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BARRY COCKINOS GETS KOKODA KID INTO ACTION AGAIN

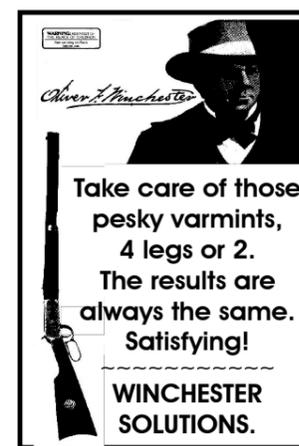
FAMED GUNSMITH COCKINOS RESTORES THE KID'S FAITHFUL OLD WINCHESTER



Barry shown outside Tombstone, Arizona's famed Bird Cage Theatre

With the eyes of an eagle and the hands of a skilled brain surgeon, master gun-smith, Barry Cockinos was able to perform the miracle of miracles after working on the Kokoda Kid's old 32.20 Winchester rifle.

Those deft fingers did their work in true Cockinos fashion, thus allowing the Kid to hit the trail once more, wreaking chaos, destruction and total confusion to the sand stops behind the still untouched steel targets at the St. Marys pistol range. Barry- or as his friends like to call him, Barry - is an old hand at gun-smithing.



DISCLAIMER

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PHOTO BY: Japanese tourist Yoogotmi Nakarsitchy

NEW PICTURES EMERGE OF THE FIRST BOAT PEOPLE

Some stunning new pictures have emerged showing the first boat people to arrive on Australian shores.

For some time now, the Afghans, Sri Lankans and New Zealanders have borne the brunt of accusing fingers being pointed directly at

them, as being the 'boat people invaders' of Oz, but it appears that it is the British who actually started the ball rolling by sending over the Irish, or any poor performing lawyers and politicians to Oz. The really bad ones were sent to Victoria or Queensland so as to endure extreme punishment.

The Affair at Eureka

The following outline of the events at Eureka in 1854 is taken from the prologue of J. Harvey's book, *Eureka Rediscovered: In search of the site of the historic stockade*.

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Fourteen years after the establishment of the settlement at Port Phillip in 1836, the rich pastoral lands of "Australia Felix" were excised from southern New South Wales to form the colony of Victoria. The new colonial administration in Melbourne was headed by the Governor and the Legislative Council, which was one third nominated and two thirds elected by limited franchise. One year later in 1851, the serenity of the squattocracy was shattered when gold was discovered at a number of places across central Victoria, triggering a sudden influx of immigrants of adventurous and democratic spirit. The government's response was to establish a quasi-military Gold Commission, whose gold-braided and aristocratic officials were empowered to administer the burgeoning gold fields in the absence of civic institutions or democratic representation.

By 1854 in Ballarat, the easy surface gold was exhausted, and a population of some twenty five thousand, including immigrants from the United Kingdom, Ireland, North America, Europe and China, were engaged in tracing the ancient buried river beds or "deep leads" across the hillsides and gullies east of the Ballarat Flat. This necessitated the slow, expensive and uncertain process of sinking exploratory shafts down through layers of clay and treacherous waterlogged silt and gravels to the bedrock, and with luck, to the elusive "gutter", up to 50 metres below the surface, where the precious metal lay concentrated. As the sinking proceeded, the surrounding hillsides were progressively denuded of trees to provide timber for supporting and lining the shafts. In their place rose the tents of the miners and the businesses which provided them with materials, food, grog and entertainment.

On the scarp overlooking the Ballarat Flat from the west, a more respectable permanent settlement was growing up around the Government Camp, from where the Resident Gold Commissioner, Robert Rede, exercised absolute authority over the diggings, an authority which was enforced by a large contingent of police and backed up by a military garrison.

By October 1854, the Eureka Lead had been traced from its beginnings in the ranges north east of Ballarat, southwards to a point close to the Melbourne road (now Eureka St), some 2.5 km due east of the Government Camp. The Eureka was predominantly an Irish area, though many other nationalities were also represented there.

The main mechanism for the collection of Government revenue on the gold fields was the "Miner's Licence", which entitled the holder to work a single 12 foot (3.6 metre) square "claim", and on which a flat monthly fee of 30 shillings was payable, regardless of the amount of gold recovered. The terms of the licence were irksome to the diggers on all the Victorian gold fields, but nowhere more so than Ballarat, where the fortunes of deep lead mining were so uncertain. Irksome too were the inadequate procedures for settlement of the many claim disputes, the inconvenience and indignity of the frequent "licence hunts", the arbitrary and often brutal exercise of police authority during the licence hunts and sly grog raids, and the general atmosphere of privilege, patronage and corruption which permeated the administration of the gold fields.

In September 1854, with his government under budgetary pressure, and concerned at the low level of licence compliance, the Governor, Sir Charles Hotham secretly ordered an increase in the frequency of the hated licence hunts to twice weekly. For a time, a violent response seemed imminent at the volatile Bendigo field, but it failed to materialise. Instead, two events occurred in October at Ballarat, hitherto the most peaceful and industrious of fields, which inflamed the situation there even further.

The first was the wrongful arrest during a licence hunt, and the subsequent conviction for assaulting a trooper, of a crippled, non-English speaking Armenian servant of the Roman Catholic priest, Father Smyth. The second was the unpopular acquittal of the publican of the Eureka Hotel, James Bentley, who had been charged with the murder of a miner, James Scobie. After an angry mob burned Bentley's Hotel to the ground, Commissioner Rede, resolving to reassert government authority and teach the diggers a lesson, requested troop reinforcements.

On Sunday, October 22, a crowd estimated at upwards of ten thousand miners assembled to discuss their grievances on Bakery Hill, directly across the flat from the Government Camp, on the road to the Eureka.

Considerable anti-government sentiment was voiced at the meeting, and the Camp was fortified and guarded against attack for a week afterwards, but no violence eventuated. Following a second mass meeting on Wednesday November 1, the Ballarat Reform League took shape under the moderate leadership of J. B. Humffray. Throughout the next month, the League sought to negotiate with Commissioner Rede and Governor Hotham, both on the specific matters relating to Bentley and the men being tried for the burning of the hotel, and on the broader issues of abolition of the licence, democratic representation of the gold fields, and disbanding of the Gold Commission. These attempts at conciliation were unsuccessful. Instead, Rede's and Hotham's pronouncements and actions throughout November seemed designed to goad the more belligerent elements among the miners into precipitating a crisis.

Tension began to mount again when military reinforcements arriving from Melbourne by way of the Eureka on Tuesday, November 28, were set upon by a mob, and a number of baggage carts were overturned. In the resulting melee, a number of men were injured, and a drummer boy was said to have been fatally wounded.

At a mass meeting on Bakery Hill on Wednesday, November 29, the blue "Southern Cross" flag flew for the first time behind the speakers. The Reform League's delegates reported their failure to obtain any undertakings from Governor Hotham, other than the promise of a Commission of Enquiry, which was perhaps seen as a delaying tactic. With the patience of the miners running out, and the mood of moderation beginning to darken, the meeting voted in favour of burning licences and general resistance to the arrest of unlicensed miners.

Rede's provocative response was a licence hunt on Thursday, November 30 at the Gravel Pits Lead, the nearest to the Camp and hitherto the most compliant. Eight defaulters were arrested, but the military had to turn out in force to extricate them and their captors from a large and angry crowd.

Following this raid, the most belligerent of the miners converged on Bakery Hill. In the absence of the official League leadership, moderation was swept aside in a rising tide of anger, and a more militant leader, Peter Lalor, seized the moment. Licences were burned, the rebel flag was again unfurled, and the miners swore an oath of allegiance to it. A council of war was established, captains were appointed, various divisions and brigades, some nationally based, were formed, and the rebels marched in a long column to the Eureka. Pikes were forged, and firearms, provisions and horses were donated or requisitioned. Drilling commenced, and shows of force were made as far away as Bakery Hill, within sight of the Camp.

Tension was high across the field on Thursday night. The Catholic priest, Father Smyth, made two trips from the Eureka to the Government Camp in an unsuccessful attempt to mediate. Nevertheless, the widely anticipated attack on the Camp did not eventuate.

The next day, Friday, December 1, Rede learned from his spies that the rebels were constructing a defensive fortification at the Eureka. On a sloping site bordering the Melbourne road, an acre or so of ground was enclosed by a flimsy barricade constructed from shaft support timbers set in the ground on their ends and roped together, along with overturned carts and the like. Within this stockade the Eureka rebels encamped, vowing to defend themselves against further licence arrests or other incursions by the authorities.

But though there was much emotion, enthusiasm and activity, and a number of adventurous excursions from the stockade by small bands of men, overall organisation was loose, and strategy and discipline were lacking. As a result, by Saturday night the purposefulness of the rebels had dissipated, the tension on the field had abated, and a military showdown no longer seemed imminent. No more than a few hundred men remained in the stockade, most having either gone off carousing in the usual fashion, or retired to their own tents in expectation of a day of rest to follow.

It was not to be so. At 3 am on Sunday December 3 1854, a party of 276 police and military personnel and several civilians, under the command of Captain J. W. Thomas, left the Government Camp, and having detoured by way of Black Hill to the north east of the Camp, approached the Eureka Stockade at dawn from a north westerly direction. Which side opened fire first is uncertain. What is certain is that the ensuing engagement was short and one-sided. The stockaders, taken by surprise, probably outnumbered and certainly outgunned, were quickly routed. Lalor later estimated that 22 stockaders were either killed immediately or died soon after, and a further 12 were wounded and survived, though how many others were killed or wounded in the vicinity of the stockade can only be conjectured. Casualties on the Government side were 4 killed and 12 wounded. Many of the surviving stockaders were taken prisoner, and the remainder fled in disarray. A number of tents within and around the stockade were burned.

Marital law was declared, and all armed resistance collapsed.

However, the ascendancy of the authorities following the decisive military victory at the stockade was short-lived. In the days and weeks that followed, there was a groundswell of public indignation in Melbourne as well as in Ballarat against what was seen as a brutal over-reaction in a situation essentially brought about by the actions of Commission and Government officials. When thirteen of the imprisoned stockaders were tried for treason in Melbourne early in 1855, all were acquitted to great public acclaim. The promised commission of enquiry into the administration of the gold fields eventuated, and was scathing in its criticism of the handling of the affair. In the following months, most of the miners' demands were acceded to. The Miner's Licence was replaced by an export duty on gold and a Miner's Right which cost a small annual fee. A system of mining wardens replaced the gold commissioners, and police numbers were cut drastically. The pace of reform was so rapid that within a year, the rebel leader Peter Lalor was representing Ballarat in the Legislative Council. After the establishment of the Legislative Assembly in 1856, he was elected to that chamber, of which he later became Speaker.

The extent to which the Eureka Stockade debacle was instrumental in precipitating change, and the extent to which change was inevitable and imminent in any case, remains a point of contention. However there is no doubt that, as the better known of only two armed insurrections in the history of European settlement in Australia, the Eureka affair has echoed and re-echoed in the national political consciousness down to the present day. Eureka has been adopted as a symbol not only by the political left, but also at times by groups on the radical right of the political spectrum. The Eureka affair has been variously characterised and mythologised as the cradle of Australian democracy, as a revolt of free men against imperial tyranny, of labour against a privileged ruling class, of independent free enterprise against burdensome taxation, as an expression of multicultural republicanism, and so on.

However, this enduring if ambiguous legacy was not apparent in Ballarat in the years immediately following the stockade battle. On the contrary, it seems that for a generation after, the inclination among officialdom and the Ballarat community alike was to forget the incident. On the official side, there was perhaps embarrassment about the clumsy handling of the whole affair, and the excessive use of force. It seems that in the general community there were mixed feelings. Some remained antagonistic, seeing the stockade episode as the result of the extreme actions of a few hotheads of Irish and other suspect origins. Most miners, whilst they probably gave the stockaders at least some of the credit for the reforms which followed, were relieved to put the turbulent past behind them as they looked forward to a period of stability and prosperity. Indeed, a number of the stockaders themselves, including Lalor, were quick to move on in respectable and profitable new directions. As a result, the event soon faded from public consciousness, and the site was neglected.

This neglect was compounded by the fact that the stockade had been located amongst tents and mine workings, in an area which until a short time before had been bush, and where enduring landmarks were few. After the rebels' defeat, the materials used in the construction of the stockade were soon reclaimed for other purposes, and all physical trace of the stockade disappeared. The ground in the vicinity was extensively worked over a period of years, resulting in substantial changes to the basic topography.

Consequently, when moves were eventually made to erect a monument to the affair in 1884, some uncertainty was reported thirty years on as to the exact location of the stockade.

One hundred and ten years later, the matter has still not been finally settled.

Source: Adapted excerpts from Harvey, J. T., *Eureka Rediscovered: In search of the site of the historic stockade*, University of Ballarat, 1994.

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The Eureka Stockade: the disputed site and the new Eureka Centre

The site of the Eureka Stockade lies in the eastern suburban area of Ballarat, now a major provincial city. The stockade affair is commemorated by a park reserve located some 2.5 km east of the centre of the city, on the north side of Eureka St. The Eureka Stockade monument, erected in 1884, stands in the south east corner of the park.

The past few decades have seen a general awakening of interest in matters of history and heritage in Ballarat. This has particularly been the case with the Eureka Stockade affair in all its aspects, including the question of the exact location of the stockade. During the period, a widespread public perception grew in Ballarat that the stockade was actually located some considerable distance west of the Eureka monument.