

ORBOST & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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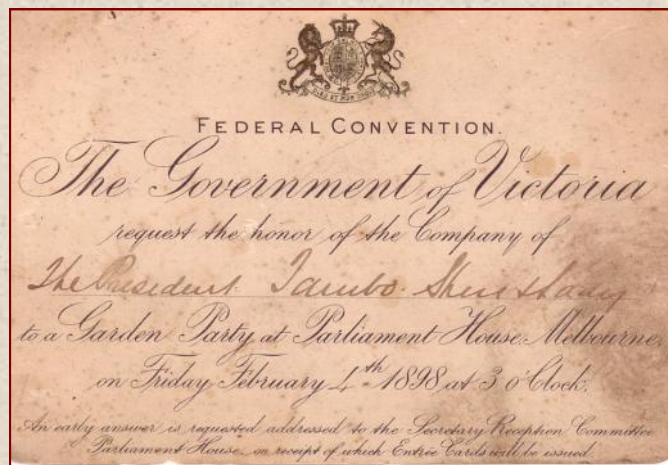
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NEWSLETTER

This series of Newsletters feature items relating to the formation and development of the Orbost Shire Council and some of the personalities who were elected to represent the various Ridings over the years.

This Newsletter is the second in the series and again deals with the pre-Orbost Shire period when the Snowy River and the Bendoc Ridings were part of the Tambo Shire.

TAMBO SHIRE 1882-1892 — PART 2



An invitation received by David Williams during his term as Tambo Shire President. (Margaret Dewar collection)

FORMER EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRES

BAIRNSDALE SHIRE — Proclaimed April 30, 1867. Area (including Town of Bairnsdale) 948 square miles.

OMEIO SHIRE — Proclaimed October 25, 1872. Area 2229 square miles.

ORBOST SHIRE — Part of Tambo Shire severed and created Croajingolong Shire, May 30, 1892. Name changed to Orbost Shire, February 17, 1893. Area 3676 square miles.

TAMBO SHIRE — Proclaimed January 6, 1882. Area 1354 square miles.

TAMBO SHIRE COUNCIL 1882-1892

SNOWY RIVER & BENDOC RIDING REPRESENTATIVES

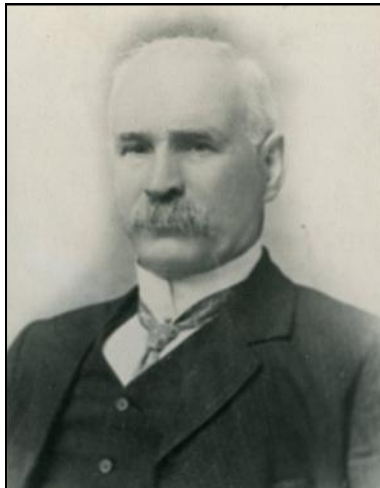
P = SHIRE PRESIDENT

COUNCILLOR			1882-	1883-	1884-	1885-	1886-	1887-	1888-	1889-	1890-	1891-
SURNAME	GIVEN NAMES	RIDING	1883	1884	1885	1886	1887	1888	1889	1890	1891	1892
CAMERON	James	Snowy River				P					P	
GROVE	Charles Henry	S R / Bendoc										
WATT	William	Snowy River										
CAMERON	John	Snowy River										
CAMERON	Hugh	S R / Bendoc										
WATT	Ernest William	Snowy River										
ROADKNIGHT	William Jnr.	Bendoc										
STIRLING	James Jnr.	Bendoc										
STAPLEY	Thomas Frederick	Bendoc								P		
BORLAND	John William	Snowy River										
BURN	George Preece	Snowy River										
ARMSTRONG	William	Bendoc										
IRVINE	John B	Snowy River										
PARDEW	Edward James	Bendoc										
O'MEARA	John Joseph	Snowy River										
STOKES	William	Bendoc										
BAIRD	James	Bendoc										

Of the 17 Councillors who represented the Snowy River and/or Bendoc Ridings on the Tambo Shire Council, only four continued their municipal service with the Croajingolong/Orbost Shire Council — viz., James Cameron (1892-1902), Charles Grove (1892-1908), Hugh Cameron (1892-1915) and Edward Pardew (1892-1896).

Biographical notes on the above Councillors

**Councillor
James
CAMERON
1846-1922**



James Cameron came to Orbost and selected land in 1877. At this time neither the Tambo nor the Orbost shires had been constituted. On the formation of the Tambo shire in 1882, he was one of the first 3 representatives. He served as a Snowy River councillor for the Tambo Shire from 1882 to 1892, holding the position of President in 1885-86 and 1890-91. In those days it was a challenging trip driving or riding to Bruthen, where the shire office was located, each month for council meetings. When the Croajingolong (later Orbost) Shire was formed in 1892, he was its inaugural President,

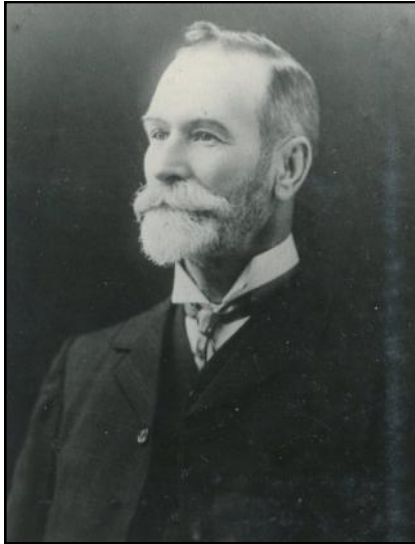
representing the Central riding from 1892 to 1902. On the death of Mr Foster, M.L.A. he contested the East Gippsland seat in the Legislative Assembly. Victorious, he took his seat in the Legislative Assembly on January 27, 1902, holding it continuously in the Liberal and Nationalist interest until 1920.

James was the first to establish dairying in the Orbost district and was one of the first to introduce milking machines. He sold the block of land in Browning Street for the building of the first Butter Factory of which he was a foundation shareholder and later director. He was a member of the early Race Club and an original member of the M.U.I.O.O.F. He was the first Justice of the Peace in the Orbost district and sat on the Bench for many years.

During his parliamentary career he served in the Murray-Watt Government administering the Public Works Department and was responsible for the formation of the Country Roads Board. He was also responsible for the marble quarries at South Buchan supplying marble for Australia House, London, and the pillars of the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne.

His wife was Sarah (nee SCOLLER) whose family came from Birregurra in western Victoria. She was a devoted worker for the Church of England. James lived at "Lochiel" and died at Orbost on 13th July, 1922, aged 76. He is buried at Orbost cemetery.

**Councillor
Charles
Henry
GROVE
1849-1937**



Charles was born in Tasmania and came to Victoria in 1867. He worked for R Goldsborough and Co. at Gillingall Station on the Upper Buchan River, but shortly afterwards was transferred to Majors Line Station, near Heathcote. He then applied for and was appointed overseer at Buchan Station, an appointment he held until John Alexander Rose sold the station. In 1874 he rented land at Bairnsdale and engaged in hop growing. He was one of the first selectors at Orbost - in 1880 he selected 320 acres at Newmerella, which he called 'Ulinda'. In 1882 he was one of the first Snowy River councillors of the Tambo Shire, where he represented the Snowy River Riding for two years and the Bendoc Riding for four years. In 1892, when the Croajingolong Shire separated from the Tambo Shire, he was elected a councillor of the new shire which, after 12 months, changed its name to Shire of Orbost. He was a councillor of the new shire for a further 15 years, representing the South Riding from 1893 to 1901, and the North Riding from 1902 to 1908. He served 3 terms as President in 1893-94, 1895-96 and 1900-1901.

He conducted the first Sunday School for the Church of England 1884 and was instrumental in the formation of the Mechanics Institute and Free Library in 1885, serving as its first President. He was prominent in the establishment of the Orbost Butter Factory in 1892, being a Director for 17 years - 6 as Chairman of Directors. He left a list and his collection of botanical specimens to the people of Orbost (now in the Historical Museum). He was Captain of the Orbost Rifle Club for 10 years and a Justice of the Peace for the Eastern Bailiwick of Victoria.

He left Orbost in 1910 after purchasing a pastoral property at Nanango, Queensland, later retiring to live in Melbourne in 1922.

His wife was Annie (nee ROBERTSON) whose brother, James Alexander ROBERTSON was the first person to select land on the Snowy River at Lochend in 1874.

Annie started the engine at the official opening of the first Orbost Butter Factory.

Charles died at Box Hill on 17th April, 1937, aged 88, and is buried at the Orbost cemetery.

Cr. William Harry Cook WATT 1825-1899

William was born in Essex, England and came to the colony in 1852 before returning to England to bring his wife to Victoria. He spent some time at the goldfields and later on managed Messrs Bright and Hitchcock's drapery business at Geelong. He moved to Bairnsdale in the early 1870s where he opened a drapery store and engaged in hop-growing. He sold the store in Bairnsdale and took another trip to England. On his return he came to Orbost in 1879 and selected 320 acres on the Snowy River and farmed at *Ilfracombe*, Newmerella, opposite the former railway station. In 1882 he was elected as one of the first councillors for the Snowy River Riding of the Tambo Shire. He was a capable musician and an accomplished artist, and held foundation shares in the Orbost Butter Factory. He often conducted church services at St James' Church of England, Orbost, where he was a member of the Board of Guardians until 1897.

His wife, Lydia (nee SMITH), opened the first Snowy River Bridge, a pile and suspension bridge - the centre section destroyed by the 1891 flood upon completion.

William died at Newmerella on 2nd May 1899, aged 75, and is buried at the Orbost cemetery.



Watts' Farm *Ilfracombe*



**Councillor
John
CAMERON
1847-1930**

John CAMERON was born in Perthshire, Scotland, arriving in Australia in 1854 at Geelong with his parents. He came to Orbost in about 1876 or 1877 and settled here together with his brothers, James and Alexander. He was the first of the family to come to Gippsland from the Western District as their lease had expired there. On finding the conditions of South Gippsland uncongenial, with dense forest and scrub land and a very heavy rainfall, he turned his attention to North Gippsland in pursuit of land for selection. He reached Omeo where he was informed by a selector of the existence of good morass land on the Snowy River. On arrival at Orbost he was pleased with the outlook and went back to recommend the land to his brothers, James and Alexander. Shortly afterwards they travelled to Orbost and selected land in the bend of the Snowy River on the left bank just above Orbost. The three brothers entered into a partnership - John selected 200 acres, James 235 acres and Alex. 273 acres, all adjoining. They also took up 'Lochiel' under the suburban lot scheme. The 'Lochiel' property went to James on the dissolution of the partnership. There were no bridges, roads or punts in those days and the only place to cross the Snowy was at John Cameron's, whose man was kept busy ferrying people across the river. John sold out to James Hossack in 1893 and went to Cann River. Subsequently he acquired property at Genoa and also selected land on the Wingan River. Eventually he went to 'Maramingo' Genoa and lived there for the last 15 years of his life. He sold the Cann River property to his nephew, George Cameron, son of James. He was a maize grower and grazier and a noted botanist and geologist. He was a Justice of the Peace and he also held a seat on the Tambo Shire Council as a Snowy River Riding representative from 1883-84 to 1885-86. His marble from Martin's Creek won a prize at an exposition in Paris about 1900.

His wife, Elizabeth (nee ROADKNIGHT) was a daughter of William ROADKNIGHT and Jane STIRLING of 'Merrangbaur' House, Lakes Entrance. John died at 'Maramingo', Genoa, on 12th February 1930, aged 83, and was buried the next day at the Genoa cemetery.

Hugh CAMERON was born at Moidant, Scotland. He came to Orbost in 1874 and selected land first on 'B' Road and then later on Marlo Road. In the early days floods were frequent and disastrous and, in 1890 and 1893, the Cameron family had to be rescued by boat. He left the district for a time and when he returned he gradually built his holdings to a substantial acreage, owning large areas of low land on the Snowy River flats. He served four terms as a Snowy River riding councillor on the Tambo Shire and later with the Shire of Orbost where he represented the East riding from 1892 to 1907 and from 1914 to 1919. He was president of the Orbost Shire in 1912-1913, and was a member of the M.U.I.O.O.F. in 1887.

His wife was Margaret (nee DONALD) whose parents were early residents of Sarsfield, and his son Alaster was also an Orbost Shire councillor representing the East riding from 1932 to 1954. Hugh died at Orbost on 3rd May 1921, aged 71, and was buried on 5th May at the Orbost cemetery.

Cr. Ernest William WATT 1853-1944

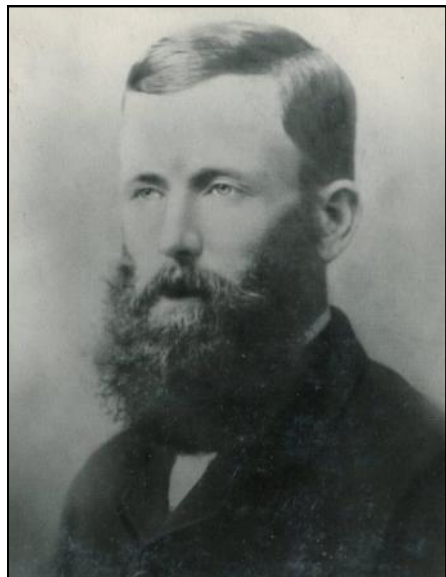
Ernest was born in England, the son of William Harry WATT and Lydia (nee SMITH). He was an early selector at Newmerella in 1875 and held foundation shares in the Orbost Butter Factory. He was Orbost's first auctioneer and commission agent in 1898 and worked for Messrs M Goold & Co. of Bairnsdale. He was a Snowy River Riding representative on the Tambo Shire for two consecutive terms in 1886-87 and 1887-88. Ernest died at Toowong, Qld., in 1944, aged 91.

Cr. William ROADKNIGHT Jnr. 1845-1912

William was born at Collingwood, the son of William ROADKNIGHT and Jane STIRLING. The Roadknight family came from Colac on board the *Enterprise* to their new home at Cunninghame. The house on the hill, now Pine Hill was named *Merrangbaur (home of the lyrebird)*. William held the Lake Tyers and Snowy River run in partnership with Thomas Telfer STIRLING who took up the eastern end of the run on the west bank of the Snowy River. The run included Ewing's Marsh — the Ewing brothers were earlier landowners but had no formal run in this area.

William served four terms on the Tambo Shire Council as a representative of the Bendoc Riding despite not being a resident of the Riding. He was then elected to the Orbost Shire as a West Riding councillor in 1896-97, 1897-98 and was Shire President in his final year 1898-99. William died at Cunninghame (Lakes Entrance) in 1912, aged 68.

**Councillor
Hugh
CAMERON
1850-1921**





**Councillor
James
STIRLING
Jnr.
1844-1917**

James Stirling followed his younger brother, Thomas Telfer Stirling, to East Gippsland. Thomas held the Corringale run and when he moved to Bruthen in 1866 James took over

the Old Station at Corringale. His belongings were brought by bullock wagon to the Old Station by Mr William Roadknight. Later he moved to Marlo where he was hotelkeeper, storekeeper, postmaster and coroner. Together with Charles Grove and William Roadknight, jnr., James was nominated and represented the Bendoc Riding on the Tambo Shire Council from August 1886. He retired in 1894 to his home near Stirling Creek.

James died on 12th June, 1917, aged 63, and was buried at the Marlo cemetery.

Cr. Thomas Frederick STAPLEY 1845-1916

Thomas was born in England. He selected land at Jarrahmond and named the area Jarrahmond in 1881. He was a painter by trade and belonged to the original M.U.I.O.O.F. Two of his daughters, Elfrida Mary and Viola Frances served as Army nurses, enlisting from Orbost during World War 1.

Thomas served three terms on the Tambo Shire as a Bendoc Riding representative. He was Tambo Shire President in 1889-90, his final year on council. Thomas died at Rupanyup in 1916, aged 71.

Cr. John William BORLAND 1815-1901

John was born at Ayrshire, Scotland. In June 1839 he and his wife Catherine (nee McKENZIE) sailed for Melbourne and after a short stay they went to Kennedy's Creek and then to Heidelberg where they remained for 35 years. During this time Mr Borland was in business as a blacksmith and wheelwright. Leaving Heidelberg he went to Omeo after which they went to the Tambo River where they stayed for about 9 years. In about 1885 he came to Orbost and established a wheelwright and blacksmiths business in Nicholson street which was subsequently sold to Mr Herman Wehner. At that time Mr Blacklock's store and residence at the lower end of Nicholson street formed practically the township. Near them Mr Borland had a small bark house erected, and after that a six-roomed dwelling, which was let to the Government and served as a police station. He then had a residence built for himself, which later formed part of Mrs Macalister's boarding-house. A little building in Nicholson street in which Mr Rowe conducted school for some years was erected under Mr Borland's supervision, as was the residence occupied for some years by Mr E H Lees, surveyor. Mr Borland also claimed to have had erected the first

baker's shop, the first saddler's shop, the first tailor's shop and the first tinsmith's shop. Four cottages on the Newmerella frontage were built under the direction of Mr Borland who ventured heavily into business enterprises and bought a considerable amount of land. He was elected as a Snowy River Riding councillor in 1888-89, the same year as George Burn, and served three successive terms on the Tambo Shire Council until 1890-91. He nominated Thomas Frederick Stapley for President of the Tambo Shire in September 1889. Misfortune overtook him when the flood came in 1890. Just after this there were 26 premises in Orbost without tenants and 13 belonged to him. A very trying period was then experienced by the people of the Snowy River so he saw fit to seek fresh fields and pastures. He left Orbost in 1891 for Yarragon where he took up farming and remained for some time. Later he moved to Armadale and then to St Kilda. He was an original member of the M.U.I.O.D.F. at Orbost in 1886.

John died at Orbost on 19th November 1901, aged 86, and was buried at the Orbost cemetery.



Borland's Blacksmith's Shop (centre of photo)

Cr. George Preece BURN

George was a selector and farmer at Newmerella. He served one term as a Snowy River Riding representative on the Tambo Shire Council in 1888-89 after completing his declaration and attending his first Council meeting on 17th August 1888. He was attended nine Council meetings through till 12th July 1889.

Cr. William ARMSTRONG

William was the first Head teacher at Bonang State School No. 2808, opened on 16th May 1887, which operated part-time with Delegate River State School No. 2809, which also opened on 16th May 1887. William was duly elected as a councillor of the Tambo Shire for the Bendoc Riding on 1st April 1889 — Cr. T. F. Stapley was the Returning Officer. He completed a declaration and attended his first meeting on 10th May 1889. He did not re-nominate

after coming up for re-election in the following August, but completed another declaration and was present at his second Council meeting on 8th November 1889. Living at Bonang and having to travel to meetings at Nowa Nowa was a major undertaking and, as a result, he only attended one further Council meeting on 7th February 1889. William died at Ferntree Gully in 1923, aged 56.

Cr. John Brass IRVINE 1862-1936

John was born at Purnim, near Warrnambool, the son of William Ross IRVINE and Rachel BEGG. He was a councillor of the old Tambo Shire before severance of the Orbost Shire and a well-known resident of Orbost. He was a representative for the Snowy River Riding of the Tambo Shire for two years 1890-91 and 1891-92. John died at Ivanhoe in 1936, aged 74.

Cr. Edward James PARDEW 1845-1927

Edward was born in Kent, England, and landed in New Zealand on 4th January, 1854. He left New Zealand in 1886 for Australia, intending to settle in Western Australia, however he met Massey Coote, an Orbost storekeeper, in a Melbourne hotel, and from his glowing reports decided to inspect Orbost for himself. When he first arrived in Orbost he lived in huts near Snagger's Lane. Then in 1887 he selected 720 acres of hill land along the Brodrigg road and later purchased property on the banks of the Snowy River between Orbost and Jarrahmond. He drove wagon teams to Lakes Entrance and carted goods to Orbost, and also conducted a fruit and meat shop in McLeod Street. Later on he built up his holdings to over 1800 acres and was engaged in dairying, fattening, maize and bean growing. He was elected in September 1891 and served for one year as a representative for the Bendoc Riding on the Tambo Shire, and then in 1892 was elected as one of the inaugural Orbost Shire councillors representing the Centre Riding until he tendered his resignation on 16th September 1896. Edward died at Orbost on 26th September, 1927, aged 92.

Cr. John Joseph O'MEARA

John was a contractor at Orbost in the 1880s and 1890s and a trustee of the Catholic Church land. In 1888 he was the contractor for the construction of a bridge over Boggy Creek on the Bruthen-Buchan Road. He was a Snowy River Riding councillor on the Tambo Shire in the final year prior to the formation of the Croajingolong Shire.

Cr. William STOKES

At the August 1890 Tambo Shire Council elections no nominations were received for the Bendoc Riding thus creating two extraordinary vacancies. On 2nd October 1890 William STOKES accepted nomination and completed a declaration to fill one of these vacancies. However it appears that he only attended one Council meeting during his one year term. The following year there were a further two extraordinary vacancies for the Snowy River Riding.

Cr. James BAIRD

James was a dairy farmer at Newmerella. He was an 1891 Rechabite and held foundation shares in the Orbost Butter Factory in 1892. James accepted nomination and completed a declaration to fill one of two extraordinary vacancies for the Bendoc Riding on the Tambo Shire Council. He attended a majority of Council meetings but did not re-nominate at the end of his one-year term. Hugh Cameron was returned unopposed to the Bendoc Riding extraordinary vacancy in lieu of Cr. Baird.



Edward James PARDEW

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