motives were not always so ruthless.

The intractable truth was that the Highlands could support a limited population, by reason of rugged terrain, thin soils and harsh climate. When various advances of civilization such as relative peace, health and hygiene and some technology began to percolate into the Highlands, the population quite naturally increased...The result was smaller and smaller farms, and a growing dependence on one crop, potatoes.35

By the 1820s the only Highland commodity fetching a profit was wool, and sheep were incompatible with a labour-intensive, subsistence peasant agriculture. The end result, whatever the exact motives, was the forced displacement of the crofters, commonly known as the Highland Clearances. Many, as an alternative to starvation or sweated factory work in the Lowlands, chose assisted emigration, and until the middle decades of the nineteenth century the western Highlands and Islands contributed disproportionately to the total outflow from Scotland.36

The industrial revolution greatly affected the Lowlands, causing social dislocation and political ferment. There was a rapid growth of population in urban areas, particularly Glasgow. Between 1801 and 1851, the population of the industrializing counties increased by 180 per cent (compared to the Border region and south-west which grew by 48 per cent and the Highlands by 38 per cent). Natural increase accounts for some of the growth in the Lowlands – internal and external immigration for the rest. The main source of immigrants was Ireland – in 1851, 18 per cent of Glaswegians had been born in Ireland. The dispossessed Highlanders were also moving into Glasgow and other cities. Prentis details the problems of health, housing, education, crime and poor relief, caused by sheer pressure of numbers in the urban areas. Miners and weavers were two of the working-class groups who engaged in collective industrial action. These problems were familiar in England – in Scotland they arrived later, but with ‘startling suddenness’.37

The three main groups to emigrate from Scotland were the Highland crofters, younger sons of Lowland farmers and handloom weavers. His entry in *Victoria and its

Metropolis: Past and Present,\textsuperscript{38} produced in the lifetime of David Marshall,\textsuperscript{39} states that he was ‘brought up to farming’.\textsuperscript{40} According to the certificate for his second marriage, David was born on the Auchenbowie estate, in the parish of St Ninians, in the county of Stirling. In the census of 1841, the 16-year-old David was still living on the Auchenbowie estate with his mother and two of his brothers and was described as an ‘agricultural labourer’. On David’s death certificate his father’s occupation was ‘labourer’. His precise motives for migrating to Victoria are not known, but it is credible, given his later history, that the potential for independence through land ownership was a powerful magnet.

Life on the Auchenbowie estate\textsuperscript{41}

What would have been the conditions of an agricultural labourer at Auchenbowie? In the first half of the nineteenth century farming in the south-east lowlands and Forth valley (which included Stirlingshire) was considered advanced and efficient and was widely copied elsewhere.\textsuperscript{42} At the same time the structure of labour recruitment and payment seemed archaic and hardly touched by the wide-ranging changes in modes of production. Most permanent farm workers were called farm servants rather than labourers, and were hired for a period of one year if married, and six months if single. Married servants generally lived in a cottage on the estate or small farm.\textsuperscript{43} They were paid almost entirely \textit{in kind}, receiving allowances such as oats, barley, peas, beans, the keep of a cow (and sometimes hens and pigs) and ground for planting potatoes or flax. Fuel was carted from the town at the farmer’s expense. The rental of the cottage was paid for by the labour of the wife or daughter during harvest\textsuperscript{44} and also longer periods as required which averaged 180 days per year. This was known as the ‘bondage’ system.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{39} The information is therefore likely to be reliable.
\textsuperscript{40} It is possible that David Marshall deliberately relayed that he was ‘brought up to farming’ rather than mention that he was the son of an agricultural labourer.
\textsuperscript{41} ‘Auchenbowie’ means ‘place of the herdsman’.
\textsuperscript{43} Unmarried male and female servants obtained a cash wage and were boarded within the homestead, usually in the farmhouse or a purpose-built barrack, receiving both food and accommodation as part of their contracts.
\textsuperscript{44} If these were not available a woman would be hired and receive board and lodging from the cottager.
\textsuperscript{45} Orr, ‘Farm Servants and Farm Labour in the Forth Valley and South-East Lowlands’, pp. 30-36.
Figure 2.2 County of Stirling showing section city of Stirling, St Ninians, Bannockburn, Sauchie Mill and Auchenbowie. 1859, Victorian Ordnance Survey Maps of Scotland
Figure 2.3a Auchenbowie House. Royal Commission Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland

Figure 2.3b Auchenbowie House, 2010. Private collection
The main features of the above system of labour recruitment and payment had been present in Scottish agriculture from the sixteenth century. By the early nineteenth century the ‘other centre of advanced agriculture’, southern England, had replaced long hires with short contracts of a month, a week or even less. There, labour was predominantly paid in cash and most labourers were recruited from local villages whenever required. Reay, in his study of agricultural labourers in England, essentially agrees with these generalisations. By 1851, England was divided between the low-service agricultural south and the high-service industrial north and west. In the last census distinguishing farm service, 1871, 85 per cent of England’s male farm servants lived either in Cornwall or Devon or in counties north of a line drawn between the Wash and the Severn.46

Devine argues that the apparently conservative Scottish lowland system had a basic rationale. For example, unlike in southern England, there was greater opportunity for the rural population to move to urban employment and farmers had to contend with strong competition for labour from industry. The long hire survived because it ensured a regular supply of full-time skilled workers. Also, the cycle of farm labour activity differed from that in southern England, the climate and soil of the lowlands dictating a regime of mixed agriculture which encouraged a lengthening of the working year with less emphasis on seasonal labour needs. Thirdly, horsepower and horse management were crucial in the productivity of the new farming system, and the whole routine in Scottish agriculture from the later eighteenth century began to centre on maximising the efficiency of the horses used in ploughing and carting. Each ploughman, for instance, took sole responsibility for a pair of horses, and his entire routine from early morning to evening concerned the preparation, working and final grooming of his animals. It was preferable that the ploughman be a permanent servant and living on the farm, close to his horses.47 At Auchenbowie, David Marshall was likely to have been a ploughman or carter. Certainly it is known from later records that he was taught to plough as a youth, and would be involved with horses in one way or another for the greater part of his working life.

Long hires and payment in kind may have suited the farmer, but did this system suit his servants? There were some advantages. Married or unmarried, they were provided with a home, either a cottage, or in a purpose-built barrack (called a ‘bothy’) or within the household. Unlike the farm labourers of southern England, they were insulated from the

market price of food. Also, married ploughmen could sell a proportion of their *in kind* payments (such as butter and cheese from the cow) to local markets or to day-labourers who were paid in cash, and their children could bring cash wages into the household. Landless employees were not necessarily worse off than sub-tenants, a structure prevalent in the early eighteenth century, in which land was given in return for labour. Sub-tenants usually held only fragments of land, had to seek work in adjacent larger farms to subsist, and many led lives of ‘grinding poverty’. Nevertheless, to an ambitious man such as David Marshall the highly circumscribed life of a farm servant must have seemed restrictive—offering neither opportunities for independence nor for financial advancement. Basic to the Industrial and Agrarian Revolution in the Lowlands was the consolidation of farms and the tighter regulation of terms of access. Fewer and fewer had legal rights to land as consolidation accelerated and subdivision of holdings was outlawed.  

David Marshall’s death certificate records his parents as being Alexander Marshall and Janet Stevenson. The Scottish Old Parochial Records index lists their marriage in St Ninians on June 16, 1822. In the 1841 census Janet’s age is 52; thus she was about 33 at the time of her marriage. Living with Janet in 1841 were David and his brothers, William, 17, a shoemaker, and Archibald, 11. All four had been born in the county of Stirling. Their father Alexander Marshall is not listed in this census entry, and may have already been dead. David also had at least one full sister, Mary, two half-sisters, Jane born 1803, and Margaret, and one half-brother, Alexander, born 1806. The latter three were Alexander’s children but not Janet’s. At least four of Alexander’s children would eventually emigrate to Central Victoria: David and Margaret in 1853, William in 1863 (aged about 39) and Jane in 1865 (aged about 62)  

David married Christian Aitken at Torbrex, a village in the parish of St Ninians, in 1848. Christian’s parents were Mary McLauchlan and Archibald Aitken, who had married in Denny, in the county of Stirling, on June 30, 1820. Mary was 24 and Archibald 25. There were at least three children from this marriage, all born at Denny: John, in 1821, Christian, in 1824, and Mark, in 1827.

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50 The ages on Margaret’s shipping record, marriage certificate and death certificate do not correlate.
51 According to their death certificates, Jane and Margaret had different mothers. Margaret’s is listed as Margaret, and Jane’s as Jane. Their brother Alexander’s christening record (8 Dec 1806) lists his mother as Margaret Marshall. Alexander Marshall and Margaret Marshall (her family name as well as her married name) were married at St Ninians 21 February, 1796.
On the night of the 1841 census Christian Aitken, listed as a female servant aged 15, but actually 16, was listed at Sauchie Mill, a farm and a watermill, one mile from Auchenbowie. (Census ages were often but not always rounded to the nearest five, in a form of age lumping.) Also at Sauchie Mill were her brother John, an agricultural labourer incorrectly listed as 15, and two uncles and one aunt on their mother’s side: James McLaughlan, farmer, 55; John McLaughlan, independent, 50; and Christian McLaughlan, independent, 45. At Millholm, a neighbouring farm, which included a sawmill, lived another sibling of Mary Aitken, Lachlan McLauchlan, 40, his wife, eight children and three servants.

Thus in 1841, Christian Aitken, born in Denny, was on census night living with her brother John, at least one aunt and two uncles only a mile from Auchenbowie, where David Marshall lived. Her mother Mary Aitken in 1841 was living at Dunipace, adjacent to Denny, with Mark, aged 14. Dunipace was about four miles south of Auchenbowie, and five miles south of Sauchie Mill. Christian’s father, Archibald, was not listed.

Auchenbowie in the 1850s was one of the nine ‘principal estates’ in the parish of St. Ninian’s. Samuel Lewis described St Ninians in 1851 as an ancient rural society, albeit in a transitional state due to agricultural and industrial changes. There were about 10,000 inhabitants of the parish, of whom 1200 lived in the actual village of St Ninians, one mile south of the town of Stirling. The Auchenbowie estate was situated about two miles further south [See map p. 16]

The town of Stirling and parish of St Ninians

The town of Stirling was famous for its history. Its castle guarded the farthest downstream crossing of the River Forth which made it a vital fort. For hundreds of years, Stirling Castle was fought over by the English and Scots, then by the Royalists and Roundheads in the Civil War. It had become a royal residence by the 15th century and several Scottish monarchs were born and raised there, including James VI of Scotland from 1567 to 1625, who became James I of England and Ireland (succeeding Elizabeth I) from 1603 to 1625. But St Ninians too had a rich, eventful past; it included the remains of five Roman stations and several Druid monuments. It was also famous for its battles, especially for the Battle

52 Christian Aitken was christened 15 August 1824 at Denny, according to the Old Parochial Records.
53 Five houses from Mary’s at Dunipace was listed a John Aitken, with his wife and eight children. He is the correct age to be Archibald Aitken’s eldest brother.
of Bannockburn in 1314, in which the English army, consisting of 100,000 under the English king Edward II, were routed by 30,000 Scots under the indefatigable patriot Robert the Bruce, and which resulted in the establishment of the independent Scottish crown.

In 1851, Stirling was a progressive town. With only 8000 inhabitants, it had a substantial library and several circulating libraries, a School of Arts (for ‘promotion of mechanical study and improvement in the arts and sciences’), a medical society, a horticultural society, and significantly, given David’s later activities in Australia, an agricultural society and agricultural museum. There were numerous schools, including a grammar school. By mid-century Stirling was a society in transition; wool manufacturing had become the principal industry, while the once considerable cotton industry was in decline. There were three large steam-mills for spinning woollen yarn, but in the parish of 9000 inhabitants, 700 were still occupied in weaving at their own dwellings. Other industries included dyeing, rope-making, soap and candle-making, coach-building; there were tanneries, some large malting establishments, and several resort hotels.55

The parish of St Ninians in 1851 included about 35,000 acres, of which 20,000 were ‘in good cultivation’. There were 2000 acres of woodland and plantations, and the remainder ‘meadow, pasture, moor and waste’. The hills and moorlands afforded good pasture for sheep and cattle. Dairying was important. ‘Coal of excellent quality has been long in operation’ and one of the four main collieries was at the Auchenbowie estate, run by the landowner. William Nimmo and Robert Gillespie in The history of Stirlingshire wrote of the coal in St Ninians:

Still the coal mines here are very valuable, and have been extensively wrought. They lie on the south-east side of the parish, in ground considerably lower than that in which the trap-rocks abound, so that the collieries of Greenyards, Bannockburn, Plean, and Auchenbowie, may be regarded as forming one large coal-field.56

Fifteen hundred of the 10,000 inhabitants of St Ninians were employed in the manufacture of carpets, tartans, and plaidings. Other industries included tanning, nail-making, malting, and brewing.57

David, whose correspondence in Victoria shows him to be literate,58 very likely

57 Lewis, A Topographical Dictionary of Scotland, p. 320.
58 The Victorian Public Record Office holds letters written by Marshall to the Secretary of the Education Department in 1876. VPRO Special Case files 892/P, Unit 34.
attended the school at Auchenbowie itself.\textsuperscript{59} The \textit{Stirling Journal} reports an examination of the children at the Auchenbowie school in 1829.\textsuperscript{60} David would have been about five so could well have been present. According to the report, the school was taught by Alexander Morrison and ‘the appearance which the children made reflected very great credit’ on him. The fact that there was a school at Auchenbowie means that attendance would have been made easier than if the estate children had to walk to a school in St Ninians. In 1851 this school was referred to in the \textit{Stirling Journal} as a ‘subscription school’ as opposed to ‘parish school’, the latter term being applied to the other schools on which the paper reported.\textsuperscript{61} However, the school underwent the ‘Presbyterial Examination’ which suggests it was overseen by the parish.\textsuperscript{62}

The 1851 census provides further information on the Marshalls, who by that time had left Auchenbowie, and there are more categories than in the 1841 census. David Marshall’s mother Janet Stevenson, her unmarried sons William and Archibald, her married daughter Mary and her married son David were all now living in the town of Stirling. At 85 Barn Road, very close to Stirling Castle, were listed: Janet, head of house, a widow, aged 64, housekeeper; William, son, unmarried, 27, shoemaker; Archibald, son, unmarried, 20, carter; Jessie Stevenson, lodger, unmarried, 68, pauper; and Charles Grinley, son [the latter should be ‘grandson’, with the surname of Grindlay], 4, scholar—all the above born in St Ninians. [See p. 24] At 86 Barn Road, were listed Thomas Cousin, head of house, married, 21, carter, born in Muckhart, Perth; Mary Marshall, wife, 27, born in St Ninians; and James Cousin, son, three weeks or months\textsuperscript{63}, born in the town of Stirling.

Mary Marshall’s first husband was Walter Grindlay by whom she had the one child, Charles, and her second was Thomas Cousin, by whom she would have nine more children.

Less than a half-mile from Barn Road, at 49 King Street, and close to Stirling Station, are listed: David Marshall, head of house, 26, ‘carrier or carter’, born in St

\textsuperscript{59} The Stirling Council Archives holds various school records but none relating to the school at Auchenbowie.
\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Stirling Journal & Advertiser}, 13 August 1829.
\textsuperscript{61} \textit{Stirling Journal & Advertiser}, 30 August 1850.
\textsuperscript{62} \textit{Stirling Journal & Advertiser}, 25 April 1851.
\textsuperscript{63} This census entry is difficult to decipher. In August 1867, at the Baringhup Agricultural Show, James Cousin was awarded third prize for boys under eighteen years of age. ‘A young lad, nephew of Mr D Marshall, also shows such ability as gives promise of his following well in the footsteps of his uncle, the well known prize ploughman’. David Marshall had recently returned from a trip to Scotland. He may have brought James (who would have been about sixteen) with him, although James was not listed on the shipping record.
Ninians, Christian, wife, 26, born in Denny; and Mary Ann, daughter, eight months, born in the town of Stirling. [See p. 25] Three male lodgers are also listed: two as ‘ironmonger’s shopman’ and the other as ‘tailor (journeyman)’. King Street was in the town centre, and house number 49 was about fifty yards from the Athenaeum. The Athenaeum was erected in 1817 and consisted in 1851 of three storeys, the first being used for shops, the second as a public reading-room, and the third as a subscription library. Opposite this building was the Corn Exchange, which was used not only for the weekly grain market, but for public meetings and entertainments. The agricultural museum was also situated in King Street. Established in 1831, it was the first institution of its kind in Britain. It was run by the Messrs Drummond, nursery and seedsmen, and the public had free admission. It consisted of four halls, each 160 feet long and twenty-five feet wide, two allotted for the museum and two to a warehouse. Charles Rogers, at the time a well-known nineteenth-century writer, was impressed. ‘The Museum contains agricultural and horticultural implements of every description, agricultural produce of every sort and from every clime, mineralogical specimens from every country, with an innumerable assortment of the most interesting scientific curiosities.’\(^64\) Living in King Street, David Marshall did not lack the opportunity for mental stimulation.

At right angle to King St, in Port Street, are listed: Alexander Marshall, head of house, 43, born at Auchenbowie and his Mary, wife, 41, born St Ninians, plus five children. The father is the correct age to be David’s half-brother, and additionally was born at Auchenbowie.

Possibly Janet Stevenson and her unmarried sons William and Archibald were required to leave their cottage after the death of her husband. Her sons may have thought they had better prospects in the town of Stirling. The youngest Archibald was described on the census as a carter, as was David.\(^65\) Carters were often former farm servants putting their expertise with horses to a new use in the town.\(^66\) These carters were not necessarily better off financially when they left farm service, but it may have provided more opportunity to save from their income and advance.


\(^{65}\) Precisely, ‘carter or carrier’.

Figure 2.4 Barn Road, showing Stirling Castle.
Janet Stevenson lived in Barn Road in 1851.
2010. Private collection
Figure 2.5 King St, Stirling, where Christian Aitken and David Marshall lived in 1851. Their rooms were above the central door.
2010. Private collection
David was described in his obituary as a carrier to the Stirling railway station. Stirling was first connected to the Scottish Central Railway in 1848. The *Stirling Observer* of April 28 1853 reported a supper in Hendry’s Star Inn, Baker Street, where a presentation was made to David Marshall of ten sovereigns on his ‘proceeding to Australia’. He was then in charge of the goods department. He had ‘long had a charge’ under Wordie & Co. The report continues:

Mr Ash the station-master in the name of those present presented him with a handsome purse, containing ten sovereigns, and bearing the following inscription:- ‘Presented, along with sovereigns, to Mr David Marshall, Scottish Central Railway, Stirling, by a number of friends and acquaintances, on his leaving for Australia, as a mark of respect and esteem for his uniform civility and strict attention to his duties. — Stirling, 19th April, 1853.’ David had long been a favourite among his fellows employed at the station, as well as a servant in whom the utmost confidence was reposed by Mr Wordie, and was always well received when discharging his duties among the public generally. He has only to follow the same steady course he has pursued here, and carry along with him the same good conduct he has manifested, and, with health, success cannot fail to follow him.

The entertainment was good, as it always is in the ‘Star’, and the company, after spending a few hours in mutual enjoyment, went home, much satisfied with their meeting. There seems, upon the whole, to be no small share of kindly feeling towards each other among the railway people in this quarter.

There are a few points of interest here. It would be useful to know the number of years referred to in ‘long had a charge’. He may even have worked there since 1848 when Stirling was connected to the Central Railway. He and Christian married in 1848, and the position and marriage may be linked. Being ‘a favourite among his fellows’, his conscientiousness, and ‘uniform civility’ were traits which would (generally) be characteristic of him in his later life in Victoria. Also, ten sovereigns contributed by ‘friends and acquaintances’ seems a surprisingly large sum, given his unassisted passage to Australia could have been twenty-five pounds. A steady position with the railway would in this period be viewed by some as a ‘glamour job’. This position must have at least enabled the couple to save part of his wages to pay for their passages.

The move of David and Christian to the town of Stirling might be an example of ‘stage migration’, whereby an emigrant from an urban area has originally migrated from one or more rural areas. Dudley Baines posits that once an individual has made an initial move, if only to another part of his own country, his decision to move again is related to his previous move. In the case of the Marshalls, the decision to emigrate to Victoria may have only emerged after their experiences in the town, which would have so contrasted

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67 *Stirling Observer*, 28 April 1853.
68 The purse is still in the possession of a Marshall descendant.
with their earlier lives at Auchenbowie and Sauchiemill. For David in particular, the seasonal rhythms of Auchenbowie farm life would have been supplanted by the New Age regime of the railroad. Successfully managing the goods department may have given him the self-confidence to consider a larger plan. Alternatively, the decision to emigrate may have been taken before the move to Stirling, a shift viewed as an opportunity to earn passage money, which is not ‘true’ stage migration. A rough indication of intent, Baines suggests, would be the length of time that a rural-urban migrant had lived in the city before he emigrated. He suggests that ‘it would be difficult to argue that a decision to emigrate taken after several years’ residence in a city was not heavily affected by the urban environment’. Their daughter’s birth in Stirling in June 1850 indicates the Marshalls lived in the town for at least three years before emigrating.

The pull of the goldfields
There was particular encouragement to emigrate to the colony of Victoria in the early 1850s. The attractions of its goldfields were kept before the eyes of the Scottish reading public. Local newspapers published news of rushes and outputs and letters from diggers to their relatives and friends in Scotland. The finds in the Buninyong district were the focus of a Times article reprinted in the Stirling Journal and Advertiser in January 1852. One man had obtained £1500 in a week and another, a blacksmith, had got £1000. A party of three men had found 20 pounds weight in one day, while another before breakfast raised 13 pounds weight. The Troubadour was only enabled to sail by obtaining her compliment of men from among the seamen confined on short sentences in the Melbourne jail.’ Even then, only six would take the offer, the rest preferring to serve their time and then make for the goldfields. The Stirling Journal and Advertiser also produced its own articles. One printed in February 1852 was light on substance (for example, not specifying the field) but very enthusiastic about the ‘New El Dorado’. The excitement by the beginning of November 1851 had been ‘augmented a thousand fold’, ‘the colonists had nearly gone mad’ and ‘from all accounts the Melbourne diggings are inexhaustible’. The Stirling papers ran encouraging advertisements from shipping companies such as the White Star Line, for example the following for the clipper ship Lochiel of 1500 tons leaving Liverpool for Melbourne 30 April 1853 (leaving roughly a month before the Marshalls left

70 Baines, Migration in a mature economy, p. 42.
71 Stirling Journal and Advertiser, 23 January 1852.
72 Stirling Journal and Advertiser, 20 February 1852.
on the *Sophia Burbidge* from Glasgow, but faster and presumably more expensive).

This fine vessel is fitted up in every respect with a view to secure the comfort of passengers, who are respectfully requested to inspect her accommodations. Lighting and ventilation have been especially attended to; and as she carries a limited number of passengers on one deck only, the Lochiel cannot fail to give entire satisfaction and confidence. She carries an experienced surgeon.\(^{73}\)

**Skills, experience and cultural values David Marshall carried to the colony**

The skills and experience Marshall carried with him included a familiarity with farm routines and management of horses, and an awareness of experimental agriculture as practised in the Forth Valley. At Auchenbowie he was trained as a ploughman and won various ploughing matches, an important feature of rural life. He was trained to plough by T Davey who also migrated to Victoria, settling in Kyneton. Skill as a ploughman indicated spatial ability to plan his treatment of the field, ability to read the immediate environment of soil and weather, and knowledge of the field and the equipment and ability to make them interact well. He was physically strong—a vital attribute in a new colony.

The society which David Marshall and Christian Aitken would leave behind in 1853 may have lacked opportunity for land ownership; but it did provide security in its traditions, rich history and identity markers.

David Marshall’s religion was Presbyterian. In Victoria, he would become trustee for both Maldon and Baringhup Presbyterian Churches and be actively engaged in the establishment and progress of these through their boards of management. Family papers indicate that in St Ninians the Marshalls were members of the evangelical Free Church of Scotland, not the mainstream Church of Scotland.\(^{74}\) Whether David had a strong spiritual belief is unknown but Presbyterianism was a vital ingredient in Scottish national identity.

With the Scottish Reformation of the sixteenth century, Presbyterianism had become the dominant religion, and this occurred surprisingly quickly. By the mid nineteenth century, eighty-five per cent of Scots were still affiliated to Presbyterianism. The remaining fifteen per cent included Catholics and Episcopalians. An important question is why this austere and exacting religion, particularly harsh in the sixteenth century with its insistence on predestination, was so quickly and almost comprehensively accepted by the Scots. Relevant immediate factors were the notoriously corrupt Scottish

\(^{73}\) *Stirling Journal & Advertiser*, 15 April 1853.

\(^{74}\) Family papers include newspaper extracts related to the South United Free Church, St Ninians, Stirling. Its incumbent, Rev. Dr Robert Frew, had a ministerial career of at least seventy years (from 1835) and his sole pastorate was St Ninians.
Catholic Church, Mary Stuart’s political weakness, and the temporary alliance between John Knox and the Scottish nobility—but long-term, unlike in England, there was comparatively little popular resistance to the enforced break from Rome.

The Presbyterians who migrated to Victoria in the nineteenth century were mostly born in Scotland, with the minority born in Ireland. Their principal home churches were the Church of Scotland and the evangelical Free Church of Scotland. Malcolm Wood argues that the Reformation of 1560 and Presbyterianism’s place in Scottish history ‘resonated in staunch Scots Presbyterian hearts more than any other nationalistic impulse’.75 (In part, this link to nationalism explains the extreme sectarianism in Scotland and even more so in Ireland.) In the colonial period, Scots clergy in Victoria evoked the Reformation, with the ensuing progress of the State Church, as a ‘grand and thrilling’ part of their history.76

Malcolm Prentis claims that the effect of the Reformation on Scottish society and culture is difficult to overestimate:

In few other nations was the reform so thoroughgoing: not only was it virtually universally accepted, but its programme was of the most thoroughly reformed kind, not stopping at the kind of Catholic-Reformed compromise reached in England …The disciplinary authority that the Reformed Kirk sought … was over not only personal morality (excessive food, drink, self-adornment, fornication) but also sins of economic injustice.77 The Kirk’s authority was claimed over all classes of subjects of Christ’s kingdom, including ‘princes and gentry’. Universal education and poor relief were therefore high priorities, even though the latter lagged seriously behind in implementation.

TM Devine details the evidence to argue that widespread availability of education was a significant Scottish characteristic. He charts the development of universal education from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century.78 He stresses that pre-Reformation Scotland was not, as is often assumed, an educational wilderness. However, the Reformers after 1560 aimed for universal education with a schoolmaster in every parish in Scotland who would provide literacy for all. They aimed at linking the parish schools to town grammar schools and universities in order to develop an integrated system. The Scottish Privy Council and Parliament supported the Kirk by taxing local landowners to maintain a school and a suitably qualified master. Obviously, it took some time to realize this ambitious program (unique in Britain) but by the later seventeenth century considerable

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76 Ibid, p. 11.
progress had been made in several Lowland areas and by the 1790s the network of parish schools in the Lowlands (including Stirlingshire) was virtually complete. Despite the general assumption about provision in the Highlands and Islands, nearly 84 per cent of parishes in Gaeldom, Orkney and Shetland had schools in the later eighteenth century, but provision was certainly patchier in the western mainland and Outer Hebrides. Education continued as a matter for the church rather than the state until the Education Act of 1872.

Devine concedes that it is at times difficult to determine the standards of literacy actually achieved through this wide availability of basic education. Full-time schooling, even in the parish system, with attendance usually starting at the age of seven, lasted a year or two for poor scholars and less than four to five years for the majority. Attendance fluctuated markedly, with numbers falling dramatically in summer when children were needed at the harvest. Tuition in writing was more expensive than reading, was often charged separately and was taught later. There is evidence that many families were mainly interested in their children being able to read and regarded writing as a lower priority.

Jane McDermid specifically examines the situation of girls in the parish school system in the nineteenth century. Mixed-sex schooling was the norm, unlike in England. Although John Knox had expected women to be obedient to men, he nevertheless did not exclude women from his desire to bring education to all Scottish people. However, the national system was weighted in favour of boys and against girls. The talented boy in Scotland could go on to university but until the 1890s the talented girl could not. Also, in practice, girls were more likely than boys to be educated outside the national system, ‘which was the case for all social classes, with lower-class girls often taught in dame schools, and the middle class in private schools for young ladies’. She agrees that reading was recognized as a fundamental skill for both sexes, but demonstrates that for working class parents, writing was generally accepted as a skill more useful to boys than to girls. Girls were more likely to be taught sewing, spinning and knitting, subjects related not only to domestic tasks, but seen as enhancing their chances of industrial work.

Also, McDermid emphasizes that migration from Ireland in the nineteenth century

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79 Devine, ‘The Scottish Nation’, p. 93 points out that schooling for the majority of the population in the larger towns was actually poorer than in the countryside. Before the Reformation the burgh councils had achieved control over schooling and this tradition was maintained. One estimate suggests one-third of the inhabitants of Edinburgh were illiterate in the mid-eighteenth century. The most dynamic feature of schooling in the large burghs was a response to the needs of the expanding business and professional classes, rather than the basic requirements for literacy of the urban masses.

80 Ibid, pp. 96-7.

resulted in a large Catholic minority which generally kept itself outside the Protestant education system.\textsuperscript{82}

Devine concludes that the achievement in schooling initiated by the Presbyterian Church was still impressive by any standards. Reading literacy became widespread and education was available in most parts of the country at low or no cost. Close connections were forged between the parish school system, the burgh schools and the universities. The Scots could boast of five universities when the English had only two.\textsuperscript{83} It was possible that able boys from humble backgrounds could rise to eminence simply on the basis of their own talents.\textsuperscript{84} Despite her more nuanced position on the equality of the Scottish system in practice, particularly on the education of girls, in essence McDermid agrees with Devine that ‘the Scots never accepted the English view that there was a special, low-grade type of education suitable for the poor, and that anything beyond minimal literacy would encourage the spread of subversive ideas’,\textsuperscript{85} and that the dominie\textsuperscript{86} in the parish school strove to teach a wide range of subjects in sharp contrast to the narrow curriculum of English elementary education.\textsuperscript{87}

The ideal of universality was partly realized. McDermid compares the Scottish and English marriage registers of 1855. By this time the Scottish national system was under considerable strain. Even so, in Scotland 88.6 per cent of the new husbands and 77.2 per cent of the wives signed their names. The corresponding figures for England were 70.5 per cent and 58.8 per cent. In the majority of Scottish Lowland counties, basic literacy was over 90 per cent, the exceptions being the industrializing counties of western Scotland.

The superiority of the national system eventually fell away under pressure from nineteenth century industrialization and the consequent breakout in population, as previously discussed in this chapter.

Devine examines implications of the Scottish educational achievements. For example, there was a boom in middle-class education in the burgh schools, academies and universities which helped to equip Scots merchants, entrepreneurs and professional groups to exploit the economic opportunities in the era of the Industrial Revolution. Also, he argues that the ‘educated peasantry’ was more open to nineteenth century agricultural

\textsuperscript{82} McDermid, p. 20.
\textsuperscript{83} Devine, \textit{The Scottish Nation}, p. 389.
\textsuperscript{84} However, in the 1860s a minister’s son was still a hundred times more likely to go to university than a miner’s son. Devine, p. 98.
\textsuperscript{85} McDermid, p. 35.
\textsuperscript{86} Scots term for schoolmaster.
\textsuperscript{87} McDermid, p. 27.
reforms because it found on the printed page a new form of authority, and much of the new farming technology was disseminated in books and articles.\textsuperscript{88}

If he had been born in Ireland or England in 1824 as the son of an agricultural labourer, Marshall would probably have been illiterate. If illiterate, he may still have emigrated, and may also have mined and farmed (although not so effectively) but could not have participated in public life in the way he did.

When he stood for the Maldon Municipal Council in 1860 he stated in his address to ratepayers ‘I am not an educated man’ and contrasted his lack of formal education with the practical experience he could offer. As the son of a farm labourer, he possibly had few years of schooling. However, when living in Stirling he may have taken advantage of adult education provision. The first mechanics institute was incorporated in Glasgow in 1821, the beginning of a movement which spread through Britain and further afield. Mechanics institutes initially aimed through libraries, classes and lectures to provide opportunities for the study of science by artisans which would be of ‘practical application to their several trades or occupations’. Harrison suggests that the study of advanced science proved irrelevant to all but a small section of self-educated working men who were not sufficient in number to sustain expensive institutions.\textsuperscript{89} In general, the institutes morphed into lower middle-class centres with wider aims of intellectual and moral improvement and which consequently added studies such as literary, historical and philosophical to the scientific. The need for elementary classes was also catered for as the century progressed. Obviously practice was not identical across all institutes, but the Stirling School of Arts which aimed in 1851 for ‘promotion of mechanical study and improvement in the arts and sciences’,\textsuperscript{90} seems a good example of the above trend. Other forms of adult education included night schools (rural and factory) and libraries; the Stirling Athenaeum situated in King St close to where David Marshall lived has already been referred to. There was also improving literature such as Chambers’ \textit{Edinburgh Journal} and publications of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. Samuel Smiles had not yet published his famous exhortation to self-improvement \textit{Self-Help} when Marshall left Scotland, but other improving literature would have been available in the various Stirling libraries.\textsuperscript{91}

Gordon Donaldson argued that by the time the great emigrations from Scotland

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{88} Devine, \textit{The Scottish Nation}, pp. 99-100.
  \item \textsuperscript{90} Lewis, \textit{A Topographical Dictionary of Scotland}, p. 487.
  \item \textsuperscript{91} Robert and William Chambers and Samuel Smiles were all Scots but their popular works would have been available in Victoria.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
were under way every Scot regarded a school as an essential element in a community, and this concept was one which he carried with him wherever he went.\(^{92}\) Marshall’s actions in Victoria show that he valued education for all children. He had been on the committee of the Baringhup East Common School and was a member of the Baringhup Board of Advice for 16 years from 1872, the year of the Victorian Education Act, which was based on principles of free, secular and compulsory education. Participation on the latter board must have required much patience, as the reports and correspondence indicate a constant struggle with the Department on a variety of issues, including providing the most basic amenities. As an example of involvement in a more complex issue, in 1876 he intervened in a dispute between the head teacher and the pupil teacher at the Baringhup school (No. 1687). He wrote a letter to James Service (MLA for Maldon, later 12th Premier of Victoria), in which he argued that the District Inspector conducting the formal hearing was not impartial. Service added a note before forwarding this letter to Duncan Gillies as Minister of Public Instruction, probably to ensure that attention would be paid to a letter which, though logical, exhibited a mediocre level of penmanship and presentation.\(^{93}\)

I beg to forward this communication for the consideration of the Hon. the Minister of Public Instruction. Mr Marshall unfortunately had not the benefit of a Government education in his youth, but he is a worthy straightforward man, and possesses a strong sense of justice. He is also a member of the Shire Council. I have [underlined] the statements that seem to require special enquiry.

J Service/14/7/76

Marshall in addition to his efforts regarding state education worked to establish free libraries, and the educational function of the Baringhup Agricultural Society also links to this culture of self-improvement and mutual improvement.

The fact that all children, no matter what their station, were educated together in the parish schools\(^ {94}\) has been linked to a greater sense of egalitarianism among Scots (compared to the English). This is contestable, but certainly Marshall was not inhibited by a sense of social inferiority. Presbyterianism also allowed local congregations a large degree of self-government and they became accustomed to discussion and decision-making.

Another relevant attitude was the belief in colonisation and superiority of British culture to all others, a belief which was shared by the vast majority of British colonists. I do not know whether Marshall had qualms about the dispossession of indigenous people


\(^{93}\) PROV, Special Cases File, VPRS 892/34

\(^{94}\) Devine, *The Scottish Nation*, p. 389.
or was sympathetic to their culture and plight. If he had been, he apparently would have been in the minority.

**Early years in the colony**

On November 13, 1853, eight weeks after their arrival in Port Phillip, Alexander, the son of Christian and David, died. According to the death register, he died at Prahran after five days of illness, and was aged 17 months. Under ‘cause of death’ are listed ‘dysentery’ and ‘teething’. His death was not certified by a medical attendant. David Marshall was the informant, he was present at the death, and is described as a carter. There is no address apart from ‘Prahran’, thus no indication of type of accommodation.

Death of infant children was not uncommon. Infant mortality rates in the 1850s in Victoria were about 140 deaths per 1000 live births. Of each 1000 children born live, 119 did not live until their first birthday. It is likely that in 1853, with Melbourne undergoing dramatic social change, the rate of infant death would have been higher. The Victorian Registrar-General, on the basis of Melbourne childhood mortality returns for one quarter of 1853, described many of the population ‘living in a state highly incompatible with infantile life’. WH Archer pointed out in 1859 that in the period 1854-57 infant mortality was 20 per cent of the births in Melbourne, compared with about 13 per cent in the rest of Victoria. He also demonstrated the high summer mortality from diarrhea and dysentery as a major cause of Victorian infant deaths, unlike in Great Britain where other infectious diseases, particularly smallpox, were the chief causes.

We can only speculate on the physical and environmental difficulties the Marshall family may have been experiencing during these first weeks in Melbourne, a town that ‘was teetering on the brink of chaos’. Broome describes the small new town receiving and digesting an average of 259 new immigrants every day between 1852 and 1854. Eighty-six per cent of those in the colony in December 1854 had come in the previous three years. By late 1852, 7000 were camped in a canvas town in South Melbourne paying five

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95 Irvine Loudon points out in *Death in Childbirth: An International Study of Maternal Care and Maternal Mortality 1800-1930*, Oxford University Press, 1992 that a major problem in the study of infant mortality in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was that deaths were often attributed to ‘convulsions’, ‘debility’, ‘atrophy’, ‘marasmus’ or ‘teething’. ‘For the most part one can only guess what diseases such terms represented, and it can never be assumed such categories were used consistently.’


97 These analyses of infant mortality were discussed in Bryan Gandevia, *Tears often Shed: child health and welfare in Australia from 1788*, Rushcutter’s Bay, NSW, Pergamon Press, 1978, p. 79.

98 Broome, *The Victorians: Arriving*, p. 76.
shillings per tent per week. The government belatedly opened Immigrants’ Homes which by the end of 1853 had provided temporary shelter for more than ten thousand immigrants.99 Unsurprisingly, men in their twenties and thirties dominated the population; there were few old people, and not a great many women and children. Melbourne was ‘a cross between a military staging-camp and a wild-west frontier town’. Facilities were poor, those with medical knowledge scarce and diseases rife. Melbourne was fortunate that no epidemic of typhus broke out during that time.100

**Life in Prahran**

The Reverend George Langhorne had arrived in Port Phillip in 1836 ‘to open a missionary establishment for blacks upon the Yarra’.101 His camp was situated on the Yarra near Punt Hill. The Aboriginal station he named Par-ra-ran. It was a compound of two Aboriginal words, meaning ‘land partially surrounded by water’, but Surveyor-General Hoddle recorded it as ‘Prahran’. The area was used as a cattle run, and the first sale of Crown land was in 1840. Before the gold rushes there were few houses or inhabitants in Prahran, which was regarded as a swamp. The population escalated after the first gold strikes, and Prahran built some prosperity on brick-making, market gardens and firewood. But despite efforts by its inhabitants, development of facilities was slow. In a letter to the Argus of May 25, David G. Stobie, honorary secretary to the Prahran municipal committee and later secretary to the Melbourne Benevolent Asylum, gives a grim picture of Prahran in 1855. He writes of impassable and dangerous roads, without lighting, drainage or sewerage, and a total absence of any sanitary measures for preservation of public health.102

In August 1855 David Marshall’s half-sister Margaret married Robert Aitken and gave Prahran as her ‘usual residence’. If we make the assumption that she had lived with David and Christian and was still at the same house, there is a possibility that the Marshalls had found ‘fixed’ accommodation in Prahran by November 1853, when Alexander died.

The deaths of his wife Christian and their second daughter cannot be found in the Melbourne register, and the causes are unknown, but the marriage certificate for David’s second marriage in 1864 shows that Christian died on March 18, 1854. She was aged 29,

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100 Serle, p. 67.
102 John Butler Cooper, *The History of Prahran*, passim.
according to this certificate. She was buried with her two children, Alexander and Christian, in the Presbyterian section in the new Melbourne General Cemetery in Carlton.

If the Marshalls had been living in Prahran, the nearest cemetery would have been the Old Melbourne Cemetery where the Queen Victoria Market is now situated.

There are two headstones. The inscription on the upright sandstone headstone (all in capitals) reads:

Erected by David Marshall late of Stirling in memory of his beloved wife Christian Aitken who died 18 March 1854 aged 28 years also of their children Alexander and Christian who died in infancy.

The inscription on the flat marble headstone (in Gothic script) reads:

Sacred to the memory of Christian Aitken Marshall who died 18 March 1854 aged 28 David Marshall her husband who died 27 January 1893 aged 68 and of their children Alexander and Christian who died in infancy

Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Psalm xxiii

Also

Agnes Marshall, died 28 July 1929

The inscription for David Marshall’s second wife Agnes was in different lettering, obviously added later.

Many married gold-seekers left their wives and children behind and often subsequently struggled to forward money to them, or gave up altogether, and perhaps the decision to emigrate together had actually been an easy one for David and Christian. A crucial factor may have been the inability of both their families to support her. Another vital factor would have been whether they had intended to settle permanently.

Whatever their intentions, after a sea voyage of nearly four months, Christian’s time in the colony was brief and tragic. She must have conceived her third child at sea, lost her son eight weeks after arrival, then died herself five months later, possibly in childbirth or of an illness aggravated by the birth.

There is only minimal evidence on David’s life and activities in his very earliest years in the colony. The major sources are the entry in *Victoria and its Metropolis: Past and Present* and his obituary. For example, his entry in ‘*Victoria and its Metropolis: Past and Present*’ describing this period reads:

He came to Melbourne in 1853, and after a few months’ manual work he bought a team and went carting on the wharf for some time. After a varied experience on the goldfields –

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103 These headstones are still intact (2011) and are totally legible.
104 Scottish women often retained their original family name when they married. The addition of Marshall to ‘Christian Aitken’ and ‘Agnes’ on the second inscription conforms to the English custom.
105 These two headstones are numbered 85 and 86 respectively.
Ballarat, Creswick, and other places – he, in partnership with Mr Aitken, took to carrying to the claims round Maldon, and also ran a coach from that township to Castlemaine for some years successfully, during which time they purchased 180 acres of land.  

It is poignant, though totally unsurprising, that there was no mention of the loss of his wife and children which occurred during 1853-4. Sutherland was concerned only with the careers and public activities of his subjects and in this reflects the ethos of his society. Women were not considered pioneers.

‘Carting on the wharf’ presumably means that Marshall was carting from the Yarra wharf, and before September 1854. In that month, a railway line was opened connecting Melbourne to a government pier at Sandridge, Hobson’s Bay. The entry refers to David Marshall’s ‘varied experience on the goldfields – Ballarat, Creswick and other places’ and then to his ‘carrying to the claims round Maldon’. The great rushes which took place after his arrival were Ballarat and Tarrangower (Maldon) at the start of 1854, Avoca and Maryborough later in 1854, and Moliagul, Inkerman and Fiery Creek (Beaufort) in 1855. From 1851 through to 1856 the Castlemaine area remained attractive. For the individual digger, Bendigo held up until late 1855. Ballarat was the most important field of the mid-fifties. Creswick was among the first fields of 1851 and retained some popularity throughout the fifties.  

David Marshall was not at all unusual in shifting from field to field. A miner was allowed to stake only a small claim measuring twelve feet by twelve feet which was quickly worked out. He would then move on to another claim, sometimes on another field.

There were increasingly frantic rushes to new fields, with thousands arriving a few days after hearing a rumour, competing for space along the creeks. Many found some gold, but soon realized that it was at the cost of incessant labour, frequent movement and uncertainty, and the knowledge that very few found enough gold to relieve them from labour permanently.

The ‘culture’ of emigration would have made the decision to emigrate an easier one for David Marshall and Christian Aitken. Scots were to be found in greater or lesser numbers in virtually every part of the globe from Arctic to Australasia, from South America to South Africa, India and China. Harper discusses the industry of ‘anti-emigration propaganda and literature that equated all emigration with destitution and despair’ but also the even bigger industry of ‘guidebooks, pamphlets, newspapers and letters that skillfully

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106 Sutherland (ed.), *Victoria and its Metropolis*, p. 262.
108 For example, David Syme, later the Age editor, between 1853 and 1855 was a digger at Castlemaine, Bendigo, Korong, Beechworth, Daylesford, Ballarat and Mt Egerton. Serle, p. 84.
targeted and fed the unfulfilled ambitions of a restless nation throughout and beyond the
nineteenth century’. In particular, there was an unremitting stream of positive
propaganda regarding farming opportunities in Canada, the United States and the
Antipodes throughout the entire 19th century. Eric Richards argues that the Scots were
‗often guided by an agrarian myth which encouraged ideas of agricultural sufficiency on
virgin colonial acres’. David Marshall would eventually acquire agricultural sufficiency,
but in the meantime would spend eleven years engaged in other occupations.

111 Eric Richards, ‘Varieties of Scottish Emigration in the Nineteenth Century’, *Historical Studies*, vol. 21,
Chapter Three: The partnership of Aitken and Marshall

In some ways, David Marshall’s partnership with his brother-in-law Robert Aitken reflected the changing concerns, aspirations and pre-occupations of the colony. It moved from carting, coaching, hotel owning, road and building construction to farming. The partnership’s activities were not without some controversy, which is fortunate for a researcher, for disputes have left a trail of council discussions and letters to the editor of the local newspaper.

The partnership in itself reflects a pattern in colonial society whereby family members often co-operated in farming, mining and business enterprises in order to get started. Aitken and Marshall combined their capital, experience and skills. Marshall was a carter/teamster with farming experience, and Aitken was a blacksmith, as was his father.

Robert Aitken

His marriage certificate lists his parents as James Aitken and Janet Gillon who, according to the Scottish Parochial Records, married in 1815 in Larbert, a village (and parish) in the county of Stirling, and christened at least eleven children, the second eldest being Robert, born in 1818. The second youngest, William, was also living in Central Victoria by at least 1867 and in the 1860s and 1870s selected farmland at Neereaman, adjacent to Baringhup.

A Robert Aitken, a blacksmith, apparently travelling alone, was aboard the ship Abrota which arrived in Port Phillip on 24 November 1852. It had left Glasgow on 5 August with two cabin passengers, 122 intermediate and steerage passengers, and a cargo of merchandise. He may be this Robert Aitken; however, ‘Robert Aitken’ is a common Scottish name.

According to his death certificate, Robert Aitken had been married at least twice before marrying Margaret Marshall in 1855. This certificate also shows that he already had three children when he married Margaret, who were named Ann, Jessie and Robert.

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113 It is unknown whether the partnership was formed before or after the marriage of David’s sister Margaret Marshall and Robert Aitken in August 1855. Robert is described as a blacksmith on the marriage certificate, which suggests the partnership came later. However, he may have considered smithing his prime occupation.
114 In 1873 William bought Ridgway’s threshing machine and according to the Tarrangower Times of December 24 ‘being a practical machinist, he overhauled and put the whole concern in a thorough state of efficiency’. He was employed by many of the district farmers to thresh at least until 1883.
Robert had married Agnes Smith in Larbert, Stirling county, in 1841, and they had at least two daughters, Ann and Jessie Gillon. He married Ann Simpson in Falkirk, Stirling county, in 1848. The certificate of his marriage to Margaret Marshall in August 1855 shows that Ann Simpson had died in 1850. Jessie Gillon Aitken married a Richard Jones in Maldon in 1873, and she died in Eaglehawk (Maldon) in 1888 aged 41, so at least one of Robert’s three children migrated to the colony. In 1856, at Tarrangower, a daughter was born to Robert and Margaret, and was named Margaret.

Mary Ann Marshall left Prahran with her father David, his sister Margaret and Margaret’s husband Robert Aitken when she was five years old.115 They went by dray to Sandhurst (Bendigo) then to Tarrangower which she called ‘Canvas Town’, and later she lived with her aunt and uncle at the Carriers Arms for an unknown period and moved to her father’s farm at Baringhup when aged thirteen.116 The above information is from the notes made by Mary Ann’s granddaughter Mary McKenzie and they are sketchy and in part ambiguous. It is unclear how long Mary Ann actually lived at the Carriers Arms. According to these notes, after her father’s second marriage she attended schools at Elmbank Terrace, East Melbourne and later at Kyneton.117 She later learned dressmaking in Melbourne, together with Janet Erskine, and lived with the Erskine family in St. Kilda Road.118

**Early Tarrangower**

The first gold rush to Tarrangower (from the end of 1853 into early 1854) turned this section of the Bryants’ pastoral run into a place of canvas and calico tents, rickety stores and rough shanties. In the early period gold was alluvial and much water was required to wash the dirt away from it. Water was at a premium and most of the dirt had to be carted about six miles to the Loddon River or five miles to the Muckleford Creek. William Howitt, the English traveller and writer, reported in 1854 on the ‘dreadful distress’ he

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115 The exact date of arrival is not known but it was later than the marriage of Margaret Marshall and Robert Aitken at her house in Prahran, August 10 1855.
116 Notes made by Mary McKenzie, granddaughter of Mary Ann Marshall. Mary McKenzie and her mother lived with Mary Ann Marshall in her Woodend house after the early death of her father William Bartlett. Family papers are in writer’s possession.
117 The 1865 Sands & McDougall directory shows Elmbank Terrace on the south side of Victoria Parade, East Melbourne, at the east corner of Lansdowne St. Argus advertisements indicate several schools for ‘young ladies’ in Elmbank Terrace over the relevant period.
118 The Erskine family had also sailed on the *Sophia Burbidge* in 1853 and remained friends with the Marshall family. The 1871 Sands & McDougall directory shows: ‘ERSKINE, James, plumber & gasfitter, 39 Swanston St; private residence, off St Kilda Road’.
found in Tarrangower, which was ‘totally without water’. Crowds carted ‘surface-stuff’ down to the gullies where they hoped there would be water in winter, paying £1 a load to have it carted. ‘Thousands of tons were thus piled up in various places’ while ‘the sanguine expectants awaited the arrival of rain.’ 20,000 were estimated to be on the Tarrangower fields with the procured gold 1000-2000 ounces a week.119 But he also wrote of the wider scene:

We had a view, from the hills near Tarrangower, of the country along the Loddon, and it was amongst the very finest we have seen in this colony. A noble valley, containing in itself immense plains of most fertile land, was bounded by hills more picturesque than this country usually presents, and across the valley lay range beyond range of hills, some dark with dense forests, others green and merely dotted with timber, terminated by blue mountain ranges, altogether truly beautiful.120

**Carting partnership**

For a period the partners carted around the Tarrangower diggings. Carting was often done by a bullock team and dray, and in this period and place would for some have been a lucrative activity. It was a likely occupation for an unsuccessful alluvial miner with experience in carting, like David Marshall. It was also arduous for men and especially for animals. George Francis Train, the American traveller and promoter described life on the Bendigo and Ballarat goldfields, and wondered whether ‘… there is [any] place in the world where there is so much cruelty to animals as here, the poor bullocks in their iron bowed yokes being the great sufferers. The driver’s whip is as long as a fishing pole, and the crack of it is as loud as a pistol.’121 Two-wheeled drays were better suited to bad roads because a single axle could be more easily manoeuvred in mud and sand. To ease the tremendous pressure which a loaded dray going downhill placed on the necks of the yoked animals, a log was dragged behind to act as a temporary brake.122 Charles Browning Hall, on the Victorian goldfields in the 1850s, describes a dray stuck in the deepest part of a ford, ‘…with from twelve to twenty four bullocks (double banking the drivers call this) hooked on and plunging vainly about in efforts to draw out the load, with six or eight men all belaboring, swearing and plowtering123 up to their middles in mud and water’. 124

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120 Ibid, p. 357.
123 Scots term for messing about or splashing aimlessly in mud or water.
However, Aitken and Marshall may have carted with horses. John Bartlett Davies from Cornwall carted on the Bendigo goldfields with a horse and dray from 1858. His extensive journal includes information on conditions, difficulties and costs of carting and it also reveals his developing awareness of the potential of various claims.125

In 1858 Davies with a partner bought a horse, dray and harness for about £70, to cart wood and quartz for a crushing machine. They each made 35 to 40 shillings per day when they had work. This was a good wage but carting was inconsistent. In the 1860s horse feed was cheap and he was able to make a ‘pretty good wage’ from carting. (At times he had different carting partners and occasionally more than one.) The difficulties included periods of drought, which made the horse feed scarce and expensive, heavy rains which limited carting in the bush and, most importantly, fluctuation in reef returns which affected the carters’ employment prospects. Through his carting, he gained a knowledge of mines and their prospects, and concluded that the quartz reefs were the most permanent source of wealth in the district. He did not mine quartz himself but he augmented (and at times replaced) his carting income by buying an interest in various quartz claims.

Aitken and Marshall similarly interwove carting and mining investment. Aitken would cart until his death in 1880; at that time he was carting quartz for RD Oswald, who by then was the principal Tarrangower mine-owner and shareholder. Aitken invested in mining and was at different times on the board of various companies and also the working manager of the Welcome Reef quartz mining company. Marshall worked as a practical miner and like Aitken was a serious investor. His mining activities will be detailed in Chapter Four.

The development of Maldon and the partnership
A preliminary survey for the township site had been made in 1854 and first lots auctioned. Quartz mining was growing in importance and indicated a long-term future. The first government survey was made in March 1856 by Thomas Adair. It was said that it was he who named the township Maldon, after the Essex town. A Tarrangower Times account claimed that Adair had only intended ‘Maldon’ to apply to the section of the town which followed the grid-style layout.126 It seems that the name was used more widely by the residents and subsequent surveys included the whole surveyed section as Maldon. Local

125 The Journal of John Bartlett Davies, held in University of Melbourne Archives.
126 Tarrangower Times, 16 March 1898.
land sales were advertised at ‘Maldon, Tarrangower Gold Fields’.

By 1856, Aitken and Marshall had expanded their carting partnership and were operating the first coaching service to run between Tarrangower and Castlemaine. Aitken by then was 38 and Marshall 32. In May of that year, Aitken bought from the Crown two allotments (5 section A and 6 section A) in a prime position in High Street. 127 One was sold to the Bank of New South Wales in 1857, and became the site of its bank building and gold smelter. 128 In the same year, on the other allotment Aitken built the Carriers Arms hotel, one of the first brick buildings on this goldfield. 129 Now, over one hundred and fifty years later, together they form a key element in the central Maldon streetscape.

In June 1857, Aitken was granted a publican’s licence on condition that the hotel was finished within two weeks, and that stables were erected. 130 In July of the same year he was granted a night licence. 131 His 1858 application to renew his licence shows that the Carriers Arms consisted of a bar, two sitting-rooms, a dining-room, six bedrooms, kitchen and outhouses and sixteen stalled stables. 132 The coaching office attached to the hotel has been described by Miles Lewis as a ‘significant symbol of the march of progress’ 133 because transport from Tarrangower to Castlemaine, and even between one diggings and another, had been a major problem. 134

In that June, the partnership, venturing in another direction, had also bought 180 acres of rich land in the Loddon valley.

Coaching on the goldfields

The development of public transport was linked to the carrying of mail. This was first done on horseback, and then by light carts followed by public coaches. In 1852, RJ Howard began a coach service to Castlemaine, and when a larger four-horse coach was built this was extended to Bendigo. In 1853 T Hodges imported a string of Yankee

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127 Mount Alexander Mail, 16 May 1856.
128 This building is now an antiques shop.
129 Miles Lewis in The Essential Maldon, Richmond, Vic., Greenhouse in association with National Trust of Australia (Victoria), 1983, p. 44, claims it is unlikely that there were many permanent brick or stone buildings put up before the Carriers Arms. It is today (2011) the oldest remaining building in High and Main Streets.
130 Mount Alexander Mail, 5 June 1857.
131 Mount Alexander Mail, 9 July 1857.
132 Application to Court of Petty Sessions, Maldon Museum & Archives Association.
133 The use of the term ‘office’ is ambiguous. If Lewis means a physical structure there are contradictory accounts over this addition to the original building. See footnote 195, p. 60.
134 Lewis, The Essential Maldon, p. 45.
Figure 3.1 Photo Carriers Arms, High St, c1860. State Library of Victoria
coaches – they were egg-shaped Concord Jacks with yellow underbodies and wheels and red side panels. They had a leather suspension and a low centre of gravity which gave a swan-like motion, making them smoother over rough country. A number of horse teams were assembled and stabled at ten-mile stages between Geelong and Ballarat and provided a fast service. By the end of 1853, much of this stock had been bought by a partnership of American men in their early twenties, headed by Freeman Cobb. Weston Bate points out in Lucky City that Americans revolutionized the transport industry. ‘Their light wagons and coaches were running regular schedules on the incredibly rough roads, and far outdistanced the lumbering bullock wagons, horse drays and heavy coaches of English and colonial tradition.’ Cobb & Co. was born, ‘in an un-English spirit of enterprise and efficiency’. In January 1854 Cobb & Co. introduced a fast passenger coach between Bendigo, Castlemaine and Melbourne, and they were followed by other coach proprietors on other gold field routes.

State of colonial roads

Roads were usually dreadful in the 1850s. The following is extracted from an 1858 description of the main route through the Maldon town centre: from the Tarrangower Hotel at the north end, to the Carriers Arms in the commercial hub further south on the same road, the British and American Hotel further south again, and a ‘sprinkling’ of sly grog tents along the southerly approaches of the road in from Castlemaine. The road is execrable and, in its natural deformity, now winds down a hill and then plunges down a gully, until by great exertions, by dint of slipping, by dint of swearing, accompanied by the most lugubriously comic grimaces, especially if you have corns on your toes, you arrive at last opposite the British and American Hotel. Most of the diggers travelled by foot, some by horse, and bulk goods were usually carried

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136 Freeman Cobb had converted his carrying business to the coaching firm with encouragement and capital from the American promoter George Francis Train.
137 The following is a description in The Spring Creek Leader in 1869 (reprinted Tarrangower Times 24 February 1869): When we look at the roads, the clouds of dust, the thick timber in some parts, the deep gutters in others, between this place and Sandhurst, we cannot help admiring the steadiness and skill evinced by the drivers of Cobb & Co.’s coaches. Six, seven, and as many as eight horses hitched up to one ponderous vehicle carrying close on fifty people, would appear to anyone but a thoroughly scientific Australian whip a most unmanageable concern , more especially [when] some horses are by no means quiet. No one can have any idea of the work of a driver of one of these coaches and a mob of horses, unless he has seen the twisting and winding their way with the ponderous team through a forest of trees or crossing some deep gutter.
139 The original Cobb & Co partnership disbanded after two years four months and the business passed through several changes of ownership, but the Cobb & Co name was subsequently used by a large number of loosely associated firms which spread to New South Wales and Queensland.
140 Tarrangower Times, 15 June 1858.
by bullock dray, as previously mentioned. Margaret Kiddle relates Caroline Chisholm’s impressions of her trip to the Bendigo goldfields in 1854. She travelled in a covered cart pulled by two horses. There was ‘enormous traffic’ passing over the route and ‘the heavy loads, the cutting, narrow, sharp-edged wheels, plough up the road, and the wide range they are obliged to take in bad weather, cuts up the road so much that foot-passengers suffer very much from the roughness of the same’.\(^{141}\) In the summer months the dust rose up in choking waves; in the winter the roads were often impassable due to bogs. During the 1850s the goldfields benefited from the significant road improvements made by the Central Road Board – the cost of cartage from Melbourne to Castlemaine dropped from £120 a ton in 1852 to £9 in 1856 and £3 in 1861. The coach trip which had taken three days could now be achieved in eight hours. But even before the roads were properly made, the coaching services began to improve the situation.\(^{142}\)

**Aitken and Marshall’s coaching partnership**

It is not known where the partners bought their early coaches. By 1860 Myring was running the Castlemaine Coach Factory in Castlemaine. Later James Callander & Sons were proprietors of the Maldon Coach Factory.

The *Mount Alexander Mail* and the *Tarrangower Times* charted the progress of Aitken & Marshall’s coaching service for Tarrangower, through advertisements, news items and occasional editorial comment. Following is the initial advertisement in the *Mount Alexander Mail* of 17 November, 1856 for the first coaching service between Tarrangower and Castlemaine.\(^{143}\)

Messrs Aitken and Marshall beg leave to return thanks to the miners and residents of Tarrangower for the liberal patronage they have hitherto received, and solicit a continuance of the same. On and after this date they will run a

**CONVEYANCE BETWEEN TARRANGOWER AND CASTLEMAINE**

Leaving Tarrangower (opposite the Royal Hotel) every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday at half past eight o’clock a.m. and returning from Castlemaine the same day: starting from the Criterion Hotel at four o’clock each afternoon.

Fare 8s. To Castlemaine and back same day 13s.

The *Mount Alexander Mail* commented that ‘this coach will be a great convenience to the inhabitants of Tarrangower and will no doubt be extensively used.’\(^{144}\) It was named *Stirling Castle*. The writer of one of Aitken’s obituaries in 1880 ‘had been acquainted with

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\(^{142}\) Lewis, *The Essential Maldon*, p. 45.

\(^{143}\) This was before the *Carriers Arms* had been constructed on Aitken’s land.

\(^{144}\) *Mount Alexander Mail*, 17 November 1856.
[the] deceased for upwards of a quarter of a century, and had the pleasure of the first ride to Maldon with him in the Stirling Castle, of which he was the proprietor'.

In the early days David Marshall drove the coach.

From 1857 the service left from the Carriers Arms, which provided ‘stabling and transport’. Saddle and spring cart horses were also available for hire. In May, 1857, ‘in consequence of many causes’, the single coach fare to Castlemaine was raised to 10s, the return fare 18s.

Despite the optimism expressed in the Mount Alexander Mail this service was not cheap and would have been for middle-class patrons. Serle states that in the mid 1850s half the miners were regularly working for wages which on the well-established fields were generally between £2 10s and £3 10s a week, sometimes as low as £2 for unskilled labourers and as high as £4 for skilled mechanics. Profits of course would be partly offset by the very rough and dangerous roads and the toll these took on horses, drivers and coaches.

The partnership also ran a service from Tarrangower to the Orrville Hotel pleasure gardens, leaving the Carriers Arms every Sunday at 1.30 pm, arriving at Muckleford at 3.00 and returning to Tarrangower at 6.00. The Muckleford Creek was the closest reliable water to Tarrangower. In May 1854 William Howitt had praised Muckleford’s rich meadow land as ‘splendid’. ‘The soil is many feet, nay many yards deep; a rich and black soil, which centuries of crops could not exhaust … [and] it was a magnificent expanse of most verdant meadow.’ The Government had already laid out a considerable number of township allotments, and also sold a large portion to the Castlemaine auctioneer Mr Hitchcock. Howitt had strongly questioned why the Government did not sell small farms here, and also in that ‘most fertile and immense valley of the Loddon just by’.

In about 1855, as part of the township of Muckleford, the small but substantially built Orrville Hotel had been erected on the main road between Tarrangower and Castlemaine near where it crossed the Muckleford Creek. It established the above-mentioned ‘pleasure gardens’ which for ‘the admirers of horticulture a finer private flower

145 Castlemaine Leader, 7 October 1880.
146 Tarrangower Times, 23 June 1888.
147 Tarrangower Times, 25 November 1857.
148 Tarrangower Times, 6 September 1858.
149 Mount Alexander Mail, 29 May 1857.
151 Mount Alexander Mail, 20 November 1857.
152 Howitt, Land, Labour and Gold, p. 357.
Later the Orville House Seminary of Muckleford was established on the Tarrangower road, conducted by Mrs Daniel and Miss Franklin. Their advertisement included the following:

Miss Franklin has had much experience in teaching in England, Scotland and the Colonies, and can give reference to the parents of her pupils who have patronised her in Castlemaine. Mrs Daniel begs to assure those who entrust their daughters to her care that it will be her study to promote their happiness.

The House is commodious with large playground. Cobb’s and the Tarrangower conveyances pass the house daily. In 1859 an advertisement stated that the proprietor Mr Frederick Lange had made extensive alterations and improvements in the Orville Hotel and its pleasure gardens and ‘is prepared to accommodate Pic Nic, Pleasure or Wedding Parties in a style that cannot be surpassed by any other house in the Colony’. The hotel offered first-class stabling and loose boxes, and a large paddock with water accommodation.

Marshall and Aitken became agents for Cobb & Co. and ran their own coach at 7 am to meet the 9 am Cobb & Co. coach at Castlemaine for Melbourne. They continued to run their ads for ‘livery and bait stables’ and for ‘cartage’. In October 1858, they acquired a new four wheeled coach, to seat twelve passengers. The Mail commented that they had ‘come out with a new conveyance, resembling an English omnibus, though much lighter. It is a great improvement in both comfort and appearance on that they formerly used.’ Passengers could be booked from their office right through to Melbourne, and the reverse at Cobb’s office in Melbourne. Fares each way were £2 6s, with Castlemaine and back 12s. They trusted ‘that by their supplying the requirements of the public, they will meet with a still further share of that liberal patronage it has always been their endeavour to merit.’

In that same month, October 1858, James Bromfield started a coach service to Baringhup. The Mail commented that Mr Bromfield had started a conveyance to and from the Davenham Hotel, Baringhup, at the ‘very moderate rate of five shillings there and
back. As this spot presents more advantages to those “picnicking thoughts intent” than any other within many miles of Maldon, there is little doubt that his conveyance will always be full.\textsuperscript{162} By December, 1858, there was serious competition. Louis Ronnfeldt began a service between Tarrangower and Castlemaine, which left the Royal Hotel, Tarrangower at 8 am and the Royal Hotel Castlemaine at 5 pm. His fares were 6s each way.\textsuperscript{163}

In 1858 newspapers advertised a service to RJ Lawrence’s \textit{Loddon Hotel}. A four horse coach would leave the \textit{Carriers Arms}, High St, on Sunday afternoons at 2.00 for the Hotel, and leave for Maldon at 6.00. The fare there and back would be 5s. JG Moon wrote of the Loddon as a favourite drive of seven miles on a Sunday afternoon, especially in summer, of those Maldonites who had horses and traps of their own, or could afford to hire a conveyance.

The great attraction seems to be not only the pleasant ride, but to visit that most good-natured and jovial of hosts, friend Lawrence, of the \textit{Loddon Hotel}. The house and garden are pleasantly situated on the river banks, and the land around under cultivation. This is also a rendezvous in summer for amateur fishermen (Loddon cod being both plentiful and good), and in winter for wild duck shooters. Agricultural shows and pigeon matches are also held there.\textsuperscript{164}

On March 22, 1859 the \textit{Tarrangower Times} praised the latest endeavour of the partnership:

\textbf{COACHING IN MALDON}

\begin{quote}
We were glad to see yesterday our old friends and pioneers on this road, Messrs. Aitken & Marshall, turning out with a new coach and four horses \textit{en route} to Castlemaine. In future all passengers by them will be drawn by four horses, and we hope that the trade will so far increase as to enable all to have four horse teams on the road. We cordially wish them success, and hope their enterprise may prove as remunerative as they can desire.
\end{quote}

In the same article, the \textit{Times} commented on the sharp drop in fares, perhaps due to improvement in road conditions but undoubtedly also to competition for passengers driving down the price.

By the way, we may also draw attention to the reduction of fares, the advertisement of which appears in another column. It will be seen that for 30s now, everyone can go all the way to Melbourne direct. This cheap travelling will, we feel assured, answer every body’s purpose; the coaches will be filled by the increased number of travellers, and the public will be encouraged to take trips that otherwise their means could not afford.

By September 27, 1859, L & W Ronnfeldt, the brothers now being in partnership, were charging 5s one way to Castlemaine, and 9s return. By 1861, Aitken & Marshall’s fares to Castlemaine were 5s one way, and 9s return.

\textsuperscript{162} Marshall later bought the land and house which had been run as the Davenham Hotel.

\textsuperscript{163} \textit{Mount Alexander Mail}, 17 December 1858.

\textsuperscript{164} JG Moon, \textit{Tarrangower Past and Present}, p. 9.
In April, 1861, Robert Aiken acquired another new coach and for several months (at least from June to August) one of the coaching advertisements was in his name alone. In retrospect this may be seen as signalling the break-up of the partnership, which took place at the end of August.

The Times commented on the new coach, and also pointed out Cobb & Co.’s entry into Bendigo:

Mr Robert Aitken has had built a splendid looking, strong, roomy, and comfortable coach, for the Castlemaine and Tarrangower roads; and we observe that ‘King Cobb’ has entered into the local line of the Bendigo coaches. We can hardly imagine that there is a fair opening for his majesty, as the traffic has always seemed to us to be particularly meager – however, ‘As it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good’ ... we presume for a time passengers will be benefited by extraordinarily cheap fares.

As predicted, on May 28, 1861, Aitken & Marshall announced a further reduction in fares. From Tarrangower to Castlemaine a single ticket was down to 3s, with the fare to Melbourne £1 8s.

The end of the coaching and contracting partnership was announced in the local paper on August 30, 1861:

DISSOLUTION OF PARTNERSHIP:

Notice is hereby given that the partnership heretofore existing between Robert Aitken and David Marshall, under the style and firm of ‘Aitken and Marshall’ as Coach Proprietors and Contractors, at Maldon, in the Colony of Victoria, has this day been dissolved by mutual consent. All debts due to and moneys owing by the late firm will be received and paid by the undersigned Robert Aitken, to whom it is requested that all outstanding accounts may be at once sent.

Construction of roads

On 6 August 1858, the Maldon municipality was proclaimed and charged with developing the town’s municipal amenities, especially the roads and bridges so vital for efficient development of commerce and social well-being. Aitken and Marshall were the first contractors for the construction of the main roads, which included High, Main and Fountain Streets.

Their tender to form part of High St for £952 5s was accepted in late October 1859. The Times of 25 November contains Marshall’s letter which vehemently denied suggestions that he engaged labourers from Melbourne instead of Maldon, underpaid them and compelled them to board at the Carriers Arms. It concludes:

We should not have troubled you on this subject, nor have thought it worthwhile to notice such malicious lies, had this not been our first government contract, fearing that if we

165 Witnesses to their signatures were Alex Hunter for Robert Aitken and Andrew Gray for David Marshall.
166 The full text of this letter is in Appendix 1.
allowed them to remain uncontradicted, we might possibly be prejudiced in future.

In January 1860 the Times commented that in a few days Messrs Aitken and Marshall’s contract for the formation of part of High street would be completed, and ‘we point with pride to the excellent manner in which local contractors can execute such workmanship. The culvert below the British and American Hotel is really an artistically finished job, and of its class, we firmly believe, second to none in the colony’. The final claim can be ignored as parochial exaggeration, but we can accept that the Times was pleased with the quality of the road.

In April Maldon was visited by the greatest flood that has occurred ‘within the memory of the oldest inhabitant’, and the Times devoted almost a full column to the description of its extent and destructiveness. In High St ‘the culvert lately erected by the road contractors Aitken & Marshall proved itself to be a splendid piece of workmanship, but all too small for such an emergency, the water seeming to gather strength from its temporary check rolled completely over the culvert carrying whole loads of metal from the newly Macadamized road in its headlong path’.

The partnership was awarded various other contracts during 1859-60, mainly to do with road construction and repair. They also fenced the Maldon cemetery, and removed stumps from and cleared the Shire Reserve.

Building the Market House

When the Municipal Council turned its attentions to the creation of buildings, the first was to be a market house, the first public building of any magnitude in Maldon and created to reinforce Maldon as the centre for district commerce. Miles Lewis writes of the ‘market building mania’ which affected many Victorian towns; unfortunately most of these efforts were financial failures.

It was correctly perceived that towns which had risen to prosperity through gold mining would be prudent to establish themselves on a more permanent footing as agricultural centres, and the model of the English market town was the obvious one to emulate. The English market town was established, however, in the days of a static working class, a close-knit network of primary producers, and considerable obstacles to the transport of goods over long distances. Two of these factors never applied in Victoria, and the rapid upgrading of the roads during the 1850s and the establishment of a railway network eliminated the third.

Lewis’s argument is generally applicable to Maldon, although the railway did not reach

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167 Tarrangower Times, 31 January 1860.
168 Tarrangower Times, 3 April 1860.
Maldon itself until 1884.

The market house was to be erected on land excised from the Government Camp, on the corner of High Street and Fountain Street, the latter the first road in Maldon to be formed. An extended partnership of John Jamieson, Robert Aitken and David Marshall was contracted for the building of the market house. Jamieson’s credentials at that stage are unknown, but Marshall and Aitken were now building on a scale much larger than before. John Jamieson later, in 1863, built the substantial Wesleyan chapel in Fountain St opposite the market house.\(^{170}\)

Jonathan George Moon wrote his history of Tarrangower in 1864. The following is from his entry for the market house.\(^{171}\)

\[\text{Market House (Borough Reserve) – Architect – Hartley; builders – Jamieson, Aitken, and Marshall; erected in the year 1859; cost £1250; built of brick, 77 feet long by 30 feet wide. The foundation stone of this building was laid by J.W.Wright, J.P., who on the occasion was presented with a silver trowel, bearing the following inscription: ‘Maldon, Victoria. Presented to J.W.Wright, Esq., J.P., first chairman of the municipality, on the occasion of his laying the foundation stone of this Market-house, by the contractors, John Jamieson, Robert Aitken, and David Marshall, A.D. April 25, 1859.’}\]

The positioning, funding and actual construction of the market house was beset by controversy. For example, the walls of the building were found in July 1859 to be bulging inwards and also leaning outwards at the eaves. Arthur Hartley, the architect and Town Surveyor, assured the Council that the work was safe, but the Council commissioned a report from ESV Spencer, the Castlemaine architect and Town Surveyor. He claimed that ‘the loose rubble foundations (are) put together with mortar composed without sand, and little lime, which disadvantage is increased through the foundation trenches having been cut only the nett width of the masonry’. In the walls themselves the mortar was ‘composed of clayey loam (in which) the virtues of the lime would be entirely counteracted.’\(^{172}\)

Spencer advised buttressing the walls from the inside by short walls at right angles, four to each side of the building, these being pierced by archways and presumably integrated into the bays of stalls which ran along each side of the main space.

The buttressing of the walls by short walls was undertaken (but two on each side, not four). The contractors survived the controversy, the contract being extended for further work, which included the ‘excavating and making’ of an underground water tank. At a Council meeting in January 1860, Hartley presented the balance of the account for £29 for


\(^{171}\) Moon, p. 15.

\(^{172}\) Quoted in Lewis, *The Essential Maldon*, p. 111.
Figure 3.2 Market House (left) and Court House c1865. Painting by HJC Mitchell. Maldon Museum & Archives
the cementing of the tank by Aitken and Marshall. Some councillors, perhaps understandably nervous, objected. On 12 January, Marshall wrote a sharp but detailed and coherent letter to the Times on the matter, which again shows his capacity to defend the partnership. Eventually the claim was approved.\(^\text{173}\)

The Council’s public works committee recommended the following month that the bottom of the market house tank be re-cemented, and in April, ‘in consequence of the walls of the tank at the Market House not being water tight’ that it be re-cemented with Roman cement, and that six barrels be purchased for this. A report was read from Mr Hadwen showing that the cement used was only one twentieth of an inch in thickness, the remaining portion being made up of lime and sand.

The Maldon market’s economic viability was undermined by the proximity of the Castlemaine market. Other problems such as overpricing of dues and stalls contributed to the venture’s resounding financial failure. In 1862 the Council ended the marketing operation. There were a few years of bitter local criticism of the original council’s over-ambitious decision and disagreements on the future use of the building. In the meantime it had a variety of uses. The council considered applications from the Literary and Scientific Institute and the Athenaeum, and various churches used it for services and anniversaries. The opening of the Maldon Common School in 1862 and the Maldon Horticultural and Agricultural Show in December 1863 were held there. The fire brigade used it for drills and the fire engine was housed in the two end stalls from 1862 to 1865.

In June 1865 the Council decided to convert the building into a shire hall and offices. It accepted the tender from J Brisco for the erection of a fire engine house so that the market house could be freed up, then the tender of Bowe and Sons for its conversion which cost £673. Marshall and Aitken had dissolved their partnership by then and were not involved as contractors. A porch and a timber floor were added, blind arches were opened up into windows, and rooms for offices, committees and a strong-room built in. A semi-portable platform was constructed so that when the occasion required, with the additional space available, the room would be a ‘noble one for a hall’.\(^\text{174}\) In 1871 hammer beam arches were constructed to tie the wall together (as they were again found to have shifted) and the mezzanine floor was added.

It was then used as a shire hall and offices for the next 95 years. In 1966, after new shire offices had been built, the Maldon Museum & Archives Association took over

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\(^{173}\) The full text of this letter is in Appendix 2.

\(^{174}\) Tarrangower Times, 1862-65.
the building.

**Court cases involving the partnership**

Compared to other local businesses, such as drapers, ironmongers or grocers, the partnership of Aitken and Marshall was rarely involved in cases at the Maldon Police Court. Occasionally the pair sued for payment, but this was rare, and probably explained in the case of coaching by tickets being usually bought in advance. In February 1860 Mr Albrecht Honneus, the local jeweller, sued in the County Court to recover £40, a significant amount, the value of a parcel containing watches and clocks which had not reached its destination, Melbourne. The judge declared a nonsuit with £4 19s 6d costs because Cobb & Co were the proper persons to sue and Mr Honneus had not told the carrier of the value of the parcel as required by the Act. Presumably enraged by this decision, Honneus wrote to the *Times*, accusing Aitken and Marshall of ‘criminal carelessness’.

> You may judge of my surprise, Sir, upon being informed that the parcel had never reached its destination, and that upon applying to Aitken and Marshall respecting it, I was coolly informed that they did not know what became of it, and likewise, they were not responsible, although they acknowledged having received the box. If valuable property, entrusted to their care, is to be lost through such – in my opinion – criminal carelessness, the sooner the practice is put a stop to, the better. 175

The Aitken and Marshall coach would not have gone further than Castlemaine, and it is impossible to judge from the available information where the fault actually lay. Honneus was for many years a successful Maldon businessman and he also obtained first prize medal at the Intercolonial (Victorian) Exhibition, and also at the Paris Exhibition, for his show of Maldon manufactured glue. 176 On the other hand, there are many instances of complaints to the *Times* from Honneus on a variety of matters and reports of several court actions he had instigated.

In response to the *Times* in September 1867 criticizing his attempt to obtain land in the Springs reserve, Honneus withdrew his subscription. The *Times* acknowledged receipt of a letter from Honneus, ‘desiring us to stop his paper, take out his advertisement, and forward his account. We shall do all three with the greatest pleasure, particularly the latter; we hope the account will be properly settled, as repeated applications during the last nine months have hitherto failed.’

A more unsettling court case for a researcher of Marshall is when he sued Aitken

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175 *Tarrangower Times*, 24 February 1860.

176 *Tarrangower Times*, 4 February 1869.
in 1865 for ‘detaining’ forty-two bags, valued at four guineas. He won the case. Given that he was suing a relative, and in particular one who with his wife helped raise Marshall’s daughter, the action seems mean-minded. No other evidence found to date supports a character trait of pettiness or spite, and it is tempting to suspect that this court action was a symptom of a deeper tension or resentment existing at this time.

Land partnership
On March 1857 the partners had bought 180 acres of land at £3 an acre in the Loddon valley. This was a crown allotment in one of the first agricultural settlements in Victoria, formerly part of the Bryants’ Cairn Curran pastoral run. Why this land was offered for early sale and further details on its position, crops grown, animals stocked and further land bought will be developed in Chapter 5. Four days after this purchase Marshall bought a quarter acre town lot on the Maldon-Castlemaine Road (allotment 9 section 10). Rates records which would indicate whether this was bought as an investment are unobtainable for this period.

It is not known to what extent each partner was directly involved in farming the Baringhup land during their partnership. But the range of activities generally undertaken during 1855 to 1861 indicates adaptability, a willingness to take risks by venturing outside fields of obvious expertise, and considerable energy. In addition to the projects he shared with Robert Aitken, Marshall had taken up mining leases on the Beehive Reef (1857) and Nuggetty Reef (1860) (he worked the latter claim himself for at least two years, but it is not known if he worked the Beehive) and had been elected to the Maldon Municipal Council in September 1860.

The end of the Aitken and Marshall partnership
Despite the competition from the Ronnfeldt brothers and potential competition from Cobb & Co., Robert Aitken continued running the coaching service for some years. When Aitken and Marshall dissolved their partnership, Marshall retained the farmland. Aitken remained the owner of the Carriers Arms until his death in 1880 and continued to run the largest livery and bait stable in Maldon. He also carted all the quartz for RD Oswald’s

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177 Maldon Court of Petty Sessions, 1860-1866, VPRS 328/P0000/2, Public Record Office. The summons was dated 29 November 1865.
Caledonian crushing mills. In the Times 1865 advertisements up to March 10 he was still a coach proprietor but in the 1871 Sands and McDougall directory he was described as a carter. The Castlemaine Leader obituary refers to him selling his four-horse coach to George Ridley, his driver, who ‘bolted’ with the coach and horses and left Aitken ‘the loser thereby’. Robert Aitken appears to have been an amiable man. When in 1880 he was given ‘the second largest’ funeral in Maldon’s history his ‘liberal and kind disposition’ was highlighted.

Throughout his 25 years in Maldon he had been, in addition to the activities described in this chapter, the manager of the Welcome Quartz Mining Company, based on Wilson’s Reef, a claimholder and shareholder in many mining enterprises, a road contractor with Kinnery, and for many years a member of and treasurer for the Maldon fire brigade.

The amount of his probate was £1342, which was not insignificant. He left no will and Letters of Administration were granted to his wife Margaret, generally absent in public accounts like so many women of this era. However, there are a few references. On 21 April 1862, she was charged with being drunk and disorderly and using obscene language, and the report of the court case in the Times shows that Robert gave evidence against her, claiming that she was drunk ‘six evenings out of seven’. This may explain why Robert relinquished his publican’s licence, and his wife’s drinking may have also been a source of tension with Marshall. Over many years, the Times refers to her donations of money and goods such as clothing and books to Maldon Hospital, substantial donations

178 Robert Dent Oswald eventually was the most eminent of Maldon’s mining men. His high-class rock drills were used throughout Australia.

179 Castlemaine Leader, 7 October 1880.

180 On 23 October 1875 Aitken still had a ‘conveyance’. For an apprentices exhibition excursion to Melbourne, Messrs Ronnfeldt, Chisholm and Aitken were prepared to run their respective conveyances for the Maldon children to catch the train to Castlemaine. In 1876 there were four coaches running daily from Maldon to Castlemaine.

181 The largest funeral was in 1862, that of a young man, John Bentley, who was very involved in Maldon public life.

182 These included claims on Parkins’ Reef, Lisle’s Gully, the Glencoe Quartz Mining Company (he had 250 shares of £1 each with 7s 6d paid up at registration of the company), Nelson United Quartz Mining Company (he had 275 shares of 10s each), the New Enterprise Co. on Nuggety Reef and the Peabody Gold Mining Company, Prince of Wales Reef. He was a (provisional) director of the Grand Junction Quartz Mining Company and of the short-lived Maldon United Prospecting Company which was set up to form a comprehensive system of prospecting for new and the further developing of old reefs.

183 For instance, in 1871 he and Kinnery were contractors for the main road to Castlemaine.

184 Of interest is this news item ‘Our neighbour, Mr R Aitken, has been, as usual, in luck’s way, by being possessed of a lucky ticket in the Victoria Art Union, which entitles him to a work of art valued at 30 guineas’ [my italics]. Tarrangower Times 1 May, 1878.

185 Probate and Administration Files 1841-1958, VPRS 28/P00003/1651.

186 Watch house record, Maldon Archives.

187 Tarrangower Times, 25 April 1862.

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of fruit to the Hospital fete, and involvement along with her daughter Margaret in Presbyterian Church tea meetings and other functions.\(^\text{188}\)

Robert Aitken’s presence seems above all a physical one. There are several references to the magnificent garden behind the *Carriers Arms* (which may have been also due to his wife’s efforts). For instance, in 1876 the *Times* describes the ‘great havoc’ caused by ‘young scoundrels’ who evidently knew the run of ‘Mr Aitken’s splendid garden’ and stripped some of the most valuable trees, both of fruit and branches. ‘It appears from the footmarks round the trees that a great mob must have been employed in the depredation, as we are informed the fruit stolen must have weighed at least a hundredweight, the majority of which was intended to have been picked on the following morning’.\(^\text{189}\)

He sold produce from this garden; for example, there were advertisements through June and July of 1864 for ‘a variety of choice flowers, roots and rose bushes for sale’ and the *Times* praised his specimens of early potatoes in September of the same year. He was not only treasurer of the brigade but drove the fire engine. A report of a demonstration by the Maldon fire brigade in 1875 is evocative, despite the mixed simile: ‘After a little delay a procession was formed, headed by the Maldon Brass Band, next the local engine, R Aitken handling the ribbon like a jehu\(^\text{190}\) to the manor born’.\(^\text{191}\)

The following indicates the type of work he was involved in and his state of health in 1870, when aged 52:

> The latter part of last week it was rumoured that Mr R Aitken, the well known team-owner and respected townsman had met with a deplorable accident at the Old Nuggetty Crushing Works. We are glad to say that, although Mr Aitken met with a misfortune, it amounted to nothing so serious as was rumoured. It appears that Mr Aitken was assisting some of Mr Oswald’s men in loading a wagon with mill work, and while hauling up the bed of a basin, weighing about two tons, the chain made a slip and down came the mass of iron on to some blocks, and, canting over, caught the left leg of Mr Aitken, inflicting three ugly wounds, and bruising the ankle and foot to a very painful degree. Mr Aitken, being in possession of a good constitution, is enabled to stand the shock admirably, and is already able to hobble about his domicile with the aid of a stick.\(^\text{192}\)

In 1878 the *Times* reported that ‘notwithstanding the prevalent dullness of trade’ Mr R Aitken was making ‘extensive operations’ to his house in the main street, the addition to be occupied by Mr TB Davison, the auctioneer,\(^\text{193}\) whose business is ‘attaining such a

\(^{188}\) Robert Aitken’s daughter Margaret married Algernon Way, a son of prominent butcher and civic figure RH Way, in 1882, two years after her father’s death. She may have been the ‘Maggie Way’ who signed the women’s suffrage petition in Maldon in 1891.

\(^{189}\) *Tarrangower Times*, 5 January, 1876.

\(^{190}\) The ‘jehu’ was commander of the king of Israel’s chariots.

\(^{191}\) *Tarrangower Times*, 16 November, 1875.

\(^{192}\) *Tarrangower Times*, 23 November 1870.

\(^{193}\) TB Davison acted as agent for Margaret Aitken in winding up Robert Aitken’s estate.
pitch that his present small quarters are quite inadequate’. 194 Auctions of all manner of goods including agricultural machinery and ‘mining material’ were subsequently conducted in ‘Aitken’s Yard’ and after his death in 1880 in ‘Mrs Aitken’s Yard’. 195

As previously noted, at his death at 62 of ‘apoplexy’ Robert Aitken was still running his livery and bait stables and carting quartz for RD Oswald. The Maldon correspondent for the Castlemaine Leader concluded his obituary with ‘no matter what kind of weather, he was nearly always to be seen in High Street in his shirt sleeves: being such a hale and hearty man I can yet scarcely believe he is no more’. 196

The Carriers Arms, that ‘well known grand freehold’ was put on the market for private sale in 1884. Part of the advertisement reads:

The house is of brick with slate roof, containing five bedrooms, sitting room, spacious dining room, kitchen and scullery, office adjoining, with frontage to Main Street. Large yard, stables, hay loft, water laid on. The property comprises about two and a quarter acres of land, with extensive frontages to High Streets and Chapel Streets.

The above offers a grand opportunity for Temperance Hotel and Livery stables combined. 197

A later advertisement includes:

A spacious courtyard with plenty of stabling, coach sheds and loft room ... A dividing fence at the top of the yard marks off a fine garden plot with good-bearing fruit trees and clear space used for a kitchen garden. This part forms the boundary of the allotment in Chapel St. Such fine town property has not been in the market for many years ... time-payment will be accepted. 198

A photo currently (2011) held by the Maldon Museum & Archives Association dated 1867 shows buildings behind the Carriers Arms which may have been used as stables and coach sheds, and there is also a two storey building. All of these additional buildings, which appear to cover a greater area than the Carriers Arms itself, are gone.

The property was bought by Dr O’Neill, not long returned to Maldon. There was then a clearing sale of furniture, engravings, many beds and much bedding. The Times commented that ‘the sale of Mrs Aitken’s effects ... will mean the breaking up of a very comfortable home of thirty years standing.’ 199

The reason for the breakup of the Aitken and Marshall partnership can only be

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194 Tarrangower Times, 25 August, 1878.
195 This information appears to contradict the claim in the Maldon Conservation Study, Town & Country Planning Board, 1977, p. 11, that the small building attached to the south side was erected as a surgery for Dr John O’Neill in 1893. Certainly the windows look older than if erected in 1893. Conversely it contradicts Miles Lewis’s claim in The Essential Maldon p. 42 that ‘the structure with the early shop window which still survives at the left hand side’ was Maldon’s principal coaching office.
196 The full text of this obituary is in Appendix 3.
197 Tarrangower Times, 2 August 1884.
198 Tarrangower Times, 20 August 1884.
199 Tarrangower Times, 10 September 1884.
speculated upon. It may have been due to a family or business rift; it may have been due to Marshall’s plans for the long term. After successfully quartz reefing for several years in the Nuggetty Ranges, David Marshall would buy more land and settle permanently on his farm in 1864, the year of his marriage to Agnes Harley. Full-time farming may have always been his ultimate goal, and the reason he emigrated from Stirling in 1853. In 1861, if his intention was to expand the farmland, quartz mining at Nuggetty may have seemed a more financially promising option than contracting and coaching.
Chapter Four: From the rock we sprang 200

David Marshall’s involvement in the Enterprise claim on Nuggety Reef was as investor and miner. Nuggety was an important reef in the history of Maldon, and this quartz mining venture would prove a test of his judgment and tenacity, would aid his accumulation of assets and facilitate his social advancement. On a wider level, the Enterprise Company’s management experiments reflect some general trends in 1860s colonial mining organization: working managers, tributers rather than wage earners, and amalgamation of groups of claimholders.

Discovery of gold at Tarrangower

The discovery and exploitation of gold was a phenomenal development in the history of Victoria. On the Tarrangower field, Captain John Mechosk was reputedly first to discover gold in June 1853, on the 109,000 acre Cairn Curran pastoral run which was occupied by Edmund Bryant.201 A report Mechosk provided to a Select Committee in 1876 (written by Charles Pridham, Gold Commissioner at Tarrangower in 1854) indicates his success as a prospector with discoveries at Fryer’s Creek in 1852, and at Jones’ Creek (Dunolly), Bryant’s Ranges (Tarrangower), McIntyre Ranges (Kingower), and Simpson’s Ranges (Maryborough), all in 1853. Mechosk received official recognition for the Tarrangower discovery and its £500 reward.202 Various possibilities have been suggested for the exact site at Tarrangower; all, however, are close to the centre of present-day Maldon. Miners from Barker’s Creek had tracked Captain Mechosk’s movements by December of 1853, and by the year’s close 20,000 diggers plus others had descended on Bryant’s Ranges.

In 1854 William Howitt commented on the transformation of the Tarrangower landscape:

The valleys and uplands are finely swarded and green, and possess a deep, rich, soil. The scenery is very pleasant — wooded ranges and hills scattered with crags bounding these fertile slopes and glades, and the diggers are actually digging up and converting into a wilderness of gravel heaps slopes of such verdure as it would make an English farmer’s heart ache to see it destroyed.203

Tarrangower, the western outpost of the Mount Alexander goldfields, turned out to be an unimportant alluvial field, but arguably runs second only to Bendigo among Victoria’s

200 Proposed motto for Maldon Municipality seal.
201 Edmund’s sons Matthew and William took over Cairn Curran in 1854.
richest quartz mining centres, and its significant mining life lasted for seventy years. Some of the early valuable quartz reefs were – Eagle Hawk, Bell’s Reef and the Beehive in 1854; German, Nuggetty, Victoria and Lisle’s Reefs in 1855; Linscott’s and Parkins’ Reefs in 1856.

The best source for detailed mining information is the Tarrangower Times. However, the source is not without problems. Gold being the life-blood of Tarrangower, there is inevitably an element of ‘talking-up’ in some reporting. Accurate coverage also depended upon the relationship between mining and crushing companies and the mining correspondent. The companies occasionally complained about inaccurate reporting. On the other hand, in 1876 the editor remonstrated that

> It is a very hard matter for our reporter to call time after time and then not even get any information until the eleventh hour. It is almost impossible then for us to provide a reliable report, but if heads of various mining companies would only make it their business to report such information as they can, and at an early hour, our strictest attention would be directed thereto, and the mining company fully and faithfully represented.

Information has also been taken from Dicker’s Mining Record which was produced to inform shareholders and therefore has its own bias (there is minimal information on miners unless they were creating ‘difficulties’ through mine accidents or wage demands) and Tarrangower mining reports, usually compiled by mining surveyor Robert Nankivell, which appear to be more balanced.

**Nuggetty Reef**

One particular claim, on the northern slope of the ranges which lay north of the township and were later called the Nuggetty Ranges, produced what was claimed to be the richest find in the world to date for the size of ground. Descriptions of gold finds are traditionally prone to be exaggerated but this claim was a sensational phenomenon. The reef was discovered accidentally in November 1855. According to the Times reporter, a boy, Alexander Pettitt, searching for stray horses, was attracted by glittering ore on the surface of a steep hill. He and two other youths, Hugh Pettitt and James Bromfield, worked quietly for two months before the secret of the find was blown. The reef was rushed in January, 1856. Twenty claims were pegged on Nuggetty Reef, and within five

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205 Ibid.
206 *Tarrangower Times*, 19 February 1876.
207 An Argus report of August 26 1862, after an outline of discovery and progress of the Nuggetty Reef of Tarrangower, asserted ‘rich as it is, and well deserved as is its repute, it must yield the palm to Poverty Reef of Tarnagulla, if not also to Maxwell’s Reef of Inglewood’.
years over nine tons of gold, valued at approximately £1 million, were crushed from the reef at no greater depth than 250 feet, and mostly with primitive appliances. These probably included hand-held drills to make holes for blasting powder and buck hammers to break open the rock.

_Dicker’s Mining Record_ included a lengthy description of Nuggetty Reef in March 1862, when David Marshall was working there:

> Tracing our steps north from the township of Maldon, passing Linscott’s Reef, leaving it on the left … we strike across the gully, and taking a track … not altogether unfrequented by drays, we arrive, after a journey of one mile and a half to two miles, at the top of the steep range looking down upon the celebrated Nuggetty Reef. The view from this hill affords one of the most extensive and varied prospects of fine wooded country to be met with even in Tarrangower – a plain redolent of charming scenery.

The writer describes the small amount of alluvial mining on the flat, the busyness of the reef 200 feet above the level of the foot of the gully, and the immense boulders of granite ‘scattered broadcast’ over the gully’s western slope. He describes the drays laden with quartz and with skids tailing along the ground behind, suggestive of repeated halts and the steepness of the road; the shute on the west side of the reef; the whims erected all along the line; and claims housed in with shingle and slabs to protect them from the severe weather.

The writer comments on the nature of the lode and quartz. The lode was ‘very hard’ and ‘sadly destructive’ of pick points and gads which made a smithy imperative on every claim. The gold in the quartz particularly from the lower parts of the reef was so ‘completely and effectually coated with sulphur, as to render it almost impossible for an unpractised eye’ to detect the slightest resemblance to it, in quartz that yielded an average of five ounces per ton. All the claimholders on this line burnt their quartz. Messrs Miller & Co. and Messrs Chrystal & Co. (two sets of claimholders who would later amalgamate with three other sets including Marshall’s to form the Tarrangower Alliance Co.) jointly owned a large kiln to burn their quartz and a nearby crushing plant at the foot of the gully. All other claimholders had to cart their quartz at least a mile and a half to one of the mills near the township.

In January 1864, the journalist J G Moon’s history of Tarrangower was published by the _Times_ proprietors, Howliston & Tate. Included is an account of Nuggetty Reef. The

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208 Williams, _Maldon and the Tarrangower diggings_, p. 20.
209 The process of quartz involved four basic steps: the quartz had to be quarried then heated in brick kilns to burn off the sulphides. Then the ore was crushed by heavy stampers. Then the crushed quartz and gold were treated with mercury which bonded with the gold. The amalgam was finally smelted to produce gold bullion.
210 _Dicker’s Mining Record_, March 1862.
Figure 4.1 North-east section of Tarrangower field, showing Nuggety Reef and section of Maldon township. Maldon Museum & Archives
richest claim ‘has been worked by Messrs Chrystal, Pettitt & Co., the full extent being only 39 feet 3 inches, the reef at its widest 14 feet, and the present depth 280 feet. From this small extent of ground over 25,000 ounces of gold has been taken, and there is every prospect of the claim continuing to yield richly’. The greatest yields from this small claim were: two tons quartz, 560 ounces gold; 1½ tons, 230 ounces gold; and from one week’s crushing 1250 ounces. 211 The next claim south (Walker’s) also proved immensely rich. From 40 buckets or barely one ton of quartz, 225 ounces of gold had been obtained: and from 18 buckets, 81 ounces. Other claims also turned out ‘exceedingly rich’; one of these was the Enterprise claim, which was adjacent to Walker’s. 212

Marshall and the Enterprise Claim

The first mining reference to Marshall is a Mount Alexander Mail notice in 1857, in which his application to register a claim on the Beehive Reef was granted. In 1888 John Tobin wrote that Marshall had worked on the Eaglehawk Reef. 213 There has been no further information found regarding Marshall and these reefs.

A Times editorial in 1864 discussed factors governing success or failure in quartz mining. Apart from an adequate yield of gold, these included knowledge of ‘auriferous indications’, a steady expenditure of ready money, skill in management, a willingness to take risks, patience to not abandon a venture prematurely, and luck. 214 Steady expenditure of money and luck were vital, but all of these factors were relevant to the success of the Enterprise claimholders, one being David Marshall.

With Alexander Hunter, William Coubrough and William Skinner, he purchased a claim on Nuggetty for £800 in July 1860. This claim had been worked by several previous holders, including Fitzgerald & Co. 215 Marshall was involved as a shareholder, working manager and tributer for more than three years before significant returns were made.

Nankivell reported in April 1861 that gold had been struck in the ‘claim known as Marshall’s’. 216 In June 1861, the Times reported that the owners of the claim ‘have either worked themselves or paid for labor in it ever since [July 1860] without the slightest returns having been forthcoming until a week or two ago, when they broke into a cap of a golden reef at a great depth under the granite formation which runs through Nuggetty

211 Hugh Pettitt in the Tarrangower Times 1 March 1864 claimed that 1½ tons had in fact produced 570 oz.
212 Moon, Tarrangower, Past and Present, p. 5.
213 Tarrangower Times, 23 June 1888.
214 Tarrangower Times, 29 November 1864.
215 Tarrangower Times, 22 December 1863.
216 Mining Surveyors’ Reports, April 1861.
From then on the *Times* (and to a lesser but significant extent) *Dicker’s Mining Record* documented the difficulties and successes of the Enterprise claim, averaging a report a week until it reached its period of greatest yields from December 1863 to May 1864. From the middle of 1861 to December 1863 yields had ranged from 1 oz to 7 oz per ton.

In October 1861, Marshall applied to register the ‘Enterprise claim’ of 96 feet under the provisions of the Mining Partnership Limited Liability Act, 1860. The nominal capital was £2800 in twenty-eight shares of £100 each (£100 was the yearly salary of the Secretary of the Municipality in 1861). The manager was David Marshall, and the office of the company was the *Carriers Arms*, Maldon.

The bill for the Limited Liability Act had been introduced by Vincent Pyke who had been a miner himself and had criticized the Mining Associations Act 1858 for its eighty-one clauses, its cost-book system and for being so cluttered with conditions as to be virtually useless. Few companies had registered under the 1858 Act. In this earlier Act the liability of company members was already limited to the amount of their shares, but when tested in court wealthy shareholders were sometimes burdened with paying the full debts of a company when it failed. The 1860 Act, commonly known as Pyke’s Act, contained eighteen clauses in simple language and the clause limiting liability is concise: ‘Any shareholder in any mining company shall be liable only for any debts incurred on behalf of such company to the amount of shares for which the shareholder has agreed to subscribe or of which he has become the holder by share transfer’.

The names and residences of the Enterprise shareholders and shares held by each show the attempt to broaden the investment of the local miners:

* Alexander Hunter, quartz miner, Maldon, four
* William Coubrough, quartz miner, Maldon, two
  Patrick Ducat, quartz miner, Maldon, four
* William Skinner, quartz miner, Maldon, four
* David Marshall, quartz miner, Maldon, four
* Robert Amos, merchant, Melbourne, four
  William Jackson White, merchant, Melbourne, four

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217 *Tarrangower Times*, 14 June 1861.
218 Previously known as ‘Marshall’s claim’.
219 The *Carriers Arms* was still owned and run by his brother-in-law, Robert Aitken.
James Mailer, draper, Melbourne, two 221

In June 1864, the east face of the reef was accidentally discovered in Walker’s adjoining claim, and indicates the role of luck in the Enterprise Company’s success. 222

The west face of the reef was taken out to a depth of 270 feet. What was originally considered to be the east face was afterwards proved to be a sandstone horse, separating the east from the west face. The east leg of the lode came to within 75 feet, the west cropped out on the surface. This horse, at the south end of the mine, continued to about 170 feet in depth, to where the granite bar came in. Below the granite, the body of quartz was in one. The east face was discovered by accident in the adjoining claim to the north, Walker’s, the Enterprise Company reaping the chief benefit of the discovery. At the north end the granite bar came in at a depth of 90 feet. The sandstone horse had several veins of quartz running through it, the present western face showing like indications suggestive of other bodies of quartz remaining to be proved in that direction.

**Dicker’s Mining Record** continues:

Since Christmas [of 1863], extending into the middle of last month, a block of quartz had been taken out on the east side, measuring 96 feet in length, 90 feet in depth, and of an average width of 4 feet, the returns from which will be found below. Shortly before the east side was opened out, the mine was let on tribute to a party of four, who are still working it and receiving half the gross returns. Before the present company was formed the original owners are said to have taken out in value of gold £19,030. A statement showing returns from 31st May, 1861, to 31st May, 1864, has the following totals: - yield of gold 13,642 oz 13dwt 14 grs; sold for cash, £53,491 3s 3d; 223 dividend per share, £948.

By the beginning of February the claim was keeping four crushing machines at work. In the first week of February the result of the various crushings amounted to 4225 ounces of amalgam, or upwards of 1400 ounces of gold. The *Times* considered there was every prospect of the yields continuing, ‘and if such be the case, each shareholder will make what, in digging parlance, is called “a pile”.’

The newspaper commented on the financial success of Marshall and Webster 224 who were both shareholders and tributers 225 and so got payments from two sources:

The tributers are indeed lucky; when they took the lease it had gone begging about for some time, as the prospects were anything but cheering; now they are making two or three hundred pounds per week per man. The most fortunate are certainly the two shareholders – Messrs Marshall and Webster – who, believing in the value of the claim, pluckily stood to it through good and evil repute, and have always worked the claim on tribute. Their reward is that they now share the rich returns from both sources. 226

The *Times* reported on February 16 that for the workings of five weeks the shareholders had received £290 per share, the gross receipts having been £16,240, half of which was

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221 Still shareholder when Enterprise Company was amalgamated with four other sets of claimholders to form Tarrangower Nuggety Alliance Company in October 1863.

222 The Dicker’s Mining Record report was reproduced in the *Tarrangower Times* 28 June, 1864.

223 Mining company reports state that about half the yield would be taken up in costs.

224 Webster had taken up shares after 1861.

225 The tributer worked the mine for a proportion of the return. The tribute system will be discussed in the following section.

226 *Tarrangower Times*, 9 February 1864.
netted to the shareholders, the other half being divided between the tributers after all expenses were deducted. The editor also suggested that even though it was natural that the shareholders should be highly excited by their good fortune, we would urge them to moderate their transports, and without the slightest wish to deteriorate the value of their really splendid property, we must point out to them that it is very possible a change may ‘come o’er the spirit of the dream’. All will remember the ‘wall of gold’ in the Beehive claim, and the recklessness it gave rise to, and while hoping sincerely that the Enterprise will continue for a long time as at present, we trust the shareholders will not be blind to the possibility of a change.  

Despite the excitability (some would say hysteria) inherent in mining reports in this period, many of which referred to the Enterprise Company, the solemn reminder that a change may ‘come o’er the spirit of the dream’ was in fact relevant and timely. Marshall possibly read the situation accurately and/or decided he should get out when he had made sufficient profit to expand his farm, and retired from active mining at Nuggetty after his second marriage in March 1864. Being able to withdraw from this apparently very profitable venture is indicative of Marshall’s strong-mindedness. The decision to withdraw while ahead was one which many miners could never make, to their detriment. The Enterprise claim’s yields fell away from the middle of 1864.

**The tribute system**

The boom in mining company formation in the colony began in 1859 and quickly reached manic proportions, particularly in quartz mining. Over two hundred new companies were formed in 1859 and 1860, many bogus and many incompetently managed. Over-trading and speculation paralysed Sandhurst [later Bendigo] and Castlemaine and ‘all but ruined Maldon.’ The *Argus* journalist James Patterson wrote that Maldon had a recent history of splendid individual successes; of fortunes rapidly made, and lost as lightly as they came; of substantial companies praised and puffed into a magnificent position on the market, and then brought to the very verge of ruin by a despair as reckless and insane; of ruinous disagreements between claim-holders, where union would have been strength and wealth; of promising companies utterly sacrificed by the over-caution of timid shareholders; and of others saved only by the extreme prudence of directors. When the bubble burst, only a hundred companies survived in the colony, of which only a handful were capable of paying dividends. A proportion of these survivors resorted to the

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227 *Tarrangower Times*, 16 February 1864.
228 James A Patterson, *Gold Fields of Victoria in 1862*, Melbourne, Wilson & MacKinnon, 1862. The 19 August *Argus* article which included this extract was reproduced in the *Tarrangower Times* of 22 August 1862. The editor disputed certain facts as stated by Patterson but did not question these general statements.
Serle claims that in the early 1860s perhaps half the miners were regularly working for wages which on the well-established fields (including Maldon) were generally between £2 10s and £3 10s a week, sometimes £2 for unskilled labourers and £4 for skilled mechanics. But increasingly miners were working as tributers, fulfilling the need of companies for exploration unfinanced by shareholders. Miles Lewis claims that Maldon seems to have pioneered the introduction of the system in Victoria, and that RD Oswald, later the successful mining magnate, was only one of a number of people who did very well out of tributing at Maldon. In early 1861 both the Grand Junction and Concord Companies were letting to tributers. By 1862 tributing in Maldon had superseded hired labour in nearly all of the mines in Maldon operated by public companies. Tributing, Lewis argues, was well suited ‘to the capital-starved mining enterprises which characterized this goldfield in the early 1860s’.

This system, a variation on the system used by Cornish copper and tin miners, was a mutual contract by which leaseholders permitted a party of working miners to mine either the whole or a specified portion of the ground, for an agreed percentage of the gold mined. Each party attempted to make the best terms for itself. A common scenario would be that the company, often being short of funds, not intending to mine on its own account, and at the cost of its own members contributing, yet being unwilling to surrender its exclusive occupation of a piece of ground presumably valuable, substituted others for a limited period, and then divided the spoil with the finders. The company put the cost on labour rather than using calls on shares to raise capital. Even though the tributers, if successful, might for a short period take the large share of the proceeds, the permanent property would be enhanced in value and eventually recompense the leaseholders.

An editorial in Dicker’s Mining Record in 1863 highlights the often diametrically opposed position of the investor and working miner. The editor was scornful of Dr Evans, Acting Commissioner of Mines, who suggested during an interview with ‘a deputation of gentlemen largely engaged in mining enterprise’ that he considered the tribute system oppressive to the miner. ‘We do not think the learned doctor could have given the subject much consideration. When it is remembered that a large number of the public companies formed in 1859 have been only rescued from perdition at the last moment by the

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introduction of tribute for hired labor, and that in nearly every instance the tributers have obtained the lion’s share of the profit, such a remark ... betrays an extraordinary ignorance.'

It is true that tributers could make the best conditions possible for themselves, and in theory a party of miners undertaking an enterprise would be well qualified to estimate the probabilities of success, and decide on what terms it would be advisable to enter the contract. For David Marshall, becoming a tributer, in this case for his ‘own’ company, eventually proved a successful move. Tributing certainly kept mining alive, as Dicker argued, but at the same time a desperate miner taking up ground for good or bad could be disastrously squeezed, and as the mines stagnated later in the century this situation would become more likely.

**Working managers**

In its early years, before 1864 when Melbourne shareholders became more involved, the Enterprise Company employed a series of working managers. Marshall was one of these. The *Times* urged in 1862 that the expense of management was too heavy in major Maldon companies such as Linscott’s, the Beehive, Atlas and Grand Junction. ‘Managers must be found, who will with some slight clerical aid do the whole of the superintending operations.’ In the Grand Junction, there were two secretaries and a paid director controlling and watching some eight or nine tributers, a situation he contrasted with that of a ‘private’ company – the Enterprise on Nuggetty Reef:

> There are twenty-eight shares in this Association, but they have paid some £260 dividend per share since January last. At the present market rate of shares the claim represents about £9000. There are constant crushings, and a variety of work for the manager, who is of course an interested party, and whose sole remuneration is perhaps £2 per week. If such economy can be exercised in a company at Nuggetty why cannot it be done further south?

There were further instances when the editor, in his self-appointed role as castigator of the apathetic and disorganized, used the Nuggetty claimholders as an example. In this

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232 *Dicke’s Mining Record*, 24 January 1863.

233 The 1893 report of the Select Committee on the tribute system as applied to Victoria highlights that what began as a means of avoiding calls on investors could rapidly become a device for exploiting the miner. Occasionally tributers were lucky, but often companies only let them into ground they thought too poor to be worth mining themselves. Whenever a mine was not paying they laid off their workers and let in tributers. If prospects revived the tributers’ lease was not renewed and the company took over the working. The Committee believed it was in the interests of the colony ‘to place the tributer in a better position’ in order to win more gold. They recommended measures to allow greater security of tenure, procedures for settlement of disputes between companies and tributers, and entitlements for tributers to take out of the gross yields their working expenses and half wages. This resulted in a subsistence wage but mine owners could then simply refuse to let tributes. Victorian parliamentary papers 1885-1900, report of Select Committee on tributing in gold mines, 1893.

234 *Tarrangover Times*, 22 July 1862.
instance, he praised their determination:

The Nuggetty claimholders have set an example of enterprise in the way of sinking for a lost lode, which the German [Reef] and other reefers would do well to imitate. The reef at Nuggetty, it is well-known, has been several times cut off suddenly by what appeared to be a floor of granite, and without any granite in the shape of ‘wall’ or ‘casing’, but these determined men persevered, on one occasion, through thirty feet of granite, till they again reached the lode, and nobly have the shareholders been paid for their perseverance.

He reminded his readers that the Nuggetty claimholders had no engine on the reef, but overcame the drainage difficulties by means of horse-whims. ‘The German [Reef] claimholders have the advantage in every respect, and should follow the good example set them by Nuggetty.’

As well as requiring physical and mental energy and the patience required to work in situations such as the one described above, miners faced the constant possibility of injury and death. The worst accident at Tarrangower up to 1870 was when four young miners in a tribute block at the Union Company went down the shaft in the skip, the engine ‘got out of gear’ (the winding gear became disconnected from the machine) and the four were precipitated from their hold of the skip and were ‘smashed to pieces’. The jury asked for evidence from a ‘practical mining engineer’ and Isaac Irving from Sandhurst was obtained. As a consequence of the jury verdict John Tamlyn, the winding machine driver, was controversially charged with manslaughter for ‘not having secured the sliding gear lever in a notch when starting the engine’. The Times editor expressed disbelief at this aspect of the verdict as ‘it can scarcely be doubted that the misfortune is attributable to defective machinery’. The verdict also included a censure of the ‘late Ministry in not placing ... money on the Estimates for the appointment of inspectors of mines and machinery, after having promised to do so.’ Mining inspectors did not exist in this period. It was not until the 1872 Act that serious safety legislation was passed.

Bryan Gandevia argues that apart from the diseases such as dysentery and rheumatism, the most characteristic feature of goldfields medical practice must have been accidents from preventable causes which were of everyday occurrence. Shafts, often inexpertly sunk and timbered, caved in, winding gear broke, men (and sometimes children) fell into disused shafts. Explosives, the entry of water and inadequate ventilation constituted additional hazards, as did most significantly the introduction of the machine.

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235 Tarrangower Times, 25 July 1862.
236 Tarrangower Times, 2 February 1870.
237 Tarrangower Times, 5 February 1870.
rock drill. The *Tarrangower Times* editorials must have been a profound irritant to many, but the newspaper in retrospect performed a vital role in calling for safer practice, as in its reporting of the 1862 death of James Williams in the Enterprise claim. The report also raises questions regarding the role of the ‘working manager’, in this case William Coubrough, when the inquest jury found the shaft to be in a dangerous state and censured the management. The verdict was that

James Williams met his death accidentally in the Enterprise shaft, at Nuggetty reef, but the jury have no evidence as to whether it was occasioned by his falling down the shaft or by being struck by the descending iron bucket. The jury also add their belief that the said shaft is in a dangerous condition, not in proper working order, and that great blame attaches to this management for allowing it to remain so.

As well as no mining inspector, there was apparently no expert witness called to comment on the state of the mine. However, a positive result of this tragedy was that, despite no legal requirement, mining operations were stopped altogether for four months while the Enterprise main shaft was trimmed down plumb and slabbged to make it safe.

**Amalgamation of the Enterprise and other claims into the Tarrangower Alliance Mining Company**

The Tarrangower Alliance Mining Company was formed in October 1863 from five groups of Nuggetty claimholders: the Enterprise Co., Chrystal & Co., Walker & Co., Miller & Co., and Aldridge & Co. This reflected a general trend towards amalgamations in quartz mining as the claims, owing to the depth and hardness of rock as well as their drainage needs, became too expensive for small groups to work.

Dicker urged various arguments for quartz claim amalgamation over a long period. For example, a letter from Thomas S Williams of Long Gully, Bendigo, discussed the extravagance in local mine management. At California Gully ‘there are four pumping-machines almost within stone’s throw of each other ... and not one quarter as much water as one of these could raise … On the Johnson’s Reef there are ten shafts sunk, all over 300 feet deep, costing over £1000 per shaft to sink – the whole of them being included within

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239 A *Times* editorial of 24 September 1870 calling for mining inspectors described ‘defective machinery, worn-out boilers, insufficient timbering, shaky ladders, stranded ropes … doing their fatal work of sending hundreds of human beings into an untimely grave, leaving behind unprovided-for widows and orphans and all the attendant train of dire misfortunes.’ It also made the point that at inquests ‘juries were almost invariably merciful, and being generally composed of miners, proverbially reckless of their own lives, it was only in isolated cases that they could be brought to return a censuring verdict.’

240 *Tarrangower Times*, 24 June 1862.
… 300 yards in length. To work these shafts there are two steam-engines and eight horse-whims.’ He continued with several other supporting examples and concluded that Bendigo generally was being worked in an extravagant manner, arguing that the most obvious solution was the amalgamation of claims. 241

In 1864 the *Times* editor suggested that the public which ‘take any interest in mining enterprises … might naturally enquire why the prospectors of the Enterprise, Nuggetty, should have amalgamated their wealthy claim with four others adjoining, north on the same reef, claims that have not recently yielded one-tenth part of the riches the Enterprise has’. The main reason was that the five claims had been for a long time obstructed by water in the lower workings. ‘These claims varied in depth (David Chrystal’s being the deepest), and had whims fixed on the top ground for the purpose of baling, but in spite of the united efforts of all parties, the water effectually put a stop to working below, and could not be reduced. The horses and whims became useless for baling, and the various parties were forced to retreat to the upper ground.’ It was agreed that only amalgamation would save the claimholders from heavy losses. The Alliance Company was formed, its aims being the drainage of the reef and property, and testing the profitability and depth of the mine. David Chrystal, who had consistently argued for years in the *Times* that Professor Frederick McCoy’s theory that gold yield from quartz diminished rapidly with depth was wrong, seems to have been a driving force in this amalgamation.

The capital was £7300 in shares of £25 each, the ground to represent half the capital or £12 10s per share paid up. Thus there was potential for £12 10s in calls. The following was the valuation of the five claims:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Claim Holder</th>
<th>Valuation (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise Co.</td>
<td>£1050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walker &amp; Co.</td>
<td>£700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chrystal &amp; Co.</td>
<td>£851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller &amp; Co.</td>
<td>£700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aldridge &amp; Co.</td>
<td>£350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was agreed that the former claim holders, the Enterprise, Walker’s, Miller’s, and Aldridge’s, should be allowed to work the top ground to a depth of the present level of Chrystal’s shaft for twelve months after the water was pumped dry from the working shaft,

241 *Dicker’s Mining Record*, December 1862.
and that Chrystal’s claim should be given up unconditionally for ingress and egress.

As soon as the company had money paid on shares, the management purchased the late Perseverance Association’s engine and pumping gear which was erected on Chrystal’s claim, the shaft being 330 feet deep. The engine was fixed and the pipes rapidly connected down the shaft. Chrystal unconditionally gave up the working of his claim in the meantime, but later received 150 shares of the company’s stock for his share of the ground, and for giving up all the top ground at once.

Prior to the influx of water in the Enterprise claim, payable gold was being obtained from the lower level, and, combined with the rich rock being taken from the upper workings, this amalgamation promised success. The extent of the Company’s ground was 325 feet comprising the best rock on Nuggetty reef.

Dicker commented approvingly on the amalgamation of these five ‘well-known’ claims, four of which had proved at various periods ‘exceedingly rich.’ The only fault he found in the formation of this new company is that ‘whilst on the change it has not succeeded in amalgamating a still larger one’.  \(^{242}\)

Several difficulties were encountered before the water was pumped dry from the working shaft and these delayed the final amalgamation. For instance, it was announced at the meeting of the Nuggetty Alliance Company May 11 1864, that the ‘difficulties met in securing and timbering the shaft were greater than anticipated, through the great width of the old workings, requiring timber of immense size and weight’.  \(^{243}\)

The Tarrangower Nuggetty Alliance Company finally forked the water in their engine shaft on July 1 1864, when notice was given to the claimholders forming the Company that twelve months from that date their claims would become its property.  \(^{244}\) By that date Marshall was no longer working on the Enterprise claim.

The Alliance Company operated for fourteen years and was wound up in the late 1870s. From 1868 to 1874 a series of landslips brought sinking for the deep reef to a standstill. There were spurts of activity in the upper levels including the old Enterprise ground, and further companies had taken up claims, with some success. For example, William Salter had registered the New Enterprise Quartz Mining Company in 1866. Robert Aitken had 109 shares at £1 each and RD Oswald was on the board. The New

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242 Dicker’s Mining Record, 25 June 1864.
243 Tarrangower Times, 13 May 1864.
244 Tarrangower Times, 5 July 1864.
Enterprise Company was wound up in 1880.\textsuperscript{245}

The Alliance Company did not ever achieve the riches from Nuggety dreamt of by Chrystal and so many others. And when it was finally wound up it had still not tested whether gold in payable quantities existed at a lower depth than 400 feet.

\textbf{Marshall’s wider life}

The local newspaper gives only fleeting insights into David Marshall’s wider activities and personal life while he was a reefer at Nuggetty. In Moon’s business directory of 1864 he was described as ‘Farmer, Baringhup, and Reefer, Nuggety’.\textsuperscript{246} It is unlikely he would have travelled to the Nuggetty from Baringhup every day. In this period he owned two properties in Maldon, in Newstead Road and Chapple Street. It is not known whether he lived on either of them as the rates records for these years are unavailable. He may have lived at the \textit{Carriers Arms}, or in the Nuggetty township.

\textbf{The establishment of Nuggetty township}

A small settlement grew up at Nuggetty comprising miners and their families. In 1861 David Marshall was a member of a committee of Nuggetty miners formed to erect a building to be used as a day school and Sunday school and a place of worship, because the distance from Maldon was too far for residents to walk there and back. It was hoped that one of the ministers of the various congregations would come and preach at least once a week.\textsuperscript{247}

It was not until 5 August 1876 that tenders were called to erect a purpose-built wooden school on Nuggetty Flat. The original building was sold by public auction, being described in the advertisement as ‘that large weatherboard building known as the Old School Room at Nuggetty, size about 40 ft by 16 ft, and suitable for removal’.\textsuperscript{248}

In its earliest years the Nuggetty township seems to have been prosperous and energetic. Along with hotels and various stores it boasted a Hunt Club. In 1862 its cricket club was described as ‘the strongest and best kept up in the district’.\textsuperscript{249} A prominent team member was David Chrystal. Later, the Alliance cave-in and the general depression of mining activity led to a slump in Nuggetty fortunes. An article by ‘The Saunterer’ gives

\textsuperscript{245} Mining Surveyors’ Reports, 1868-1880.
\textsuperscript{246} Moon, \textit{Tarrangower, Past and Present}, p. 26.
\textsuperscript{247} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 23 July 1861.
\textsuperscript{248} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 2 May 1877 shows that Mr Loney bought it for £14. He then advertised it for sale in January 1878.
\textsuperscript{249} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 25 February 1862.
this glimpse in 1868:

Although Nuggetty does not at the present time present the appearance of a very thriving township, there is some slight hope that a little excitement may take place, there being a number of men dotted amongst the ranges prospecting, and Nuggetty reef is again shewing a little more spirit of revival taking hold on the several claims. The crushing works keeping in full swing in a measure enlivens this ‘happy valley’ which contains some neat-looking cottages with prim gardens. The population is not very dense, but it appears a wonderful thriving locality for juveniles, the school having a larger average attendance, in proportion, than the township schools. The Nuggetty school is spoken very favourably of by the residents.  

**Arrival and death of William Marshall**

According to his entry in *Victoria and its Metropolis*, Marshall employed a manager on his Baringhup farm while he reeded at Nuggetty for about two years. Whether principally driven by family motives or by his inability to find a suitable manager is not known, but in 1863 he encouraged the emigration to Victoria of his older brother William. This plan ended tragically with William’s death after only a few weeks in the colony. He arrived March 9 and died on May 1, aged 39. According to the *Times*, ‘a most numerous and respectable following’ accompanied the funeral procession to the Maldon Cemetery. William had arrived on the *Great Tasmania*, having ‘suffered much during the voyage’ from a disease of the heart, and ‘his colonial career was of the briefest and saddest description. Mr Marshall had intended that the deceased should take charge of the farm at Baringhup, so that the former would have more time at his disposal for reefing.’ From his arrival he gradually deteriorated, and died at the residence of his sister and brother-in-law, Margaret and Robert Aitken.

William was one of several family members David Marshall encouraged to emigrate from Stirling, part of a widespread colonial pattern of immigrants re-establishing their original family in a new country, a form of chain migration.

**Social events and a court case**

In 1859 Marshall attended the celebration of the centenary of Robert Burns’ birth, held at the Royal Hotel. He was an official, along with later luminaries such as John Ramsay (soon to be MLA for Maldon) and Robert Dent Oswald. Two days after his marriage to Agnes Harley in March 1864, a dinner was given for the men working on the Enterprise claim. Salter was chairman, and JW Walker vice-chairman. ‘The place – in fact the whole

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250 *Tarrangower Times*, 26 September 1868.
251 Sutherland (ed.), *Victoria and its Metropolis*, p. 262.
252 *Tarrangower Times*, 5 May 1863.
reef – was gaily decorated, and after dinner lashings of grog and cigars were enjoyed with all the concomitants of a convivial evening. The toast of the evening, Mr and Mrs Marshall, being, of course, drunk vociferously.\textsuperscript{253}

In the Court of Mines on September 3 1867, apparently some years after the event, Marshall sued William Coubrough to recover £1000 he claimed had been wrongly paid to the latter. The court was told they had been mates in a tributing mining venture in the Enterprise claim at Nuggetty, the tribute being known as Number 1. Marshall also had a share in another venture in the same claim known as Number 2, in which the defendant had no share. Marshall found out later that the gold was from tribute 2, not 1, as he had been told by Coubrough, who would not pay the money back, saying only he would leave it to Marshall ‘in his will’.\textsuperscript{254} Messrs Salter and Truran were in court as witnesses, and JW Walker was called as a witness but did not appear. The defendant Coubrough also did not appear, the court being informed he was ‘on the briny’. Mr Merrifield who appeared for Marshall said that as the defendant was ‘on the briny’ it would be like ‘calling spirits from the vasty [sic] deep, but would they come when called’. Mr Merrifield was authorized to withdraw £1000 from Coubrough’s accounts upon payment of costs.

**RD Oswald**

Some perspective on Marshall’s financial success and motivation to mine might be gained by briefly examining the career of Robert Dent Oswald. Marshall was born in 1824 and Oswald in 1825; both emigrated from the county of Stirling, Scotland, and arrived in Maldon at roughly the same time, 1855 and 1854. Marshall left Barlinghup in 1888 and died in 1893 at 68, and Oswald died in 1891 at 66. In Maldon they were both viewed as successful miners. However, Oswald was stunningly so. Oswald’s life in Maldon was bound to mining, whereas it seems likely that Marshall’s primary motivation in mining was to acquire more land in order to farm effectively.

Alexander Sutherland’s entry in *Victoria and its Metropolis* frames Oswald as the archetypal self-made man.\textsuperscript{255} He migrated to Victoria from Lauriston, Stirling county, worked at his trade as carpenter for three months, then began mining on Tarrangower as a member of a ‘small co-operative party’. He then became manager of the Parkins’ Reef Quartz Mining Company. Sutherland recorded that ‘he engaged vigorously in the

\textsuperscript{253} *Tarrangower Times*, 29 March 1864.
\textsuperscript{254} *Tarrangower Times*, 6 September 1867.
\textsuperscript{255} Sutherland (ed.), *Victoria and its Metropolis*, p. 262. Oswald was probably the source of information for his entry.
development of the Maldon mining district, and he has been associated more or less with nearly all the leading mines in the locality, and closely identified with important mining ventures in other parts of the colony’. The *Tarrangower Times* editor commented in 1870 on ‘the big shareholder, in every respect, in perhaps directly or indirectly every lease in Maldon’ who was attending a Melbourne conference of miners but not to ‘represent the majority of Maldon miners but the monopolistic lease-holders’. 256 Nevertheless, Oswald was a source of steady employment for many Maldon miners and surface workers. In 1868 he had taken over David Chrystal’s crushing plant, which he renamed the *Caledonian*. He had become the sole proprietor of the celebrated North British Mine, from which he annually drew a ‘moderate fortune’. It closed in 1926, the last of Maldon’s big mines to close, with official figures showing a total yield of 203,037 ounces from 226,361 tons. 257 The North British engineering workshop became famous for the manufacture of high-class rock-drilling machines, extensively used throughout Australia. Oswald was also a respected member of the Maldon Shire Council for a time and a JP (although in fact he rarely sat at the local court), but unlike Marshall, he was not generally involved in civic life. 258 When Oswald first stood for Council the *Times* recommended him as eminently suited through his business background to manage ‘public business’, despite being ‘perfectly untried as a public man’ and declared that Mr Oswald was a strictly conscientious ‘upright and downstraight’ man of the people. ‘He will have the bawbee’s worth but is all there with the bawbee.’ 259 A ‘bawbee’ is a Scottish halfpenny. This Scots saying suggests that he was careful in his financial dealings but was also willing to invest and spend.

A later editorial favouring Oswald over his opponent Stevenson in the Council election argued that Oswald’s interests ‘are very widely ramified throughout the entire district, country and town. If Maldon were to fail he, to a great extent, and his large properties invested, must fail too. 260 When Oswald died in 1891 his estate for probate purposes was valued at £145,000, the sixth highest amount for miners in Victoria. 261

For many miners, the decision to step away from a well-paying venture would have been impossible. On the one hand there was the chance to make a fortune and on the other, the continuing huge draining expense of quartz mining and the chance of being

256 *Tarrangower Times*, 10 August 1870.
257 Williams, Maldon and the Tarrangower diggings, p. 32.
258 As a young man, he was a member of the Maldon Dramatic Society
259 *Tarrangower Times*, 1 August 1868.
260 *Tarrangower Times*, 12 August 1868.
261 Information provided by Charles Fahey from an examination of probate registers.
wiped out completely. Marshall’s decision demonstrates astuteness and willpower. His activities as a miner on Nuggetty were typical of many others, but this decision was not.

The actual profit Marshall made from the Enterprise claim is unknown and will presumably remain so. However, it is documented that in 1864 he bought 306 more acres to extend his Baringhup farm, and also invested widely in the formation of mining companies such as the Northern and Welcome, in addition to the Enterprise and Tarrangower Nuggetty Alliance.\footnote{Prices at purchase were: Enterprise Company, 4 @ £100 each; Tarrangower Nuggetty Alliance Company, 6 @ £25 each (held 180 in 1875); Northern Quartz Mining Company (Nuggety Reef), 8 @ £50 each; Welcome Quartz Mining Company, 4 @ £20 each. Later known shares: In 1882 he took up 100 @ 10s each in South German Reef Gold Mining Company; in 1885, 500 @ 10s each in Adventure Gold Mining Company Tarrangower.} In 1866 he had the finance to take an overseas trip of 14 months, which included buying and shipping livestock. Quartz mining at Nuggetty would bring him the wealth to extend his farm and live comfortably, and would give him time and energy for his various civic interests.
Chapter Five: An Enthusiastic Yeoman

David Marshall, in partnership with his brother-in-law Robert Aitken, bought 180 acres of farmland at auction in 1857. He gradually bought out Aitken in 1861, acquired another 430 acres and sold the farm in 1888. During this period 1857-88, powerful squatting interests were gradually opposed and land around the central goldfields were opened up to selection by small farmers, particularly after 1865. In many areas, the large pastoral holdings were eroded and in others they were significantly reduced. In 1857, the pastoralists ran sheep and the small farmers engaged in grain crops and dairying. By 1888 the small farmers in many cases were increasing their holdings and combining small-scale grazing with agriculture. The shortage of farm labourers was made worse in the 1870s by the fall-off in mining activity, because miners had traditionally supplemented their income by working as agricultural labourers during the harvests. There was therefore a strong impetus to develop harvesting machinery to suit local conditions. Railway construction followed settlement expansion, rather than the reverse, and there was intense rivalry among agricultural districts over railway extension. This chapter will focus on David Marshall’s experience as a first generation settler, and how he modified his economic behaviour as a response to environmental and social change. It will also briefly examine his marriage to Agnes Harley and her family’s selection of land.

The Aboriginal Protectorate

While the lure of gold was the catalyst for many arrivals in the 1850s, the vagaries of gold mining meant that for some, the winning of land became the main game. Already there were two competing claimants to the land, the traditional occupiers and the usurping pastoralists.

When setting up an administration for the Port Phillip District, the British Government had established an Aboriginal Protectorate, to prevent a repetition of the problems between aboriginals and white settlers in New South Wales and Van Diemen’s Land. In January 1838, four Assistant Protectors were appointed in England to work under George Robinson, and these five arrived in Melbourne before the arrival of the first Superintendent of Port Phillip, Charles La Trobe.

The aims, successes, problems and eventual disbandment of the protectorates make a complex and tragic story. What is of relevance to this account of David Marshall is that

This term was occasionally applied to David Marshall by the Tarrangower Times.
Assistant Protector Edward Parker, who was assigned to the Loddon or North Western
District, decided that a reserved area should be set aside for the Loddon tribes where they
could live and obtain their food without encroaching on the areas already claimed by the
pastoralists. In April 1840 the Colonial Secretary wrote to Superintendent La Trobe on the
subject of Assistant Protector Parker’s desire to select a homestead on the Loddon: ‘It is ...
to be understood that the square mile or 640 acres forming the inner reserve is intended for
cultivation, and the outer reserve of five miles in radius (or a circle of ten miles in
diameter) for the hunting ground of the natives’.264 Parker spent considerable time and
energy in searching for a suitable site and narrowed it down to a place beside a large
lagoon which was called Neura Mong (‘hide here’) by the Dja Dja Wurrung, a name later
modified by the white settlers to Neereaman. The site became known as Parker’s Plains
and is about a mile upstream from Hamilton’s Crossing on the Loddon. The outer reserve
included the land later owned by David Marshall, and Parker’s Plains, an area of 606
acres, was adjacent to his land.

Parker began the establishment of the homestead and reserve. He brought with him
his wife and their seven children, an agricultural overseer, Robert Bazely, with his wife
and child, plus a medical assistant, four assigned servants (convicts on ticket of leave) and
three Aboriginal policemen. However, after undergoing an unusually dry summer Parker
decided, on advice from Overseer Bazely (appointed expressly for the purpose of advising
the Protector on matters agricultural), that the site was unsuitable for the reserve.

He looked for another site further upstream, eventually deciding, after considering
Strangways, on a site near Mount Franklin. He left Neereaman in 1841; 127 Aboriginal
people moved with him. Edgar Morrison, who edited Parker’s memoirs, writes of this
decision:

[H]ad the year 1840 not been a rather lean year, with an early and scorching summer,
Parker’s choice of Neereaman as the centre of his operations would probably never have
been questioned. The station could have remained there with every prospect of success,
because subsequent history has demonstrated that the Baringhup-Neereaman country, in a
normal year, is eminently suitable for cultivation.265 Parker’s son Joseph later wrote of the ton of dried cod from the Neereaman lagoon which
they took with them to the Mount Franklin site and this is significant to David Marshall’s

264 Quoted in CC Culvenor, The Boundaries of the Mount Franklin Aboriginal Reserve, Daylesford, Jim
265 Edgar Morrison (ed.), Early days in the Loddon Valley: Memoirs of Edward Stone Parker 1802-1865,
Yandoit, Vic., 1965, p. 20.
later occupation of the land.\textsuperscript{266} On a wider level, Parker’s journal and later writings by his family relate incidents from the stay at Neereaman which indicate its importance in establishing valuable contacts with both settlers and Dja Dja Wurrung people in the lower Loddon.

Unfortunately, Parker had a long succession of trials on the Mount Franklin site. His main complaint was against William Morrison Hunter, who had replaced Lauchlan McKinnon (later co-proprietor of the \textit{Argus}) as the owner of the Tarringower run.\textsuperscript{267} For example, Hunter consistently breached the five-mile radius with his stock, and claimed land within three miles to the west of the homestead. The role of the Protectorate was undeniably problematic, but Edgar Morrison argues that Parker showed great resolve and commitment in the face of insuperable difficulties. The government closed the Protectorate in December 1849, although Parker undertook to continue his commitment to the Dja Dja Wurrung people left on the reserve, and was granted a pastoral license on this basis.

\textbf{The land question}

Earth hunger has led to many and great revolutions, and to be lord of the soil has ever been the aspiration of humanity. To obtain a title to occupy a plot of ground undisturbed, men have bartered liberty, and strange as it may sound, even life itself, that heirs might enjoy the greater privilege.\textsuperscript{268}

The Aboriginals may not have shared this aspiration, but the issue of who should own the land had become a major preoccupation of the European settlers by the second half of the nineteenth century. Conflicts raged between squatters, between squatters and potential selectors, between both groups and governments, and within governments. The great hunger for land in Britain fuelled by the population explosion and seizures of whole villages and huge tracts of common land had been transferred to the colonies. Aboriginal land occupation was generally ignored. This attitude was underpinned by the notion that Europeans developed the land while the Aboriginals made no use of it.\textsuperscript{269}

In New South Wales, Van Diemen’s Land and Port Phillip the nucleus of a

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{266} Letter quoted by Morrison, p. 29.
\textsuperscript{267} A variation in spelling from ‘Mount Tarrangower’.
\textsuperscript{268} Introduction to \textit{Tarrangower Times} editorial, 17 October 1883.
\textsuperscript{269} When the British took possession of the continent, the prevailing European law relating to who owned newly ‘discovered’ lands ‘held that the inhabitants only had sovereignty over that land if, by their labour and practice of agriculture, they used it and changed it by constructing buildings and towns’ . Richard Broome, \textit{Aboriginal Australians: Black Responses to White Dominance 1788-2001}, NSW, Allen & Unwin, 2002, p. 30.
\end{flushleft}
landowning aristocracy had been deliberately established. It was expected that those who received small grants would become yeoman farmers, the ‘backbone of the nation’, and that the large grant holders would rent out their land to agricultural farmers as in Britain. This plan relied on settlement being confined to a relatively small area. However, due to dispersion of settlement and against the wishes of the British government, by 1836, when the Port Phillip District was officially opened, the best lands of eastern Australia had been occupied, many by squatters. The English word ‘squatter’ has various meanings, but by this date in Australia it referred to the taking over without permission of large areas of public land beyond the boundaries of location, by men of capital.

This occupation was legalized by the Imperial Government in March 1847. The Order-in-Council of March allowed for pastoralists in intermediate districts to lease their land for eight years and in unsettled districts for fourteen years. During the currency of the lease, no person other than the lessee could purchase any portion; the lessee could, after formal application, buy at not less than one pound per acre in lots of 160 acres, the sites of their improvements. In the settled districts, the leases were for twelve months only, with no right of pre-emptive purchase.

In Port Phillip, the three directions of pastoral expansion were inland from Port Phillip Bay, inland from the Hentys at Portland and along the track of Major Mitchell’s exploration through the central and western areas. The land bought by David Marshall and Robert Aitken in 1857 on the east bank of the Loddon in the Baringhup area was part of the 100,090 acre Cairn Curran run, which had been occupied by several licensees until acquired by William and Matthew Bryant in 1854.

Their father Edmund had been a sheep breeder in Van Diemen’s Land, who came to Port Phillip in 1846 to assist the Simsons to work and hold their vast tracts, which included the runs of Cairn Curran, Charlotte Plains, Janevale, Langi-Coorie and Glenmona. Edmund Bryant had moved from Charlotte Plains to Cairn Curran in 1848 although the lease was listed under other licensees until 1854. The pastoral licence 136 was issued for Cairn Curran in 1840 and cancelled in 1879. It is listed in Billis and Kenyon as 100,090 acres, carrying 300 cattle and 20,000 sheep.

H.M.Strachan was an amateur historian and descendant of many of the pioneers listed by Billis and Kenyon. In his Foreword to the 1932 edition of Pastoral Pioneers of

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270 Barbara Willis, Footprints: a history of the Shire of Tullaroop, Shire of Tullaroop, 1988, pp. 5-6.
Port Phillip, Strachan wrote of the squatters:

Those colonists who explored and occupied the country laid as well the foundations of national stability. Without assistance or encouragement, often in the face of opposing forces, they subdued the wilderness. They established flocks and herds of unrivalled excellence, and from the primeval bush they fashioned some of the most noted properties of the Empire.272

Strachan’s comments highlight the cyclical nature of historical interpretation. They have some validity, although the subduing of ‘the wilderness’ often included the subduing of the indigenous inhabitants. Overall, the focus is narrow.

The Selection Acts passed in the 1860s were not of course the first attempts to break the squatters’ stranglehold. However, the increasing demands of the post-gold population made the effort imperative for any government wishing to stay in office (the first Victorian parliament was elected in 1855). In the decade 1851 to 1861 the new colony of Victoria’s population increased fivefold. While most immigrants initially pursued gold or engaged in gold-related activities such as carting and store keeping, there was also interest in ultimate land ownership.

The middle class immigrants tended to be influenced by the often idealized picture of Australia conveyed in British writing of the 1840s and 1850s. English writers such as Charles Dickens, Bulwer Lytton and Samuel Sidney were disillusioned with their own industrial reality, and saw Australia as a new Arcadia.273 Indeed, Powell argues that the urban middle classes were the leaders in the early struggles for land reform, and that ‘it becomes increasingly more difficult to distinguish a real desire to farm from the consuming passion to oust the squatters from their land monopoly and their social and political dominance’.274

Also, many of the English Chartists and other British working-class radicals who emigrated to Australia in this period took an active role in colonial politics and envisaged Australia’s future as a nation of small farmers. Such groups viewed the Enclosure Acts as depriving the small man of his land and forcing him into factory work in the new industrial towns. Chartists and others wanted the return of small plots of land and a re-creation of long-lost rural life.275 The attempt to create a class of yeoman farmers based on the old English model, which had become increasingly irrelevant after the Industrial Revolution, would significantly influence the progress of Victorian public lands disposal.

272 RV Billis & AS Kenyon, Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip, Melbourne, McMillan, 1932, p. ii.
Additionally, the lure of land ownership was a powerful inducement to Scottish immigrants whose prospects had been eroded by the commercialization of farming in Scotland. Combining with the agitation from these and other groups to unlock the land was the Victorian government’s need to encourage land sales to assist further immigration. It needed to make land available to intending cultivators on reasonable terms, at the same time giving the squatters an opportunity to purchase portions of their runs.

Over most of Victoria, and especially around the goldfields, the great majority of land was still owned by the Crown but was being licensed to squatters.276 A small proportion was held freehold by the squatters in blocks around their actual or purported homesteads, invariably on the choicest land with a river frontage, and a further small proportion was held by the Government for possible sale as towns and agricultural settlements.

Land Leagues from Victoria and New South Wales came together in a Land Convention at the Eastern Market in Melbourne in July 1857 and decided on a radical program for land reform. Tarrangower delegates were John Ramsay, later MLA for Maldon, and T Gainsford. Gainsford stated at the convention that the ‘local squatters’ outbid those who were trying to buy land around Tarrangower. The Tarrangower Land & Reform League was formed, with Ramsay as president.277 Major demands campaigned for by the Land Convention were:

- Abolition of the existing pastoral occupation by the squatters
- Free commonage on runs
- Selection before survey of 160-320 acre blocks at a minimum price of 10 shillings to a pound per acre with only 10 per cent down payment.278

Although it was several years before the Nicholson Bill, ostensibly based on the above demands, could be passed, subdivisions from the Cairn Curran run had been sold by the Crown in the Baringhup area as early as June 1857. Cairn Curran was part of the Westernport District, which was not a settled or intermediate district. Serle in The Golden Age outlines the background to this apparently early sale:

Despite the distorted reputation created for him by the Argus, La Trobe was no creature of the squatters and earnestly desired to meet the clamorous demand which was developing from prospective farmers and speculators. Since 1847 he had persistently argued with his superiors for a liberal interpretation of the Order-in-Council, believing that it was ‘in the power and duty of the Government to use timely foresight’ to reserve land for agriculture.

276 Governor La Trobe refused to issue the leases under the 1847 Order-in-Council.
277 Mount Alexander Mail, 6 June 1857.
and sell it as needed.\textsuperscript{279}

La Trobe’s only loophole was section 9 of the Order which allowed him to make reserves ‘for public purposes’, such as townships and roads ‘or for otherwise facilitating the improvement and settlement of the Colony’. By this means he had already reserved some 700,000 acres. However, in an opinion given in January 1852, the law officers, Stawell and Barry, held that in cases of ‘absolute necessity’ land for townships and for their agricultural support could be reserved and sold and the pre-emptive right not apply, but the Governor should not anticipate the prospective wants of the community. Serle points out that the weight of legal opinion clearly leant towards the squatters, but ‘after long hesitation’ La Trobe went on making reserves for future sale.\textsuperscript{280}

The Government chose a part of the Bryants’ \textit{Cairn Curran} run, which included what was to become the site of Maldon itself, as one of the first agricultural settlements. In October 1852 Assistant Surveyor Thomas Adair surveyed the allotments on the Loddon River ‘at the crossing place near Bryants’ Station’ which were to develop into the agricultural settlement of Baringhup.\textsuperscript{281} In later years Baringhup, rather than Muckleford or Walmer, would become the agricultural centre of the Shire of Maldon. It could be said that David Marshall and Robert Aitken were in the right place at the right time. The land they bought in 1857 was excellently sited. Everything known about this partnership suggests that this was not simply a lucky choice, but a reasoned one. It also indicates that their partnership was profitable.

**Marshall’s acquisition of farmland**

Over the years 1857 to 1878, Marshall slowly but skilfully acquired a substantial farm of 612 acres starting at the first auction sales of 1857.

 Lots on the Loddon at what later became known as Bryant’s Crossing were sold at Castlemaine on June 6. At least five lots that day were bought by the \textit{Cairn Curran} squatters Matthew and William Bryant.\textsuperscript{282} Thomas J Thompson bought 164 acres at 4 pounds an acre (allotment 2 section 6), and James Bromfield bought 126 acres at 3 pounds 10 shillings an acre (allotment 1 section 9). David Marshall and Robert Aitken jointly bought 180 acres at 3 pounds an acre (allotment 4 section 9).\textsuperscript{283}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{279} Serle, \textit{The Golden Age}, p. 131.
  \item \textsuperscript{280} Serle, \textit{The Golden Age}, p. 131.
  \item \textsuperscript{281} Lewis, \textit{The Essential Maldon}, p. 17.
  \item \textsuperscript{282} Mount Alexander Mail\textit{}, 6 June 1857.
  \item \textsuperscript{283} General Law Title search.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
On July 13 of the same year Thomas J Thompson bought another 142 acres at one pound per acre (allotment 1 section 6)) which was obviously a considerable decrease in cost. It might be significant to this decrease that the three week Land Convention was held in that July. In 1861 Thompson was ‘brought into comparative poverty after a comfortably independent position’ after a disastrous fire on his farm – the barn, stables, six sets of harness, blacksmith’s shop, sheds, stock-yard and piggeries were totally destroyed although the house, cattle and horses were saved. He also lost his harvest. The *Times* contained an advertisement for the compulsory sale of his cattle as ‘a result of the late fire’ which included milch cows, heifers, three horses and dairy utensils.\textsuperscript{284} Marshall bought Thompson’s two blocks in 1864 at £2 7s per acre.

His next purchase was more expensive. In 1878 he bought James Bromfield’s *Davenham* farm from Thomas Griffiths\textsuperscript{285} at £9 per acre. The *Times* wryly observed of his purchase that ‘pastoral and agricultural pursuits about Baringhup are certainly a good line’.\textsuperscript{286}

\subsection*{Favourable location of farmland}

The first months of the gold rushes had in general disrupted farming as both farmers and labourers left for the diggings. But once the initial shock was over there was rapid expansion in the central goldfield counties of Ripon, Talbot, Dalhousie and Grenville. Baringhup was spread across the county of Talbot and the Loddon district. The collector of agricultural statistics for these counties commented that as the miners represented a huge new market, farmers avoided the transport costs faced by their competitors in other regions. The central goldfields became a major agricultural region, which was shielded from the pressure of imports by its distance from the sea. In addition, unsuccessful diggers provided help with harvesting.\textsuperscript{287}

As well as its proximity to this assured market, Marshall and Aitken’s land was in a favourable geographical location. Situated on the Loddon river flats it had permanent water. From 1864, when Marshall bought Thompson’s two blocks, his farm straddled the river. It was close to Maldon, Castlemaine and Bendigo so fruit, dairy produce, poultry and pork could be quickly transported.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{284} *Tarrangower Times*, 29 March 1861.
\item \textsuperscript{285} Thomas Griffiths had bought James Bromfield’s *Davenham* farm in 1867.
\item \textsuperscript{286} *Tarrangower Times*, 13 February 1878.
\item \textsuperscript{287} Agricultural and livestock statistics March 31 1857, *Victorian Parliamentary Papers*, vol. 4, no .82, 1856-7, Appendix 3: Report from GC Levey.
\end{itemize}
Figure 5.1 Section Baringhup and Neereaman, Alienation from Crown map.
State Library of Victoria
Figure 5.2 Marshall’s farmland 1878. Alienation from Crown map. State Library of Victoria
Maldon residents were dependent for much of their dairy and produce requirements on the farmers settled along the fertile Muckleford and Loddon valleys and Baringhup proved to be the main source of supply.

Moon wrote in 1864 of the yields of ‘the rich and fertile agricultural division of Baringhup, Newstead, Muckleford and Walmer. On Mr Bromfield’s farm (at Baringhup) as much as 40 bushels of wheat were obtained from one acre’.288 It was this farm which David Marshall acquired in 1878.

**Impressions of Baringhup and Marshall’s farm**

In addition to providing food for the mining population of Maldon, the agricultural settlement of Baringhup also provided social and leisure attractions—for those who could afford to get there.

Moon in 1864 gives an impression of Baringhup while describing RJ Lawrence’s Loddon Hotel: 289

There are many pretty rides and drives in and around Maldon, but the favorite is decidedly a drive to the Loddon [at Baringhup], a distance of seven miles. This, on a Sunday afternoon, especially in summer, is the chosen of the upper ten, who have traps and horses of their own, and also by those who can afford to hire them. The great attraction seems to be not only the pleasant ride, but to visit that most good-natured and jovial of hosts, friend Lawrence, of the Loddon Hotel. The house and garden is pleasantly situated on the river banks, and the land around under cultivation. This is also a rendezvous in summer for amateur fishermen (Loddon cod being both plentiful and good) and in winter for wild duck shooters. Agricultural shows and pigeon matches are also held here. 290

In 1872, *The Times* correspondent, under the guise of ‘An Occasional Visitor’, described his visit to several Baringhup farms, one being Marshall’s, thus providing a useful sketch:

Continuing the green lane, the large homestead of enthusiastic yeoman Mr Marshall comes in view. A trot up the long avenue brings us to the threshold. The homestead is situated [at] about the finest spot on the Loddon, whose wild waters flow in haste to the Murray. The river is of good breadth and depth and consequently there is a fine lake in the driest weather. The bush paddock abutting the road is springing up very rich. The level paddock fronting the house is in fallow, top dressed with yard manure. The low paddock by the river is somewhat backward, but will pick up wonderfully fast.

‘An Occasional Visitor’ goes on to describe crossing the river on the ferry boat, convenient and handy ‘as many duck shooters know’, and then climbing up the picturesque fern and rocky bank. The high ground was ‘a perfect crop of waving green’ on one hand, while on the other an immense tract of grass land yielded abundant feed for a large herd of cattle and a stud of horses.

289 RJ Lawrence was a significant figure in Baringhup and Maldon, involved in many civic activities.
290 Moon, p. 10.
Figure 5.3 Davenham House, Baringup. Maldon Museum & Archives
Figure 5.4 Davenham House, Baringhup. Maldon Museum & Archives
Figure 5.5 Marshall farm with Davenham House top left. Maldon Museum & Archives
In 1876, the *Times* correspondent wrote up an account of various Baringhup farms. He had already visited those of Lillie, Manson, Ely, Harley, Lawrence, and Schmidt, and paid a ‘flying visit’ to Marshall’s sheep farm, noting the darker side of this rural idyll:

We much admired the position, beautifully situated on a bold sweep of the river. The picture of the sheep in the well kept and securely fenced paddock was well calculated to please the eye of a spectator, and satisfy the desires of a proprietor, and for a time we thought we had found the contented man of fabulous history, but alas for the concocter of visions, we found Mr Marshall’s prospects darkened by the presence of a flock of audacious crows, which Mr Marshall pathetically informed us, were present for the agreeable purpose of picking the eyes out of his lambs. 291

**The Harleys select in Baringhup**

David Marshall and Agnes Harley married in 1864. Her parents, Michael Harley and Charlotte Dow, her brother Michael, and sister Isabella Niven, gradually acquired Baringhup farmland close to David Marshall’s during the period 1865 to 1880.

For several reasons, the attempts to unlock the land for small-scale farmers by means of the 1860 Nicholson and 1862 Duffy Acts were generally unsuccessful. 292 ‘Exacting leasehold conditions repelled would-be settlers, poorly framed enabling clauses permitted breaches of legislative intent’, and the squatters, using bribery, peacocking, dummyism and Legislative Council dominance, secured extensive tracts of freehold land. 293 Most of the area surveyed and opened for selection as a result of the 1860 Act was in the Western District, and of the 900,000 acres sold in the next two years, five-sixths went to squatters. 294 A further attempt was made with the 1862 Duffy Act, but during 1862–4 roughly two-thirds of the million acres sold ended up being owned by about a hundred men. 295 However, the provision of commonage and the ‘beginnings’ of occupation licenses in the Nicholson Act benefited some small settlers and these were both extended in later Acts. 296

The 42nd section of the 1865 Act enabled people to lease twenty acres of land under occupation licenses within a ten-mile limit of a goldfield, the annual rental to be two shillings per acre per year. Because the Crown retained the land, the prospective selector was helped without mining interests being injured. Unlike the Boards of Enquiry appointed by Duffy, Commissions of Enquiry met in local areas to consider all

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291 *Tarrangower Times*, 15 January 1876.
292 James Service as Minister for Lands introduced the Victoria’s first major Selection Act but the Bill was heavily compromised by the time it passed through each House. Powell, p. 76.
294 Powell, *The Public Lands of Australia Felix*, p. 82.
applications while protecting ‘the public and local interests’, and were assisted by the
district surveyor and mining surveyor together with the chairman and members of mining
boards and shire councils. Using the 42nd section of the Act, James McPherson Grant, the
Minister for Lands and architect of the 1865 Act,297 was able to place thousands of miners,
labourers and tradesmen on smallholdings throughout the Victorian goldfields regions.298

The gradual acquisition of leases later converted to freehold by the Harley family
would exemplify the working out of the 42nd section. In the parish of Baringhup, four
Harley family members applied on 16 September 1865 for a license for 20 acres of land
under the 42nd section of the Amending Land Act 1865.299

Isabella Niven allotment 4 section 7
Charlotte Harley allotment 1 section 7
Michael Harley allotment 1 section 7
Michael Harley, jnr, allotment 1 section 7
Such land applications by family groups were not uncommon. Charles Fahey points out
that land files indicate that selectors frequently moved in family groups. Children were an
ideal way of extending the family farm and a ‘common settlement pattern was fathers,
sons and daughters taking up adjoining blocks’.300 It provided co-operative labour, a larger
thus more viable area than normally allowed by the Act, and in some cases, joint capital.

Because of the successful working of Section 42, Grant interpreted the workings of
this section ‘liberally’ and the number of 20-acre blocks for which the one person might
apply was extended to four in February 1866. In May 1866 Michael Harley and Isabella
Niven were each granted 80 acres under the 42nd section.301 In September 1867 Michael
Harley was granted 80 acres and in November 1867 he applied for another 40.

New regulations came into force on 1 November 1868. Originally these 20 acre
licenses applied only to land within a radius of ten miles of a goldfield. The new
regulations applied to land more than ten and less than thirty miles from a goldfield with
the maximum acreage for selection being increased to 160 acres. The 1869 Act provided
for selection of up to 320 acres for a yearly payment of two shillings per acre.

297 R Wright, The Bureaucrats’ Domain, p. 103 points out that the most successful and innovative clause of
the 1865 Act, Section 42, was drafted by the public servant Clement Hodgkinson, Secretary of the Board of
Crown Lands and Survey.
298 Powell, p. 126.
299 Tarrangower Times, 19 September 1865.
300 Charles Fahey, ‘Moving North: Technological Change, Land Holding and the Development of
Agriculture in Northern Victoria, 1870-1914’, in Alan Mayne (ed.), Beyond the Black Stump: Histories of
Outback Australia, Kent Town, South Australia, Wakefield Press, 2008, pp. 179-209.
301 Tarrangower Times, 1 June 1866.
Figure 5.6 Harley & Niven farmland. Alienation from Crown map.
State Library of Victoria
Significantly, it enabled selectors to purchase land under the following conditions. The licensee was allowed three years to cultivate ten per cent of the land selected. If the property was improved and enclosed, and the selector had lived there for two and a quarter years, they could then lease the land for another seven years. They could buy the land any time after the first three years with the rental being used to help pay for the land. In 1870 Michael Harley’s application for 180 acres was recommended.\textsuperscript{302}

The parish plan (see p. 98) shows that the Harley family eventually (between 1872 and 1880) bought land from the Crown totalling 420 acres, which they called \textit{Carron Vale}.\textsuperscript{303} Michael Harley snr bought 260, Michael Harley jnr 80, and Isabella Niven 80. This family had begun farming on four leases, each of 20 acres. The Harleys appear to have done well as croppers. In 1872 and 1873 they had the best wheat crop in the district.\textsuperscript{304} Michael Harley snr took prizes for his Tartarian oats at various shows and in the 1880s Michael Harley jnr was a judge of double furrow ploughing. Isabella Niven’s only child Henry became a successful farmer and bought David Marshall’s farm in 1910.\textsuperscript{305}

Not surprisingly, JM Grant had been heavily criticised by both colleagues and opponents for his unconstitutional actions and dictatorial power in amending the provisions. For example, in the parliamentary debate on the administration of the land law, Shepherd claimed:

\[\text{No lawyer could say with honesty [that] the 42nd section, which allows 20 acres to be taken up by miners on goldfields, for one year, could be construed into allowing persons not miners, and not on the goldfields, to occupy 80 acres for any length of time. There never was a grosser case of the straining and breaking of the law.}\textsuperscript{306}\]

The Attorney-General George Higinbotham had argued that because land legislation had been defeated by ‘various contrivances of fraud’, such management was justified. ‘The 42\textsuperscript{nd} clause, simple as it appears, despotic as it undoubtedly is, and conferring far larger powers than anyone ever dreamt it would do, has been the salvation of the Land Act of 1865.’\textsuperscript{307} By June 1866, 120,393 acres had been licensed on the western goldfields, and in that short period over 5000 settlers were residing on the new holdings. By the end of the sixties it was claimed that this single clause, Section 42, had allowed the settlement of

\textsuperscript{302} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 30 November 1870.
\textsuperscript{303} The Harleys had lived at Carron, near Falkirk. The River Carron flows between Falkirk and Larbert, and into the Firth of Forth.\textsuperscript{304} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 11 Jan 1873.
\textsuperscript{305} Henry Niven paid £8892 for this farm which was then owned by William Shields. General Law Title search. Niven sold the patent for a sheaves tie to HV McKay for £1000.
13,000 applicants on 786,000 acres.  

**Marriage to Agnes Harley**

David Marshall married for the second time on 22 March 1864, ten years after the death of his first wife, Christian. According to the marriage certificate he was aged 38 (actually 39) and Agnes Harley was aged 21.

The marriage notice was in the *Argus* of 24 March:

MARSHALL—HARLEY. — On the 22nd inst. at the United Presbyterian Manse, Collins St, Melbourne, by the Rev. A M Ramsay, Mr David Marshall, farmer, near Maldon, late of Stirling, to Agnes, second daughter of Mr Michael Harley, late of Carron, near Falkirk, Scotland. Falkirk and Stirling papers please copy. This notice was included in the *Tarrangower Times* of 29 March with the following variations: ‘of Baringhup, Loddon’ was inserted after ‘farmer’ and the final sentence was omitted.

On the marriage certificate Agnes Harley’s present and usual residence is listed as 46 Rathdowne Street, Melbourne, and Marshall’s present residence is the same address, which suggests that this was the home of the Harleys. This family later selected land in Baringhup, as discussed above, so it is likely Marshall encouraged them in this move and possible that he had even sponsored their emigration, as Mary McKenzie’s notes state that the Marshall and Harley families had known each other in Scotland. The references to their towns and/or countries of origin is common in marriage, birth and death notices, and indicate how these first generation settlers still identified themselves. The final request for ‘home’ newspapers to copy is also common.

Agnes was born in 1842 in Larbert, in the county of Stirling. Her parents, Michael Harley and Charlotte Dow, had married in 1838 in Larbert (also Robert Aitken’s birthplace), and had emigrated to Victoria on the *Blanche Moore* in August 1862. Michael’s occupation is listed in the shipping record as ‘labourer’. There are records of at least seven children born in Larbert to Michael and Charlotte. Four accompanied their parents on the *Blanche Moore* in 1862: Michael, aged 15, Charlotte, 11, Anna, 9, and David, 7. Shipping records have not as yet been found for Isabella, Agnes and Margaret. The eldest child, Isabella, born in 1838, married an Andrew Niven and had at least one

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308 Powell, pp.126 -127.
309 Mary McKenzie was the great-granddaughter of David Marshall. These notes were previously discussed in chapter three, p. 43.
310 He probably worked in the Carron ironworks, as did ‘most men’ in Carron. Information from family correspondence.
son, Henry, who was born in Invercargill, New Zealand, in 1864. Andrew died in the same year after being kicked by a horse, and Agnes travelled to Invercargill to bring Isabella and her child to Victoria.

In 1872 Agnes’s sister Charlotte married George Telford, who had emigrated from Northumberland, northern England, and in 1873 her youngest sister Anna married George’s brother, John. Discussing creameries in the St Arnaud district in the 1890s, Yvonne Palmer refers to the Telford brothers’ farm, Mount Pleasant. (Marshall’s probate papers show that he had lent George Telford of St Arnaud one hundred pounds free of interest.) The Telford farm was ‘becoming noted for the progressive methods of its owners; field-harvester trials were held there and it was used for Department of Agriculture experimental plots’. The farm was visited by the Prince of Wales, later Edward VIII, when it was run by John’s son, Michael Harley Telford (1876 -1953).

**Agnes and the role of women in the colony**

As discussed in Chapter One, women generally were not involved in public life and therefore were given minimal attention by the *Tarrangower Times*. They were reported through their contributions to organizations such as the Ladies Benevolent Association and to such events as Easter Fairs, the plethora of tea meetings linked to the schools and churches, and the activities of the Good Templars, in which women could hold office. These activities provided women not only with the opportunity for socializing, but also civic involvement and leadership. Caroline Lawrence (widow of RJ Lawrence) and Isabella Ellis (wife of Edward Ellis, who became insolvent) stood out as business women when they continued to operate their husband’s hotels. Some unmarried women and widows ran small schools before the Education Act of 1872.

Therefore it was not at all unusual that there were few references to Agnes Marshall in the local papers. She was occasionally mentioned in lists of donors to the Hospital and other institutions, separately from her husband, and also mentioned as assisting at Church functions such as tea meetings and bazaars. For example, in January 1870, Mrs Marshall and the ‘Misses Harley’, her sisters Charlotte, then about nineteen and Anna, about seventeen, assisted on the tables at the Bible Christian tea meeting held at Lawrence’s hotel. They were Presbyterians not Bible Christians but attendance at local

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311 There is no record of Margaret Harley in Australia.
312 This information was obtained through family correspondence.
314 This information was obtained through family correspondence.
events usually crossed religious boundaries, particularly for those in the nonconformist churches. At least eighty people were present but this was considered a small number and was attributed to ‘the yeomen’ harvesting. It is worth noting that Mr Lawrence with his ‘usual liberality’ arranged free stabling and provender for all horses.\footnote{\textit{Tarrangower Times}, 29 January 1870.} Interestingly, at this tea meeting a Miss Thorne preached – she was ‘fervent and soul-stirring’. A woman preaching was a highly unusual event, particularly so in Baringhup or Maldon, but was more likely in nonconformist churches, which had moved somewhat from the era which produced Dr Johnson’s famous pronouncement.\footnote{‘Sir, a woman’s preaching is like a dog walking on his hind legs; it is not done well, but you are surprised to find it done at all.’ Boswell’s \textit{Life of Johnson}.} Linda Wilson has explored the role of nonconformist churches in providing an intermediate sphere between private and public life in which women could find a variety of roles. These included teaching in Sunday schools, fundraising, leading prayer meetings, and preaching.\footnote{Linda Wilson, ‘Constrained by Zeal: Women in Mid-Nineteenth Century Nonconformist Churches’, \textit{The Journal of Religious History}, Vol. 23, No.2, (June 1999), pp.185-202.}

In 1883 Agnes was elected to the Maldon Ladies Benevolent Association committee, and remained on it until 1888, when the Marshalls left the district. Despite its unprepossessing title, the organization did attempt to fill a chasm of need in a period with minimal government assistance to the ill and unemployed, and was constantly struggling to raise funds. The Report of Mr Evans, Government Inspector of Charities, describes how ‘the recipients of relief where practicable report to the committee at their monthly meetings, when each individual’s case, whether for renewal or for first assistance, is brought forward for consideration’.\footnote{\textit{Tarrangower Times}, 6 August 1884.} In the twenty-first century this public ‘inquisition’ seems a demeaning requirement, but may have been considered reasonable by inhabitants of a nineteenth century goldfields town, where middle-class women were thought in need of constant protection and therefore were discouraged from ‘interviewing’ applicants in their houses.

Probably the fact that Agnes seems to have remained in the background is a testament to her position as a ‘good wife’. Catherine Currie, the wife of farmer John Currie, for many years exemplified this ideal.\footnote{Her mental breakdowns in later life possibly indicate the tensions of living up to this ideal. Alisa McLeary & Tony Dingle, \textit{Catherine: On Catherine Currie’s Diary, 1873-1908}, Carlton, Melbourne University Press, 1988.} Her diary entries show she raised several children and worked very hard in both the house and on the farm as well as constantly assisting neighbours and her wider family. Although she was anxious about its wisdom,
she supported her husband’s choice to sell their Ballan farm in 1873 to select at Lardner, in the formidable environment of the Gippsland forest. And although an astute and ambitious woman, from the sidelines she watched her husband take on public roles in the church and community.

Farmers’ wives often took responsibility for the kitchen garden, the poultry and the milking, including cheese and butter production. What was produced was used by the household and the excess bartered or sold. This excess could provide crucial income in difficult periods as in the example of Catherine Currie who regularly sold eggs and butter when she lived in Ballan and also Lardner. At the twenty-first Baringhup and Maldon Agricultural Show in 1878 Agnes won prizes in the machinery section for a churn and a ‘washing-machine’, the latter being probably used to wash milking equipment. This indicates her dairying involvement.

There is the occasional more individual glimpse of Agnes. Her reputation as an able and confident host(ess) did receive some attention in the Times, several articles attesting to this. In the account of the marriage of her stepdaughter Mary Ann to Richard Froomes, which was held at Annfield the Marshall farm in 1870, readers were informed that ‘Mrs Marshall personally supervised the arrangement for the wedding breakfast, and therefore it is needless to mention that the repast was excellent and elegant’. There are also reports of meals provided for James Service, who represented Maldon in the Legislative Assembly from 1874 to 1881. (He was also a prominent colonial politician: Victorian Treasurer from 1874 to 1875, then Premier in 1880, and Premier/Treasurer from 1883 to 1886.)

James Service’s visit to the Marshall farm in 1877 was unexpected. In the lead-up to the Assembly election, Thomas Harding drove Service (plus RD Oswald, the mine-owner, and Thomas Hannay, Service’s Maldon agent) from Maldon to Neereaman and Baringhup for election meetings. Arrangements had been muddled at Neereaman and no-one turned up for the meeting. A halt was made at the Marshall farm and the party, who were now running ahead of time, were invited to dinner, together with the Times reporter who later wrote: ‘The repast provided by Mrs Marshall was creditable in the extreme, and was certainly done justice to by the guests’. Service expressed his appreciation of the hospitality shown, and regret at not being in a position to remain longer. After dinner the

320 Ibid, p. 28.
321 Tarrangower Times, 30 March 1878.
322 Tarrangower Times, 10 December 1870.
visitors were shown around the farm, then a start was made for the Loddon Hotel for the election meeting for Baringhup voters, where Service gave a very long speech, reproduced as usual in all major Victorian papers.\textsuperscript{323} The meal provided in the lead up to the 1880 election seems to have been planned:

Coming from Ely’s [at Neereeman] to Baringhup the Service procession made a slight detour and called in at Mr Marshall’s new palatial residence on the banks of the Loddon,\textsuperscript{324} where the contingent were most hospitably received, and a feast worthy of a Prince was set before them by Mrs Marshall. The repast was as unexpected as it proved most agreeable, and it is needless to say the good things were gratefully enjoyed. The party which included Mr Service, Messrs Page, Hannay, Campbell, Calder, Franklin, Johnson and others were loud in their praise of Mrs Marshall for her thoughtful consideration.\textsuperscript{325}

**Daily life: ‘Fire and flood and famine’**

The Loddon occasionally flooded. An 1886 report from the Central Loddon district described some negative consequences. ‘Along the course of the Loddon many acres of grain and hay crops have been swept away whilst along the various creeks and water-courses much damage has been done to roads, fencing and standing crops.’\textsuperscript{326} There was also the complication of managing the cattle in a flood. ‘The late floods have put the farmers on the Loddon to great inconvenience, especially with their cattle crossing from one side to the other: they had some difficulty in getting them back again.’\textsuperscript{327} There were drownings of cattle and horses in these floods, and sometimes humans.

In general Marshall’s farm was protected from water shortages, although others were not. In the 1876-77 drought, water was ‘becoming a scarce commodity to those farmers who reside a distance from the river, and have not got good springs’. Cattle had to be driven four or five miles to the Loddon for water, and most of the farmers in the back blocks ‘have even to cart the water for threshing all the way from the Loddon which is no joke, especially when returns are so small as they are this year’.\textsuperscript{328}

In 1861 Marshall reported five acres of crop ‘all but completely destroyed by frost’ and he had not yet ascertained the full extent of the damage. He stated that ‘nearly all the neighbouring farmers will be sufferers to a greater or lesser degree’.\textsuperscript{329}

In October 1864 the residents petitioned Captain Standish, Chief Commissioner of

\textsuperscript{323} *Tarrangower Times*, 2 May 1877.
\textsuperscript{324} The ‘palatial residence’ was *Davenham*. Marshall had bought the Bromfield land in 1878.
\textsuperscript{325} The press party who were travelling separately was ‘entertained by Mrs Lillie near the bridge – a good substantial tea, not so elaborate but very appreciated’. *Tarrangower Times*, 21 February 1880.
\textsuperscript{326} *Tarrangower Times*, 16 January 1886.
\textsuperscript{327} *Tarrangower Times*, 24 September 1867.
\textsuperscript{328} *Tarrangower Times*, 31 January 1877.
\textsuperscript{329} *Tarrangower Times*, 16 December 1861.
Police, for the appointment of a resident police constable at Baringhup and Muckleford. During hay making and harvesting the previous year the farmers of these places had suffered great annoyance and loss from the influx of ‘rowdy’ labourers, and there is ‘too much reason to believe that some cases of firing stacks may be attributed to the lawless’.  

Lawlessness may have been involved in the following event. In January 1868, a fire destroyed part of Marshall’s wheat crop.

[He] was just about to commence stripping, and had occasion to absent himself from the field for a time whilst preparing the stripper, leaving seven men at work cutting roads prior to commencement, four of whom indulge rather freely in smoking. Taking advantage of Mr Marshall’s absence they commenced lighting the pipe, and carelessly threw down the matches, thereby causing the fire. The men at once endeavored to extinguish the flames, but to no purpose.

The neighbours hurried to help, but the fire had spread to the fence line of a forty-five acre paddock of wheat. In order to prevent it catching fire, James Gilfillan placed men in the wheat, close to the fence, so that as soon as the crop caught fire, it could be quickly put out. ‘The scene for the time was most exciting, everyone present manifesting a desire to stop the progress of the flames.’ Marshall lost about seven acres out of the paddock – a loss described as ‘fortunate’ by the Times. It is interesting to note the number of farmers with their employees who quickly assisted. Named farmers apart from Gilfillan were Messrs Watson, Griffith, Huish, Hayes, Farrell, Harley, Southgate, Manson, Coghill, and Lillie. The employees were not named by the paper. Mutual assistance was common, as in most agricultural districts, with farmers helping others with their ploughing and harvests. A magistrate’s enquiry was held, and the jury (contrary to the suggestion of carelessness in the above Times report) decided that the fire was ‘malicious’, which indicates resentment against Marshall, although the jury could not point to the ‘guilty parties’. Even if not ‘malicious’, smoking and throwing down the matches in a wheat paddock was obviously irresponsible behaviour. They may not have been permanent employees. Seasonal workers could have been miners down on their luck or from ‘the city’ or other districts.

330 Tarrangower Times, 7 October 1864.
331 Tarrangower Times, 3 January 1868.
332 Marshall inserted an advertisement in the Times expressing ‘heartfelt thanks’ to all who ‘kindly assisted’ him subdue this fire.
333 In 1863 when Maldon businessman James Warnock bought Golden’s farm in Baringhup other farmers gave a day’s ploughing each, to enable fifty acres to be quickly seeded. As the season was advanced this was a considerable convenience.
334 Tarrangower Times, 3 January 1868.
A more lethal fire broke out at Marshall’s in 1880. The fire was first seen by Agnes from the opposite bank of the Loddon, and she ‘immediately’ sent a message to Marshall who was at a Farmers’ Union meeting. He, with the Lillie brothers and their sons, the Gilfillan brothers and Messrs Morris, Manson, Lewis, Daw and their ‘assistants’, hastened to the burning field. After a few hours of fighting they subdued the fire but eighty acres of sheep feeding pasture were burnt out, and ten chains of dividing fence. The *Times* reporter claimed the fire was no doubt due to the carelessness of a fishing and shooting party, who left rapidly ‘as soon as the mischief commenced’.

Redbank, as many sportsmen know, is on the west bank of the Loddon on a bend in the river, a favourite spot for anglers and trigger men, the spot being fertile with fish and game. The owner has never interfered with anyone trespassing, but rather made all free and welcome. He has no wish to curtail sport, and now only desires to impress upon visitors to be careful to guard setting his property on fire[!].

Thistles were a constant problem, necessitating a Thistle Inspector appointed by the Maldon council. In November 1864 the Thistle Inspector reported that thistles were again getting numerous, and recommended that tenders for their extirpation be called immediately. In discussing the report, Cr Lawrence said he had the previous night lost a valuable cow which had eaten ‘heartily’ of the thistles after drinking at the river. The owner, lessee, or occupier was required to clear their land, and if not done they could be fined – the penalty in 1868 for example being £5 to £20.

Marshall in his 1873 farm report discussed the wild chamomile weed.

Farmers who carry on dairying are pestered with a weed known as wild camomile, and it is feared will have to give up dairying in consequence. When the cows are depastured on land infested by this weed butter cannot be made, the milk and cream have such a disagreeable smell, and there seems to be no way of getting rid of it.

He expressed optimism that grazing sheep would keep down this weed.

Rabbits, locusts and possums could be incalculable threats to grain and vegetable crops. Locusts could strip the standing crops of their heads, and acres that were to be left for grain could only be cut for hay. The *Times* reported in 1882 that rabbits were beginning to overrun some of the farms about Baringhup, and ‘pot hunters and sportsmen are at liberty to hunt over Mr Marshall’s land, providing they do not damage the fence or interfere with the sheep and cattle’. In May 1885 he was experimenting with bisulphate of carbon steeped in cotton-waste and placed at the mouth of a burrow, the fumes entering the burrow and killing the rabbits. ‘It is hoped that Mr Marshall’s action ... will incite

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335 Tarrangower Times, 31 January 1880.
336 Tarrangower Times, 28 November 1868.
337 Reprinted in Tarrangower Times from Melbourne Leader, 2 April 1873.
338 Tarrangower Times, 21 July 1882.
other landholders to give the matter a trial, as combined action is essential in order to accomplish any real good."339 The problem worsened throughout the 1880s and, as in surrounding shires, Maldon Council appointed rabbit inspectors to direct council employees to exterminate rabbits on public lands by shooting, poisoning with bisulphate of carbon and burning hollow logs and dead tree tops. Occupiers of properties were encouraged to assist. Despite £108,727 being spent by the Victorian government from 1880 to 1886-7 and enforcement of the Rabbit Suppression Act throughout the colony, there was no perceptible reduction in the rabbit population. ‘What with locusts, rabbits, sparrows, hares, foxes etc Victoria is a grand place for the working man.’340

**Battle over commons – small farmers versus pastoralist**

The provision of commonage was an important feature of the Nicholson Act. The various types of commons (town, farmers and goldfields) were intended to assist the small settler in all parts of the colony. They provided land for additional grazing, while still maintaining the Crown’s possession of the land and the right to dispose of it at any time. The idea of commonage had a long European history and had been tried already in Australia. By the 1860 Act farmers commons were proclaimed anywhere within five miles of purchased land, on the petition of not fewer than ten occupiers holding a combined total of 500 acres freehold. The use of the commons was intended to be restricted to small farmers who could show that one-quarter of their property was cultivated; that is, they were not intended for use by pastoralists. An annual licence fee was levied at four shillings for each horse, and two shillings per head of cattle.341

There were criticisms of the system, but Duffy saw the commons both as outlets for small farmers and reservations preserving the Crown’s right to large slices of the public domain, for future provision of settlement. His 1862 Act brought them more directly under the control of the Board of Lands and Works by the appointment of managers nominated by local groups of commoners. The general result was a more effective control which enabled the application of increased commonage fees to local improvements. He also enlarged the provision of grazing to selectors at a nominal fee.342

The alleged exploitation of the commons by the local squatter Matthew Bryant was a running sore for small farmers over many years. As discussed previously in this chapter,

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339 *Tarrangower Times*, 2 May 1885.
340 *Tarrangower Times* editorial, 4 June 1887.
342 Powell, p. 98.
his father Edmund had come from Van Diemen’s Land in 1846,343 and had taken up the Cairn Curran run for the Simsons. At the time of the gold rushes produce and stock commanded ‘immense’ prices, and Edmund had reaped ‘a rich harvest’ from the sale of his produce. As much as £105 per ton was paid in the 1850s for hay grown on the estate.344 His sons, Matthew and William Bryant, acquired Cairn Curran in 1854345 and also purchased Plaistow in 1862 from George Joyce. William ran Plaistow, and Matthew at Cairn Curran became well-known in the Victorian colony as a breeder of racehorses.

The Times editor in 1862 made one of many accusations of misuse against Matthew Bryant, reiterated also in letters to the paper and in satirical pieces, and sometimes in local court hearings:

The Baringhup farmers have paid for certain grazing rights which Mr Bryant … appropriates principally to his own use. The Baringhup Farmers Commons (east and west) instead of being reserved for the agriculturalists, are inundated by Mr Bryant’s sheep. Within the last six weeks these have been increased to three thousand, with every appearance of the supplies being augmented. True to the Victorian squatters’ faith, Mr Bryant can by no means see the force of subsiding before the advancing tide of civilization. It is nothing to Mr Bryant that the farmer will make several blades of grass grow where one only grew before (and that he – the farmer – is justly entitled to the use of what he has paid for). Mr Bryant believes in his flocks and will feed them at anybody’s cost … With sheep he began his career, and with sheep he wishes to end it – his whole mind is concentrated in mutton.346 The editor claimed to ‘know of’ sixteen licences taken out for the Baringhup East and West Farmers’ Commons, which their holders hesitated to renew, as ‘they knew not whether the new Land Act [of 1862] would protect them, or leave them open to the same “sell” as before’.

A meeting of the United Baringhup East, Loader Downs and Laanecoorie Farmers’ Commons held in June 1869 throws some light on Matthew Bryant’s position. The commoners were asked to consider his recent application for an extension before clearing off his sheep.

David Marshall, as United Commons manager, explained that the managers preferred that the commoners should decide on the application rather than themselves. The Commons had been extended by the new Act so that they included a ‘great portion’ of the run previously held by Mr Bryant. The managers had given him two months’ notice to remove his animals, this notice would expire in two days’ time and Mr Bryant was

343 According to the Australasian, the Bryants in Tasmania were skilful breeders of high-class merinos. Article reproduced in Tarrangower Times, 8 Sept 1886.
344 Tarrangower Times, 7 July 1886.
345 Edmund Bryant died in 1860.
346 Tarrangower Times, 1 July 1862.
applying for a month’s extension. The herdsman Taylor had reported that Mr Bryant’s sheep, in flocks of two hundred and three hundred, were actually trespassing over ‘all parts of the common’—and also on the properties of Messrs Bell and Skinner, these farmers reinforcing Taylor’s report. The farmers who were entitled to run their cattle on the common were angry because their own herds were dying, ‘with every blade of grass eaten by sheep’. 347

Bryant, who was present at the meeting, argued that he had discharged the offending shepherds, that he had paid rent on his run until December 1869, and that he would have to pay £10 in order to have his rent reduced the following year to recompense him for the run reduction. In addition, the farmers’ cattle were being driven onto his property and he queried the difference between this and his trespassing sheep.

There were various reactions expressed to this argument. Marshall thought it ‘strange’ that the sheep were still on the common when the offending shepherds had been discharged. Skinner and Roberts had witnessed Bryant’s shepherds deliberately driving sheep onto the common, and Taylor said the shepherds ‘hid behind bushes’ when anyone appeared. The chairman of the meeting, Bell, said the situation for the farmers was ‘unbearable’ and that Mr Bryant, considered previously a ‘gentleman’, was ‘no longer such’. He considered that Bryant had been very good to the farmers by not impounding their cattle, but the matter was now ‘quite ridiculous’. Broadfoot said he would like to do ‘all the good’ to Bryant that they could but was afraid that the farmers would harm their own interest. Manson expressed sympathy for Bryant because of the difficulties involved in managing sheep.

Marshall reminded the meeting that Bryant had got his assessment reduced by the Shire Council because his run had been cut up by the commons. The United Commons had been blamed by the commoners for giving him so much as two months notice, far more than the notice given by the Baringhup West Common. He believed some steps must be taken in justice to the farmers who were losing their cattle.

Bryant said if he were not given the extra time he would pay the fines if his sheep were impounded, and take the money out of the wages of the shepherds. Marshall replied that the question at issue was not the fine but saving the grass for those entitled to use it. If Bryant could show how the sheep could be kept out of the areas where the farmers’ cattle normally grazed, he would not object to a month’s extension. Doubt was expressed by

347 This claim that herds were dying was supported by Times news items, for example, 26 June 1869.
others at the meeting that the sheep would be kept out.

Bryant replied that the sheep could not be sold at present, and his only solution was that the flocks would ‘travel from common to common’. The motion, that Bryant be allowed an additional month, on condition that he give his word ‘as a gentleman’ that he would keep his sheep off the original common area, was finally passed.

The editorial in the same paper is scarcely surprising. ‘At a meeting Mr Bryant the well-known squatter made a remark ... worth noting. In reference to his sheep trespassing upon a common, he said his remedy was to keep his sheep travelling from one common to another. The farmers need scarcely be informed that such would not for a moment save any squatter from the impounding penalties. The law has been interpreted very justly ONLY to exempt from being impounded flocks of sheep proved to be bona fide travellers to market.’

The meeting report gives some insight into the thinking and strategies of Bryant, Marshall and the users of the commons. Marshall managed to guide a long meandering discussion to an eventual resolution (for example, there was a laborious debate on whether shepherds deliberately drove the sheep onto the commons which has not been included), albeit one not very satisfactory. There was a degree of sympathy shown for Bryant’s position, possibly sincere, by some commoners. But the dilemma over the use of the commons highlights their inevitably opposing positions.

The editor points out the absurdity and irony of Bryant’s proposed solution that the sheep could ‘travel from common to common’. However, Bryant’s comments may have been deliberately artless. There is no evidence to date of his views on the establishment of a ‘yeomanry’ on his run. But like Niel Black, the Western District pastoralist and politician, he may have genuinely believed the small selectors could not survive long-term and have seen himself as a scrupulous man fighting for retention of his own land against inept and short-sighted legislators.

Matthew Bryant died in July 1886, after he injured his spine when attempting to stop a bolting horse. An 8000 acre section of his still large estate, with the Loddon running through it, was sold off in the September, plus 5000 sheep, 65 horses, 50 cattle,
station plant and implements. This section included William Powell’s (former) paddock of 302 acres and David McFarlane’s (former) paddock of 661 acres, and Parker’s Plains containing 551 acres, ‘all rich land, the greater portion well suited for cultivation’. Parker’s Plains was the site of the former Neereaman Aboriginal Protectorate.

**Products of farms**

Reports from the *Tarrangower Times* Baringhup correspondent and entries for the Baringhup and Maldon Agricultural Society and shows in other districts give information on the Marshall farm. They reveal that, as with many other Baringhup farmers, he achieved a high degree of self-sufficiency. He grew wheat, oats and barley, and ran/bred cattle, horses and pigs, at least until 1874, when he sold most of this stock and concentrated on sheep farming. He also kept poultry – chickens, turkeys, geese, pigeons and ducks and produced cheese and butter. His grain was milled at Newstead and possibly Maldon after 1873, when the Warnock brothers established their flour mill.

The 1878 Victorian Bailliere’s *Gazetteer* lists the principal products of the 152 square miles of the Maldon Shire as gold, grain, flour, dairy produce and wool. The Shire consisted of the three ridings of Maldon, Walmer and Baringhup, and the *Gazetteer* gives the following snapshot of activities in the two rural ridings:

> Agricultural and pastoral pursuits are extensively carried on outside the town boundary, by an industrious and well-to-do class of yeomen and farmers, possessing holdings up to 1000 acres. The largest holders combine wool with grain growing in the Baringhup district. The farms on the whole are well laid out with comfortable homesteads. In the Baringhup district is to be found a select stud of thoroughbred mares, most imported from England, kept for breeding purposes by a resident wealthy squatter—Mr M Bryan JP. The Baringhup dairy produce is noted for its excellent quality and famed for obtaining prizes at agricultural exhibitions. In Walmer district the holdings are not of such a large extent as those of Baringhup, but, besides agriculture, a large area at Walmer is covered by fruitful orchards and vineyards.

This 1878 entry points to a growing change in the Baringhup agriculturalists’ production—to wool growing. This links to the overall change in Victoria, whereby wheat growing in the later nineteenth century tended to move northwards and westwards.

The Baringhup 1875 harvest reporter pointed out that on many of the large farms little crop was being grown, especially on the Marshall, Powell and McFarlane farms. The report of the 20th Baringhup annual show in 1877 discussed the fact that the stock on the farms was also much reduced in horses, cattle and implements in agriculture because

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351 *Tarrangower Times*, 4 September 1886.
352 *Tarrangower Times*, 9 December 1975.
many of the large freeholders were now growing less corn and more wool. ‘On some of the large farms where ten to twelve horses were used for draught purposes throughout the year, since the introduction of sheep on the land, there is scarcely a team to be met with. A few years since, three to four yeomen such as Messrs McFarlane, Manson, Lillie and Marshall would muster about forty head of horses for the show, on Wednesday the same owners could not count a dozen in the yard’.353

A general climate of experimentation

Charles Fahey argues in *Moving North* that despite the failure and hardship so often depicted as contingent on agricultural settlement, by 1914 Victoria had established major export industries based on agriculture and there were 100,000 farm units in the state. These farms survived and even prospered ‘because the first two generations of settlers were determined individuals who constantly modified their economic behaviour in the face of environmental and market risks and difficulties’, and ‘had a keen eye for opportunities offered by the Victorian environment and the markets for their produce’.354 David Marshall exemplified these ‘determined individuals’, as did David McFarlane.

David McFarlane was born in Mearns, Renfrewshire, Scotland about 1803 and his wife Margaret Giffen was also born in Mearns, in 1814. Sailing on the *Martin Luther*, they had left Liverpool on 6 November 1851 and arrived in Port Phillip via Adelaide in March 1852. They were accompanied by their five children John 15, Mary 12, Margaret Pollock 10, Jane 6 and Cornelius one year. Another child, Isabella Kenny, was born on the ship.355 John, Cornelius and Isabella died as young adults between 1872 and 1876, John at 35, Cornelius at 25 and Isabella at 24, all apparently of tuberculosis.

According to the obituary of Margaret Giffen McFarlane, the family visited ‘various diggings’ when first in the colony, as David Marshall had done, and later settled on land at Baringhup, entering ‘very largely and with success into cattle breeding and dairying, Mr McFarlane’s herd of cattle being famous’.356 The 1868 rate book described the Baringhup property as ‘Stone house and garden, 970 acres land, 200 cultivated’. At that time David was in partnership with his son John. David was an early member of the

353 *Tarrangower Times*, 7 April 1877.
355 These are ages on the shipping index, which were often wrong. On the ship was a young boy later to become Sir George Reid, politician and Prime Minister. His father was a Presbyterian minister who christened Isabella McFarlane aboard the ship.
356 *Dunolly and Bet Bet Shire Express*, 22 May 1907.
Baringhup Agricultural Society, ‘if not the first’,\textsuperscript{357} and was President for several years. He was a consistent prizewinner at district agricultural shows and also won prizes for his butter at the Port Phillip Society’s (later Royal Society) Show.\textsuperscript{358}

However, as well as running a well reputed dairy and breeding cattle he experimented in other directions. He wrote a long letter to the \textit{Times} in 1863 discussing his use of silkworms. He had received 30-40 eggs from a Melbourne friend and his family were now reeling a ‘good deal’ of silk. The worms were eating mulberry leaves. ‘There is no family of three or four young persons, if they have no other employment, but may raise as much silk in one year as will keep the family in clothing all the year round.’ He offered eggs and mulberry leaves for readers to try. He was also trying bee-keeping with success and had bought two hives from a Mr Deaken, who advertised in the \textit{Argus} and gave him instructions on how to deal with ‘angry insects’. ‘I think it is a pity to see so much honey lost in this country, when nature and nature’s God has provided us with an insect so busy and willing to labour for us in gathering an article that is said by the ancients to prolong life, and was spread out and sacrificed to the gods.’\textsuperscript{359} In July 1864 the staff of the \textit{Times} tasted two samples of colonial wine he had produced. A first-class judge was brought in, who thought Mr McFarlane ‘peculiarly successful in his manufacture’. The red resembled a fair light claret, the white a light hock.\textsuperscript{360}

In the 1870s McFarlane, along with Marshall, cut back on breeding cattle and horses and took up sheep farming. In August 1870 he applied for 157 acres in the Parish of Eddington. In 1876 he sold 1200 acres of his Baringhup farm (‘a portion of the renowned Stonehouse estate’) plus livestock and moved to Eddington. The advertisement for the Stonehouse auction advised that ‘Mr McFarlane having lost his sons, and himself being far advanced in years, has fully made up his mind to withdraw from farming operations.’\textsuperscript{361} He died in 1880, aged 77.

Otto Yung, an enterprising German, was also an experimenter. One of the earliest residents in Castlemaine, he was the head of the firm of Jung & Oppenheim, wine and spirit merchants in Market Square. After dissolving this partnership, he turned his attention to the cultivation of wine at Chinaman’s Creek in the Walmer Riding of the Maldon Shire, to which ‘he brought so much intelligence that he carried off prizes for his
wines at the principal shows in the colony and won the still higher honour of obtaining an award at the Philadelphia Exhibition’. He was a Maldon Shire Councillor for many years, and raised questions in council regarding extending industries, encouraging trials of new crops, changing forest policy and apprenticing orphans, among others. In 1878, five varieties of his wine were entered in the Paris Exhibition.

In 1871 the Times noticed Baringhup butter advancing in favor outside of the district with Messrs Powell taking butter prizes at Kyneton and Mr E Edwards at Smeaton, and an ambitious exporting venture.

It speaks well for the pluck of our yeomen in penetrating such strongholds as Kyneton and Smeaton. Just so, but what can we say in commendation of the enterprise of the Messrs Gilfillan, Marshall, Powell, McFarlane and others, when seeking so a market for their produce at such a distance – the old country. The above yeomen, at their own individual risks, have recently exported a large quantity of butter in kegs to the London market. Let us hope the experiment will prove a success.

**Experimentation with agricultural machinery**

From the 1860s onwards the Baringhup Agricultural Society reports, general newspaper reports and advertisements track developments in agricultural machinery, especially machines related to the labour-intensive processes of ploughing and harvesting. Alluvial miners in particular had traditionally supplemented their income by working as agricultural labourers, particularly during the harvests. The chronic shortage of farm labourers was made worse by the fall-off in mining activity and increased the pressure to mechanise. There were improvements made to the reaper, which by the mid-1880s had become the reaper and binder by which the cut crop was tied into bundles for ease of handling. There was an advance towards the combined harvester of the 1890s and early 20th century, which would eventually complete stripping, threshing and winnowing processes in one pass of the machine over a particular section of grain crop. David Marshall was involved in acquiring new machinery himself; he offered his land for field trials; and he worked by means of the Agricultural Society’s annual shows and ploughing matches and educational endeavours to publicize and encourage mechanization. This latter aspect will be developed in the next chapter.

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362 *Tarrangower Times*, 3 October 1877.
363 *Tarrangower Times*, 6 July 1878.
364 *Tarrangower Times*, 2 December 1871.
365 The original reports are missing, believed destroyed, but fortunately the *Tarrangower Times* reports on the Society are available.
366 Other important inventions of the 1880s were Grisold’s tree and stump extractor, De Laval’s cream separator, Spilman’s hay-loader and Dobbie’s seed sowers.
Ploughing
The double furrow ploughs were gradually gaining in popularity in the 1870s and 1880s. The single furrow plough was converted to turn two and later three or more furrows, a means of saving agricultural labour. One man with three horses and a double furrow plough could complete the same amount of work as two men with four horses and two single furrow ploughs and less skill was required. According to an article in Farmer, the double furrow plough had been exhibited publicly for the first time in 1868. Emanating from ‘an obscure corner of Scotland’, it had been sold in large numbers all over Scotland and England.367 Farmers began with the British plough but ‘experience and experimentation by farmers and implement makers eventually devised shapes which were far better suited to local circumstances’.368 These were exhibited and trialled; for example, Mellor’s patent soleless three-wheeled double-furrow Adelaide plough was worked near Lawrence’s Hotel in 1870. The trial was deemed ‘very successful’, and orders were taken from most of the farmers present.369 In 1876 some of the ploughs used in the Baringhup match were made by local men James Callendar and Thomas Lillie.

The local ploughing matches, by including a section for double furrow ploughs, also enabled different makes to be demonstrated. Also, ploughs were exhibited in the Society’s agricultural shows.370 At the Baringhup Society ploughing matches some inevitable criticism was made of the new double-furrow plough, for instance that it lacked the superior finish of single-furrow ploughing. However, its obvious advantages would eventually win out. The Society encouraged competition in the double–furrow ploughing section by increasing prizemoney in that section. A second section for double-furrow ploughmen who had not previously won a prize with a double furrow plough was added in 1883.371 The skills of the ploughman were reduced by the introduction of double and triple furrow ploughs.

Harvesting
‘We are glad to notice a desire on the part of our farming friends for the introduction of the latest improvements in agricultural implements’, observed the Times in 1862. With David McFarlane of Stonehouse Dairy, Baringhup, David Marshall had visited Melbourne

369 Tarrangower Times, 18 May 1870.
370 For example, Marshall won first prize for a swing plough in 1862. Tarrangower Times, 28 March 1862
371 Tarrangower Times, 14 July 1883.
to witness trials of several reaping machines. The latter bought a T Robinson and Co.’s ‘side delivery reaping machine’ and a horse hay rake. Mr Marshall expects that the saving in manual labour will, in a short time, repay him for the outlay. The Times did not refer to any purchase by McFarlane.

Phillip Ridgway of Baringhup exhibited a stripper in the 1863 local show. The opinion ‘of intelligent farmers is, that were a winnowing machine to be attached to it, it would be perfect, and its use effect a very great saving in labor, as well as giving less chance of waste’. In 1867 Ridgway bought one of Clayton and Shuttleworth’s first-class threshers, with all the latest improvements. ‘It is of ten-horse power, and one which, after a trial of eight days, was recommended for a prize by the Royal Society. Mr Ridgeway intends to travel the district [which he did, successfully] and we wish him well. In the 1869 Agricultural Show prizes were offered for strippers (Edwards, McFarlane), threshers (Ridgway, Broadfoot), reapers (Bishop, Hayes and Huish) and winnowers (Edwards, Horwood).

In 1873, William Aitken, brother of Robert Aitken (brother-in-law and former partner of David Marshall) bought Ridgway’s thresher, and ‘being a practical machinist, has overhauled and put the whole concern in a thorough state of efficiency. He will commence this week thrashing for Messrs Rumbold and work up by Mr. Marshall’s farm, to Lawrence’s bridge’. In January 1874, the hum of the threshing-machine was ‘heard all over the Baringhup district, and farmers are being threshed out on double quick time this season. The average this year is likely to be much lower than last, the machine [Aitken’s] doing the most work, in this part turning out about ten bushels to the acre, the others not quite so much. Threshers were too expensive for individual farmers to buy, so they would hire a machine such as Aitken’s, and hire and feed the labourers.

The Times reported on the progress of the reaper and binder, in Victoria and

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372 In 1874, Marshall advertised for sale ‘on easy terms’ a stripper by T Robinson and Co. of Melbourne and a reaping machine by Moody Bros of Kyneton, both in ‘perfect order’.
373 Tarrangower Times, 18 November, 1862.
374 John Ridley had produced a stripper in Australia in 1847 although he did not patent it. Strippers were being made in Castlemaine by at least 1868 by the Horwood Bros, ironmongers and agricultural machinists. Tarrangower Times, 19 December 1868.
375 Tarrangower Times, 13 March 1863.
376 Tarrangower Times, 10 September 1867.
377 Tarrangower Times, 10 April 1869.
378 Tarrangower Times, 24 December 1873.
379 Tarrangower Times, 7 January 1874.
elsewhere.\textsuperscript{380} In the late 1870s, there were several reports of reaper and binder trials close to the Baringhup district. For example in 1877 a trial of Bonsfields’s American reaper & binder was held at Mr Weim’s farm, half way between Laanecoorie and Newbridge.\textsuperscript{381} The following week Wood’s American reaper & binder\textsuperscript{382} was trialled at Mr Douglas’ farm, in the same district.\textsuperscript{383} An attendance of ‘about 700’ was reported. In December 1877 Wood’s reaper and binder was trialled on David Marshall’s farm. The Times urged attendance:

A trial of one of Wood’s reapers and binders will be made today on the farm of the enthusiastic yeoman, Mr D Marshall, Baringhup. As the occurrence will be one of the greatest importance to every selector and farmer they should attend and judge for themselves, especially as Mr Marshall with his usual urbanity has invited all to be present. The machine is the property of Mr Broadfoot, the working a novelty and destined to help considerably to make farming pay.\textsuperscript{384}

The Times ran an article of one and a half columns on the introduction of Wood’s harvester to Baringhup, and included the following information. ‘No machine of late years has excited so much attention and interest as Wood’s reaper and self-acting binder. Mr Broadfoot deserves all possible credit for his enterprise in introducing the Wood’s Harvester into Baringhp district, and also Mr Marshall for publicly inviting all classes [sic] to be present to witness this wonderful piece of mechanization’. The trial took place in Marshall’s homestead wheat paddock, of about thirty acres. At other trials a man had been sent to work the machine but here ‘the Yankee’ was not present as local farmer George Broadfoot, the ‘master of all mysteries and details’ was available. The trial was ‘eminently’ satisfactory and attracted ‘about 1000’. There were ‘a host of agriculturalists and selectors’, representatives of all trades and professions and the mining interest, several shire councillors, and manufacturers including Messrs Callander and Calder from Maldon. Everyone spoke ‘in admiration’. Mr Erskine of Melbourne, a friend of Marshall’s, ‘was up especially to witness’. Mr and Mrs Marshall most ‘cheerily and hospitably entertained’ the numerous visitors,\textsuperscript{385} and during the afternoon ‘a few well known agriculturalists assembled in the house and drank success’ to agriculture generally, the Harvester.

\textsuperscript{380} For example, in 15 August 1868 it reprinted a report on Smeaton farmer Peter McColl’s reaper and binder. He had been working on it since 1858. ‘If the invention is perfected it will effect a saving of five out of every seven men in harvesting ordinary crops’, and cut and bind at least 8-10 acres daily. In America, Carpenter of Wisconsin patented a reaper and binder in 1870. Tarrangower Times, 23 November 1870.
\textsuperscript{381} Tarrangower Times, 13 October 1877.
\textsuperscript{382} Produced by Walter A Wood’s Mowing & Reaping Machine Manufactory.
\textsuperscript{383} Tarrangower Times, 20 October 1877.
\textsuperscript{384} Tarrangower Times, 5 December 1877.
\textsuperscript{385} How 1000 observers were hospitably entertained is not explained in the article.
Broadfoot, and so on.\textsuperscript{386}

The \textit{Times} also discussed the economics. Ordinary reapers cut from 10 to 12 acres of crop per day, and required the services of seven or eight men, at a cost of about £5 per day, whereas this reaper and binder ‘requires but one man and will cut and bind from 15-20 acres per day, at a cost not exceeding 30 shillings’. Some agriculturalists believed it would mow as well as reap, by lowering the cutting board. The cost was ‘rather high’, as the one in use at the trial cost £100, the protective duty being twenty-two per cent. In America it would cost £50, and in England £55. The \textit{Times} expressed the belief that farmers who once cried for protection, ‘after a few more turns of the screw will have had enough … and will want free trade’.\textsuperscript{387}

The reaper and binder had its drawbacks. For example, a harvest report from the Central Loddon District in 1885 stated that ‘a very large area … has been left for the stripper, that machine being considered more economical and clean for harvesting thin crops than the more widely used reaper and binder’.\textsuperscript{388} Farmers often used both machines. Marshall discussed threshing and reaping machinery in the Baringhup district in his 1878 farm report for the \textit{Leader}:

On the whole I do not think many [farmers] were disappointed with the result of the threshing although it is generally believed that machines would do better work if they were under the charge of experienced managers. The new reapers and binders have done an amount of work in this district, and as my crop was cut by one, I can give you my experience. The work done was good, and the binding very firm, no loose sheaves being noticeable in stacking, as is the case when the crop is bound by hand. Many wires got away from the band cutters in threshing time and mixed with the chaff and straw, and although I notice in an English paper that wire has been destructive to cattle at home, yet my cattle have been feeding on the straw, &c., ever since (about six weeks), and I have noticed no ill effects.\textsuperscript{389}

The editor in a later paper commented that Marshall had been fortunate on this last point, as there were reports of horses with ‘intestines pierced by small pieces of wire evidently swallowed with chaff’.\textsuperscript{390} Marshall was using an early version of the reaper and binder; in the 1880s the machines were improved and string replaced wire.

A number of people had been experimenting to make a combined harvester throughout the 1860s, 1870s and 1880s, this work being stimulated by generous rewards offered by various governments and private organizations, for example in 1879 by the South Australian Government’s offer of £4000 for a machine to strip, thresh and winnow.

\textsuperscript{386} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 8 December 1877.
\textsuperscript{387} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 8 December 1877.
\textsuperscript{388} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 19 December 1885.
\textsuperscript{389} Reprinted in \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 6 March 1878.
\textsuperscript{390} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 1 June 1878.
But it was not until the late 1890s that HV McKay’s harvester was widely sold. The development and widespread use of the combine harvester was immensely important but not relevant to David Marshall’s story.

**Marshall’s return from Scotland with breeding stock**

In 1866-67 David Marshall spent fourteen months in Scotland. According to the shipping records he was not accompanied by his wife Agnes, even though they had been married for only two years. The reason for his travelling alone is unknown. He may not have intended such an extended trip. A *Times* article in July 1867 welcomed his return to Maldon and Baringhup. It stated that he ‘went home’ for the general benefit of his health, but more particularly ‘to get the best advice and treatment upon the terrible eye disease he was suffering from. We are glad to find that his sight is very much improved, if it cannot yet be said to be completely restored’. Choosing words unwisely while conveying relevant information, the *Times* reported an astute decision of Marshall’s. ‘At home Mr Marshall had an eye to the main chance, and brought with him to this colony a quantity of pure bred Leicester lambs and also some of the best bred pigs.’ In the same article, the following is reproduced from an unnamed Stirling paper:

> Keir Stock for Australia.—We understand that Mr David Marshall, who left Stirling some years ago for Melbourne, and returned to this country lately, is to leave again for the colony on an early day. At the last annual sale at Keir [Perthshire], Mr Marshall purchased a number of pure bred Leicester lambs, which have since been shipped for Australia. These, we understand, are intended for breeding purposes, and having been selected from the far famed stock of Keir, will doubtless be highly prized in a country where so much depends upon the produce of sheep.

The *Times* concluded by wishing Mr Marshall success with this breeding venture, as ‘it will undoubtedly be a great convenience to our farming friends’.

It is not known who managed his farm while he was away. It could have been a manager, or possibly Agnes and the Harleys. The following advertisement was run late in 1866. It was the only reference to the Marshall farm in the *Times* during his absence.

> GRASS PADDOCK. One of the best Grass Paddocks open in the district for horse feed is to be found at Mr D Marshall’s farm, near the Davenham House. Charges. 2s 6d per week, but without any responsibility for accident or safe custody of any horse or cattle so agisted.

Marshall won prizes for this imported stock and their progeny at various agricultural shows. For example, he won prizes at the 1868 Baringhup Agricultural Show for his ram,

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391 No further information has been found on this health problem.
392 *Tarrangower Times*, 23 July 1867.
393 *Tarrangower Times*, 16 October 1866.
pen of ewes, aged boar, and breeding sow. The *Times* commented that the Leicester breed of sheep shown by Mr Marshall were magnificent representatives of the ‘woolly tribe’, and the show of swine by him and others was the best seen in the district. At the Eddington and Baringhup Shows of 1869 he won with the equivalent exhibits as above, plus a sow and litter and a pen of three lambs,\(^{394}\) these exhibits being described as ‘splendid’ by the reporter. Marshall and David McFarlane were the only exhibitors from the district in the National Agricultural Show held at Ballarat in 1869 and both were successful. David Marshall obtained the two first prizes – the Board’s and the Society’s – for his imported Leicester rams. David McFarlane was awarded first prize for his two year-old filly, and third prize for his brood mare.

Marshall subsequently advertised sales to sheep farmers of 400 to 500 lambs, the progeny of sheep and rams purchased from Sir William Stirling Maxwell, Bart., of Keir, Perthshire, Scotland, who bought from ‘some of the best Leicester breeders in England and Scotland, including Lord Polworth, Mr Simson of Blainshie [Scotland], Rev. Bosanquet of Bocky, etc’.

Horse and cattle breeding and sale

As well as rearing stock for the butcher, a considerable profit was derived by Baringhup small farmers from the progeny of their light and draught horses and cattle.\(^{396}\) Some of these breeders were Phillips,\(^{397}\) O’Keefe, McFarlane and Marshall.

In 1874 a two-day auction of David Marshall’s horse and dairy cattle stock was held because, according to the advertising, he was about to devote his whole attention to sheep-grazing. These included Clydesdale brood mares and young horses, dairy cattle, agricultural implements and dairy utensils. TB Davison, the auctioneer, pointed out that ‘the whole of the young Stock is by the best imported Horses, Mr Marshall having made it his especial study for the past 10 years to excel in the production of first-class Stock’.\(^{398}\)

The *Times* commented on the forthcoming ‘great sale’ of horses, cows, pigs, including the imported Berkshires, agricultural machinery, and implements of ‘every

\(^{394}\) *Tarrangower Times*, 10 March 1869.

\(^{395}\) *Tarrangower Times*, 2 October 1875.

\(^{396}\) The *Tarrangower Times* of 22 December 1875 praised Mr Phillips, who had recently acquired Irish King and Master of Bute, for his untiring efforts to improve the stock of horses in the district.

\(^{397}\) Advertisement in *Tarrangower Times*, 7 February, 1874.
conceivable form and variety of modern make and construction’. It added that ‘the quality of the stock reared on this farm is well-known, and the result, on referring to the file of the Times, of exhibiting at three shows last season, was a gain of 18 prizes, chiefly for brood mares, draught stock, and dairy cattle’.  

On the first morning of the two-day sale, the editor urged attendance:

The young stock of colts and fillies are from the champion entires of the colony; the mares prize-takers at all the exhibitions round about. Mr Marshall being about to devote his attention to wool and mutton, intends ‘clearing out’ every thing appertaining to a first class farm. There are some rare bred pigs and porkers, imported and colonial bred. The whole of the live stock are in beautiful condition. The intended sale has been the talk of the village for some time, and will most assuredly attract bidders from all parts of the colony, the name of David Marshall being so well known as an “enthusiastic” yeoman.

The sale was held in ‘scorching heat’. The report includes a rare mention of Agnes Marshall. She would have been about 32, and David about 50.

We should imagine that such a turn out as this would be good, if only occurring once in a life time, especially in the eating and drinking line. Free lunch, and truly it was, as hundreds who never so much as made a bid, and, verily, never intended one, make free with a vengeance on the eatables and drinkables provided so liberally and cheerfully by Mrs Marshall. The spread all day long was of the best, and the wines and other drinkables of superior kind to what is usually set down as “lunch provided.”

The report included some of the prices paid; for a meaningful comparison, in 1871 Baringhup harvest workers were paid five shillings per day plus five meals.

DRAUGHT STOCK. – Gipsy, black mare, £30, Mr Steele, Newbridge;
Lily, b mare, £32 10s, Mr. W Bishop, Baringhup;
Lady, b mare, by RJ Lawrence’s First Larnak, £29, Mr. Daly, Baringhup;
Darling, b m, £26, Mr. Daly, Baringhup;
Beauty, dark bay, bought in £32;
Young Earl, 4 years old, a magnificent dark gelding, bought in £39;
Maggie, b, 3 years old, £23 10s Mr. Faulks, Tarnagulla;
Jenny, £23 10s, Mr. Wilson, Carisbrook;
Jessie, dark bay, £29, Mr. Nixon, Eddington.
The two year olds averaged £20 each, the one year from £14 10s to £18.
The cows went for up to £9 10s each, the steers about £7 each.

The final paragraph is illuminating, indicating a sort of retirement:

Mr Marshall having been successful as an agriculturalist, intends indulging in a little rest and going into wool and mutton farming as a pastime, not however, on the Riverina, but on the Loddon, at Baringhup, and he may be assured that his wide-spread circle of friends

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399 The first Baringhup Fair was postponed for two days so as to avoid clashing with this sale.
400 Tarrangower Times, 7 February 1874.
401 Tarrangower Times, 11 February 1874.
402 Tarrangower Times, 14 February 1874.
403 Tarrangower Times, 13 December 1871.
wish him hearty success in the future as he reaped in the former line of agriculture.  

There is a rare mention of a local Aboriginal in the report.

Among the visitors to the sale was “King Billy,” attired in a gorgeous but dirty scarlet jumper and trimmings, to match, a two foot black belltopper and green veil, a soapsuds pair of unmentionables, and mounted on a fine grey draught horse in winkers, but no saddle. His Majesty came jolting down the avenue, with anything but majestie deportment in horsemanship. His Majesty was offered the position of bell-man, which he delighted in, but the peculiar manner in ringing the bell was anything but delightful to his hearers. During the afternoon His Majesty managed to sneak out a bottle of strong waters, and, imbibing too freely, became a nuisance, in fact the king got—drunk, and the last seen of him, he was snoring loud and sonorous on a bundle of halters.

The Dja Dja Wurring (as opposed to Aboriginal peoples involved in frontier fighting with white settlers, in Queensland for example) are seldom mentioned in the local newspapers of the 1850s to the 1880s or in other contemporary accounts. This description of ‘King Billy’, although revealing a degree of affection, is a dehumanizing portrait by 2011 standards. The anonymous reporter can be presumed to be a product of his upbringing. He would believe, as would the vast majority of his readers, that the Europeans, particularly the British, were at the top of the pile, and the indigenous peoples were at the bottom. When the latter presented no particular threat or irritation, they could be used as a source of humour.

**Purchase of RH Way’s properties**

In September 1874, the same year as his large sale, Marshall bought at auction the Maldon butcher RH Way’s Baringhup properties, consisting of 10 half-acre allotments, the whole being a square block, bounded by the main and three bye-roads. The buildings on the block included a ‘snug’ cottage, residence, shop, and a two-room newly-built dwelling for the assistant, with slaughterhouse, stables and piggeries. Marshall started bidding with £130 and the above was knocked down to him at £200. ‘Such a bargain is rarely heard of” opined the Times. ‘People at first appeared incredulous that the sale was bona fide, but cash down clinches the argument. Mr RH Way will now have time to devote his whole soul to his extensive Maldon trade.’

This purchase may have been linked to Marshall’s change of direction or it may have been a speculative venture. There was anticipation that ‘certain Baringhup farmers’ would start a co-operative butchery and lease the shop and slaughtering premises.

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404 *Tarrangower Times*, 14 February 1874.
405 *Tarrangower Times*, 5 September 1874.
However, this did not eventuate and in January 1876 the house, butcher’s shop, outbuildings etc were bought by R Chisholm, another Maldon butcher.

**Larger farmers change to grazing**

From the mid 1870s on, the *Times* referred in their reports to McFarlane and Marshall as the small-scale wool growers of the district (the large-scale grower being the grazier Matthew Bryant). By 1882 Messrs Powell, Manson and Caygill were added to this group. Despite the reference to ‘retirement’ in the local reports on Marshall’s sale, the greater profitability of sheep for farmers in that period and place was obviously important. Reasons included over-cropping thus soil depletion, years of drought, the prevalence of rust, and the decrease in alluvial mining leading to fewer seasonal workers. Central goldfields farmers were struggling to compete with new farmers on the Wimmera and Northern Plains. Marshall had taken an early opportunity to move from cropping and stock breeding to small-scale pastoralism, and this would become a trend.

In Marshall’s reports published in the agricultural column of the Melbourne *Leader* references are made to the depletion of ‘old soil’ and also the gradual introduction of sheep. For example, in 1873 he predicted that ‘those who have been farming here during the past fourteen years, and have not taken up any land under the new land acts, will have no chance to compete with the free selector and this fresh land, for wages are too high to a limit of growing root crops &c, to clean the land and restore its fertility’ and that ‘many farmers in this district will have to resort to the keeping of sheep’. In 1874 he pointed out that much of the land under wheat which in spring looked promising was then not worth cutting, with some ‘even vanishing completely away’. In 1877 he again discussed crops disappearing in large patches, which was called ‘take-all’ in the district and was principally found on land which had been over-cropped. He mentioned in 1873 that only ‘one large farmer’ in the district had introduced sheep and that by 1874 that sheep had been adopted to a limited extent ‘but with good results’. Grazing was gradually increased through the 1870s although in 1877 and 1878 ‘severe drought’ hindered success.

In February 1878 Marshall extended his land by buying the Bromfield farm of 126

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406 *Tarrangower Times*, 21 October 1882.
407 Some of Marshall’s reports for the Melbourne *Leader* are in Appendix 4. John Lamont Dow, politician and journalist, was agricultural editor of the *Leader*.
408 Farm report reprinted in *Tarrangower Times*, 2 April 1873.
409 Farm reports reprinted in *Tarrangower Times*, 21 February 1874, 14 February 1877, and 6 March 1878.
acres. The *Times* reported in May that ‘a great portion of the vast area is now under cultivation, and as many of Mr Marshall’s neighbours have volunteered to lend him a hand to get the whole of the ground ploughed, it may be expected before long to see the whole surface of the ground covered with the rising crop’.\(^4\) This indicates the general spirit of co-operation amongst Baringup farmers, but shows also that Marshall was still involved in cropping at this time. The Bromfield land may not have been over-cropped.

The *Times* reported in 1885 that year after year the amount of land cultivated in the district was becoming less, with many of its former largest tillers devoting their entire attention now to grazing and dairying. ‘As these men hold considerable portions of the better land, it is not, therefore, so very surprising that the average results are rather diminishing than increasing, even with more modern appliances, and greater knowledge of the requirements of the district.’\(^5\)

**Figure 5.7 Shire of Maldon wheat production (1871-1891).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Wheat (bushells)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>80,369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>105,207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>68,808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>18,268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>18,829</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In his farmland purchases, importation of stock, breeding of horses and cattle, grazing of sheep along with crop cultivation on the river flats, and experimentation with machinery, Marshall exhibited his keen eye for opportunities and his ability to modify his economic behaviour in response to environmental and socio-economic change. Emigrating in 1853 to the Victorian colony had opened up a career path which brought him wealth and status.

Increasingly, and as he gained financial security, he was willing to devote much time and energy to increase the ‘general good’. Obviously his own financial interest could appear to intersect with the wider interest, as shown in his involvement in the two railway leagues formed to extend the line from Castlemaine to Maldon, and then along the telegraph route from Maldon to Laanecoorie. Local communities obviously treated this

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\(^4\) *Tarrangower Times*, 8 May 1878.

\(^5\) *Tarrangower Times*, 19 December 1885.
issue as vital, and the process would see many changes of alliance and much bitterness. David Marshall’s involvement in the push for railway extension and in the development of the Baringhup Agricultural Society will be charted in Chapter Six.
Chapter Six: Building communities

The businessman who emerges from the public record is energetic, enterprising and determined. These qualities are also demonstrated in activities unrelated to money-making; these involved what he saw as the betterment of the district. John Tobin wrote in 1888 that ‘Mr Marshall has occupied almost every public position in Maldon and Baringhup for over thirty years’. These included the following:

- Founding member Baringhup Agricultural Society 1857, President 1874-1888
- Member Maldon Municipal Council 1860-1862
- Member Maldon Shire Council 1874-1888, President Maldon Shire Council 1879, 1885
- Member Baringhup East Common School Committee
- Member Baringhup School Board of Advice 1872-1888
- President Baringhup, Neereaman and Eddington Railway League 1882-1888
- Founding member Baringhup Free Library/Mechanics’ Institute Committee 1868-1888
- Manager of Baringhup East Commons, Manager United Farmers Commons of Baringhup East, Loader Downs, and Laanecoorie
- Member Local Land Board
- Member Maldon Hospital Committee (representing country districts)
- Trustee for Baringhup Mechanics’ Institute, Baringhup Presbyterian Church and Maldon Presbyterian Church; member Board of Management Baringhup Presbyterian Church
- Justice of the Peace
- Maldon delegate to Melbourne conference re Federation of States July 1884

In this chapter I will concentrate on the progress of two of the above: the Baringhup and Maldon Agricultural Society and the Baringhup, Neereaman and Eddington Railway League, and emphasise Marshall’s role. Both organizations were extremely important to him over many years and his role in them illustrates qualities in his character such as persistence and energy. He was the driving force behind the railway league and an active leader of the agricultural society. With the railway league in particular, he showed his capacity for occasional lapses of judgment. He also had an extensive local council involvement, and although this is impossible to detail in any meaningful way in limited space some general points will be made.

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412 Letter to Tarrangower Times, 23 June 1888.
413 Title changed to Baringhup & Maldon Agricultural Society in 1874.
Council involvement

The development in Victoria of local self-government led to Maldon being proclaimed a municipality in August 1858, four years after the rush to Tarrangower. Districts of no more than nine square miles containing at least 300 householders were to be constituted if 150 householders petitioned. All householders had the power to vote. By 1860, fifty-six municipal districts had been created under Clarke’s Municipal Corporations Act of 1855. The adjacent territory to Maldon was managed by two Roads Boards, Baringhup and Newstead.

The Municipal Council’s tasks included road and street-making, erecting bridges, supplying water, drainage and sanitation, and lighting for night travellers. Williams claims that the first councillors ‘succeeded nobly’, as they were all ‘virile young men afire with newly-found zealious enthusiasm’. These claims may be excessive, but certainly energy and self-confidence would have been required, and also resilience, as these young men were consistently held to account by members of the populace and outspoken newspaper editors.

Motivation in standing for Council was unlikely to have been financial, although some might have hoped for a boost to their own business. The general urge for democracy in this period cannot be overlooked.

David Marshall stood for the municipal council in September 1860. The other new candidates proposed at the nomination meeting in August were RJ Lawrence, Loddon Hotel proprietor; JP Richards, cabinet-maker; Dr RA Lisle; and F Maddocks, Australasian Hotel proprietor (his proposal was seconded by Marshall). J Warnock, general merchant, retiring by rotation from the first council, was also proposed. In the written request by ratepayers on August 23 asking Marshall to ‘be placed in nomination’, the reasons offered were his long residence in the locality and knowledge of its requirements, and his connection with the ‘mining interest, which has hitherto been unrepresented in the Council’.

In his speech accepting nomination, Marshall based his claim for support on his ‘long residence’ in Maldon and having run a business for many years ‘satisfactory to

415 Williams, Maldon and the Tarrangower Diggings, p. 37.
416 The Times of October 10 1875 wryly commented on cabinet maker Conrad Waeke’s retirement: ‘Mr Waeke has been a resident on Maldon since its very early days, always considered a prudent and industrious tradesman, strictly attending to his own business, never taking any prominent part in public affairs. Consequently he retires possessed of independent means’.
417 Tarrangower Times, 23 August 1860.
himself’ which he thought was ‘as good a pledge as he could give that he would also satisfactorily attend to the business of the ratepayers’. ‘Some’ had argued a man experienced in Council was needed, but he recalled that ‘one Councillor’ had voted for 15s 6d each being given for the extraction of stumps in the Municipality in opposition to a tender at the rate of 5s each; the latter had been accepted and the contract satisfactorily carried out. Almost certainly it was Marshall who had extracted the stumps for five shillings each as he had contracted for such jobs with Aitken in this period. Also, it had been said ‘by some’ that an educated man was required for Council. He ‘did not come before them as an educated man, but a man who would act in a pure, honest and straightforward manner, and would spend the public money for the benefit of the whole, and not in any particular part’.\textsuperscript{418} Marshall is open about his lack of education and his promise of ‘pure, honest and straightforward’ dealing seems generally to match his later conduct as a Councillor.

Dr Lisle did not accept nomination, and on a show of hands, Marshall came in last of the five, and asked for a poll, which was held the next day, returning Richards, Lawrence and Marshall. The \textit{Times} editor approved of the election of Marshall saying of the latter:

\begin{quote}
We trust, and are inclined to believe, that Mr David Marshall’s homely common sense and well-known integrity will render him a very useful member; his experience ought to be of great service in the public works department, more especially as he has himself been one of the most successful contractors among those who have been employed by the Council.\textsuperscript{419}
\end{quote}

Lawrence and Marshall actively assisted supporters to cast their votes. Lawrence ‘engaged carts’ and Marshall was seen ‘busily driving his supporters to the poll’. The election reporter suggested that if the other candidates or their friends had exerted themselves ‘it is more than probable Mr Maddocks would have far distanced his cannie Scottish opponent’.\textsuperscript{420}

Thus David Marshall began his service as a councillor, first for the municipality for two years, and later representing the Baringhup Riding on the United Shire of Maldon Council for fourteen years and twice serving as Shire President. During his early months, the council reports show that he contributed to general discussions, for example on framing the Maldon Market bye-laws, when he along with other councillors still believed

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\textsuperscript{418} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 31 August 1860. \\
\textsuperscript{419} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 7 September 1860. \\
\textsuperscript{420} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 7 September 1860.
\end{flushright}
that the market would eventually work.\textsuperscript{421} He was on the public works committee, the committee for regulating commons (he argued the unworkability of the 1862 Land Act on commons) and the committee dealing with the inflammatory issue of the Newstead Roads Board boundaries.

Although he made useful contributions in discussions, statistics for the half-years ending March 1862 and September 1862 indicate poor attendance, particularly at committee meetings and ‘special’ meetings, held on days additional to the usual fortnightly meeting.\textsuperscript{422} The \textit{Times} had a shot at him in 1860:

\begin{quote}
TWO THINGS AT ONCE – Mr Councillor Marshall has belied the old saying, that no man can properly do two things at once. At the last meeting of Council, he (during business) enjoyed the perusal of a newspaper, and no-one can surely say he did not do this and his municipal duties properly.\textsuperscript{423}
\end{quote}

He did not re-stand for Council when his term expired in September 1862. During his two years on the Municipal Council, he was in partnership with Robert Aitken until August 1861, was involved with the Enterprise claim at Nuggetty and worked the 180 acre farm at Baringhup. It is reasonable to conclude that he had overstretched himself.

The Shire incorporated the ridings of Maldon, Walmer and Baringhup in 1864. Marshall had permanently settled on his Baringhup farm from 1864, and in 1873 was encouraged to stand in the Baringhup Riding against Cr RJ Lawrence, who was up for re-election. The \textit{Times} did not believe there would be any challenge to RJ Lawrence, who already had sixteen years experience as a councillor and considerable local popularity as the proprietor of the Loddon Hotel. However, to the surprise of at least the local newspaper, Marshall nominated.

Mr. Marshall’s nomination paper was lodged with the Returning Officer yesterday, signed by men who have some weight in the Baringhup district. We know both the candidates so well. Mr Marshall in the old Council, and Mr Lawrence in all the Councils, and we also know so much in favour of both … Mr Marshall was well known in the old days as a councillor, and always as a yeoman and a sturdy supporter of agriculture and agricultural interests. The ratepayers know so much of each that we should be fairly accused of presumption were we to attempt to advise a choice.\textsuperscript{424}

It was just as well for the \textit{Times} that they did not advise, for it was no walkover for Lawrence. ‘Mr Marshall has no need to be ashamed of his position on the poll. To receive 356 votes against such an old campaigner as Mr. Lawrence, must be almost as gratifying as to be victorious’. Lawrence got 452 votes. Marshall was elected the following year.

\textsuperscript{421} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 4 December 1860.
\textsuperscript{422} The original council minutes are held by the Maldon Museum & Archives Association.
\textsuperscript{423} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 14 December 1860.
\textsuperscript{424} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 6 August 1873.
when Cr Webster resigned mid-term.

In contrast to 1860-1862, when he was engaged in several occupations simultaneously, his attendance for the next fourteen years was exemplary and he was an energetic supporter of his riding’s interest, usually having a say on several issues at each meeting, and frequently riling councillors from other ridings as they fought with intensity over allocations of the ratepayers’ money. He was Shire President in 1878 and 1885. Succeeding him as President in 1886, Cr Michell said he did not expect to fill his office as well as the late President, as he ‘had not such a supply of energy’. 425

The growth of the Agricultural Society

David Marshall was described in his obituary as ‘the very figure-head of the Baringhup and Maldon Agricultural Society’. 426 It was claimed the Society was the first established in north-western Victoria. 427 He was connected with it since its inception as the Baringhup Agricultural Society in April 1857, 428 and was its president for fourteen years from 1874 until he left the district in 1888 to live in Melbourne. 429 Even then he continued to be ‘an active supporter, and was always present at their periodical gatherings’. 430 Although the minutes of the Agricultural Society for the relevant period are missing, the local newspapers clearly demonstrate his passionate involvement.

The first Australian agricultural societies were established in the 1820s. They can be traced back to British associations in the eighteenth century, which were set up to promote new agricultural practices. In Victoria, many societies were created in the 1850s and 1860s when gold discoveries led to the creation of small farming communities. 431

The Mount Alexander Mail in 1858 described the advance in ‘agricultural pursuits’ in the years 1855 to 1858, arguing that the agricultural element ‘is too strong among us ... to escape recognition as a substantial and fatly increasing branch of our local resources’, and detailed the rise of the Baringhup Agricultural Society. 432 In June 1858 the Society represented Baringhup freeholders to the extent of 8515 acres, nearly 2000 of which were under cultivation, and the rest ‘fast being rescued from a primitive condition’. It had begun

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425 *Tarrangower Times*, 19 August 1886.
426 ‘Figure-head’ has changed in meaning – it was not then used as a pejorative term.
428 This date was before Marshall bought his first Baringhup farmland, with Robert Aitken.
429 David McFarlane had been president from at least May 1860 to 1871.
430 Obituary in *Tarrangower Times*, 28 January 1893.
432 *Mount Alexander Mail*, 4 June 1858.
the previous year with ten members, and by August 1858 had thirty-seven. The aims included the promotion and improvement of theory and practice of agriculture, the improvement of the breed of stock and the treatment of its diseases, collection and dissemination of important facts relating to soil and climate of district and to the adaptability of the various grain crops, seeds, roots, and pasture grasses, and the holding of exhibitions and meetings at which prizes may be awarded, for the encouragement of agriculture and horticulture.

The *Mount Alexander Mail* largely attributed the ‘early prosperity and influence’ of the Baringhup society to the efforts of George Rigg, the honorary secretary. Rigg had obtained £250 of the government grant for the encouragement of progressive agriculture, which had been added to annual subscriptions of £44 2s, donations of £27 13s 9d, and ploughing match proceeds of £34 16s 9d.\(^{433}\) The first ploughing match was held on July 2, 1857 and the first Show of cattle, seed and implements on April 21, 1858.

HN Simson, the President of the Society, took the chair at the Loddon Hotel dinner which concluded the first ploughing match.\(^{434}\) In light of the often bitter conflicts entailed in trying to loosen the grip of the graziers, he gave an interesting and possibly artful speech. He remarked that ‘although called the arch squatter from Charlotte Plains’, he had the utmost pleasure in proposing the ‘Baringhup Agricultural Association’ and ‘Speed the Plough’. He had come to the district seventeen years previously, when it was called a ‘desert’. He then became a squatter, because nothing else would pay, but he was happy to see that farms had taken the place of sheep on his run. He was now a Loddon farmer, and with his heart and soul had engaged in that profession. He intended to be so all the days of his life, and hoped his children would after him. He considered the fact of his being the first squatter in the colony who presided over an agricultural association the greatest honour that could be conferred on him, and concluded amid great applause.\(^{435}\)

In May 1858 the Agricultural Association members thanked George Rigg for his efforts in promoting it, by giving him a day’s ploughing with their united teams (twelve horses and six bullocks). Unfortunately, a few months later Rigg was declared insolvent, and sold his lease of 235 acres which fronted the Loddon, plus his crops, stock,

\(^{433}\) *Mount Alexander Mail*, 23 August 1858.
\(^{434}\) HN Simson had amassed vast holdings, in 1841 acquiring Cairn Curran, Charlotte Plains, Janevale, Langi-Cooie and Glenmona.
\(^{435}\) *Mount Alexander Mail*, 8 July, 1857.
implements and furniture. Obviously, even with fertile land on the Loddon, the Baringhup farmers could fail. Factors would include personal change in circumstances, such as ill-health, disasters such as fire, and lack of experience.

During the years of Marshall’s membership, 1857 to 1888, the Agricultural Society fluctuated but continued to run financially successful ploughing matches and shows. In 1860, two acres were temporarily reserved for the show yards; when the permanent site was gazetted in 1868 members sent teams to the forest for the requisite timber, and the extensive yards were erected in time for the 1869 show.

Long and informative press reports on the shows and matches (often running over several columns) attest to a thriving Society. These were great social days and regarded as an entertainment and meeting place for those citizens who did not especially care about the quality of the exhibits or abilities of the ploughmen. These days also expressed the community’s pride and identity, and country centres competed with each other to put on the best event.

In its annual report for 1869, the committee of the Baringhup Society boasted of its achievements in its twelve years of existence. First, it had helped to sustain price and demand for land in the locality, ‘so that it is almost totally taken up’. Second, ‘the marked improvement that has taken place in this district in agriculture’ had been developed in a great measure by the society. Third, the breed of horses had been greatly improved, as well as all other livestock bred in the district, and the people of Maldon could testify to the superior quality of the dairy produce.

Although this report from the committee can hardly be objective, the Times editorials, often critical of other organizations, were invariably laudatory of the Baringhup Society. Other agricultural societies such as Maryborough also praised the management and success of the Society under Marshall and Walter Rollason (as President and Secretary). In 1885, Langler, the Secretary of the Dunolly Agricultural Society, ‘warmly’ referred to the assistance offered his Society by this pair.

Attempts were made over the years to amalgamate with other societies, to increase

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436 The following is part of Rigg’s poignant letter to the Mount Alexander Mail of 13 December 1858, which was directed to potential buyers. ‘I have spoken to several persons I thought were likely to be purchasers, and each has said, It is not likely we will go there to bid against you, as you will buy it all yourself … I beg most distinctly to state that I have not the means to purchase anything. I did not go into the Insolvent Court for the purpose of bettering myself at the expense of my creditors. I was forced into it. I have given up everything I possess to the official assignee.’

437 Tarrangower Times, 27 January 1869.
438 Tarrangower Times, 30 March 1878.
439 Tarrangower Times, 21 March 1885.
support and offer larger prizes which would induce breeders and manufacturers from a distance to compete. As early as 1863 Messrs Lawrence, Marshall and Powell representing the society had met a deputation from the Maldon Horticultural Society to arrange an amalgamation but their negotiations were not fruitful. The *Times* commented on the refusal of Baringhup farmers to amalgamate their Agricultural Society on any terms with Maldon – the refusal showed ‘not much public spirit and was not brilliant’. 440 At base the reason was probably the animosity which always simmered and occasionally flared between town and country inhabitants. In 1874 the name *Baringhup and Maldon Agricultural Society* was adopted. This amalgamation was not achieved without difficulties and in the end Marshall as president and Mills as secretary seem to have pushed the name change through without due process. The committee and in particular Marshall also attempted amalgamation with some of the neighbouring agricultural societies such as Eddington, Newstead and Carisbrook but to no avail. A failed attempt was made in 1863 to amalgamate with both Newstead and Carisbrook. The aim ‘was an annual moveable Show of the first order, in imitation of those held by the Royal Highland Agricultural Societies in Great Britain and Ireland’. 441

Further activities included distributing Board of Agriculture grain samples for experiments. Societies were also asked to suggest experiments they wished to see tried on the Government Experimental Farm. 442 In 1886, Agricultural Department analysis of soils was offered free of charge by Mr Pearson, the agricultural chemist, for all persons connected with agriculture. 443

The Board of Agriculture had requested Societies to co-operate with the Registrar General in collecting and ensuring faithful returns relative to the agricultural statistics. A discussion took place in 1869 responding to a circular from the Board inviting suggestions on the method of collection. Complaints from the farmers about the method were not new, 444 but on this occasion the majority of those present were opposed to any statistics being taken, on the ground mooted by James Gilfillan that it would have an indirect tendency to lower the price of agricultural produce because they were only collected for the benefit of speculators and thus would prejudice the interests of farmers. Gilfillan moved, and Duncan Forbes seconded, ‘That in the opinion of this society, no statistics

440 *Tarrangower Times*, 23 September 1864.
441 *Tarrangower Times*, 8 December 1863.
442 For example, in meeting report *Times* 13 February 1860.
443 The Department of Agriculture was set up in 1872.
444 For example, a letter to the *Times* 20 June 1862 complained about the erratic collection processes and argued that the statistics were rendered useless.
should be supplied, and that the secretary be instructed to write to the different agricultural societies, to request their co-operation in refusing to furnish them, as it would be a useless waste of public money’. An amendment, moved by Marshall and seconded by David McFarlane, was luckily carried, shelving the decision until ‘a future meeting of the society’. Their action reflects their grasp of a larger public good.

The *Times* editor conceded that they had been to date collected ‘very carelessly’ and understandably farmers were disillusioned. But he urged that the motion of Mr Gifillan would if adopted ‘make the local society notorious!’ In a later meeting, a resolution suggesting a way to collect statistics through the Shire Council with farmers being supplied by forms in March of each year provided a compromise.

**Introduction of Farmers’ Club**

By 1882 the Society called itself in advertisements the *Baringhup and Maldon Agricultural Society and Farmers’ Club*. Meetings of the Farmers’ Club to ‘consider questions affecting the interests of the society or the farming industry generally’ followed the usual Society meetings, but membership of this group struggled. Marshall said at the November 1882 meeting that farmers ‘are the worst group of men to pull together in the colony’ and ‘they will meet as a body at the ploughing match or agricultural show (where there’s not time to discuss matters as they ought to do) but will not attend meetings where they could share much useful information’. 

David Marshall tirelessly argued for farmers to be more involved in wider issues. For example:

> They had now organized their Society on a new and broader basis and he trusted that every farmer in the district would become members not just for purpose of exhibiting at shows but to form a strong association that would ultimately *make its power felt*. [my italics]

He referred in this speech to the recent efforts to secure the railway extension from Maldon ‘as near as possible to benefit the greatest number’, and impressed on his listeners ‘the necessity of still being on the watch, as there was no doubt that considerable influence would be brought to bear by those favourable to the other routes which would leave Baringhup, Neereaman and Eddington out in the cold’. The Maldon railway extension

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445 *Tarrangower Times*, 16 October 1869.  
446 *Tarrangower Times*, 20 October 1869.  
447 *Tarrangower Times*, 10 November 1869.  
448 *Tarrangower Times*, 23 November 1882.  
449 *Tarrangower Times*, 4 February 1882.
would become a major pre-occupation of Marshall’s. Don Aitkin describes how in the 1880s and 1890s farmers began to set up what a later generation would call ‘interest groups’ in order to represent to governments the economic concerns of their members. He points out that before very long, and for good reason, these groups were putting forward ‘political views’. The Farmers’ Club in Baringhup can be seen as an early example of this trend.

This Farmers’ Club had an educative as well as political function and each meeting included a farmer delivering a paper followed by discussion. The first was given by the Secretary Walter Rollason on seed wheat and the second by James Gilfillan on the preparation of a seed bed. These papers, often lengthy, were then published by the Times and included an assessment by the reporter. For example, ‘Mr J Gilfillan’s paper is a masterly production by a coming yeoman, highly important to tillers of the soil, as well as interesting and instructive to outsiders. He was given marked attention and the facts were generally approved of by the majority.’ Gilfillan recommended the return to the ‘old country’ process, with special regard to composition of the surface soil and subsoil. The Times editor was ‘satisfied’ the Farmers’ Club could claim ‘writers and readers’ of the capacity of Gilfillan and Rollason whereby the practical experience of members was challenged.

David Marshall’s paper ‘On Cattle’ was delivered and published by the Times in September 1882. He discussed the raising of beef and dairy cattle, concentrating on the breeding of Durhams (Shorthorns), his own specialty. The reporter observed that the paper delivered by ‘the enthusiastic yeoman’ was well received and approved of, and that a cordial note of thanks was passed. In 1884 James Gilfillan read a well-organized and literate paper on ‘Manure’ and was thanked for the ‘interesting manner in which he treated a not very savoury subject’.

Interestingly, the Times reported in 1885 that ‘in the annual report for the year ending 1884, just issued by the Secretary of Agriculture, we notice out of eleven papers

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450 Marshall wanted to retire from the committee in 1883 but ‘the meeting would not accept this, as it was considered that things would not run on smoothly without the veteran President’. Tarrangower Times, 24 October 1883.
452 He was the son of James Gilfillan who moved in 1869 that statistics not be supplied by the Agricultural Society.
453 Tarrangower Times, 31 May 1882.
454 Tarrangower Times, 3 June 1882.
455 Tarrangower Times, 2 September 1882.
456 Tarrangower Times, 10 September 1884.
contributed by various societies and clubs, no less than five emanate from the Farmers’ Club in connection with the Baringhup and Maldon Agricultural Society’. 457

The Central Loddon Agricultural Society had also formed a Farmers’ Club458 as had Bung Bong,459 but apparently these clubs were not a general move by agricultural societies. In 1884 the Baringhup and Maldon Agricultural Society invited TK Dow to lecture at the Baringhup Library Hall on the evening of Show Day. Dow had been sent to America by the Australasian on a fact-gathering tour,460 and lectured on ‘General farming in America’, in the course of which he urged an active Farmers’ Club, because farmers needed to keep their political representatives ‘well posted up’. James Gilfillan in his speech thanking Dow said the Society had begun a Farmers’ Club but not enough farmers took an interest. He believed however they would see ‘the light’ and that the Farmers’ Club would become a general institution all over the colony.461

The Club was not without overt political motives. In June 1884 Marshall instigated a Farmers’ Club resolution for two or three members to wait on James Baikie of Sandy Creek to invite him to stand for the forthcoming Shire Council vacancy. If he would agree ‘the members of this club’ pledged themselves to do their utmost to secure his return.462 The Times endorsed this political function of the Club.463

The Agricultural Society had broader concerns in the 1880s. The railway had been extended from Castlemaine to Maldon by 1884. In that year the various agricultural societies in the colony, with the National Society at the head, made a determined effort to relieve themselves of ‘the burden’ of paying judges’ railway fares and other expenses incurred with the Railway Department at every show. Accordingly a large deputation waited on the Commissioners to obtain the following: Free carriage for exhibits to and from all agricultural exhibitions; such carriages for valuable animals to be by horse boxes attached to mixed as well as goods trains; and free passes to judges. Marshall and Rollason attended as delegates.464

The society was passionate about the controversial issue of mining on private property. A public meeting was called by the Farmers’ Club in 1884, with Marshall in the

457 Tarrangower Times, 19 September 1885.
458 Tarrangower Times, 25 August 1883.
459 Willis, Footprints, p. 93.
460 TK Dow’s brother JL Dow was also sent to America, by the Leader.
461 Tarrangower Times, 19 March 1884.
462 Tarrangower Times, 7 June 1884.
463 The Times editorial of July 5 1884 mentioned that the Farmers’ Club had proposed Baikie to stand for council but he had declined.
464 Tarrangower Times, 25 June 1884.

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chair, to discuss the Mining on Private Property Bill then before Parliament. Various opinions were voiced, a sub-committee worked on these and they were followed up at an ordinary monthly meeting with resolutions on clauses requiring amendments. These were sent to all members for the district with the request to amend the Bill. 465

Baringhup was grouped with Glenlyon, Castlemaine, Kyneton and Heathcote societies as a District Board by the Agricultural Societies Federation Committee. Marshall was elected as the Maldon representative to this District Board. At its first meeting at Kyneton in 1885, Marshall raised the question of smaller societies as he was concerned they would be ‘snuffed out’. Baringhup was ‘small but useful and 25 miles from Sandhurst and 25 from Smeaton’. He hoped that their representative (W Thompson of Kyneton was subsequently elected) on the Agricultural Societies Central Board would oppose attempts to abolish small societies. 466 The main question to be considered at the first meeting of the Central Board was to improve the Agricultural Colleges Bill 467 because ‘at present’ there were only two practical agriculturalists on the Central Board. 468

At the 1888 Agricultural Show, the last with Marshall as President, there were just under 600 entries, and the prize list had been augmented by private sponsors to nearly 50 per cent. Marshall took prizes for his horses, pigs and sheep. Two of Dobbie’s seed sowers were exhibited and the De Laval cream separator was shown at work in the yard. 469 The centrifugal separator was a new and important piece of technology, making it possible to separate cream from milk faster and more easily, without having to let the milk set and sour. ‘Really good’ judges had been secured, mostly from considerable distances, so that exhibitors could be assured of a fair field. This had followed some talk of bias in the Society meetings, with accusations of stewards ‘leading’ the judges. 470 At the presentation of prizes Rollason the Secretary pointed out the many advantages of holding the Agricultural Show in Maldon as opposed to Baringhup. Gilfillan also spoke, advocating that more science be incorporated into farming, if it was to be successful and pay its way. Large societies with big revenues should try to introduce something new such as products of Southern Europe, as farmers ‘here’ needed to cultivate ‘other things than wheat’. 471

465 Tarrangower Times, 27 August 1884.
466 Tarrangower Times, 27 June 1885.
467 Tarrangower Times, 20 August 1887. The Council of Agricultural Education announced it would extend agricultural education by establishing a farm school at Longerenong in the Wimmera district, to add to Dookie, established 1886 in the Shepparton district.
468 Tarrangower Times, 27 June 1885.
469 Tarrangower Times, 17 March 1888.
470 Tarrangower Times, 26 February 1887.
471 Tarrangower Times, 25 April 1888.
There is no doubt that David Marshall worked hard for this Society and was intensely interested in the improvement in agriculture and animal husbandry. He had shown awareness of the position of other farmers over the years, not just Society members. For example, he investigated forming a Mutual Assurance Association in the Baringhup agricultural district, for the benefit of sufferers from loss by fire, or other misfortunes.\textsuperscript{472} He was involved in forming a Farmers’ Union to assist farmers who needed an advance to harvest their crops. The \textit{Times} approved this move:

As matters stand at present, the millers are applied to for assistance, who, after getting the wheat stored with them, grind it, and convert the same into cash, charging the farmer 10 per cent for any advance made. We can’t help but congratulate the farmers for having made a movement for their own protection, as it appears to us it is actually their own money on which they are paying the interest to the millers.\textsuperscript{473}

\textbf{Ploughing matches}

Marshall was also actively engaged in the Society’s ploughing matches, which were viewed as an essential feature in Baringhup and other agricultural districts. As with the agricultural shows there were very detailed accounts in local papers of the ploughing matches and the dinners and entertainments (the dancing often continued until daylight) which followed them. The \textit{Times} advised that fathers ‘would do well to encourage emulation in this beautiful and not-to-be-done-without pursuit’.\textsuperscript{474} The match tested and developed crucial skills. It enabled new machinery such as the double-furrow plough to be demonstrated and publicised. The match itself was also a lively social event. From early morning the ground would be alive with parties of ploughmen and their friends and supporters, who intended either to enter or witness the contests. British matches of particular interest were reported in the local papers.\textsuperscript{475} Even European matches were mentioned, through the medium of the British press.\textsuperscript{476}

David Marshall was a man of varied interests who in Maldon and Baringhup had links to many organizations and institutions. However, it is illuminating that his lengthy

\textsuperscript{472} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 12 February 1870. The outcome of this research is unknown.
\textsuperscript{473} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 30 November 1887.
\textsuperscript{474} \textit{Tarrangower Times}, 1 July 1864.
\textsuperscript{475} For example, an article titled ‘Death of a celebrated ploughman’ on Thomas Kerr, from Carrington, Midlothian, Scotland, was reprinted in the \textit{Times} August 15 1868. Between 1841 and 1866 he had won 60 major prizes across Fife and the Lothians and adjacent counties.
\textsuperscript{476} The following was reported in an 1869 British paper: Agricultural gatherings in France are becoming as common as they are on this side of the Channel. This week a great meeting took place near the old Cathedral town of Chartres where a most important trial of ploughs came off. Upwards of fifty competitors appeared upon the field. The first prize – a gold medal and 200 francs – was carried off by a man sent from England by Messrs Howard and Bedford.
obituary in 1893 begins with Wordsworth’s lines on Robert Burns, who was sometimes known as the Ploughman Poet:

The man who walked in glory and in joy
Behind his plough, along the mountainside

The obituary continues:

Mr Marshall was a splendid ploughman, and both in the Old Country and in Victoria won many trophies for his ploughing.

This passion was lifelong. He competed in matches as an owner/ploughman, he trained upcoming young ploughmen, donated valuable prizes and also regularly judged matches in other districts. Skill as a ploughman indicated spatial ability (to plan his "treatment" of the field), ability to read the immediate environment of soil and weather, and knowledge of the field and the equipment and ability to make them interact well.

At the first ploughing match run by the Baringhup Agricultural Association in 1857 Marshall with his horse team won the first prize of £10. He was the only owner/ploughman. Team owners Watson, Lawrence, Nairn, McFarlane, Powell and Edwards employed others to manage their teams. The first match was, according to the Mount Alexander Mail report:

most successful in its results, the attendance of farmers being large, and the work highly creditable to the competing men. The ground was too dry and hard for smooth work, but it drew out the qualities and patience of both man and beast ... Among the horse teams were many animals that would bear favourable comparison with many to be found in the mother country. The time allowed was from eleven am to four pm; the extent of ground to be ploughed was a quarter of an acre. The spot fixed upon was on a plain, and belonged to Mr Thomas. It is situated about three quarters of a mile from Lawrence’s Loddon Hotel.

Marshall had frequent success at these Baringhup ploughing matches, and also at those held at Carisbrook, Muckleford (for Castlemaine), Newstead and Kyneton, among others. At times, according to the newspaper reports, he was considered the best ploughman even when not the winner. For example, in May, 1859, a match was held at Muckleford, in a grass paddock opposite the Orrville Hotel. Marshall was awarded second prize due, it was alleged, ‘to some trivial variation in laying out the land’. A ‘great many who are competent to form an opinion’ expressed themselves as ‘disgusted’ with the result, and the ‘very thin attendance at the dinner table’ was attributed to ‘several persons’ leaving immediately on the announcement of Mr Marshall’s disqualification being made.

477 After an opening explanatory statement.
478 Obituary, Tarrangower Times, 28 January 1893.
479 Mount Alexander Mail, 8 July 1857.
480 Tarrangower Times, 27 May 1859.
departure of these ‘several persons’ indicates how seriously these matches were viewed. Success in several matches led to parochial pride and heavy betting on his expected victory at the combined ploughing match to be held on July 25, 1860. The *Times* certainly exerted pressure. Thus:

On Wednesday a ploughing match takes place at Newstead, between the prize ploughmen of the Newstead, Baringhup and Carisbrook Agricultural Societies. We understand that these matches are to take place annually, at alternate places. In the Baringhup district are several excellent ploughmen, among whom stands pre-eminent Mr David Marshall. We trust that in the forthcoming match he will uphold the character of the district he represents.\(^481\) Once again, Marshall was penalised. The *Times* carried a lengthy, and somewhat tongue-in-cheek account of this combined ploughing match, and concluded:

[As] the declining sun broke out from behind a bank of clouds the view was exceedingly picturesque. The long clean furrows, from the sod being damp, shining up like polished metal, or ‘Pencilled lines by artist’s hand’.

Now the judges have examined and measured with the most critical exactitude, the decision is given, and lo! the favourite has lost! Mr D Marshall, the veteran ploughman, the winner of many a prize, has failed, inadvertently, to comply with one of the regulations, and he has lost the cup, although confessed by the judge’s decision the best ploughman. The gentleman who should have taken the second prize has also lost through a similar mischance. All is over, and fortifying the inner man with a drink for what we cannot profess enthusiastic admiration, namely, colonial swipes, under the cold beams of ‘yon chaste moon’ we return home.

The *Times* of August 3 printed the following letter from Marshall:

SIR,- In connection with the late Carisbrook, Baringhup and Newstead Ploughing Match, I beg you will do me the favor to insert the following; - Although I care nothing for the money value of the prizes for which we contested, I certainly do for the honor of the Championship, and I also think it due to those parties, who backed me at long odds, that the circumstances of the case should be fully known.

One of the rules for the conduct of the match – which I confess I did not minutely examine – required that the number of furrows on one side of the land allotted to each competitor should not exceed the number on the other by more than one furrow; now as each man’s land lay quite close to his neighbour’s – which I think was a very faulty arrangement – one of my neighbours turned over his first furrow on to my land; this I did not observe until the conclusion of the match, and as I had not the land to plough on I was, of course, *minus* on that side and in excess by two furrows on the other.

The judges decided that my land was ploughed by far the best, but from this accidental breach of the rules they were unable to award me the cup to which I was otherwise entitled.

Mr Robinson, who should have taken the second prize, was also similarly circumstanced.

Baringhup, July 28\(^{th}\) 1860

Marshall admits he did not ‘minutely examine’ the rules, and emphasises the honour of the championship, his sense of responsibility to those who backed him, and awareness of Mr

\(^{481}\) *Tarrangower Times*, 20 July 1860.
Robinson’s similar position. However, although not specified, there may have been an underlying concern for his good name and reputation for prowess.

In 1861 the *Times* expressed the hope that at the coming annual ploughing match ‘the Loddon Champion has not forgotten his neat and scientific art from having become a successful quartz reefer, but that he will again astonish the natives’. The results were not sent in which was something of an anti-climax. However the wording of this *Times* article is significant. Marshall obviously wasn’t at all deterred by his raised status into resisting the desire to compete as an owner/ploughman, and others including the *Times* apparently did not consider his behavior inappropriate or eccentric. This suggests some overturning of the Old World’s established rules of class behaviour and a more egalitarian climate. Another example of egalitarianism is the propensity of the *Times* to criticize the wealthiest man in the district, the grazier Matthew Bryant.

At the 1862 Baringhup, Carisbrook and Newstead combined match, Matthew Bryant of *Cairn Curran* and current President of the Baringhup Society was absent for the presentations. The *Times*, quite unfazed by Mr Bryant’s power and wealth, expressed displeasure:

> It is much to be lamented, [that those] who are unavoidably honored with the presidential chair of these and other similar societies, cannot find one hour’s leisure from their money making pursuits to fulfill the duties of their position, and give the weight of their presence on such occasions, which occur but three or four times in the year.  

In 1864 Castlemaine held its annual ploughing match at Muckleford. Marshall won third prize for his ploughing and first prize for best team of horses. He was by then forty years old. The general opinion seemed to be that Mr Marshall would have received first honors, only, that he ‘dallied somewhat at the commencement’, and had to make tremendous efforts to complete in time, his finish being in consequence not good. The interesting aspect of this match was that his own mentor in Scotland was present:

> One of the best pleased on the ground at the success, partial as it was, of Mr Marshall, was the man who in Stirling, 25 years ago, taught him to plough – Mr T Davey of Kyneton, a hale and hearty old yeoman of nearly fourscore years.

The reporter disapproved of appearance being favoured over utility.

> We wish the judges at these matches would strenuously discountenance false cuts, so often indulged in; such ploughing is of little practical value, for instead of the depth being all through alike, in too many cases utility is sacrificed for the sake of appearance; the depth being perhaps 5 inches on the point and only 3 inches on the feather. This is not the ploughing farmers want.

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482 *Tarrangower Times*, 6 June 1861.
483 *Tarrangower Times*, 18 November 1862.
484 *Tarrangower Times*, July, 1864
Marshall continued to win local and combined matches and in later years he, like his mentor T Davey, trained many young ploughmen, some of whom performed very well, and also judged at matches they were not involved in, for example, at Woodend in 1875 and 1877, Kyneton in 1878 and for the Mount Alexander and Upper Loddon Society in 1883. Ploughmen he trained over many years included James Cousin (his nephew), John Lillie, David Harley, W Smith, James Guard, D Tully, C Poynton, J Preston, Charles Cox, J Benham and George Foulmain.

At the Newstead Annual Society’s 13th annual ploughing match in 1872 J Cousin ‘of D Marshall’s farm’ at 21 was the championship cup winner in an ‘exciting’ match. Marshall was out of the hall when the award was announced and he came in ‘for the bugging and shouting of many boisterous and elated friends’. James Cousin was the son of his sister Mary. In the Baringhup 1867 ploughing match he had come third in the boys’ section, and also won the Newstead cup that year. ‘A young lad, nephew of Mr D Marshall, also shows such ability as gives promise of his following well in the footsteps of his uncle the well known prize ploughman.’ James and his younger brother David were the only ones of Mary’s ten children to emigrate to Victoria, and it is possible James sailed from Scotland with his uncle in 1867, although not listed on the passenger shipping list. Marshall had sent his animal stock to Australia on an earlier ship, according to the report in the Stirling paper, so James may have accompanied them, if not considered too young. He would have been sixteen in the August of 1867.

It was usual for older ploughmen to act as tutors or coaches to younger. At the Newstead match in 1869 the reporter noted that the ‘cracks of other days’ including Postlewaite of Smeaton, Marshall of Baringhup and C Farquarson and Telfer of Newstead ‘were most energetic in bringing their proteges to the requisite pitch of perfection’. James Cousin was now ploughing in Class A, the open to all comers section, and took second prize in this match and also at the 1869 Carisbrook match. He won or took places in many matches over several years including at Bendigo in 1871, where he took first prize with Marshall’s double furrow plough manufactured by Hugh Lennon. A report of the

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485 This advertisement in the Times 23 February 1878 is typical: Wanted, a youth about 16. One who wishes to learn to plough. Apply to D Marshall, Baringhup.
486 Argus, 30 July 1877
487 Tarrangower Times, 7 July 1883.
488 Tarrangower Times, 20 July 1872.
489 Tarrangower Times, 23 August 1867.
490 Tarrangower Times, 26 June 1869.
491 Argus, 1 July 1871.
Baringhup match in the same year evocatively described ‘the great attraction’ in watching Cousin and Turvey (from Newstead) ‘slowly and beautifully turning over the folds of earth … Cousin finished within the stipulated time and indeed it was a finish straight, clear and as regular that a pea placed on the soil at one end might be seen at the other’. In 1872 James Cousin left the ‘native air’ of the Baringhup farm for factory work in Melbourne, but returned to compete in various ploughing matches.

Marshall also ploughed in the 1871 Baringhup match. By now 47 and after some years without competing as a ploughman he had replaced Tully (who was ‘unavoidably absent’) in the double furrow section with his Lennon plough. ‘Mr Marshall buckled up and started his team. For a time the furrows looked anything but straight.’ But towards the end, being cheered on by a host of admirers, he managed by some means ‘to push the crooked furrows more in accordance with good ploughing’, and obtained the second prize (£3 and a set of swingle-trees) and also the prize for best crown. In July 1886, at 62, he engaged in a ‘friendly’ ploughing match with the much younger Rollason. Rollason won but the judge, Robert Ely from Neereaman, experienced considerable difficulty in arriving at a decision as the ploughing was ‘very equal’.

Ploughing is a metaphor for deferred gratification. The ploughman combines with nature to strengthen the crop which will take several months to ripen. Deferred gratification is evidenced in many areas of Marshall’s life: in cropping, stock breeding, three years of mining at Nuggetty with no reward and in training young ploughmen. He was able to take the long view. This was also evident in his very long fight over railway extension from Maldon.

**Railway extension**

The Government was authorized in 1857 to construct the northern trunk line to Bendigo and the Murray. The line to Sunbury of twenty-three miles was opened on January 13, 1859 with massive celebrations. Fifteen hundred guests had a luncheon with the Governor, and ‘the navvies roasted two bullocks whole’. In February passenger traffic to Sunbury began with three trains a day. Passengers for/from points north changed to/from coaches at Digger’s Rest, which cut an hour and a half from the previous full coach trip to...
Melbourne. Advertisements in the *Tarrangower Times* show that Cobb and Co. franchise coaches from Maldon (such as Aitken and Marshall’s) included the rail fare in their tickets.\(^{496}\)

The line to Woodend was opened in 1861, to Kyneton in 1862, and to Castlemaine in 1864. An extension from Castlemaine to Maryborough which was opened in July 1874 was via Campbell’s Creek, Newstead and Joyce’s Creek, not via Maldon and Baringhup/Neereaman, in order to avoid the hills which surround Maldon and instead service the fertile Campbell’s and Joyce’s Creeks and Loddon River valleys.

The Maldon committee had fought for the extension to go via its town since at least 1861.\(^{497}\) Local communities obviously treated the issue as vital. Proposals for new lines and extensions to existing ones were continually submitted. The adoption of one rather than another meant the development or steady decline of townships, and gain or loss for those who owned property near proposed routes.\(^{498}\) For farming districts, it meant increased market opportunities.

The process to obtain the railway saw many changes of alliance. Citizens who were allied in getting the railway to a particular point became adversaries in relation to the route of any extension beyond. For example, David Marshall and Addison Nicholl had both campaigned for the Castlemaine-Maldon line, which was finally opened in 1884.

From at least 1875, when considerations of an extension beyond Maldon to the north became the topic, David Marshall spearheaded the campaign for railway extension from Maldon to Laanecoorie along the Telegraph or western route, via Neereaman and then along the fertile Loddon valley. Addison Nicholl, on the other hand, led the campaign for the more direct but less fertile route to Laanecoorie via Shelbourne.\(^{499}\)

The campaign for the western route, although vigorously pursued, eventually failed. The line to Shelbourne was opened in 1891. Marshall’s motive was apparently not personal gain. His farm was situated so that the Moolort station (Castlemaine-Maryborough line) or Maldon station served him equally well, the nearest point to his farm from the proposed western line of route being about four miles. However, in the process the campaign made him many enemies, the most dangerous being FW Prideaux, the editor of the *Tarrangower Times*. During the years from the beginning of publication

\(^{496}\) *Tarrangower Times*, 1861.
\(^{497}\) *Tarrangower Times*, 4 January 1861.
\(^{499}\) Because the Maldon line terminus was in the town, situated at the base of the Nuggety Ranges which blocked any further progress without expensive tunnelling, any further extensions had to follow a common route back along the line, then around the base of the Ranges from where alternative routes were possible.
Figure 6.1 Rival rail routes – western projected only, eastern did not extend to Laanecoorie
in 1858 the *Times* references to Marshall were in general either neutral or favourable. In his final eighteen months in the district he was either ignored or derided and letters to the editor from those supporting his position on the railway route were apparently not printed.

As with the attempt to obtain the extension from Castlemaine to Maldon, the campaign was an extremely drawn-out affair. In July 1875 the Shire Council railway committee reported that the party for surveying the proposed line beyond Maldon to Laanecoorie had arrived. The President John Hornsby introduced a plan of route similar to that already suggested by Marshall and the council endorsed it. The survey party started pegging along the Telegraph route. Contrary wishes, mainly for a route through Bradford, were expressed. This division continued and grew more bitter, and was spasmodically evidenced by deputations to the Minister for Railways and Railway Commissioners; public meetings and visits to railway leagues and local councils across all relevant districts; news items and satirical accounts of proceedings and letters to the Times and other relevant papers. Two railway leagues would eventually be formed: one the Loddon Valley League with Addison Nicholl as chairman, the other the Baringhup, Neereaman and Eddington League, with Marshall as chairman. Ironically, the route favoured by the latter traversed more of the Loddon Valley than that favoured by the former, because it reached the Loddon at a higher point of the river. However, because it had to swing further around the Nuggetty Ranges to do so, it looked inefficient on maps compared to the so-called ‘Loddon Valley’ route which headed in an almost straight line for Laanecoorie much further down the valley (see map p. 145).

The Agricultural Society called a public meeting in February 1882 to protect the interests of communities such as Baringhup, Neereaman and Eddington and not just those of the farmers. Advertisements for this meeting were in consequence signed by Walter Rollason, not as secretary of the Agricultural Society but as secretary of the Neereaman School Board of Advice. The meeting agreed that the Telegraph Line route would confer the greatest benefit to the greatest number. At this stage Marshall did not think the Loddon Valley League would object to this and thought some ‘amicable arrangement’ could be worked out. The Baringhup Neereaman and Eddington League was formed and resolved to get support from all relevant shire councils, including Maldon.

Marshall asked for support at the Shire Council’s September meeting but it was not given. In presenting a memorial he said he had been in the Council for many years and had never felt more strongly on any matter. Seven members supported the Telegraph route – the remaining two, Councillors Way and Upton, remained neutral. Cr Marshall was
reported as making ‘uncalled for remarks’ regarding Way and Upton, including ‘now they had got the railway to Maldon they did not care for the Baringhup people’, and Cr Michell ‘deplored the warmth displayed by Cr Marshall’. The Council resolved to remain neutral until the Minister of Railways has paid his promised visit to go over the routes. There was a spate of letters to the Times including from George Upton, who explained his anxiety that the proposed Maldon station site might be lost if the Telegraph line was pursued.

The Railways Minister Thomas Bent was due in Maldon in November 1882, and at the Baringhup Agricultural Society meeting Marshall urged that every farmer should take a holiday. ‘They should take a pause in their money grubbing’ he was reported as saying, because ‘if they lose this chance for a railway they will lose it forever’. The day of Bent’s visit started well. He was met by many citizens including representatives for both routes to Laanecoorie. An excursion set off for ‘the interior’, to follow the Telegraph route. Cr Marshall, Minister Bent and his private secretary, all on horseback, led the way up Main St, when the secretary’s horse swerved and he ‘hit the dust’.

When the excursion reached Hamilton’s Crossing (of the Loddon), ‘a most magnificent view broke on the gaze’.

The country could be seen for miles round, the Loddon flats and far away plains looked luxuriant and pleasing. This showed the Minister a magnificent and fertile expanse of country, dotted here and there with substantial looking residences, that of Cr Marshall standing out prominent above the rest. On each side of this lane the growing crops and grasses were most promising to abundant harvests. A few miles along the old Dunolly road brought them to the thriving and quaint halting place of R Ely’s [an inn]; here the halt was to refresh.

However, at Ely’s the ‘other side’ came out, and were denounced by the ‘westernites’. According to the reporter, the scene ‘begged description’ as Mr Bent was ‘kidnapped by the others’ and taken off to inspect the alternative route. The event had become a circus.

In December 1882 the Maldon-Laanecoorie extension legislation was passed in the Legislative Council.

The issue of the extension again raised its head in May 1884 as the Castlemaine-Maldon line neared completion. At the Marong Council meeting, it was unanimously decided to agitate in that Shire for the line via Shelbourne, and that members with their parliamentary representatives should form a deputation and wait on the Government at an

500 Tarrangower Times, 23 September 1882.
501 Tarrangower Times, 1 November 1882.
502 Tarrangower Times, 5 November 1882.
503 The Castlemaine-Maldon line was opened by Hon TF Sargood Minister for the Army on June 16 1884, as Minister Gillies was ill.
early date. ‘Baringhup and Neereaman must be up and doing if they do not want to be ‘shunted’ over the railway extension from Maldon towards Laanecoorie’, the *Times* advised.504

A large deputation to the Minister from the Baringhup Neereaman and Eddington League, Maldon Council and including MPs took place in May 1884. Minister Gillies said ‘it was all a question of money’ and he would consult his colleagues. Walter Rollason, secretary of the Baringhup Neereaman & Eddington League, wrote what was intended to be a conciliatory article. ‘It is to be deprecated that as a farming community, trying to secure our just right, we should be divided.’505 In the same paper, the *Chronicles of Maldonia*, a long-running satirical column, offered its version of the latest events, claiming that the Shire Council has been bribed to forgo its previously neutral position.

The opening of the long account of events and personalities was as follows:

Now it came to pass when the Great Caravan to Maldonia was nigh completed, the tribes beyond again waxed mighty wrath one towards another.

And again the Barhupites mustered their great strength with David their King506 at their head to do battle against their enemies the Marongites.

And Will, the son of Poall,507 said: Harken unto me ye wise men of Barhup, let us all go up unto the Council Chamber of Maldonis, and lay our case before the Chief, and demand of him a grant from the Treasury, in order that we may proceed to the chief city on the Coast.

Now it came to pass on the tenth day of the sixth month of the reign of Richard,508 that wayward chief, shortly after leaving the seat of justice received a deputation of the Barhupites, and promised them all material for a protracted war against the Marongites.

And David said: Behold, I will give unto thee and thy servants, who make sacrifices and blood offerings to the people of Maldonia, twenty measures of oats, and twenty measures of chaff, and twenty measures of wine, as a token of our gratitude for not keeping thy promise to remain neutral in this matter that hath so much stirred up our wrath.

In October, during the passing of the new Railway Bill the Minister was asked if the extension to Laanecoorie would be carried in the direction of Baringhup. Gillies replied that it would approach Baringhup ‘as near as engineering difficulties would permit’. The *Times* concluded that ‘as it has been recently shown that there are no difficulties insurmountable in the way the prospects of the extension being taken via the Telegraph line is pretty sure’.509

504 *Tarrangower Times*, 3 May 1884.
505 *Tarrangower Times*, 11 June 1884.
507 William Powell.
508 Richard Way, Shire President.
509 *Tarrangower Times*, 25 October 1884.
Involvement of FW Prideaux, *Tarrangower Times* editor/owner

Between 1858 and 1885 there had been several editors of the *Tarrangower Times*.\(^{510}\) They had kept a critical and sometimes abrasive pen hovering over the economic, social and political situation of the town (and its surrounding district), especially in the interests of the miners and mining shareholders. They alerted their readers to international events, explained the implications of government decisions related to the goldfields, and battled to keep the local council and other organisations up to the mark. They fulfilled, with varying degrees of success, a vital function. The downside was that with only one local newspaper in Maldon during these years, it could make or break a cause or a reputation.

Francis William Prideaux, who had been the accountant at the Maldon branch of the Bank of NSW since 1879, took over as owner/editor from Ward and Robinson in July 1885. Marshall was then Shire President. An early editorial discussed the record of the Shire Council. Prideaux argued that the condition of roads had attracted most criticism, that their ‘abominable’ condition was linked to defects in laying out, and that there should be a certified engineer connected to Council because the Clerk of Works JR Campbell was insufficiently qualified.\(^{511}\) ‘It certainly does seem strange that we should expect him to know all the intricacies of civil engineering; we might just as much expect that a man should walk without legs, or a bird fly without wings.’ Campbell retained his job as Clerk of Works after the Council elections of the following month.

During 1886 criticism of the Shire Council was being made on almost a weekly basis, through editorials, myriad but almost always anonymous letters to the editor (so that it was difficult to gauge the number of individual critics, the drawback with the nineteenth century tradition of unsigned letters), News and Notes items, various occasional columns and satirical pieces. The main theme was the ineptitude of the Clerk of Works, and the inability and/or disinclination of the Council to sack or control him. Related to this criticism was condemnation of the Council deputation to Melbourne in March 1886 for an interview with the Railway Commissioners on the western railway route. Although Prideaux did not in his editorials favour one route over the other, letter writers consistently argued the Council should not favour the western route, or any route, and certainly should not waste taxpayers’ money on funding large deputations of councillors and council officers, and especially those which included the erring Clerk of Works.

In addition to this deputation, Marshall and other members of the Baringhup

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\(^{510}\) Some had been owner/editors.

\(^{511}\) *Tarrangover Times*, 22 July 1885.
Neereaman & Eddington League plus sundry supporters kept up pressure with letters to the editor favouring the western route on the basis that it would serve the interests of the greatest number, including those of the town of Maldon. The western route would open up trade with North, East and West Baringhup, Neereaman and Eddington, and at the same time secure Laanecoorie and Woodstock. They argued that a memorial favouring the western route and signed by Maldon’s ‘principal residents’ had already been presented to the Legislative Council and that the town could not benefit by the eastern route because Woodstock, even with a railway to their doors, would not deal with it because its residents got a better price for produce in Sandhurst (Bendigo) and bought their goods more cheaply there. They disputed as spurious the argument that the eastern route would bring timber from the north. Members of the League continued to address neighbouring railway leagues and councils.

‘Fossil Muldoon’, in his column ‘Squibs’ revealed that ‘King David, having engaged a private secretary, is prepared to answer all comers’.512 (This shows Marshall’s awareness of his own limitations.) In addition, he took every verbal opportunity. John McIntyre MLA was entertained at a banquet by about one hundred of his constituents; it was chaired by Marshall in the absence of Michell the Shire President. In his toast to McIntyre, Marshall said that he had done more for Maldon ‘than all previous members’ (he was referring specifically to the Coliban Reservoir development). But there remained much to be done for the ‘outskirts’ and he ‘hoped the time was not far distant when there would be a railway down the Loddon Valley’.513 Similarly, at the 29th Agricultural Society’s annual show, Marshall raised the route question during his toast to McIntyre, expressing the hope that he ‘would not forget to advocate construction of railway to Baringhup’. In reply, McIntyre ‘hoped that at no distant date the railway would extend to Baringhup’.514

Railway Commissioners visited to inspect the eastern route on September 25 and the western on September 29. The processions included MLAs and shire councillors. Gilfillan, Rollason and Marshall spoke in favour of the western route to the Commissioners. The Times claimed 300-400 people were in the western route procession.515 The Age in January 1887 reported that the decision by the Commissioners

512 Tarrangower Times, 21 April 1886.
513 Tarrangower Times, 6 February 1886.
514 Tarrangower Times, 6 March, 1886. Presumably they meant ‘via’ Baringhup to a point further up the valley.
515 Numbers in the eastern route procession were not mentioned.
had been delayed:

In view of the difficult nature of the country to be traversed special provision was made in the Railway Construction Act, extending the limit of deviation the surveyors would be permitted to adopt from three miles (limit ordinarily allowed) to seven miles. This was done … to enable the Railway Commissioners to decide upon a route that would give satisfaction to the largest number of farmers. During the latter portion of last year the Commissioners inspected the two routes advocated … and came to the conclusion that the deviation which they deemed necessary to be made could not be made without the terminal point being altered. Doubts existing as to the legality of such a step, the matter was referred to Crown Law officers, and an opinion will be furnished to the Railway Commissioners in course of a few days. 516

Gillies consulted the Attorney-General who advised that the terminal point was fixed and any deviation could only be made within the terminal points. 517 A deputation of three councillors accompanied by the Clerk of Works Campbell and Shire Secretary departed for Melbourne leaving the Shire Hall office closed. On February 16, 1887 Prideaux’s long editorial focused on Campbell’s alleged recent project blundering and this latest visit to Melbourne. It would be better, he argued ‘if councillors would allow officers to carry out their proper duties instead of being whisked off to Melbourne to suit the convenience of a small number of the Council’. This was followed by a wave of criticisms (in columns, articles, and particularly letters) of Campbell for incompetence, the Council for being ‘dummies’, and Marshall for ‘ruling the roost’. Almost all letters were anonymous.

In March, editorials castigated Campbell for his conduct to a contractor E Edwards while inspecting his work on a bridge near Phillips’ farm at Baringhup, and also Marshall for statements on the matter which were ‘without an atom of truth’. The criticism of Marshall for lying was a new one by the Times. On March 9, a letter from ‘Cosmopolitan’ called both Marshall and Campbell frauds and also impugned Marshall’s honesty with money, with no further detail. This charge was also a new one.

On the same day, there was a ‘showdown’ between Prideaux and Marshall at the Agricultural Show formal lunch held with an array of guests including WA Zeal, MLC (the Minister John McIntyre was not present). On March 12 a scorching editorial was printed. It claimed that the usual toast to the Press was omitted and when Marshall responded to the toast to his health, he had lambasted the Times as ‘a disgrace to the district of Maldon and a scurrilous paper’. The Show reporter wrote in his own article that Marshall had called the local paper ‘scandalous’. Prideaux’s castigation of Marshall is patronizing and petty. For example:

516 Reproduced in Tarrangower Times, 8 January 1887.
517 Tarrangower Times, 12 February 1887.
We are not surprised to learn from his lips that, during his residence of some thirty years, the local press has not said one word against him. He must remember there are journals and journals. Others who have come before us in connection with the Times might, and doubtless did, overlook his shortcomings – mayhap thinking he was too insignificant a public character to waste ink over.

It also includes malice and snobbery:

But it was ever thus with persons who by force of circumstances have been pitchforked (as it were) into public positions. Their natural instincts are of so unrefined and coarse a character that all the intercourse possible with gentlemen can effect little, if any, improvement – the rough excrescences will remain.

The full editorial is in Appendix 5. Prideaux concludes it with the words ‘Vale, Marshall’.

Marshall’s response at the Show lunch was a lapse. He forgot the adage, ‘Don’t pick a fight with people who buy ink by the barrel’. Replying to a toast in this inhospitable and impolitic way was out of character. Proud of his reputation for moral integrity, he must have been driven to distraction by being first accused of lying by the editor and then of financial dishonesty by an anonymous letter-writer who provided no evidence. The fact that the paper had printed no letters supporting the Melbourne deputation or the western route over the previous month, but quite the opposite, probably sharpened his awareness of persecution and of Prideaux’s bias.

On the other hand, Prideaux’s response was extraordinary. Since the paper’s inception it would be difficult to find an editorial quite like this one, even though Maldon had endured its fair share of absconding and/or negligent company directors, mining managers and other miscreants. It is revealing that in this same paper, March 12, Campbell’s letter asking the editor for actual proof of his poor conduct in the Phillips’ bridge affair had (apparently) not been edited, and with abundant errors in punctuation and other aspects made Campbell a figure ripe for ridicule. It begins:

Sir Several anonymous correspondents have taken upon themselves lately through the medium of your columns (out of the abundance of Their hearts no Doubt) to hurl broadcast vilifications at me, but I should not have been disposed to pay any heed to these ‘Stabs in the dark’ if you sir had not to a great extant (sic) identified your Self with their attacks—and by so doing Gives them and their unworthy assertions The benefit of that Glorious mantle of Truth with which the Press (usually) so ably Protects the weak and which in this work- a day world is held to be so much more Efficacious than the Benefit of clergy…”

To not copy edit such a letter indicates a vindictive streak in Prideaux, but is also another example of the class snobbery revealed in the editorial on Marshall. Prideaux used the same strategy nine months later, mocking the punctuation and spelling in a letter from J Saunders, Lieutenant in the Maldon Salvation Army.518 (Criticisms of Salvation Army

518 *Tarrangower Times*, 14 December 1887.
adherents and activities had been appearing in the *Times* over a long period.)

Marshall may not have felt constrained by class-based expectations, but the language of Prideaux’s editorial suggests that he disapproved of the colony’s opportunity for social mobility with his allusion to persons of ‘unrefined and coarse instincts’ being ‘pitchforked’ into public positions not through ability or hard work but by ‘force of circumstances’. Prideaux’s background was indicated in his *Times* obituary.\(^{519}\) He was born in Somerset, came to Victoria ‘as a young man’, and entered the Bank of New South Wales. After being accountant at Maldon for ‘some years’ he resigned and bought the *Times*. According to his obituary, ‘Mr Prideaux was a man of remarkable ability, and possessed considerable knowledge upon all manners of subjects …’ His father was a ‘clever chemist’, two of his sisters ‘are engaged in mission work in India, and his brother is a dentist in London’.

His Bank of New South Wales employment record reveals that he entered service in 1878 when aged 21 and resigned in 1885 aged 28 to ‘start a business’. His entry salary as a bank clerk was £100 and exit salary as an assistant accountant in 1885 was £180.\(^{520}\) His extreme reaction to Marshall’s speech at the Show might be partly explained by his age, but also may have been rooted in resentment at Marshall’s financial and social ascent, linked to some frustration with his own position.

On the basis of the constant criticisms voiced in *Times* letters it is logical to question why the Council would keep Campbell in this crucial role, and why a councillor like Marshall, always interested in the improvement of roads, would support him? If short of funds to pay someone more skilled, why did the Council not consider borrowing (as advocated by Prideaux, and in fact a strategy previously used by Maldon councils)? That the ratepayers did not return different councillors when they had the chance at a number of elections suggests that either the voters were extraordinarily sluggish or the majority did not agree that the roads were in an abominable condition and/or that their rates were being thrown away on a no-hoper.

After the publication of the March 1887 editorial there was an almost total lull. For several months there was little mention of Campbell’s mis-doings, and Marshall was mentioned only when unavoidable, in routine reports by the Baringhup and Council correspondents, and when present in court as a JP. For fourteen months there were no

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\(^{519}\) This was reproduced by the *Tarrangower Times* of 6 June 2008, in an edition celebrating the 150th anniversary of the newspaper. The obituary is undated.

\(^{520}\) Letter from Bank of New South Wales Archivist.
Figure 6.2
David Marshall in 1883, aged 59.
Maldon Museum & Archives

Figure 6.3
Clerk of Works JR Campbell, 1883.
Maldon Museum & Archives
references to him in the ‘News and Notes’ column, nor in editorials, the long-running ‘Chronicles of Maldonia’ ceased, and no letters from him were printed. One exception to the trend was buried in a ‘Passing Events’ column from ‘Hallelujah Tom’ and possibly unnoticed by Prideaux – ‘I would not like to call [to account] a magistrate’, whose brow is decked not only with the snows of five and sixty years, but with an honourable record of thirty years of public life, and neither would I like to be the magistrate who was so called [to account] without vindicating myself’.

Still the railway route issue remained unresolved. Settlement was indefinitely postponed by the Railway Commissioners who ‘will leave it to Parliament to decide’. Gillies, in answering a question in the Assembly, stated he did not propose to request the House to debate the issue. The next step was that Gillies in June 1887 asked the Railway Commissioners to proceed with the survey of the scheduled route. The Times ‘News and Notes’ report concluded that ‘even when it shall have been finished there is a doubt whether, in view of the strong feeling evinced by the residents in regard to rival routes, the commissioners will assume the responsibility of deciding which shall be adopted’.

During July 1887, leading to the Shire Council elections, came another spate of letters criticising Campbell and the Council for employing him. The July 20 editorial implied that Campbell was canvassing for a Baringhup candidate, obviously unethically. ‘We are reliably informed that a paid officer of the Council is working for one of the candidates, and personally canvassing for votes.’ Campbell claimed Prideaux was defaming him and Cr Pollard’s motion to refer Prideaux’s editorial to the Shire solicitor was passed unanimously, which indicates the Council’s confidence in Campbell’s probity. At the elections, Charles Bryant was opposed by John Hornsby and Thomas Bell was opposed by Andrew Farrell; both Hornsby and Farrell were experienced as councillors but still they could not unseat Bryant and Bell. Reversing an established editorial practice, Prideaux did not make any comment on their re-election. Once again, the ratepayers were not sufficiently disenchanted with the current councillors to take the opportunity for change. Even so, endorsement by the Council for Campbell’s engineering

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521 None may have been received.
523 Tarrangower Times, 26 March 1887. ‘Hallelujah Tom’ appears to be supporting Marshall’s response to Prideaux.
524 Tarrangower Times, 8 June 1887.
525 Tarrangower Times, 2 July 1887.
526 Tarrangower Times, 20 July 1887.
527 Tarrangower Times, 23 July 1887.
528 Tarrangower Times, 13 August 1887.
and administrative abilities was hardly overwhelming. At the August 1887 meeting Cr Pollard thought Mr Campbell ‘had very much improved. The works were carried out in a satisfactory manner.’ Cr Marshall commented that ‘the roads were kept in good repair and were a credit to the Clerk of Works’. Cr Way endorsed these opinions but added that ‘the Clerk of Works was hard on the contractors, and hence got in bad grace with them’. Cr Elliot was critical of ‘too much day labour allowed’ and ‘not enough supervision’. Cr Collard thought the Clerk of Works ‘did his best’.529

In May 1888 the Shire Councils of Bet Bet, Tullaroop, and Maldon, the Borough Councils of Tarnagulla and Dunolly plus the relevant railway leagues sent deputations to Gillies due to his reported statement that the eastern route would be chosen.530 They were told again that Parliament would be consulted. A letter from ‘A Ratepayer’ complained of the expense of seven councillors and officers sent from Maldon.531 A reply from Marshall was published, the first letter from him published for fourteen months, stating that members of the deputation had paid their own expenses, with the exception of one councillor and the secretary who had been appointed to attend the conference on rabbit eradication. He reiterated that the ratepayers of Maldon had clearly expressed their desire for the western route.532 In June, an item in ‘News and Notes’ announced the sale of his farmland:

The farms of Messrs D Marshall, A Manson and JP Jones, all situated on the Loddon, have recently changed hands, the purchaser being Mr W Shiels [sic], of Cheltenham, near Melbourne. The total sum paid amounted close to £14,000. Rumours of the transactions were fully circulated several days since, but until yesterday we had no official information, when Mr Watson of the Junction Hotel and brother-in-law of the purchaser, courteously supplied it.533

Marshall sold his farm to William Shields for £8892.534

The deafening silence relating to Marshall was broken by John Tobin’s letter in the same paper which discussed Marshall’s record of service in the light of his imminent departure. Tobin was a longtime Maldon businessman and prominent public figure.535 He praised Marshall’s long dedication to the welfare of Baringhup and Maldon. He did concede that ‘Occasionally he has come in contact with the representatives of the Press in his public capacity, and probably acted indiscreetly’ but continued ‘but when his good

529 Tarrangower Times, 17 August 1887.
530 Tarrangower Times, 9 May 1888.
531 Tarrangower Times, 16 May 1888.
532 Tarrangower Times, 19 May 1888.
533 Tarrangower Times, 23 June 1888.
534 General Law Title Search.
535 Tarrangower Times, 23 June 1888.
deeds are weighed in the scales, we feel sure that they will immeasurably counter-balance his shortcomings’.

In August 1888 Prideaux for the first time came out in favour of one route, the eastern. He explained this in terms of ‘the influential memorial recently signed in Maldon in favor of the Shelburne route containing over 1000 signatures’. A letter from ‘ZigZag’, among others, claimed that many Maldonites who signed in favour of the eastern route thought they were actually signing for the western. ‘Zig Zag’ conceded that this was a strange phenomenon and attributed it to the ‘ability’ of the gentleman presenting the petition. A generous interpretation of this is that the signatories may not have been disabused of their notion that they were signing a second petition for the western route.

The following year the decision regarding the Maldon-Laanecoorie extension was finally made in favour of the eastern route. The western route would have involved increased distance and engineering difficulty around Nuggetty. The eastern route on the other hand ran through flatter but less fertile and populated country.

On August 2 1889 a contract was let to Barker & Company for construction of a line from Maldon to Laanecoorie via Shelbourne. The ten mile section to Shelbourne was completed but construction beyond was suspended. The Shelbourne-Laanecoorie section was never built and bushfire damage led to the closure of the Shelbourne extension in 1970.

536 Tobin’s full letter is in Appendix 6.
537 Tarrangower Times, 22 August 1888.
538 Tarrangower Times, 12 September 1888
539 This line was authorized by the Railway Construction Act of 1884.
Figure 6.4 Victorian Railway System 1942, showing line to Shelbourne.

*Victorian Railways to '62*
Chapter Seven: Conclusion

‘A leader not a follower.’

The Agricultural Society’s annual meeting of October 1888 was Marshall’s last as President. James Gilfillan replaced him as President and Walter Rollason continued as Secretary. Marshall thanked members for their ‘uniform courtesy’, hoped the affairs of the society would continue in a prosperous condition, and invited those present to take a glass of wine at Edgell’s [Loddon Hotel]. Several toasts were honoured and songs and recitations given.\(^{540}\) He was similarly farewelled by other institutions such as the Shire Council and School Board of Advice during these last weeks in Baringhup.

He was also given a general farewell by ‘sixty gentlemen’ from Maldon, Baringhup and the surrounding district. They assembled at the Library Hall, Baringhup on October 24 to present him with a ‘handsome’ gold watch and illuminated address to recognise his ‘valuable services’ to the district, delivered over his 34 years of residence. Many complimentary speeches were made, dominant themes being that he was ‘a leader not a follower’ and ‘an independent public spirit’ who ‘defied adverse criticism’. William Powell did not think it was possible to obtain a better leader as ‘he gave strength to the whole team’. WA Zeal MLC, up from Melbourne to present the address, described him as ‘a true friend and a generous opponent’. In his response, Marshall remarked that he had been on many goldfields but he ‘never saw a place where he would sooner reside than on Tarrangower’. He had been ‘comparatively young’ when he came to Baringhup, and was now ‘getting old’, but he would never forget it.\(^{541}\)

His many years of civic contributions can be linked to the Presbyterian ethos of social obligation and egalitarianism but they also point to an energetic man who saw gaps in provision of local services which he applied himself to fill. Emigration had also led to considerable improvement in his socio-economic position. He had mentioned in his farewell speech at the Library Hall that he was grateful that he ‘had enough to live on for the rest of his life’. This life was not to be a long one as he died unexpectedly at his Hawthorn house on 27 January 1893. Probate was declared on 28 March, his executor being his son-in-law, Richard Froomes. His real estate was valued at £1720 and personal estate £5239, in total £6959. His occupation was listed as ‘gentleman’. The assets inventory shows his capital was invested in land, mortgages and shares and that he would

\(^{540}\) Tarrangower Times, 24 October 1888.
\(^{541}\) Tarrangower Times, 27 October 1888.
have lived comfortably on his interest during retirement. Real estate included an allotment with a frontage of 85 feet to High St Woodend, with shop and house erected and let for £72 per annum, bought in 1889 for £900 and rated by Newham Shire at £65. There was also an unimproved allotment in Maldon rated by Maldon Shire at £20, plus his residence, an allotment in Rathmines Road, Hawthorn Parish of Booroondara, with a brick villa known as Baringhup House. It had been bought in 1888 for £850. Included in his personal estate were a fixed deposit of £300 with the Commercial Bank (which survived the 1890s slump); four sets of mortgages, including one with AW Froomes, farmer of Woodend North (the nephew of Richard Froomes), for £1700; an interest free loan of £100 to George Telford, St Arnaud, the husband of Agnes’ niece Anna Harley; and four sets of mining shares, the most lucrative being the Derby United Gold Mining Company, 225 then valued at 6/6 each, and the South German Gold Mining Company, 100 then valued at 21/- each.\(^{542}\) His probate indicates a level of material prosperity which would have been difficult to reach in Scotland.

His will provided for his daughter and second wife. Agnes was to live in the Hawthorn house for her lifetime with £2000 to be invested for her benefit and the residue of his estate was left to his daughter Mary Ann. Mary Ann had married Richard Froomes in 1870 at Baringhup and they lived at Woodend, where Richard established a drapery business. Her writings and what is known of her schooling history show that Mary Ann had been more formally educated than her father.\(^{543}\) Mary Ann and Richard had ten children together, nine of whom lived to adulthood, and all born before David Marshall’s death in 1893. Richard’s father, William Froomes, had been an innkeeper who kept the George Inn, Hounslow, on the Windsor Road to London. The George Inn was a posting house and William ‘held an appointment (1841) under the signature and seal of the Earl of Jersey to provide post horses for the carriages of Her Late Majesty Queen Victoria when travelling between London and Windsor’.\(^{544}\) He usually kept 50 pairs of horses.\(^{545}\) His father Henry Froomes had held this same commission.\(^{546}\) The advent of the railway led to a downturn in his fortunes. ‘The iron horse put in its appearance and the inexorable

\(^{542}\) PROV, Probate & Administration Files, VPRS 28/P/2/357.Unit 651, 51/412.

\(^{543}\) Relevant family papers are in Bill Lord’s possession.


\(^{545}\) According to his obituary in the *Woodend Star*, 27 January 1890, William IV, George IV and the Duke of Wellington had frequented his establishment on many occasions, and he had provided the carriages for the funeral of Queen Adelaide, wife of William IV. He also provided fresh horses to various runaway couples on their way to Gretna Green.

\(^{546}\) *Mount Alexander Mail*, 27 January 1890
monster had no respect for old established or vested rights, and Mr Froomes lost
heavily.'\(^{547}\) In the first year of the railways, he lost over fifteen hundred pounds.
Consequently, he emigrated to the Victorian goldfields on the *Angelsey* in December
1854, with his wife Ann and four of their eight children, responding to glowing accounts
of the country from his eldest son William, who had emigrated earlier to Adelaide, then
settled in Castlemaine. The children who accompanied William and Ann were Ann, aged
20, Elizabeth, 17, Richard, 11 and Emma, 8. Their eldest daughter Mary had previously
arrived with her husband, Henry Gough, and her brother, Henry, aboard the *Fairlie* in
1853. William and Ann settled in Castlemaine where William jnr was running a successful
drapery and clothing business on the corner of Barker and Moyston Streets, one of the
corners of Market Square. William snr set up a successful boot and shoe dealership, also
in Market Square. His son William became a significant figure in the establishment of
Castlemaine and was Chairman of the Municipality for three years—1858 to 1860. What
David Marshall, as a patriotic Scot, thought of the ‘royal connections’ of William Froomes
snr is unrecorded, but presumably it was a source of satisfaction to him that his daughter
had married into an established and enterprising family.

Malcolm Prentis’s hypothesis is that the contribution of the Scots as an ethnic
group has been undervalued, compared to the contribution of the English and Irish.\(^{548}\) He
argues that their participation in areas of their traditional strengths has been significant to
Australia: for example, in skilled and scientific working of the land, calculating
entrepreneurship and civic involvement, and in the ideal of universal education attuned to
the need of the modern world. To validate his argument, however, he concentrates on
examples of elite Scots: those whose socio-economic background gave them a promising
start and who rose to the top of fields such as medicine, banking, pastoralism, education,
commerce, law, journalism, politics and the armed forces. David Marshall was a different
type of immigrant.

His working life in Victoria, from 1853 to 1888, coincided with its massive gold
discoveries, period of economic boom founded on rural growth, and democratic
experimentation. His individual history is part of the history of his locality and of colonial
Victoria. Moreover, it illuminates the larger history of migration.

Throughout this period the Europeans, particularly the British, sought to re-fashion

\(^{547}\) Ibid.

\(^{548}\) Prentis’s more recent publication, *The Scots in Australia*, Sydney, University of New South Wales Press,
2008, does not differ in this respect from *The Scots in Australia: a study of New South Wales, Victoria and
their former societies in this far-flung colony, which offered opportunities to immigrants sufficiently bold and capable to seize them. Marshall was not an ‘elite Scot’, neither through socio-economic position at birth nor through level of achievement, but he showed initiative, flexibility and determination in his entrepreneurial, mining, farming and other economic activities, and also in his participation in civic development. These attributes of character proved far more relevant to Marshall’s success than his class background.
Appendix 1: Letter to Tarrangower Times 25.11.1859 re road-building

To the editor,

Sir,- It is strange that people as a rule find it so difficult to adhere to the golden maxim which recommends everyone to mind their own business, and it is still more odd that when busybodies do transgress the rule they so often find it necessary to circulate falsehoods about their neighbours. The fact of our having obtained the contract for forming a portion of the main road through Maldon has served to bring us prominently into notice, and to our astonishment we hear that we have offended in the following manner:

First, it is alleged that I went down to town and engaged labourers to perform the work. This is absolutely and entirely false, as we have not engaged a single man but in Maldon. I certainly did bring from Melbourne two farm servants for harvesting at the Loddon, who are now engaged on my farm. I never even attempted to hire other men.

In the next place we are charged with giving 5 shillings per day in wages. If the same slanderers had seen fit to enquire of our men instead of exercising their imaginations they might have learnt that to all ordinary workmen we give exactly double; and 10 shillings a day we believe is the highest current wages for unskilled labour in any part of the colony.

It is again said that we compel all men to board at the Carriers’ Arms; this is as true as the former statements; if men choose to board with my partner they may do so; if they prefer to live elsewhere, they are equally at liberty to do so, without fear of losing their employment through such desire. We never compelled any man in any manner, or made it a condition that they should board anywhere whatever. Besides this, a very large proportion of our men are married, and live with their families in their own tents.

We should not have troubled you on this subject, nor have thought it worthwhile to notice such malicious lies, had this not been our first *Government* contract, fearing that if we allowed them to remain uncontradicted, we might possibly be prejudiced in future. Hoping that you will insert this communication on that ground.

I am, Sir, yours &c.

D MARSHALL
Pr Aitken & Marshall,
Contractors.
Appendix 2: Marshall’s letter to Tarrangower Times 12.1.60 re tank

To the editor,

Sir,- In your report of the Maldon Municipal Council meeting, held on Wednesday last, the following extract occurs:

‘A certificate from Mr Hartley, surveyor, was sent in stating that Aitken & Marshall were entitled to the sum of twenty-nine pounds, balance of contract for water tank. Discussion ensued, some of the Councillors believing that a proper cement had not been used.’

It thus appears that a duly qualified architect gives a certificate that we have finished a contract properly, and are entitled to a sum of money, but some of the Councillors ‘believed that a proper cement had not been used’. Now with all deference, we should like to know what a ‘proper cement’ is. When we obtained the contract we sent to our agent in town requesting him to forward the necessary quantity of cement for the tank in question, at the same time placing no restriction on price, our only instruction being to forward that of the best quality. The cement arrived, and as shown by the surveyor’s certificate, the work was finished, none save councilors imagining anything but astonishment then, Mr Editor, at hearing through your columns that it was not ‘proper’. We applied to competent authorities at once, and give the result of our enquiries.

The plasterer who laid the cement (one of the best workmen in Castlemaine, by the way) says that ‘he had never used better cement in the colony of Victoria’, at the same time offering to purchase the surplus we had in hand for a similar job in the above township.

One of the councilors bought a cask of the same from us, and stated that it was superior to what he had bought himself for private use from the same Melbourne firm.

We have asked the opinion of every practical man that we could find, and can prove that the cement is of the very first quality, and that it is laid in a thoroughly workmanlike manner.

This should be sufficient to disabuse the public of any unfavourable impression your report may have occasioned, and we assure you that had not we felt it due to ourselves to vindicate our character as contractors from the insinuations implied by the nameless councilors we should not have so far troubled you.

We are, Sir,
Your most obedient servants,
DAVID MARSHALL,
Pro Aitken & Marshall
Appendix 3: Robert Aitken’s obituary, Castlemaine Leader, 7.10.1880

Maldon

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT)

It is with feelings of extreme regret that I have to chronicle the death of Mr Robert Aitken, one of the oldest identities. Yesterday his remains were entered in the Maldon Cemetery, and to show the large amount of respect and esteem that was felt for him, the funeral was the largest that was ever seen in Maldon (with the exception of Mr John Bentley’s, some years ago). The writer had been acquainted with deceased for upwards of a quarter of a century, and had the pleasure of the first ride to Maldon with him in the ‘Stirling Castle’, of which he was the proprietor. He, in conjunction with Mr David Marshall, afterwards started a four-horse coach between Maldon and Castlemaine, which ran on this road for a long time—George Ridley being the driver. Eventually, Ridley purchased the coach. Every old Maldonian will remember how he bolted with coach and horse, and that poor Mr Aitken was a loser thereby. For the last few years he had been engaged in carting all the quartz for Mr Oswald’s Caledonian Mills, and also was the proprietor of the largest livery and bait stables in Maldon. He was a man of a very liberal and kind disposition, a very large supporter of mining, and generally a kind and good-hearted man—being very blunt and straightforward; and was known by the sobriquet of ‘Old Bob Aitken’ amongst his friends. I feel assured he will be missed by many. No matter what kind of weather, he was nearly always to be seen in High street in his shirt sleeves; being such a hale and hearty man I can yet scarcely believe he is no more. In conclusion I would say, ‘May his soul rest in peace’.
Appendix 4: Two examples of Marshall’s farm reports for the Melbourne Leader

The *Leader* was begun in 1856. JL Dow, a prominent land reformer and politician, was agricultural editor 1873-1886 and again 1892-1915.

**April 1873**  
**Farm Notes**  
Wheat: Yield from 10 to 32 bushels per acre; about the usual average; quality, very good; fit for harvest 13th December; area, about the same as last year. Barley about 30 bushels per acre: little grown except for home use; fit to cut 17th December. Oats, 23 bushels per acre; quality good; fit for harvest 20th December. Oaten hay one and a half tons per acre; quality good; cut in November. A small area of land has been sown down with rye grass and lucerne. Mangels are only grown in gardens, and but little maize is sown for green fodder. Sheep have been adopted this year by one large farmer, but with what result is not yet known. Dairying is carried on to a fair extent. Farm-yard manure is principally used in the district.

General remarks: Some say that sheep will keep down the weed, and I trust this is the case, for many farmers in this district will have to resort to the keeping of sheep. I may state that those who have been farming here during the past fourteen years, and have not taken up any land under the new land acts, will have no chance to compete with the free selector and this fresh land, for wages are too high to a limit of growing root crops &c, to clean the land and restore its fertility. – DAVID MARSHALL, Baringhup East

**February 1874**  
**The Harvest at Baringhup**  
Wheat: Yield, the greatest 26, the smallest 5, average 13 bushels per acre; 3 bushels under the average of last year; quality good; fit for harvest 3rd December; area same as usual; Barley, English: very little grown, yield 25 bushels per acre; quality good; fit for harvest middle of December; Barley, Cape: Yield 20 bushels per acre. Oats: Yield, greatest 40, smallest 17, average 20 bushels per acre; under the average of last year; quality medium; fit for harvest 21 December; area less than usual. Rye: Little grown. Potatoes: None grown, except in gardens; Oaten Hay: Yield 1½ ton per acre; quality good; area same as usual. Maize: Season too dry. Grapes: Very little cultivated. Little land is sown down, the grasses used are lucerne, rye-grass, and clover generally. Sheep are being adopted to a limited extent, but with good results. Dairying is carried on to a limited extent, with bad results. Manures used are farm-yard, bone dust, and guano to a limited extent.

General remarks: The prospects of farmers in this neighbourhood looked promising, but the hot winds set in far too early and injured the grain crops considerably. Many of the farmers continued to believe the yield would be large, but were greatly disappointed at the results of the threshing, many expecting 30 bushels, and only getting 15. Much of the old land under wheat, which in spring presented a promising appearance, was not worth cutting, some even vanishing completely away. I believe much of the old land will be sown down with English grass. The land is nearly all selected here, and grubbing as well as other arrangements are being carried on for next season’s crop. – David Marshall, Baringhup East.
Appendix 5: Prideaux editorial 12.3.1887

Mr David Marshall, JP, member of the Maldon Shire Council, and president for ever so many years of the Baringhup and Maldon Agricultural Society, surprised his most ardent admirers at the luncheon in connection with the society’s show at Baringhup on Wednesday, by the eloquence displayed in giving the Tarrangower Times a ‘slating’ but in the opinion of ninety-nine out of the hundred persons who were present, Mr Marshall’s venomous inspiration was made manifest at a most inopportune time. We fail to see what relationship exists between a recreant councilor, whose laches it had been our duty to expose and condemn, and a person who, as President of an Agricultural Society, was called upon to reply to the toast of his health. But it was ever thus with persons who by force of circumstances have been pitchforked (as it were) into public positions. Their natural instincts are of so unrefined and coarse a character that all the intercourse possible with gentlemen can effect little, if any, improvement – the rough excrescences will remain. Of course, Mr D Marshall has a right to his opinion concerning men and matters, and he is most welcome to think what he pleases concerning this journal. We venture to assert, however, that he is singular in his verdict that the Tarrangower Times is ‘a disgrace to the district of Maldon, and a scurrilous paper.’ We are not surprised to learn from his lips that, during his residence of some thirty years, the local press has not said one word against him. He must remember there are journals and journals. Others who have come before us in connection with the Times might, and doubtless did, overlook his shortcomings – mayhap thinking he was too insignificant a public character to waste ink over. There are public men of this class in every community. But we claim the right to exercise disinterested criticism upon all public characters, upon the principle that we shall ‘nothing extenuate, nor aught set down in malice’. We presume that as Mr Marshall hails from the ‘Land o’ Cakes’ he has heard of Bobbie Burns, and, perhaps, he may have read some of that poet’s sentiments. If so, we would remind him of an oft-quoted verse, which is peculiarly applicable to his reflected idiosyncrasies:—

O, wad some power the giftie gie us/To see oursel’s as ithers see us!/It wad frae mony a blunder free us/And foolish notion.

There is much food for thought for the ‘King of Baringhup’ in the quotation, if he has any competency to ‘chew the cud of reflection.’ It is a peculiar coincidence — if a coincidence at all, which we doubt— that the usual toast of ‘The Press’ was expunged from the list submitted at the luncheon on Wednesday. In view of the interpolated and ill-timed abuse showered upon us as the local representative journal, one would have thought that ‘The Press’ was uppermost in the mind of Mr Marshall at the time; and it certainly appears upon the face of it that the insult was one of design, rather than an inadvertent omission. Were we less intimately acquainted with the other members of the society we should incline to the belief that they were ‘got at’ by the ‘perpetual’ President in this connection; but knowing them as we do we cannot imagine that they are capable of sacrificing the first principles of politeness and courtesy to favour the fad of one who was smarting under the deserved strictures of a journal that, so long as we have its conduct, shall lose sight of individuality in advocating and conserving the interests of the community at large.

Appendix 6: Tobin’s letter to Tarrangower Times 23.6.1888 re Marshall’s departure

SIR,—The advance in the price of land in this district lately has induced several of the old residents to sell their farms, amongst whom is that old veteran ‘King David’ who is justly considered the ‘Father of Baringhup’ and who has always been foremost in promoting the welfare of Baringhup and Maldon. Mr Marshall has occupied almost every public position in Maldon and Baringhup for over thirty years, since the memorable days when he drove the ‘Stirling Castle’ from Maldon to Castlemaine; and his services were ever at the disposal of the hospital committee in collecting for the Easter Fair and in promoting the cause of charity. As a member of the old borough council, and of the shire more recently, he has been attentive and painstaking, and, although his acts were occasionally severely criticised, still we feel sure his intentions were honourable and disinterested. His advocacy of the western railway route from Maldon to Goodrich’s corner was honourable and consistent, and, in endeavouring to secure railway accommodation for the districts interested along that route, he, as a public man, simply did his duty. Occasionally he has come in contact with the representatives of the Press in his public capacity, and probably acted indiscreetly; but when his good deeds are weighed in the scales, we feel sure that they will immeasurably counter-balance his shortcomings. Although no longer living in the midst of the gold mines of Maldon, he has freely and liberally assisted in developing them, and we remember the days when ‘Honest David’ was actively engaged in delving for gold in Eaglehawk and Nuggetty. The existence and continued success of the Baringhup and Maldon Agricultural Society are mainly owing to his untiring exertions on their behalf, and we hope and trust that the people of these districts will not permit Mr Marshall to depart from amongst them without manifesting the appreciation of his disinterested services, and we trust he will be invited to a public banquet for his numerous and lasting services, as a slight token of the esteem he is held in by those who have known him for so many years. Apologizing for troubling you at such length, we remain, yours etc.,

J Tobin & Co.
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### Chapters in books


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