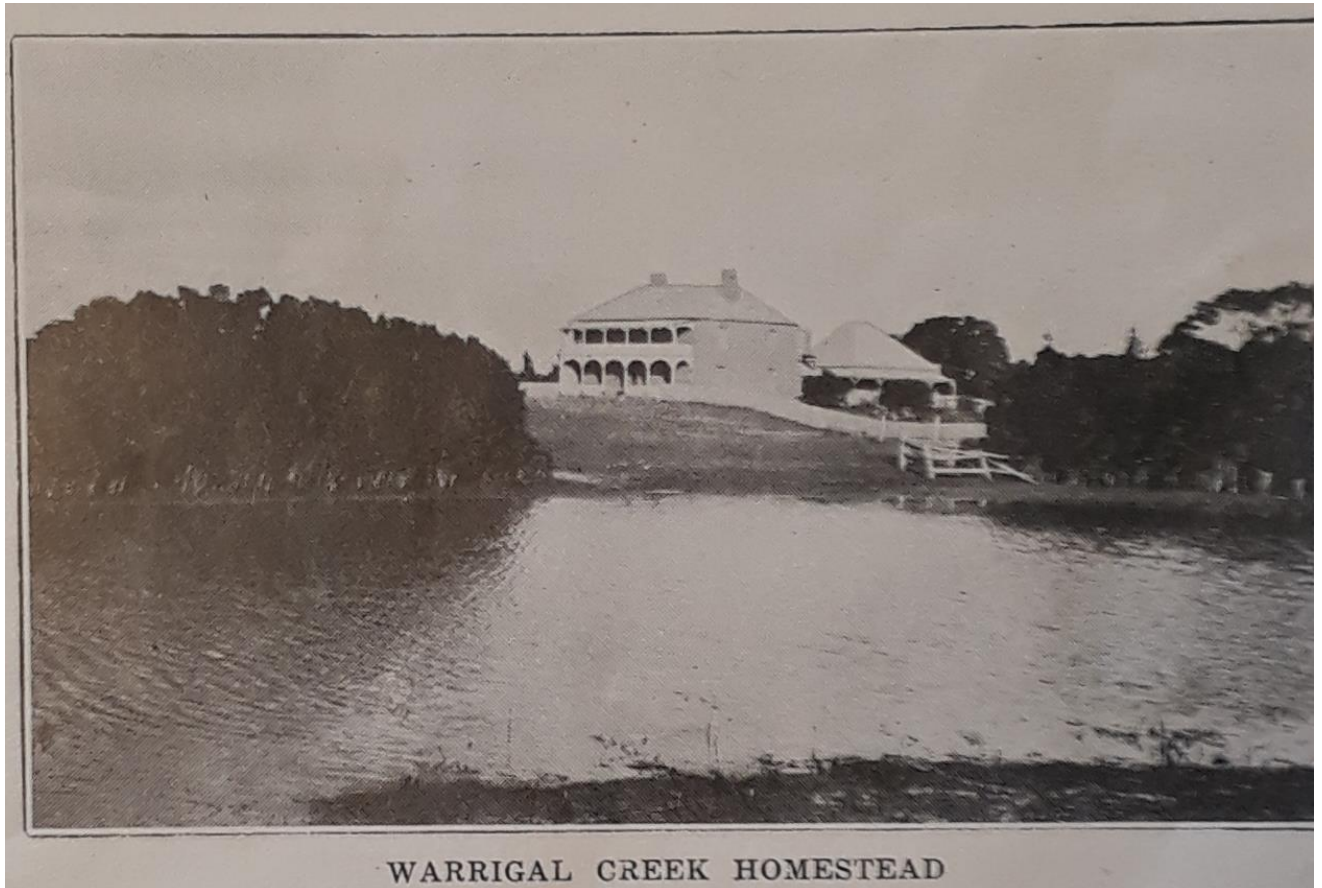


Notes on Massacres 2022

Peter Gardner

1. Who was in the Highland Brigade?



Over the years I have occasionally been asked whether this or that individual was in the Highland Brigade and the retaliation at Warrigal Creek after the murder of Ronald Macalister. The answer to the question is difficult, and remains mostly pure speculation, as we will never be able to definitely prove one way or the other who was there. Even the existence of the Highland Brigade is questioned by some, as it is dependent on the single, but graphic, account of Gippslander – William Hoddinott (see below). However the European population of Gippsland in mid-1843 is known – about 200 ‘free’ males, plus convicts and a very small number of women and children. Of this group at least one third appear to have been of Scottish origins and, on its own, this statistic indicates a strong ‘highland’ presence in any retaliation. Within the Scots group there was, for want of a better name, an inner circle – those from Skye and Gaelic speakers – and closely associated with the Macalister family and McMillan.

For reasons of trust and secrecy most, but not all, of those outside the ‘inner circle’ were probably excluded from the Brigade. Those excluded include Vandemonians generally as untrustworthy, and those with convict ‘credentials’ such as PC Buckley, whose mother was a convict (more on Buckley

below). As well any sympathisers or supporters who would otherwise qualify, but were more than a couple of days ride from the massacre location can also be excluded.

Beyond the 'inner circle' possible participants included others of Scottish origins, squatters in the near vicinity, friends of McMillan and a small number who were already known for their harsh treatment of Aborigines. In terms of who was present and nearby, or could have been, the list is broad and reads like a "who's who" of the squattocracy in south and central Gippsland. So in order of preference who do I think were members of the 'Highland Brigade'?

The most likely members are all the dead man's relations, friends and Macalister employees. If he was in Gippsland at the time the Brigade was almost certainly led by Lachlan Macalister. Relations and their employees possibly include Mathew Macalister, Thomas Macalister, Colin Macalister, Angus McMillan, Alexander Arbuckle, Alan Cameron, John McDonald, Colin McLaren, John Morrison and perhaps Andrew Hutton and Simon Gillies. Allowing for absences and unavailability, but adding a few more unknown, unnamed, loyal workers of the 'inner circle' gives a base of at least a dozen, but possibly sixteen or more. It is quite possible that the brigade was composed entirely of this group.

Next among other possible members, but outside the 'inner circle' and in no particular order, come Alexander MacDonald (from Skye, squatter on the Armadale run adjoining Glencoe), Malcolm MacFarlane, John McLennan (overseer of the Heart run and on the McMillan boat trip) John Campbell (of Glencoe Station and partner of Arbuckle, Gaelic speaker), William Montgomery, Charles McLean, Angus McLean, Robert Cunningham and Robert Thomson (neighbours of the Boisdale run), William Pearson (of the Kilmany run and friend of Lachlan Macalister), Archibald McIntosh (a Gaelic speaker later blacksmith at Flooding Creek, who came to Gippsland with Glengarry and stayed), William Scott (holder of the nearby Erinvale Station at Merrimans Creek) and Hugh Buntine (lived in the vicinity with the Bush Inn on Bruthen Creek and held the Bruthen Creek run from 1844).

Those on the McMillan boat trip not listed above include one of the Loughnan brothers of the Lindenow run, John Reeve squatter of Snake Ridge, Captain Orr of Orr's Survey near Port Albert, Davy Fermaner boatman and Port Albert pilot, and R.B. Sheridan, overseer for Odell Raymond. Others in the vicinity though not necessarily friends of McMillan include Leonard Mason, a friend of PC Buckley and relative of Mashfield Mason, the Sydney Merchant and early holder of the Snugborough, Woodside, and The Meadows squatting runs; James Taylor soon to take up the Warrigal Creek No 2 run; and PC Buckley who was about to take up the Coadyvale run to the north-east of Warrigal Creek. I tend to discount Buckley as brigade member because of his convict origins – he was born in Newgate prison on St Patricks day 1816 – although his diary records a number of instances when he was hunting Aborigines (on one occasion with Leonard Mason), but not to have killed any. I have written a chapter on Buckley in *Through Foreign Eyes*.

Fred Taylor¹ in partnership with the Loughnan brothers on the Lindenow run, was in Tarraville at the time of Macalister's demise. A Scot but not a highlander – his role was completely different. He had a reputation for involvement in massacres in the Western District and in Gippsland prior to Warrigal Creek and as such may have been a willing, even eager, member of the 'brigade'. Likewise the

Loughnan brothers, one of whom Robinson in 1844 described as a ‘bad character’, were associates of Taylor in the Western district, India and in Gippsland, and most likely involved in a number of Taylor’s affrays, but somehow avoided his reputation.

However the relations between the Macalisters and the Loughnan camp were distinctly cool, although we have no idea for how long, the reasons why this state of affairs existed, or when the antagonism between the parties started. Presumably this animosity extended to Fred Taylor as their partner, whilst the Loughnans were most likely considered ‘Vandemonians’, as John Loughnan’s principal residence was in Hobart. The conflict between the parties came to a head in July 1846 when Lachlan Macalister challenged John Loughnan to a duel, and when Loughnan refused, circulated printed matter calling him a “coward, scoundrel and a liar”. The matter went to the Supreme Court the following year but was dismissed ². Assuming this feud had continued for some time the participation of Taylor and any of the Loughnan brothers at Warrigal Creek was most unlikely.

I have already named nearly 38 individuals – far more than the 20 to 30 generally assumed to have comprised the brigade, so I do many of them an injustice merely by mentioning their names. Whilst I may be maligning many of them, Meyrick clearly indicated Gippsland was a most lawless place and whose early occupants almost unanimously were antagonistic to the Kurnai. There are also probably a number of other possible names to those listed above, that I have missed.

The criteria for membership of the Highland Brigade is roughly as follows: all Macalister relations resident at the time including close Scottish acquaintances, friends and workmen; generally they spoke Gaelic and were of Skye or Highland origins; otherwise they were from the squatting class and with no convict or ‘Vandemonian’ connections. It is easier to say definitely who was not a member brigade. All of the residents of Port Albert, Tarraville and Alberton would be excluded as being in an area where the secrecy would be too difficult to maintain and so exclude Davy Fermaner and Captain Orr. Likewise Uriah Hoddinott was not at nearby Sunville until more than a year after the Warrigal Creek massacre.

2. Who Led the Highland Brigade?



Lachlan Macalister (Cabena)

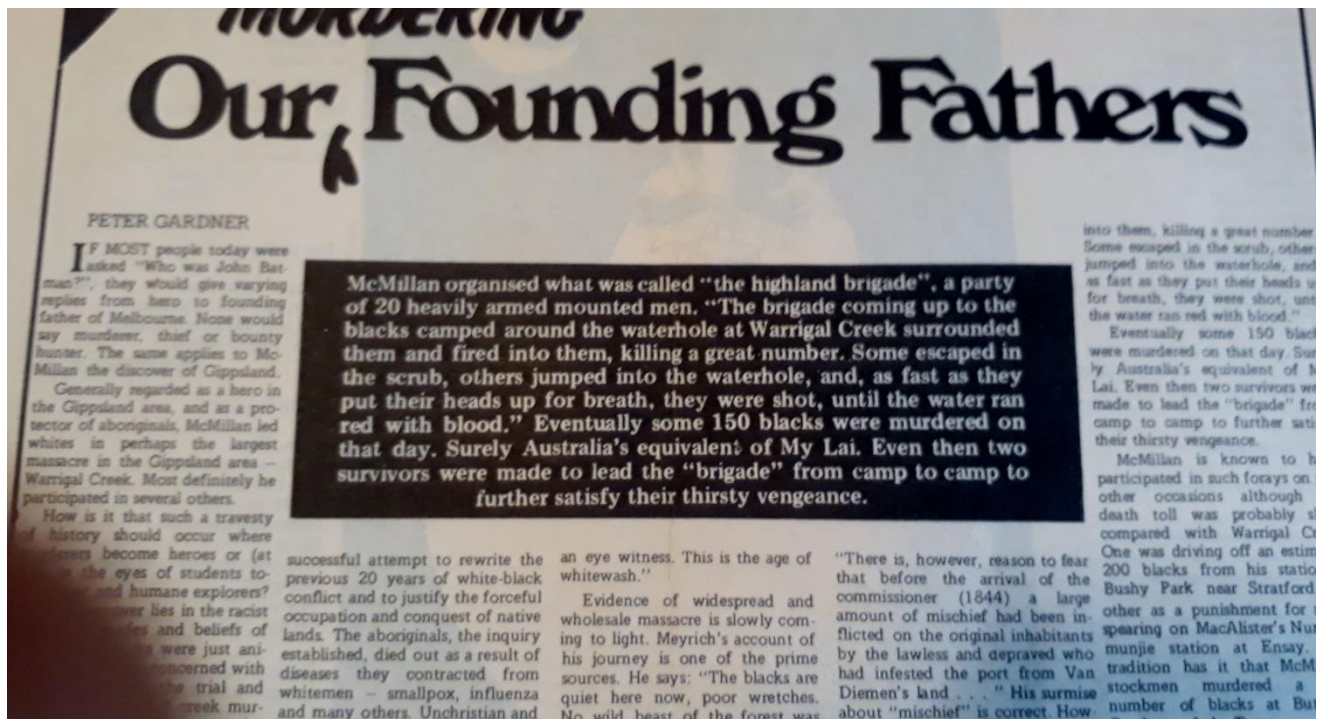
This question tends to be a distraction to the main thesis of frontier conflict and massacres in Gippsland in the early 1840s and for this I may be partly responsible. In the 1970s I asserted that McMillan was the leader of the Highland Brigade at the Warrigal Creek massacre – probably initially influenced by an article on McMillan by FT Midlin³ in *The Gap* 1964. The ‘Gippslander’ account mentioned McMillan, although, as has been repeatedly pointed out, did not ‘implicate’ him either as leader or even a member of the Brigade, and Dunderdale offered Lachlan Macalister⁴ as the leader. I tended to discount Dunderdale for a number of reasons and so when I first published on the Warrigal Creek massacre in my 1980 RAHS essay I asserted that the Highland Brigade was led by McMillan. I was also probably influenced by John Wilson’s account of how Lachlan Macalister was an infrequent visitor to the district. Wilson noted that “Captain Macalister did no exploring on his own account. He was seldom in Gippsland. So [as] far as can be gathered he never resided in the province permanently, but it was his enterprise and money that threw open the 'extensive areas' of grazing lands that comprised Lower Gippsland.”⁵

Eight years later in my ‘alternative’ biography of McMillan *Our Founding Murdering Father* I considered this question in some detail, though for only one page in a book of 100 pages. Here I stated that the evidence against McMillan was circumstantial, discuss the evidence of Lachlan Macalister being in Gippsland in mid-winter 1843 and suggest that there were a number of Macalister candidates for the role of leader.⁶

My ambivalence on this ‘debate’ enabled Wayne Caldw to use it as the central feature of a ‘straw man’ argument⁷ in his criticism of my work. Using my early statements on McMillan as leader of the Warrigal Creek retribution Caldw argued that it “contains many unproven assertions that undermine his main premise, that McMillan was responsible for the massacre.” The assertion that “McMillan was responsible for the massacre” was my ‘main premise’, or even an important part of my work, is false. The debate is a distraction from the main premise – that frontier conflict definitely occurred in Gippsland, was horrendous for the original inhabitants, and even by contemporary standards a crime.

Shane Rees has recently entered the debate supporting Lachlan Macalister as leader⁸. If Lachlan was in Gippsland at the time, then he definitely was the leader. The task is to establish beyond doubt his presence in Gippsland in August 1843. His somewhat limited military experience may be seen as additional evidence in his favour. Much of the difference between historians on this matter is due to the weight or value they give to different sources like Dunderdale. But as I concluded thirty years ago the leader was Lachlan if he was there, and either Thomas or Mathew Macalister or McMillan if he was not. Few appear to have considered Thomas or Mathew as leader. In this extreme case of the murder of a family member, one or the other may have assumed control above McMillan. And it is certainly ironic that McMillan is kept in the spotlight due to his continuous self-promotion as discoverer of the region and remains the only early Gippslander most locals have heard of, aside from his ‘foreign imposter’, Strzelecki.

3. McMillan's Popularity: discoverer and local hero



McMillan's name was first noted beyond his small circle of friends as a result of the 1840 'discovery' debate. The debate in the Melbourne press came after Strzelecki's publicity of the new region 'Gipps Land' whereupon McMillan put forward his claim as 'discoverer'. There followed a series of letters, for and against the competing claims, by several correspondents.

One of the main reasons then, for McMillan's current popularity was that during his lifetime in Gippsland, from 1840 to 1865, he actively promoted himself as the 'discoverer' of the region and, more latterly, as a friend of the Aborigines. I covered this in some detail in *Our Founding Murdering Father* and readers are referred to this volume. This self-promotion included frequently making his claim to travellers, squatters, officials, and Ministers of Religion amongst others. He also gave written accounts to prominent individuals on at least five separate occasions. Only one of these accounts – each being slightly different – was published in his lifetime and the rest posthumously, with long intervals in between. In 1856 McMillan made a speech on his 'discovery' at Port Albert, which was published two years later.⁹

An extract of McMillan's accounts sent to Lachlan Macalister in 1840 was published in J.D. Lang's *Phillipsland* in 1847. In 1843 he gave a written account to John King of Nambrok. This was published in 1882 in *Our Trip to Gippsland Lakes and Rivers*. In 1853 McMillan gave his account to Governor La Trobe which was later published in 1898 in T.F. Bride's *Recollections of Victorian Pioneers*. In 1856 an account was sent to James Bonwick later published in 1883 in his *The Port Phillip District*. Finally in 1862 Richard Mackay met McMillan who supplied him with a copy of his Journals. This was published in 1916 in Mackay's *Recollections of Early Gippsland Goldfields*.

From about 1855 to 1862 McMillan was a wealthy, prominent squatter, who spent a lot of time in Melbourne, was for a short time the Member of Parliament for South Gippsland, and president of the

Caledonia Society. In the latter organisation he met J.J. Shillinglaw, one time secretary, who became a strong McMillan advocate. It can be assumed that McMillan continued his self-promotion at every opportunity, though often during this later period was in the Aboriginal cause.

Following McMillan's death in 1865, a number of tributes and obituaries were published in the Melbourne press all praising his exploratory work and acknowledging him as the 'discoverer' of 'Gipps Land'. Shillinglaw supposedly inherited McMillan's papers and became a staunch McMillanophile¹⁰ for the rest of his life. In 1874 the discovery debate surfaced again following an article in the Australasian by Shillinglaw. Much to his ire, Edward Bayliss made the claim that he was the first European to the Gippsland Lakes more than a year before McMillan. Shillinglaw wondered why Bayliss had kept quiet about this for so long. There followed the various publications of McMillan's 'Journals' in 1882, 1883 and 1898. Shillinglaw died in 1904.

By 1900 I assume that McMillan's discovery claims were taught in State schools as historical fact. John Wilson noted that by "the turn of the century he had become such a legendary figure that it is difficult to discern the man behind the legend."¹¹ Prior to World War I the Reverend Cox in Yarram was an assiduous collector of local history and generally a McMillan supporter. Likewise in an article in the Royal Historical Society of Victoria (RHSV) journal in 1912 AW Greig gave a detailed account of the European exploration of the region in 'The Beginnings of Gippsland'.¹² This account of the European 'discovery' mentioned the lesser figures but gave prominence to McMillan (4.5 pages) and Strzelecki (3.5 pages). The title of the paper gives an indication of the Europocentric nature of history at this time, which continued for much of the twentieth century.

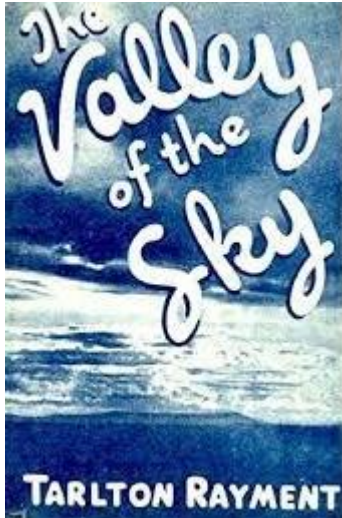
Post war the second of the McMillanophiles, Charles Daley, then a teacher at Sale High School, became prominent.¹³ Daley wrote articles on McMillan's work that appeared in Echoes, The Gap magazine and he was active in the RHSV. He became a moving force in the campaign to build memorial cairns to McMillan across Gippsland that were unveiled in 1927. The campaign received the full support of the Education Department and by this time McMillan was firmly established as the local hero. Daley died in 1947 and his *The Story of Gippsland* was first published in 1960.

After the cairns Tarlton Rayment's *The Valley of the Sky* (see below) first appeared in 1937 where McMillan was the hero and the main character. Post war recognition included the naming of the Federal electorate of west and south Gippsland in 1947, Daley's history, articles in the second Gap series in the 1960s, a glowing entry in the Australian Dictionary of Biography (ADB) in 1967, the commencement of the McMillan lectures and the publication of Kenneth Cox's biography *Angus McMillan: Pathfinder* in 1970.

The ADB entry stated: "McMillan pioneered Gippsland and spent the rest of his life contributing to its welfare. His popularity was testimony to the change wrought by the country in the narrow, bigoted young man who arrived in the colony. He died while extending the boundaries of the province he had discovered. Although he received little wealth from Gippsland and resented the credit given to Strzelecki as an explorer of the new district, his journals and letters and those of his contemporaries reveal him as courageous, strong and generous, with a great love for his adopted country."¹⁴

It was not until the 1960s with Gippslander's account of the Warrigal Creek massacre being republished, and the possible, even likely, participation of McMillan in that event, that his popularity began gradually to decline.¹⁵

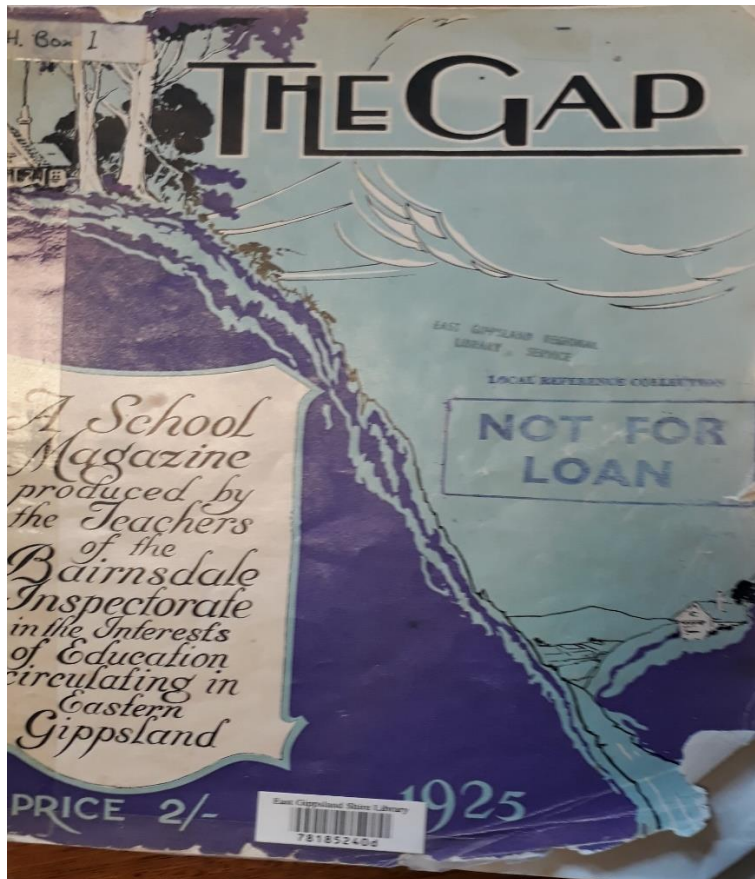
4. Tarlton Rayment's *The Valley of the Sky*



The Valley of the Sky by Tarlton Rayment¹⁶ was first published in 1937 with 2 further prints in that year and three more in 1938 and another in 1945. As well there was an abridged paperback edition in 1943 with a further print run in 1944. This remains unsighted but was probably directed at a younger audience. The novel is dedicated to Angus McMillan and the lead character MacAllen is obviously based on him. This highly romantic interpretation has MacAllen as friend of the local Aborigines from the start of his entrance into Gippsland. 'Bushy Park' is identified as the homestead and the district 'the land of the Bra-yak-alung' indicates that the author was familiar with the writing of Alfred Howitt. The only hostility against the Aborigines is initiated by the 'free settlers' one of whom kills one of the Aboriginal characters. These individuals are the 'baddies' in the book, whilst MacAllen, and his family, his friends and his 'natives' are the 'goodies'. Rayment's book is based on some substance of Aboriginal knowledge from Howitt with a very narrow, and fallacious, European interpretation of the discovery and early settlement. As I have noted elsewhere, in *Kamilaroi and Kurnai* Howitt deals with the rapid demise of the Kurnai in a few paragraphs about the 'line of blood' on the frontier¹⁷ and in his 1904 publication *Native Tribes of South East Australia*, which Rayment probably had access to, does not mention it at all. Further Rayment left Briagolong in 1922 three years before Gippslander's account of the Warrigal Creek massacre was published in the 1925 *Gap* magazine, and it is unlikely that he had any idea of the early 'troubled times' or the 'black wars'. Thus Rayment produced a fictional piece that in many ways is the opposite of what really happened. As later occurs with Kenneth Cox, Rayment generalises the native camps at Bushy Park and the idea of McMillan as friend of the 'blackfellow', to apply to the whole of McMillan's 25 years in Gippsland when this state appears to be only from 1850 onwards or perhaps a year or two earlier. Interestingly Rayment's epilogue in the book is full of environmental regrets, in much the same way as Marie Pitt,¹⁸ with "gone are the scents of the prickly box and the purple mint bush" and "the ironbark falls to the steel axe of the white man." The last words in the book are "Where is a resting place for Bukkan-munji? The eyes of the white man see not; his ears hear not. My little bag is

empty... White man! Please give, just a little, to Bukkan-munji ____.” This is a mixed work, obviously highly sympathetic to the Aboriginal people, but also has helped boost the McMillan myth.

5. An Update on the Sources for Warrigal Creek



This is a brief update on my massacres analysis originally published in my *Through Foreign Eyes*.¹⁹ It is necessary because certain critics are still not persuaded by the overwhelming evidence, from John Wells ‘might have been’ massacre many years ago to Wayne Caldw’s recent criticism of Gippslander’s account as “anonymous, unattributed and generic” and then arguing that Warrigal Creek massacre did not occur because this account is “based largely on a story from a schoolchildren’s magazine from 1925.” There are also a few more recent sources, one ironically identified by Caldw himself. It is the convergence of evidence from multiple sources that gives us confidence that this event occurred.

1. Primary. I have long classified Henry Meyrick’s account, written in 1846 as primary evidence for the Warrigal Creek massacre. Meyrick’s account has been widely covered and specifically mentions not less than 450 Kurnai fatalities in Gippsland at the time of writing. This estimate clearly implies at least one conflict where the fatalities were large. In conversation with Aboriginal Protector William Thomas, Meyrick mentioned the murder of Ronald Macalister and the “awfully reckless & merciless” response to it.²⁰ Although Meyrick does not specifically identify the Warrigal Creek massacre this fits in with my murder retaliation thesis – a somewhat obvious one I advanced many years ago. A number of critics accept Warrigal Creek but fail to allow for Meyrick’s estimate and endeavour to

downplay the importance by suggesting fatalities in the 30-60 range. They fail to explain where these other fatalities occurred - if not at Warrigal Creek – or offer few alternative locations. Some will deny Meyrick as primary evidence for Warrigal Creek as he was not in Gippsland at the time.

2. Secondary. I classify Gippslander, Bell, Dunderdale, and Hatcher as secondary accounts although the latter two offer different locations for the event. Gippslander explains that two of his sources were Aboriginal survivors of the massacre and, to tell the story of the ‘Highland Brigade’, must have had European sources as well. Dunderdale identifies Gammon Creek as the massacre site and his source was, most likely, the Port Albert pilot Davy Fermaner. Davy was definitely in Gippsland at the time but most unlikely to have been at Warrigal Creek, making this evidence ‘third’ hand. Further, Dunderdale had a ‘penchant’ for changing names, dates and places of the characters in his story and historian A.W. Greig thought his work ‘unreliable.’²¹ Hatcher thought the massacre occurred on Bruthen Creek and his source was his brother-in-law Hugh Buntine who ran an inn on the creek - near current day Woodside. As a Scot Buntine was just possibly at Warrigal Creek. Of the secondary sources Bell is the only one where we have no idea where his information came from. But it is important in that it offers Warrigal Creek specifically as the site of the massacre, and additionally adds Bundalaguah as another large scale affair.

3. Information from Angus McMillan. McMillan appears to have offered accounts of the early ‘troubled times’ to a number of people including Richard Mackay, the Reverend Login, and possibly Caroline Dexter. These individuals then recorded brief summaries of these accounts some of whom identified McMillan as the source. These accounts are all ‘general’ and with the exception of Mackay, offer little detail on events or locations. Mackay was, for a long time, the only written source for a massacre in the vicinity of Maffra. Dexter’s account is sometimes erroneously classified as ‘primary’ evidence. Patrick Morgan pointed out that the Dexters were friendly with McMillan and that he was the most likely source of Caroline Dexter’s information.²² There remains a problem of how to classify these sources other than that they all support the frontier war thesis.

4. Other General accounts. There are a large number of these accounts that can be classified as somewhere between secondary and folk. Some identify specific locations other than Warrigal Creek such as Charles Lucas. Other accounts where the lineage of evidence is lost such as McLean, tend towards the folk classification. All of this can be found in my early publications.

5. Folk accounts where the line of information from the original source cannot be identified including the Aboriginal sources such as Phillip Pepper. Often these stories carry themes such as the ‘hot coals on the feet’ and ‘bodies being carted to Red Hill’. Aside from Aboriginal sources there appear to be two other distinct folk strains - those emanating from the Hoddinott family and those from the Irvings who are long time landholders of Warrigal Creek. The Beesley account, which was probably sourced from the Hoddinott descendants, has a number of distortions. In her history of Raymond Island Midge Beesley wrote:

“A settler by the name of Roly McAlister had a hut on the Port Albert road where two of his stockmen lived. The stockmen became over familiar with the blacks and would have them in the hut at night. One night the blacks would not leave when they were told and to hurry them along one man took a shovel full of coals from the fire and threw it on their feet. They left in an angry mood. Next night Roly McAlister was in the hut alone, and the Aborigines returned and killed him. Enraged Scottish settlers took matters into their own hands; gathering their

horses and guns they drove the Aborigines into a bend in the creek beside the Sunville homestead and killed all that were there. They then loaded the bodies into bullock drays and took them to the sand hills about half-a-mile away and buried them.”²³

This account has a number of the persistent themes in folk history including the hot coals on feet story and the bodies buried in the sand hills. But it has the wrong location for the murder of Ronald Macalister and definitely the wrong location for the massacre. On the other hand it can clearly be seen as the same event. An account by Mrs Greenwood (nee Hoddinott) in later life also carries a number of distortions.

6. Bone finds. There are at least five separate instances of bone finds which I have dealt with previously including the Walpole account, substantial finds in 1876 and 1914, and the more recent account of Carol Glover. Most of these finds were in the vicinity of Red Hill giving some credence to the folk stories.²⁴

7. My theories on location and geographical lay-out of massacres and the murder retaliation theory as outlined in *Through Foreign Eyes*. The latter – that there would be a retaliation after the murder of a European – is fairly obvious. And in the case of Ronald Macalister, one of the most important men in Gippsland at the time, definitely so. Nothing has changed with regards the massacre location except that, after my last visit, it may have occurred on either side of the waterhole, rather than just on the inner side of the bend.

6. A Brief Account of the Hoddinott family*



Willy Hoddinott (alias Gippslander) c.1900 (T. Grigg)

Uriah Hoddinott was born in 1818 of a farming family in Somerset and his wife to be, Martha Childs, was born in 1820 in Wiltshire, the daughter of a banker. He worked in Salisbury for a number of years as a solicitor's clerk, then in 1841 he eloped with Martha and immigrated to Melbourne. Their first child – Ellinor – was born on the 12 December at Emerald Hill. Little is known of their stay in Melbourne. Uriah advertised for work and in 1842 was employed as 'overseer and storekeeper' at the Aboriginal Protectorate station at Murchison.

As well as being literate Uriah obviously had a number of farming skills. At Murchison where he worked for six months, he was soon in constant conflict with the assistant protector William Le Souef.²⁵ One argument they had was over when a crop should be harvested. Uriah appears to have established a number of friendships with the Aboriginal people, one of whom, "Harry" worked for him as a drover on the drive into Gippsland. By March 1843 his work at Murchison was finished and he returned to Melbourne, where, in June he offered to work with the Aboriginal Protectorate, anywhere, and with anyone but Le Souef.²⁶

For the next 18 months the family appear to have been tenant farmers on Merri Creek, somewhere in the vicinity of Kinlochewe, present day Craigieburn. What is clear is that in that time Uriah built up a herd of 80 head of cattle and a number of horses, prior to his departure for Gippsland.²⁷ It also seems likely that Uriah visited Gippsland, probably in 1844, scouting for land on which he could squat. In February 1845 Uriah with Harry and their cattle joined a much larger drive of stock into Gippsland. Readers are referred to Beesley's *Raymond Island* where she quotes liberally from the Hoddinott letters and Uriah's account of the drive which took ten weeks "and the blacks [were] very bad".²⁸

Uriah took up the Sunville run sometime that year and Martha and her 2 children arrived from Melbourne later in the year. By 1846 the Hoddinotts were well established at Sunville Station (sometimes known as Upper Warrigal Creek or Warrigal Creek A). Their first son, Joseph, was born here in February and the run was officially taken up that year. The following years saw the expansion of the enterprise and the Hoddinott family. In 1851 Uriah took up Varney's Old run also known as Warrigal Creek No 1 or Ninety Mile Beach of 12,800 acres which he held until 1868. During this time Aboriginals were employed on the run.

By 1856 the station had 20 horses, 250 cattle, 3,300 sheep²⁹ and William Uriah Hoddinott, later known as 'Gippslander' was born the following year. Ten years later the fortunes of the Hoddinotts peaked with Uriah holding Sunville, Varneys Old Run and the Traralgon West runs – listed as 40,000 acres with freehold and improvements in the Bank of Victoria auction.³⁰ As well Martha held in her own name a 1700 acre lease south of Bairnsdale.

The crash came in 1868 with the Bank of Victoria taking over all Uriah Hoddinott's properties which were then auctioned. Sunville failed to sell and the family remained there until 1872 when they moved to Bairnsdale and farmed around Paynesville. Uriah held the Raymond Island lease from 1874-1881 and held a selection at Fort King until his death in 1885. At least four of his younger children settled in the Bairnsdale district; William and Henry and sisters, Harriet (Greenwood) and Elizabeth (Bomford) both born in 1852 and may have been twins.

William Hoddinott is chiefly of interest as his role as 'Gippslander' and his graphic account of the Warrigal Creek massacre in the 1925 Gap magazine. The fact that he moved to the Bairnsdale district

when he was 15 or 16 years old explains why both his accounts were published in Bairnsdale. Also here he probably met, and was encouraged by, Bairnsdale High School history teacher William Fearn Wannan, who was also on the Gap committee of management, and the idea of publishing an account of the Warrigal Creek massacre first crystalized. Likewise the committee of management or the editors probably decided that, due to the popularity of McMillan and the fact that he was mentioned in the article, Hoddinott should use the pseudonym Gippslander. It also appears likely that the article was edited and its inclusion must have involved some discussion on the editorial board.

The second account appeared in the Bairnsdale Advertiser under William's own name two years before his death and confirmed his true identity as Gippslander. There can be no doubt that the stories of the Warrigal Creek massacre permeated the large family, descendants of whom are spread across Australia. It is also clear that Uriah, possibly exploring the area within 12 months of the massacre, heard all the gruesome stories that Henry Meyrick heard, but never recorded any of it.

William, no doubt, composed his account from various sources including his parents and older siblings, Aboriginal and European stockmen and farm workers. He is buried in a family plot beside his wife in an unmarked grave and adjacent to his parents, sister and brother-in-law in the Bairnsdale cemetery.

*First published in The Black Sheep March 2023 No.115

End Notes

1. An email from historian Seumas Spark noted that Taylor was in Tarraville at the time of the Macalister murder. See also my account of the Hollands Landing massacre [https://petergardner.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Hollands-Landing-Massacrerev.edpdf .pdf](https://petergardner.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Hollands-Landing-Massacrerev.edpdf.pdf)
2. In July 1846 Lachlan Macalister challenged John M. Loughnan to a duel. He appointed William Pearson as his second who then wrote to Loughnan suggesting he appoint a second. Loughnan refused. A notice was later posted in Tarraville and probably more widely circulated which read "NOTICE I hereby declare Mr. J.M. Loughnan of Tarra Ville, to be a coward, scoundrel and a liar. L. M'Alister 24 July 1846". Subsequently Loughnan indicted Macalister before the Supreme Court in February 1847 noting that Macalister was "of a turbulent, wicked and malicious disposition" and that he was "intending to do great bodily harm and mischief to one John Michael Loughnan..." Evidence on the cause of this conflict was disallowed and the Judge instructed the Jury to give a "not guilty" verdict. Consequently we are not aware of the nature of the dispute or how long it had gone on but we are aware that the animosity was deep. First published in the Port Phillip Patriot on 27.2.1847 and republished in full in the Colonial Times Hobart on 23.3.1847 <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/page/672235> Thanks to Charley Daniel of Black Rainbow Press for alerting me to this feud. In the original draft of this essay I had noted that there "is at least one other reference to conflict between the Loughnans and the Macalisters I have seen in the last 12 months which now I cannot locate or identify".
3. Midlin F.T. 'Angus McMillan Pathfinder' an article in The Gap 1964 p.6. My first popular piece in The Living Daylights 1974 (see image above) did refer to McMillan as one of 'our murdering founding fathers' quoting 'Gippslander' and heavily influenced by Midlin.
4. Giving evidence in the case against Macalister in 1847 Loughnan noted that he had known him for 3 or 4 years indicating possible residence of Macalister in 1843
5. Wilson, John. "Lachlan Macalister" article in the Gippsland Times 15.5.1947
6. I have identified the fourth factual error in *Our Founding Murdering Father* on p.42 where I claim the Ronald Macalister was 'almost certainly [Lachlan Macalister's] son'. It seems that Lachlan had no sons and Ronald was 'almost certainly' his nephew. Presumably either Thomas or Mathew was the murdered man's father.
7. An online definition: "A straw man argument... is the logical fallacy of distorting an opposing position into an extreme version of itself and then arguing against that extreme version." My long reply to Caldwell is here <https://petergardner.info/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Warrigal-Creek-Massacre-a-reply-to-Wayne-Caldow.pdf>

8. Rees, Shane. "Warrigal Creek Revisited" unpublished paper.
9. McCombie, Thomas. *The History of the Colony of Victoria* (Sands and Kenny, 1858)
10. I have read the Shillinglaw papers many years ago but cannot recall anything specifically relating to McMillan's papers. The term, my own, can be defined as an avid promoter of all things McMillan.
11. Wilson, John. *The Official History of the Avon Shire* (1951) p.46
12. Greig, A.W. 'The Beginnings of Gippsland' in *Victorian Historical Journal* (1:1912)
13. Daley, Charles. *The Story of Gippsland* (Whitcombe & Tombs, 1960) Daley's was the first local history book I read early in 1973. It must have made a strong impression on me as I devoted 30 years of my life to studying two small aspects of it – frontier conflict and the 1903 coal miner's strike in south Gippsland, the latter on which he had a single sentence.
14. The original Australian Dictionary of Biography (ADB) entry for McMillan by Theo Webster 1967 was accessed online on 27.6.2020
15. As far as I am aware the only published versions of the Warrigal Creek massacre that appeared before my own are FT Midlin, Bill Wannan *Australian Frontier Tales* (Lansdowne, 1971) and Michael Cannon in *Life in the Country* (Nelson 1973). Wannan may be a son of William Fearn Wannan, who was on the committee of management of the original Gap magazine series that published the Gippslander account in 1925.
16. Rayment, Percy Tarlton. 1882-1964 author, was resident in Briagolong between 1908 and 1922. A prolific writer, natural history and bees were his specialty. "His novel *The Valley of the Sky* (Whitcombe & Tombs 1937), 'a romantic idyll of the pioneering of Gippsland' based on the life of Angus McMillan, won the British section of an all-nations novel competition." ADB online accessed 27.6.20.
17. See my essay "Howitt's Line of Blood" https://petergardner.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Howitts-Line-of-Blood-3rd.ed_.pdf
18. Burke, Colleen. *Doherty's Corner: the life and work of poet Marie E.J. Pitt* (Angus & Robertson, 1985) "There's no bush today at Doherty's Corner..."
19. *Through Foreign Eyes*. p.106
20. *ibid* p.52
21. See my analysis of Dunderdale here <https://petergardner.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/George-Dunderdale-and-the-Kurnai.pdf>
22. Morgan, Patrick. Biography of Caroline Dexter *Folie a Deux* (1999) See my comments here https://petergardner.info/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Notes-on-a-McMillan-Review-rev.ed_.pdf
23. Beesley, Midge. *Raymond Island : past present future* (1986) p.41
24. My essay on bone finds here https://petergardner.info/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Warrigal-Ck-Revisited.rev_.ed_.pdf.pdf
25. Clark, Ian D. *Goulburn River Aboriginal Protectorate*, (Ballarat Heritage Services, 2013) p.41
26. *ibid* p.65
27. In 1843 the Port Phillip district was in severe depression. Frank Clune in *The Kelly Hunters* (Angus and Robertson, 1958) noted "Panic selling made the panic worse. The price of sheep fell to 2s 6d a head, and later to a shilling a head, and of cattle and horses to £1 per head and then to 10s." p.15. It can be assumed that Hoddinott probably took advantage of these prices to establish or build up his herd. Also that the family had some financial resources.
28. Beesley. *Raymond Island : past present future* p.41
29. *ibid*
30. The runs comprised Sunville 12,800 acres, Varneys Old Run 12,800 acres, and Traralgon West. Traralgon was subdivided into East and West in 1852 leaving Traralgon West at about 15,000 acres for a total of about 40,000 acres. Billis & Kenyon. *Pastoral Pioneers of Victoria*, Stockdale Press, Melbourne, 1974