

## Rev. James Clow 1790-1861

*First Presbyterian Minister to arrive in Port Phillip District*

*Vice-President 1839 Melbourne Mechanics' Institution Committee*



*Rev. James Clow, possibly about the time of his election to the 1839 Melbourne Mechanics' Institution Committee.*

*Image from Bride, T.F. Letters from Victorian Pioneers, 1983.*

This article gives a résumé of Rev. James Clow's life, and focuses on his relationships with fellow-members of the 1839 Committee of Management of the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution Committee. Accounts of Clow's time in Australia are dealt with in detail elsewhere, including T.F.Bride's *Letters from Victorian Pioneers*.<sup>1</sup>

### *Early life*

James Clow was born at Chartershall, near Stirling, Scotland on 26 May 1790, making him one of the older members of the 1839 Committee of the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution. He was the second son of James Clow, farmer and miller, and the only child of his marriage to Helen, née Gray.

He was educated at Blackford School, and from 1808 to 1813 at St Andrews and Edinburgh Universities, being licensed by the Kirkcaldy Presbytery to preach on 21 July 1813.<sup>2</sup>

In 1815 Clow became the first Presbyterian pastor with the East India Company at Bombay, then the chief naval station in India. He had been born with one hand, and was never robust,<sup>3</sup> He suffered ill health for much of his life.

### *Marriage and family*

James Clow married Margaret Morison in Bombay on 15 April 1819.<sup>4</sup>



*Margaret Clow, née Morison*

*Image from Bride, T.F. Letters from Victorian Pioneers, 1983.*

The Clows had two sons and six daughters in Bombay, and after returning to Scotland due to James's ill-health and retirement, they had two more daughters.

We know that in 1852 James and Margaret lost a son, Henry Moncrieff, aged 20, and in 1855 a married daughter, Emma, aged 21.

In this staunchly Presbyterian family a number of the daughters married Presbyterian ministers; two married Presbyterian members of the 1839 Melbourne Mechanics' Institution Committee.

(See Appendix 1 for details of the children)

### ***Port Phillip District – 1837***

The Clows, apparently encouraged by their friendship with John Dunmore Lang, decided to settle in Australia. They would have heard of opportunities in the early colony, and Clow was interested in farming, possibly hoping that this would help with his health problems. Sullivan remarks that "The Reverend James Clow, (was) another ... clergyman who did not allow his Christianity to interfere with his commercial activities." He had brought between three and four thousand pounds with him to Australia.<sup>5</sup>

The family arrived in Hobart in early September 1837 in the *North Briton*. In a letter to the Rev. J.D. Lang on 31 December 1837, Clow wrote "Looking at the date of this letter, you will I doubt not, be surprised, as both Mrs Clow and I were, when we saw you in Edinburgh, so decidedly bent on going to South Australia. The information which we got concerning it in Hobart Town, both from residents there and from several persons who had very recently come from Gulph St Vincent, was unfavourable, and all accounts, on the other hand, of Port Philip were so inviting, that I resolved to visit the latter place, in the first instance.

This I did last October, and being upon the whole satisfied with the appearance of the country, and delighted with the prospect then held out, a prospect which I hope will still be realised – that it would be a free colony – and being at the same time upon the spot at the last sale of allotments in this township, I purchased a few contiguous to each other as the site of the family residence, and thus put a termination to all painful uncertainty as to the place of our future habitation.

I landed here with my family on Christmas Day. Our accommodation consists of a couple of tents and a large building which I intend for a stable and other offices, after the erection of a wooden house which I brought with me from Hobart Town. We are literally living in the bush, as our allotments form the extremity of the Township at present, and I need scarcely add, we are far from being comfortable."<sup>6</sup>

The allotments described by Clow as ‘forming the extremity of the Township’ were “two half-acre town blocks with 475 feet frontage in Swanston Street at £45 each, and two half-acre blocks with 400 feet frontage in Lonsdale Street, one at £37 and the other at £35. He kept the freehold of this two acres, on which shops, timber-yards, foundries and hotels were built. When the Clow estate was wound up after his widow died, the ground was sold, on 26 December 1873, in 27 lots for an auction price of £77,495.<sup>7</sup>

Early in 1838 Clow built a house from a frame pre-made in Hobart Town on his land near the corner of Swanston Street and Lonsdale Street. A charming image of the house shows that it had two storeys, with a front veranda, and three windows in the roof.<sup>8</sup> It must have seemed superior to many other primitive dwellings appearing at the time. The Clows lived there for the greater part of the following seventeen years, with periods away in a rural property.

Life in Melbourne was not without its hazards: The *Port Phillip Gazette* reported on 3 November 1839 that "Robberies we are sorry to see, are frequent. What are the constables about?... The house of the Rev. J. Clow was entered on Saturday night or Sunday morning last, and a quantity of plate stolen."

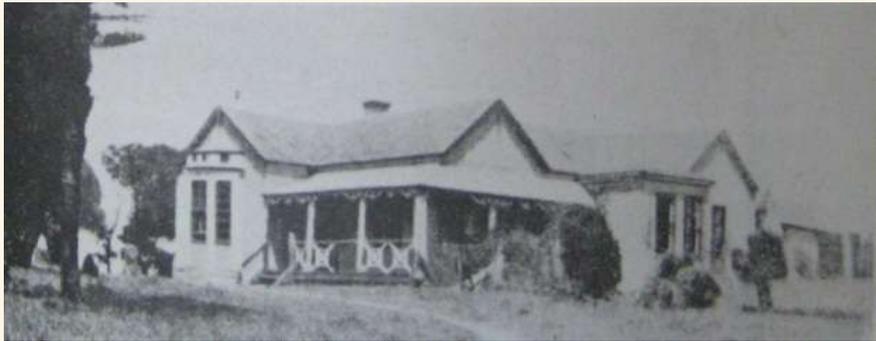


*The Clow family house built in 1838 in Lonsdale Street, Melbourne  
Image from Bride, T.F. Letters from Victorian Pioneers, 1983.*

1838 was a busy year for the Clow family: they also took possession of the *Corhanwarrabul Run*, a property, in the foothills of the Dandenongs, south-east through Rowville and nearby Lysterfield to the then Dandenong village. The family spent time there at a homestead called *Tirhatuan* over the twelve years they occupied it. Clow obtained a licence to “depasture stock beyond the limits of location of the Melbourne and Geelong districts, for the year commencing 1 July 1840, on payment of the established fee.”<sup>9</sup> In addition to this run “an outstation in the thickly-timbered ranges, taken up in 1840, was called Glen Fern. These runs were sold in March 1850, with 1000 cattle, some horses and 6000 sheep, with lambs.”<sup>10</sup> “Throughout the period of Mr Clow’s residence at *Tirhatuan*, his family was very frequently visited by the aborigines belonging to the Yarra Yarra and Western Port tribes. They often encamped near his house; they were uniformly treated with kindness, and in return they always conducted themselves decently and honestly.”<sup>11</sup> Bride gives a fine account of the Clows’ lives at their station, including their interaction with the aborigines, anxieties about bushfires, and on occasion earth tremors. It must have been both exciting and confronting for the Clow family, especially for Margaret Clow, who at times looked after the property whilst her husband was away - a resilient woman indeed. (see Appendix 2)

Early roads in the area acknowledge Clow’s early settlement: *Clow Avenue* and *Glenfern Road* in the Upper Fern Tree Gully/Upway area, *Tirhatuan Drive* in Rowville, and *Clow Street* in Dandenong.

This property was sold in 1850, and Clow built *Clutha* at Queenscliff on the coast. The family later moved to *Oakhill* on 120 acres near Queenscliff. It was here that James, who had been suffering from angina pectoris, died suddenly on 15 March 1861 “while in his garden at *Oakhill* giving instructions to a servant.”<sup>12</sup>



*Rev. James Clow's Queenscliff house, Oakhill  
Image from Bride, T.F. Letters from Victorian Pioneers, 1983.*

Although, due to ill health, Clow had intended to retire from religious office when he left Bombay, anticipating a rural life, he held services in Melbourne from his arrival in December 1837. Experienced ministers were scarce in the early settlement and he was soon drawn upon to help. In January 1838 the Rev. James Forbes arrived in Melbourne from New South Wales, appointed by the Presbytery to the District of Port Phillip. Forbes offered to go to Geelong, but Clow, then aged in his late forties, stepped aside for the 25-year-old Forbes, who would later become his son-in-law.<sup>13</sup>

The following month, on 3 February 1838, a meeting of members and friends of the Church of Scotland was held with James Clow in the chair. Plans were made to build a church and raise £300 in order to obtain a matching grant available under the Church Act. This date is regarded as the official birthday of Presbyterianism in Victoria and the beginning of Scots' Church. A committee was appointed consisting of Clow (Treasurer), James Forbes and Skene Craig (Secretaries) [*these three would all be appointed to the 1839 committee of the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution*]. On 2 June 1838 Clow wrote to the Governor, Sir Richard Bourke, reporting on Rev. Forbes's success in obtaining subscriptions for the erection of a Scotch Church in Melbourne.<sup>14</sup>

The *Argus* of 31 January 1931, commenting on the early days of the churches in Melbourne, reported that the Rev James Clow "caused arrangements to be made for the loan of the wooden building belonging to be Church of England. The Anglicans used it in the forenoon; the Presbyterians worshipped there in the afternoon. This friendly arrangement lasted for a few months."

Perhaps not quite so friendly as it appeared: Clow writing to J.D Lang in December 1837, shortly after arriving in Melbourne, spoke of a quandary: "There is a small place of worship here, which was built by contributions obtained from persons of all religious denominations indiscriminately, and was intended for the use of Protestant ministers of every sect. The Episcopalians have now got it into their possession, and their district committee here

assume to themselves the sole disposal of it. With considerable difficulty I have obtained the use of it from two to four o'clock every Sunday afternoon, as a temporary arrangement. Neither Episcopalians nor Presbyterians of the Scottish Church are numerous here I understand. ... I am just returned from Divine Service. I had a respectable audience; the church was full but many of those present were Episcopalians and Dissenters. I hope ere long I should know pretty accurately the amount of members of our church." Clow also raised with Lang the state of the law with respect to marriages celebrated by ministers of the Church of Scotland, for since his arrival he had had applications from parties of various denominations to get married.<sup>15</sup>

One hundred years later, the *Argus* of 5 February 1938 reported that a Centenary thanksgiving service would be held in Scots Church, Collins Street the following day, and a brass tablet referring to the window in memory of the Rev. James Clow would be unveiled. A window in the north wall west transept had been presented in 1878 by his daughters.

In September 1839 Clow subscribed to a fund for the erection of a school in connection with the Presbyterian Church, Melbourne. On 12 September 1839 Rev. James Forbes wrote to Superintendent William Lonsdale forwarding plans and specifications. Clow was proposed as a Trustee.<sup>16</sup>

"When the Presbyterians of Port Phillip split over the Scottish Disruption of 1843, Clow was in sympathy with the Free Church of Scotland but opposed to carrying the division to the colonies, and retained his connection with the local Church of Scotland. In 1859, when the Presbyterian Church of Victoria was formed by the union of four branches of Presbyterianism, it was arranged that on 7 April at the initial General Assembly Rev. A. Love of Geelong would be elected Moderator. Love was unpopular with two Free Church ministers, who without warning nominated Clow to the office. To avoid division the nominators of Love remained silent, and Clow was elected."<sup>17</sup> He was approaching seventy at the time.

On 7 August 1850 Clow spoke at a meeting to oppose "Obnoxious Bills ... subversive of the principle of denominational equality" which were thought to favour the Church of England.<sup>18</sup>



*Rev. James Clow. Photograph by T.F. Chuck  
No. 601 of a 1870s mosaic of 700 photographs  
The Explorers and Early Colonists of Victoria  
Index to photographs at the State Library of Victoria*

In the small Melbourne community James Clow would have been welcomed at the houses of the social élite, including that of Andrew McCrae - who would be one of the first Trustees appointed to the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution in 1840 - and his wife, the fine portrait painter and miniaturist, Georgiana McCrae. Georgiana kept a journal which has proved invaluable in documenting the social life of early Melbourne. Clow would have been welcomed to drop in for dinner, as he did on 30 July 1841, and also officiate on occasions such as baptisms of the children.

Of the happenings on August 7, 1844, Georgiana comments: "At 3 p.m. the Rev. James Clow arrived and was ushered into the drawing-room, where he found among those already assembled: Mr Simpson, Captain McCrae, Mr McCrae, Mr McLure and the boys and Lucia. Jane carried in the baby, whom the Minister solemnly baptised, after the Presbyterian rites, by the name of Margaret Martha. Afterwards, while Mr Clow was delivering the most impressive address, Perry [*young son of Andrew and Georgiana*], from his position near a window, called out that Mr C's mare had broken loose and was dashing up the carrots and the onions; Mr Clow only paused for a moment, and then went on with his speech. After the ceremony concluded, all hands, except Mr McCrae, set out to catch the mare which proved not to be an easy matter. Eventually Jane having handed the baby to me, secured the obstinate creature, so that Mr C. was able to go on his way in peace."<sup>19</sup>

### ***James Clow as a member of the 1839 Committee of the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution***

Clow, a founding Vice-President in 1839, was re-elected as a Vice-President at the AGM on 1 June 1840, and again in 1841. Clow appeared to attend only the meeting(s) of the committee held on 26/27 November 1839, which he chaired. On March 17 1840 he was not present at a meeting when it was moved by Mr Mayne, seconded by Mr Strode, and carried unanimously, that the Revd J. Clow be requested to give the Introductory Lecture.

At a meeting of the committee on 15 February 1842 “the Secretary laid on the table a return of the attendances of the members from July last. It was resolved that the Revd Mr Clow, Dr Wilkie [*and two others named*] have by reason of non-attendance vacated office; and the Secretary directed to communicate with these gentlemen as to their desire of continuing in the List.”

Membership lists show that Clow was a member of the Institution in 1841 and again in 1852, though lists do not exist for some intervening years. Clow became a member again in 1852 - following the sale of his Dandenong property in 1850 and the move to Queenscliff, where his estate responsibilities would have been reduced.

### ***James Clow's relationships with members of the Mechanics' Institution Committee***

[ ] = fellow-members of the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution Committee]

Clow worked closely with other members of the Presbyterian Church in the Port Phillip District; those who became fellow-members of the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution Committee in 1839 include *Rev. J. Forbes* and *Dr D. Wilkie*, both future sons-in-law of Clow, and *S.Craig*. The early days (1838 to 1839) of the Presbyterian Church in Melbourne are detailed in *The Historical Records of Victoria*.<sup>20</sup>

But Clow was also involved from his arrival in Melbourne in a range of issues affecting the business interests, as well as the welfare, of the early residents of the District.

Clow was one of six Trustees appointed to Port Phillip's First Savings Bank which was gazetted In December 1836.<sup>21</sup> [*W.Lonsdale, S.Craig*]. It was not opened for business until January 1842, at which time Clow was no longer listed as a Trustee.

In 1838, following catastrophic bushfires it was suggested that a local company should be established for insurance purposes as there had been delays in obtaining insurance through Sydney and Hobart agencies. On 6 April, 1838, Clow was appointed a Director of the Fire and Marine Insurance Company. [*J.Gardiner, D.C.McArthur, W.Rucker, P.Welsh, W.Yaldwyn, Directors; S.Craig and W.Highett, Auditors; R.Russell, Surveyor*].<sup>22</sup>

On 4 June 1838 James Clow was one of a number of early settlers supporting Thomas Watts's application to Governor Gipps for permission to operate a punt on the Yarra River. [*W.Rucker, J.Peers, J. Gardiner, S.Craig, J.Rankin*]. Two months before, John Gardiner had crossed the Yarra with a herd of cattle, 27 of which were drowned as there was no bridge or punt. Watts's petition offered to build the punt at his own sole risk and expense.<sup>23</sup>

In January 1840 Clow headed the provisional committee of the newly-established Port Phillip Club, “the life of which was short, its history obscure and little information about it has survived. Those known to have belonged to it were gentleman of repute and substance: professional men, merchants and squatters. [T.Wills, S.Craig, D.Wilkie] The new club seems to have had the character of a second eleven [compared with the Melbourne Club]. The Rev. James Clow ... sober, respectable, Scottish, a man of substance with mercantile and squatting interests, may be said to have set the tone of the committee and of the club.”<sup>24</sup>

Also in January 1840 Clow, who by then had a rural property near Dandenong, was appointed director of the newly-established Pastoral and Agricultural Society of Australia Felix. [F.McCrae (Vice President), A.Thomson, G.B.Smyth, W.Rucker, P.Welsh, also J.Simpson, who would become President of the Mechanics’ Institution in June that year, and A.McCrae, who would become a Trustee of the Institution in June 1840, who was appointed Secretary]. “In those times it was a cardinal tenet of popular belief that no enterprise could prosper unless set going by a good dinner, a blended baptism of post-prandial grog and oratory, and so to work the ‘undertakers’ went to get up a convivial celebration accordingly. It was at first intended to hold it at the *Lamb Inn* – grandmother of the now *Scott’s Hotel* – where there was a tolerably large room at the time, but on measurement this was pronounced to be not sufficiently commodious, and a recently-erected store of *Mr Rucker’s*, in Market Street, between Collins and Little Flinders Streets was finally selected as the feeding ground. This was the first Public Dinner in the colony, and it came off on 15 January. The Rev. James Clow, one of the Directors, invoked a blessing. Amongst the best speakers of the jolly evening was another clergyman, the Rev. James Forbes. ... The Association was born several years too soon, but it was not surprising that the premature bantling should be an abortion. Annual exhibitions were promised at Melbourne and Geelong, but the materials did not exist in the Province to produce such unconsidered results. The first show took place on 3 March, 1842 and it was a failure. The exhibits were a vast disappointment. ... On the following evening the members consoled themselves over a dinner, much less enthusiastic, gushing and prayerful than the inauguration one.”<sup>25</sup>

1840 continued to be a busy year for Clow: he was involved early in a Separation Association to advance the cause of separation of the District from New South Wales. [H.Gisborne, P.Welsh, W.Yaldwyn, Dr F.Mcrae] A meeting was held on 13 May and a petition forwarded to England. Progress was slow, but eventually, in 1851, the Colony of Victoria was proclaimed.<sup>26</sup>

On 14 July 1840 Clow was appointed Vice-President of an Auxiliary Bible Society.<sup>27</sup>  
[*Superintendent La Trobe, Patron; Capt. Lonsdale, President; E. Brewster, Vice-President; J. Gardiner, R. Reeves, D. Wilkie, J. Peers, Committee members*]

At a public meeting, held at the "Lamb Inn", on 25th of May 1840, and presided over by the Rev. James Clow, a resolution was moved by Andrew McCrae [*who would become one of the first three Trustees of the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution in 1840*] ... "that, for the purposes of affording a better and cheaper supply of water to this town, a joint stock company be formed, and entitled 'the Melbourne Water Works Company'; the capital whereof shall consist of £20,000, to be raised in 2000 shares of £10 each." A provisional committee was nominated, but nothing practical resulted, and the business fizzled out.<sup>28</sup>

### **Summary**

In spite of life-long physical disability and poor health Clow contributed significantly to his community and particularly to the Presbyterian Church, both during his time in Bombay and in Australia.

Clow's was an older, respected voice in the community; he was often the one called on to chair meetings. He remained calm in the midst of upsets, whether it was his horse escaping and "dashing" the McCrae's vegetable garden, or the more weighty issues of the day, he could be relied on to provide a steadying influence.

He was a respected 'elder' to those within the Presbyterian Church and to others in the wider community. De Serville, describing the short-lived Port Phillip Club, remarks that Clow "... sober, respectable, Scottish, a man of substance with mercantile and squatting interests, may be said to have set the tone of the committee and the club."<sup>29</sup>

His close ties with Presbyterians on the 1839 Mechanics' Institution committee were cemented by the marriages of two of his daughters to fellow-committee members. But, as Sullivan comments, "Clow did not allow his Christianity to interfere with his commercial activities."<sup>30</sup> Many were drawn to Australia following reports of opportunities awaiting early settlers, not only regarding the availability of land, but also in the commercial enterprises being established. Clow had arrived with sufficient funds to avail himself on both fronts; he and others associated closely with the various churches contributed significantly to the development of the Port Phillip District, in pastoral and commercial enterprises, as well as in the religious field. His expertise continued to be drawn on over the years; a letter in 1853 from Clow to La Trobe is in response to a query concerning the level of settlement in the Dandenong district. [*see Appendix 3*]

His involvement in the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution was brief. He was one of eight vice-presidents elected to the first committee - few of them took part in the meetings, and the number of vice presidents was reduced from eight to two at the first Annual General Meeting. It is possible that the election of so many initially was to appease the élite 'gentlemen' class, and preserve their perceived 'status' as leaders in the pre-goldrush community. However, as an older settler, and a respected and trusted figure, he would have exerted indirect influence through this interaction with members of the Institution, and would have provided leadership in his various enterprises.

## Appendix 1

### The children of James and Margaret Clow

**James Maxwell Clow** (1820–1894), the eldest son, in 1847 occupied 'Ballarook' (or 'Balerook') west of Lake Hindmarsh, Victoria, and explored the area to the north, taking up the first run in the Big Desert which he named 'Pine Plain'. He became Assistant Commissioner for Crown Lands in 1851 and then a Commissioner, and was Magistrate at Steiglitz, near Geelong, Victoria, from 1856 to 1871. He died in 1894 and is buried in the Church of England section of the St Kilda Cemetery.<sup>31</sup>

**Helen Johanna Clow** (1822–1898), the eldest daughter, was married in 1845 to **Rev. James Forbes** (1813–1851) [*Secretary of the 1839 M.I. committee*]. (Sydney Morning Herald, 26 April, 1845, p.3). Forbes died only a few years later, survived by Helen, and four children: Margaret (1846) who married Robert Chirnside; James (1847–1898) who died unmarried and was buried with his parents; Helen (1849) who married Alexander Cresswick; and Charles (1851-1901), also a bachelor, baptised by his father as his last ministerial act.<sup>32</sup>

**Margaret Jessie Clow**, the second daughter, was married on 16 January 1840 in Melbourne to Rev. William Hamilton, Minister of the Presbyterian Church, Goulburn and Kilnoorat. (*The Colonist* Sydney, 8 Feb. 1840, p.3). The Rev. Hamilton was born on 30 March 1807 at Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, Scotland, the son of the Rev. Andrew Hamilton of the High Church, Kilmarnock, and his wife Janet, née Bachop. He arrived in Sydney on 27 September 1837 on the *North Briton* [*the same voyage on which the Clow family arrived in Australia – was this how the contact between William and the Clow family was made? Margaret Jessie would have been about 14 during this voyage, and only about 17 at the time of her marriage to William, then in his thirties*]. William and Margaret Jessie returned to New South Wales and were at Goulburn until October 1846 when they moved to the Western District, Victoria. William died on 25 May 1879 at his residence, Cairnlee, Mortlake, Victoria, and was buried at the Mortlake Cemetery. [Ward & Prentis *Presbyterian Ministers in Australia 1822-1901*]

**Mary Elizabeth Clow** who was married on 20 October 1842 to **Dr David Elliot Wilkie** (1815-1885) [*Curator, 1839 M.I. committee*]. (Australian Dictionary of Biography *Dr David Elliot Wilkie*).

The Hobart *Mercury* reported on 16 December 1893 (p. 13) the death of Mrs Wilkie, the mother of Mrs Major Rainsford Hannay, Mrs Patrick Agnew, and Isobel, b. 7 September 1859, who married Robert Alexander Baillie on 13 July 1887 and died on 1 February, 1945. They had two children: Gawaine Stewart (1893-1914) and Adrian William Maxwell (1898-1947).

**Jane Clow** on 24 April 1857 married Alexander Philadelphia Lamb Robertson, Esq. M.D. late staff Assist. Surgeon, son of the late Rev. James U. Robertson, of Coldingham, Berwickshire. (*Argus* Melbourne, 24 April, 1857)

**Emma Clow** [*born about 1834*] "Deaths: On the 15<sup>th</sup> April, 1855, at Lexington, Emma, the beloved wife of A.M. Campbell, Esq., J.P. and daughter of the Rev. James Clow, Melbourne, aged twenty-one years." (*Argus* 19 April 1855, p.4)

The *Argus* of 30 March 1852 reported the death on 29 March of the son of James and Margaret, **Henry Moncrieff Clow**, [*born about 1832*] " at this father's house in Lonsdale-Street, in the 20th year of his age".

There is no information to hand on the remaining three daughter.

## Appendix 2

### *It was not an easy time for a woman alone on a station*

Bride, T.F. *Letters from Victorian Pioneers*.<sup>33</sup>

About the month of January 1850, during one night and part of the succeeding day, an unusual noise, somewhat resembling that of bush fire at a distance, was heard at *Tirhatuan*, [*the Clow property*] and at an out-station about 3 miles off, situated near the gap in the ranges behind Narre Narre Warren. At the former place it was heard by Mrs Clow and others living there. She rose in the night time, and looked out to see if any of the huts was on fire; and during the day she went repeatedly into the veranda in front of the house to listen; and as the noise seemed to come from the rises on the west side of the creek, she sent two persons as far as the bridge with a view to ascertain what it was. On their return they said they could not tell, but that when they were at the bridge, the noise seemed to be at the house.

The overseer happened to come, and she spoke of it to him, but he said that he had not noticed any unusual sound; neither did he then perceive any. He was in a hurry and went off immediately; but, happening to go to the out-station at the Mountain Gap, he was asked by the two men there, both of whom had resided in the colony only a short time, and were therefore perhaps more liable to be easily alarmed, whether the fire was coming their way. He said he did not know of any fire. They told him that they had not slept during the night, for they heard a noise as of a great fire at a distance, and were afraid it was coming in that direction, and that they could still discern it. He was thus forcibly reminded of what he had just before heard, and on going a little way to a rise, he listened, and acknowledged that he

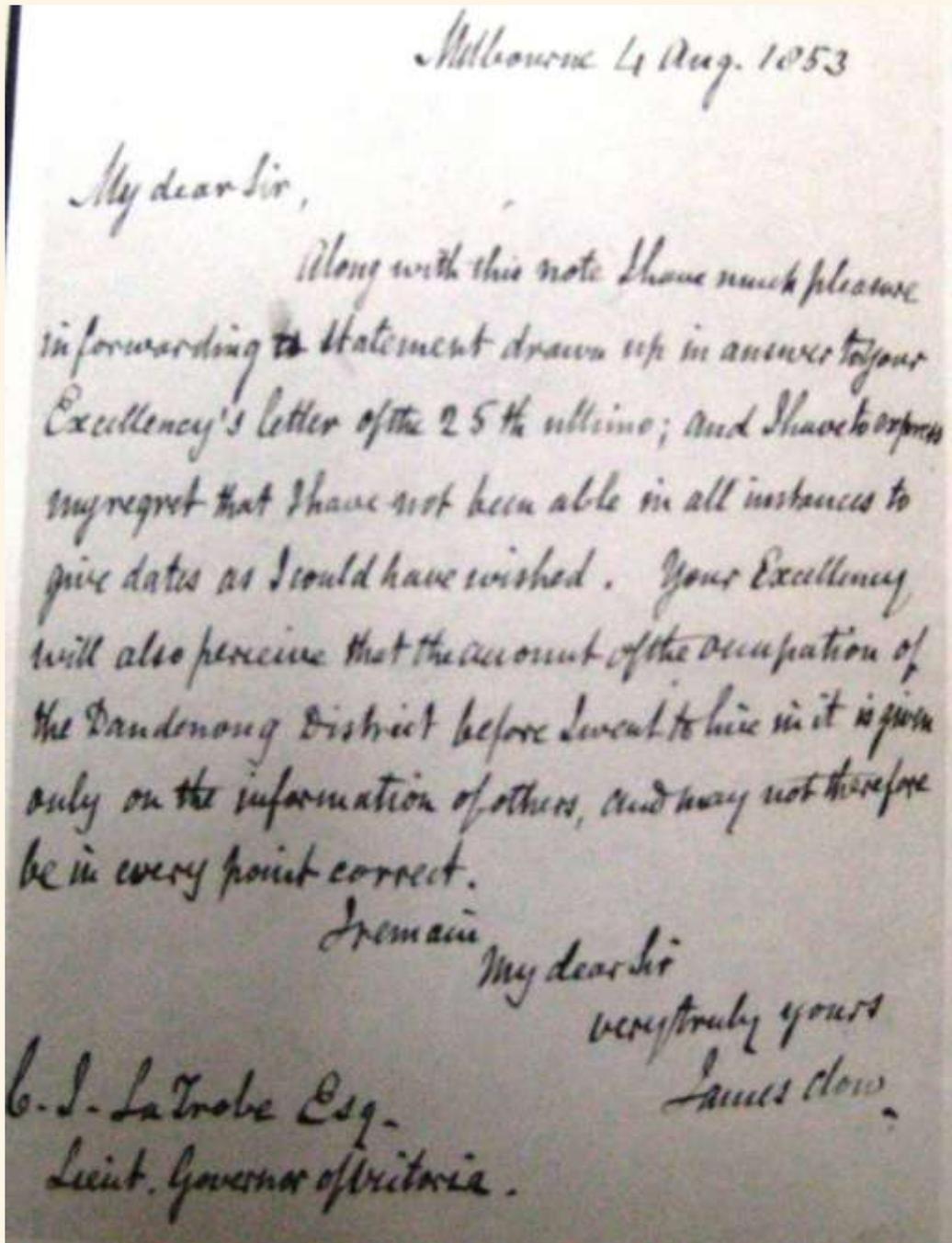
could distinctly hear a noise similar to that which had been described, but could not tell what occasioned it.

As heard by Mrs Clow, the noise was not always the same, but rose and fell, and after dying away for a little would begin again and gradually increase. To some it seemed to be in the air, but the prevailing impression on her mind at the time, and that to which she is still inclined, is that it was subterranean. It will perhaps be considered corroborative of this opinion that, on two previous occasions an earthquake had been distinctly heard and felt there.

### Appendix 3

*An 1853 letter from Rev. James Clow to Lt Governor C.J. La Trobe  
concerning settlement of the Dandenong district*

*Bride, T.F. Letters from Victorian Pioneers, 1983.*



Melbourne 4 Aug. 1853

My dear Sir,

Along with this note I have much pleasure  
in forwarding to statement drawn up in answer to your  
Excellency's letter of the 25<sup>th</sup> ultimo; and I have to express  
my regret that I have not been able in all instances to  
give dates as I could have wished. Your Excellency  
will also perceive that the account of the occupation of  
the Dandenong District before I went to live in it is given  
only on the information of others, and may not therefore  
be in every point correct.

I remain  
My dear Sir  
very truly yours  
James Clow

C. J. La Trobe Esq.  
Lieut. Governor of Victoria.

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Bride, T.F. *Letters from Victorian Pioneers*, Lloyd O'Neil P.L. Melbourne, 1983.
- <sup>2</sup> Bradshaw, F.M. *Clow, James (1790– 1861)* Australian Dictionary of Biography, 1966, p. 1.
- <sup>3</sup> Bride, T.F., p. 105
- <sup>4</sup> The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Miscellany, 1819.
- <sup>5</sup> Sullivan, M. *Men and Women of Port Phillip* Hale and Iremonger, Sydney, 1985, p. 63, 182.
- <sup>6</sup> Cannon, M. & Macfarlane, I. (eds) *Historical Records of Victoria*, Vol. 3 *The Early Development of Melbourne 1836– 1839* Vic. Government Printing Office, Melbourne, 1984. P. 497.
- <sup>7</sup> Bride, T.F. p. 105.
- <sup>8</sup> Bride, T.F., p. 106.
- <sup>9</sup> Cannon, M. & Macfarlane, I. (eds) *Historical Records of Victoria* Vol. 6 *The Crown, the Land and the Squatter 1835-1840*, Vic. Government Printing Office, Melbourne, p. 155-157.
- <sup>10</sup> Bride, T.F. p. 106.
- <sup>11</sup> Bride, T.F. p. 107.
- <sup>12</sup> Bradshaw, F.M. p.1.
- <sup>13</sup> Ward, R.S. *James Forbes (1813 – 1851): Melbourne's first Christian Minister* Knox Presbyterian Church, Wantina, Victoria, 2008, p.1.
- <sup>14</sup> Cannon, M. & Macfarlane, I. (eds) *Historical Records of Victoria*, Vol. 3, p. 506.
- <sup>15</sup> Cannon, M. & Macfarlane, I. (eds) *Historical Records of Victoria*, Vol. 3, p. 498.
- <sup>16</sup> Cannon, M. & Macfarlane, I. (eds) *Historical Records of Victoria*, Vol. 3, p, 516-522.
- <sup>17</sup> Bradshaw, F.M. P.1.
- <sup>18</sup> Finn, E. [*Garryowen*] *Chronicles of Early Melbourne 1835 – 1852*, Fergusson & Mitchell, Melb., 1888, p. 131.
- <sup>19</sup> McCrae, H. (ed.) *Georgiana's Journal, Melbourne 1841 – 65* Angus & Robertson, Melbourne, 1966, p. 147-8.
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