



8 Attack on the Stockade, December 3rd

9 Arrests followed the battle

The Eureka Trails

The gold rush of the 1850s brought wealth as well as chaos to the fledgling Victorian colony. Agitation on the goldfields led to the “affair at Eureka”...



Eureka Sites

The four principal sites are Bakery Hill, the Eureka Stockade, the Ballarat Old Cemetery and the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery. The diggers met at Bakery Hill and fought in the Stockade. Their dead are buried in the Ballarat Old Cemetery and their flag, the flag of the Southern Cross, is preserved at the Art Gallery. The police lived in the Government Camp, which occupied the area where the Art Gallery now stands, and the military were stationed nearby on Soldiers Hill. From the Camp, the Government forces set out on their mission to put down the digger protest on Sunday morning the 3rd of December 1854. The Art Gallery and Bakery Hill are within easy walking distance of the city centre. The other sites listed may require transport.



Troopers' Trail

The Troopers' Trail follows, as closely as possible, the route taken by the Government forces on their way to the Eureka Stockade. The walk now travels through urban Ballarat and alongside the Yarrowee River. It finishes in the Eureka Stockade Historical Precinct. Directional bollards and information signs are located along the way.

The Troopers' Trail is 3.5 km long and takes approximately one hour to walk in either direction.



Diggers' Trail

The Diggers' Trail begins at Bakery Hill, the site where the monster meetings took place, and where the diggers' flag, the flag of the Southern Cross (the Eureka Flag), was first flown. After passing numerous points of interest in the Eureka story, the Trail culminates at the Eureka Stockade, where the diggers had resolved to resist any further licence hunts and to agitate for reform of the corrupt goldfields administration.

Acknowledgments...

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THE Eureka Trails

*Follow in the footsteps of
Ballarat's tumultuous history ...*

**“We swear by the Southern Cross
to stand truly by each other and fight
to defend our rights and liberties”**

Images

- 1 Eugene von Guerard **Old Ballarat as it was in the Summer of 1853-1854** (1884)
Collection: Ballarat Fine Art Gallery
- 2 S.T. Gill **The Licence Inspected** (1852-3)
Collection: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria
- 3 F.W. Niven, after S.T. Gill **“Deep Sinking” Bakery Hill, Ballarat – 1853** (1853)
Collection: Ballarat Fine Art Gallery
- 4 Charles Doudiet **Eureka Riot 17th October** (1854)
Collection: Ballarat Fine Art Gallery
- 5 P. Lambert, after John Ferres, Government Printer **Notice!** (1997)
- 6 Charles Doudiet **Swearing allegiance to the “Southern Cross”** (1854)
Collection: Ballarat Fine Art Gallery
- 7 Charles Doudiet **Eureka Slaughter 3rd December** (1854)
Collection: Ballarat Fine Art Gallery
- 8 George Browning **Eureka – December 3, 1854** (1985-1989)
Collection: The Eureka Centre
- 9 P. Lambert, after John Ferres, Government Printer **£400 Reward** (1997)





1 The goldfields of Ballarat, summer of 1853-1854



4 The burning of Bentley's Eureka Hotel



6 Swearing the oath, November 30th



7 Attack on the Stockade, December 3rd

Ballarat : the Australian Eldorado

Victoria became a colony in July 1851. Gold was first discovered in Clunes and Buninyong, then in the creeks and gullies of Ballarat in August 1851. News of these discoveries quickly spread throughout Australia and the rest of the world soon heard of these wonderful finds.

Thousands of people, including almost all of the police force, quit their jobs in Melbourne and Geelong and headed for the goldfields. Over the next four years, Ballarat's population increased dramatically from a handful of diggers to 45,000. Most diggers were young men who hoped to find gold quickly and then leave the harsh conditions of the goldfields. In the beginning, good finds were reported by individuals or small parties of diggers but shallow alluvial gold was becoming difficult to find and the diggers had to put down holes up to a depth of 30 metres. This could take months and thousands of diggers were disappointed and frustrated.

The new colonial government in Victoria faced many problems. It began with few resources and, as the population on the goldfields increased, there was a demand for services: roads, postal services, schools, hospitals and the other structures of a civilized society were needed.

In order to pay for its services and to control the diggers, the Government imposed a tax of 30 shillings per month on the diggers in the form of a licence to dig for gold. The licence fee was a tax on labour rather than on the fruits of labour, and it fell equally on those who were enriched by their finds and on those who made nothing.

The licence fee was also imposed without granting a voice to the diggers who could neither stand for, nor be represented in Parliament. The diggers also knew that a policeman who made an arrest was paid half the fine, which considerably increased his miserable payment of 6 pence per day and gave him an incentive to catch unlicensed diggers. Many policemen, frequently assisted by soldiers with bayonets, grossly violated the human dignity of the diggers. Police recruits were often ex-convicts who enjoyed the infamous digger hunts.



2 Licence inspections were unpopular



3 Gold became harder to find, forcing miners to dig deep

Unrest on the Ballarat Goldfields

Average gold yields, especially in Ballarat East where the Eureka lead was situated, were declining by 1854 and the licence was an unbearable financial burden on the diggers. Corruption on the goldfields was rife. The newly appointed governor, Sir Charles Hotham, did not agree with the licence fee, but he had been told before his departure from London that he must enforce it, even if it came to a fight with the diggers.

Although unrest was widespread on the other Victorian goldfields it reached boiling point at Ballarat on the 7th of October 1854 when a young Scottish digger, James Scobie, was killed outside the Eureka Hotel. Many diggers believed that the proprietor of the Hotel, James Bentley, was responsible for Scobie's death. Brought before a magistrate who was his friend, Bentley was discharged. During 'a monster meeting' of enraged diggers on the 17th of October the Hotel was burnt to the ground. Political agitation then grew daily and a group of British former Chartists established the Ballarat Reform League and had their Charter of Bakery Hill passed on the 11th of November, by some 10,000 diggers. The Ballarat Reform League Charter demanded a thorough reform of Hotham's Government and of the administration of the goldfields. Its fundamental premise lay at the heart of every democratic movement - 'the people are the only legitimate source of all political power.'

On the 27th of November Governor Hotham refused to compromise with a digger deputation pleading for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. He increased the number of troops at Ballarat and ordered further licence hunts. The diggers held another 'monster meeting' at Bakery Hill, on the 29th of November. At this meeting the newly created flag of the Southern Cross was flown for the first time and some diggers burnt their licences. The diggers were enraged when a deliberately provocative licence hunt was held the next day. The diggers met again and, under Peter Lalor's leadership, they took a stand at the Eureka lead where they erected a flimsy fortification called a stockade.

The battle of the Eureka Stockade

Although the leadership of the diggers had been given up by the former Chartists and passed to more radical elements, it was never the intention of the new leadership under Lalor to engage in direct military action against the government forces, much less to attempt to overthrow the government itself. The men at the Stockade stood on their own ground where they were determined to resist any further licence hunts and to persuade the government to reform the corrupt administration of the goldfields.

By taking that stand, however, the diggers played into the hands of the authorities who had decided that the movement for reform had to be put down. The highest authority at Ballarat,

Commissioner Robert Rede, wrote to the Governor on the 2nd of December expressing his satisfaction that the diggers were in the Stockade and that they were armed. He said that they had to be caught with 'arms in their hands' and thus it would be possible 'to crush them and the democratic movement at one blow.' Rede was correct in his estimate of the diggers because they had taken a stand for democratic and human rights, for human dignity and freedom of expression.

At dawn on the 3rd of December 1854, a Sunday, a well-armed and highly trained force of 296 men attacked the 100 or so diggers in the Stockade. The bloody battle lasted only 20 minutes but, a few hours later, Captain J. E. Thomas, Commander of the Troops, reported that 'The number of the killed and wounded on the side of the insurgents was great...there were not less than thirty killed on the spot, and I know that many have since died of their wounds.' In the vicinity of the Stockade the police slaughtered several innocent bystanders. In the line of duty Captain Henry Christopher Wise and three privates were killed or died of their wounds.

Death makes no distinctions between those fallen in battle and the remains of the soldiers lie near to those of the diggers in the Ballarat Old Cemetery. Fittingly, because his death lit the fire that brought all things to this pass, James Scobie lies between them.

After the battle, 125 arrests were made, one third of them Irish because Eureka was an Irish field. Of that total number only thirteen stood on trial for their lives in Melbourne in early 1855 charged with high treason. Melbourne juries rapidly acquitted them all.

The growth of a democratic spirit

It can be argued that the reforms, which followed Eureka, would have been achieved without an armed protest. That tyranny ruled on the goldfields is undeniable and there are no grounds to believe that it would not have long continued without Eureka. Peter Lalor later said 'if democracy means opposition to a tyrannical government then I am, and will ever remain, a Democrat'. He also deplored the fact that British governments, at home and abroad, had constantly granted reform measures only after they had been baptised in blood.

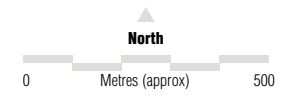
In the years after Eureka all the reforms demanded by the diggers were granted. The licence fee was abolished and replaced by a Miner's Right, which also gave its holder a right to the vote. The digger leaders, John Basson Humfray and Peter Lalor, were elected to Parliament to represent Ballarat. A tax of 2/6 per ounce was placed on gold and the Gold Commission was abolished. The demands of the Charter of Bakery Hill for manhood suffrage, triennial parliaments and payment of members were eventually met. Land reform took much longer and was never fully achieved in the Nineteenth Century.

The diggers bore the democratic spirit of Eureka to the goldfields in Queensland and Western Australia. Over the years since 1854 the legend of Eureka has quickened the hearts of millions and the Southern Cross has been flown proudly as a unique and beautiful symbol of its spirit. The values of Eureka belong to all Australians regardless of race, class or creed - mateship, egalitarianism, the readiness to 'have a go', a respect for the underdog, fair play and courage in adversity.



5 Political agitation brought a swift response

THE Eureka Trails



Ballarat Old Cemetery



Ballarat Fine Art Gallery



"Blood on the Southern Cross", Sovereign Hill



The Gold Museum



The Eureka Memorial, 1886



The Eureka Centre

Eureka Sites

Trooper's Trail

Digger's Trail

1 Police Camp or Government Camp

The Police Camp, also known as the Government Camp, was located between Lydiard and Camp Streets. The Ballarat Fine Art Gallery now occupies this site.

The police had occupied this high ground since 1851 and were able to look down onto the thousands of diggers working along the Yarrowee River* and the Ballarat East, Eureka and Golden Point leads. *Until it was recently renamed, this watercourse was known as the Yarrowee Creek.

2 Gnarr Gully

The Government forces stopped here for half an hour and were joined by more forces from Soldiers Hill who were in full battle dress. The attacking force of nearly 300 men included mounted and foot soldiers from the 12th and 40th Regiments plus mounted and foot police. Soldiers Hill is located to the North of this point across the railway line and is the area where the Government forces camped in the 1850's. From that vantage point they were able to observe the diggers on the Ballarat flat.

3 Eastern Oval / Yarrowee River

To avoid detection the troopers marched along established walking tracks following gullies, rivers and hills. Through this area they followed the Northern banks of the Yarrowee River which now flows in a bluestone channel behind the Eastern Oval grandstand.

4 Yarrowee River / Black Hill

At this point the Government forces forded the Yarrowee River onto the grassy flat on the other side. The actual crossing place is difficult to identify in today's landscape because of extensive mining activity over the years.

Tension between the Government and the diggers had been rising for some months and in anticipation of an attack the diggers placed sentinels on watch around the various Ballarat diggings. From the top of Black Hill to the North one of the diggers remaining on duty saw the Government forces and fired a single warning shot to the diggers. It was heard at the Stockade but they waited for a second confirming shot that was never fired.

5 Specimen Vale Creek

In this area the Government forces split into three groups to attack the diggers at the Stockade. The infantry and foot police marched up Carboni's Gully and marksmen took up positions on the top of the hill. Another group on horseback continued along the Specimen Vale Creek and past the Free Trade Hotel to attack the Stockade from the rear.

6 The Eureka Stockade / Eureka Stockade Gardens + Memorial

A flimsy fortification, called a stockade by the Government, was erected in this area on the Eureka Lead in December 1854. The Stockade was built of timber and scrap materials and was designed to provide some sort of fortification for the diggers who undertook basic military training behind its walls. It signalled a place they could call their own and defend, if necessary, with their blood. On the morning of the attack (Sunday the 3rd of December) by Government forces, the Stockade was poorly defended and the thousands who had pledged their loyalty a week earlier had dwindled away. The battle lasted approximately 20 minutes and the diggers were quickly over run.

In 1884, some 30 years after the battle at the Eureka Stockade, a group of citizens decided that an appropriate memorial should be built at Eureka. The Victorian Government donated four cannons and the granite obelisk was eventually mounted in 1886.

The exact site of the 1854 Eureka Stockade was a contentious issue and a large party of old diggers were unable to agree on its location. Some evidence suggests that the original site was approximately 200 metres north-west of the 1884 monument.

7 Bakery Hill

Bakery Hill was the hub of the goldfields. It was the natural centre of activity because all roads met in this narrow gully and it was here that the hotels, gold buyers and merchants congregated. It was here too that the huge public 'monster meetings' were held and the diggers demands were made. From Bakery Hill the diggers could look across the valley of the Yarrowee River to the Government Camp and to Soldiers Hill.

On the 29th of November, 1854, a crowd of over 12,000 (one-third of Ballarat's adult population at that time) attended a meeting on Bakery Hill. At this meeting the newly created flag of the Southern Cross (the Eureka Flag) was flown for the first time and some diggers burnt their licences and pledges of loyalty were made. Next day, Peter Lalor knelt beneath the Eureka flag, proclaiming:

**"We swear by the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other
and fight to defend our rights and liberties"**

His oath was echoed by the diggers.

8 Ballarat Times Office

The Ballarat Times and Southern Cross was edited by Henry Seekamp, an outspoken critic of the Government and of its representatives at Ballarat. The paper began production on the 4th of March 1854 in Mair Street. By the time of the Eureka Stockade, it had moved to the north-east corner of Victoria and Humfray Streets in Ballarat East.

Seekamp was convinced that the founding of the Ballarat Reform League and the Charter of Bakery Hill had sown the seeds of 'Australian independence.' On Monday the 4th of December Seekamp was arrested at his office when he was preparing a report on the battle. He was found guilty of seditious libel and imprisoned.

9 Catholic Chapel

The Chapel was located near the eastern boundary of the St. Alipius Church grounds in Victoria Street, between Princes and King Streets. Father Patrick Smyth, a highly educated young Irish priest, constantly tried to negotiate with the Camp authorities and calm the tempestuous spirits among his flock, including the 4,000 Irishmen on the Eureka Lead. The Catholic Chapel became an important meeting place for formal and informal gatherings during the weeks before Eureka.

10 Hayes' Tent Site

Timothy and Anastasia Hayes lived at this site close to the Eureka diggings at the time of the Eureka Rebellion. Timothy Hayes was chairman of the Ballarat Reform League and was charged with high treason following his arrest on the day of the Stockade battle. Anastasia Hayes, the mother of 6 children, protested against the harsh treatment of the diggers by the Government. She was present during the operation to amputate Peter Lalor's arm.

11 Carboni's Vantage Point

Raffaello Carboni was an Italian digger on the Ballarat goldfields. He spoke a number of languages and acted as interpreter at the monster meetings on Bakery Hill. It is recorded in Carboni's book, **"The Eureka Stockade"**, that from this vantage point on the 30th November 1854 he looked back to observe the file of diggers two abreast stretching back to the Catholic Church, during their march to the Stockade from Bakery Hill.

12 Bentley's Eureka Hotel

One of the sparks that lit Eureka was the burning of Bentley's Eureka Hotel. Its owner, James Bentley, was an ex-convict who had quickly amassed great wealth and had influential friends. The hotel, known widely as a house of ill repute, was a popular meeting place for the administrators and magistrates on the goldfields. Following the death of James Scobie on October 7, the hotel

was burnt down on the 17th of October 1854. A plaque is situated on the corner of Otway and Eureka Streets.

13 The Eureka Lead

Located in East Ballarat the Eureka Lead adjacent to the Old Melbourne Road was situated approximately 2.5 kilometres from the Government Camp. Although largely an Irish area other nationalities resided here.

14 The Eureka Centre at the Eureka Stockade Gardens Precinct

The Eureka Centre was opened in 1998 and its exhibition galleries provide a dramatic focus from which to explore, interpret and contemplate the events and significance of Eureka. www.eurekaballarat.com

15 Ballarat Old Cemetery

In December 1856, a small band of diggers went to the Ballarat Old Cemetery to gather around a memorial to honour their fallen comrades. A Geelong man, James Leggat, donated the memorial and the inscription speaks of the 'unconstitutional proceedings' of the Victorian Government.

In 1878 a monument was erected to honour the soldiers who died at Eureka. It stands fifty metres to the east of the diggers' monument and was erected by the Government of Victoria at the request of the citizens of Ballarat. The inscription makes it plain that doing one's 'Duty' in the cause of the British Empire was of importance to many citizens.

16 Peter Lalor Statue

Irishman Peter Lalor was appointed Leader of the Ballarat diggers as their Commander in Chief prior to the conflict at the Stockade. He was severely wounded during the battle at the Stockade and later had his arm amputated. He remained in hiding until after the State Treason Trials in early 1855. Lalor was elected to the Legislative Council in November 1855 and appointed speaker of the Legislative Assembly in 1880. He died in 1889.

17 Ballarat Fine Art Gallery

The Ballarat Fine Art Gallery houses the original Eureka flag, one of the most valuable and historic relics in Australian history. The Gallery also has an important collection of contemporary goldfields artworks, including works by S.T. Gill, Charles Doudiet and Eugene von Guerard.

The flag of the Southern Cross was 4 x 2.6 metres in size and was designed by a Canadian digger, Captain Ross. A group of women loyal to the diggers' cause made the flag under which many diggers died when the Stockade was over-run by the Government forces. Since its acquisition by the Ballarat City authorities in 1895, the Gallery has held the flag. It was out of view for several decades and has only been on public display since December, 1973.

18 The Gold Museum

The Gold Museum has an exhibition titled "Ballarat: Inspired by Gold" tracing Ballarat's fabulous golden history.

19 Sovereign Hill

Sovereign Hill, an internationally renowned cultural tourist attraction, depicts Ballarat's first 10 years after the discovery of gold in 1851. **"Blood on the Southern Cross"** is an exciting nightly sound and light show which tells the story of the Eureka confrontation.