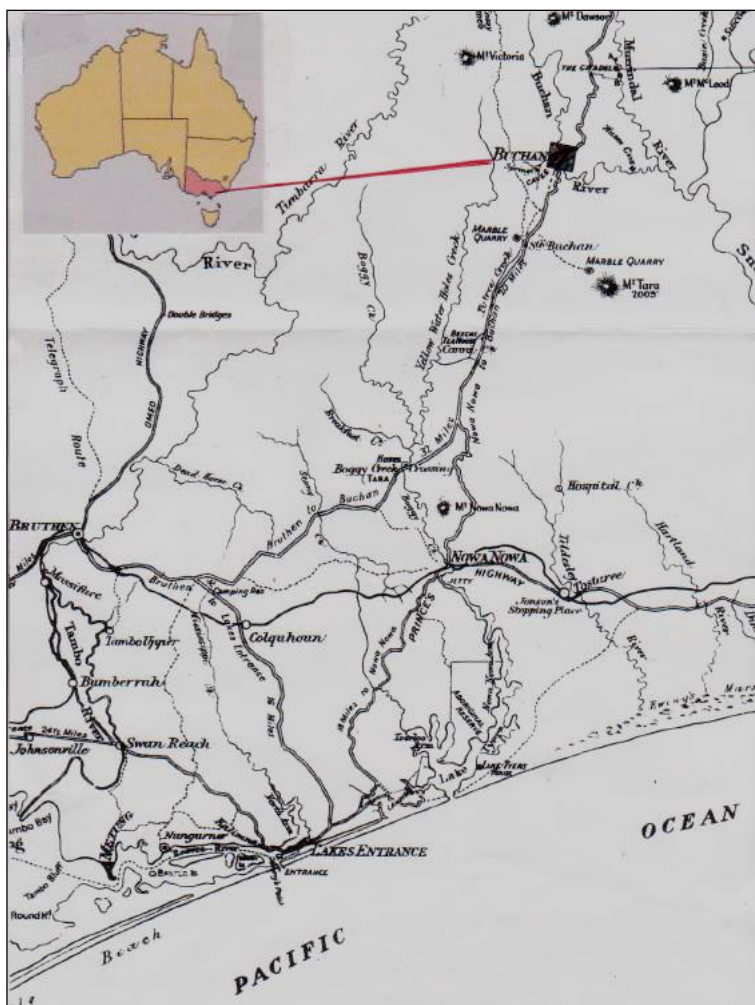


## The Buchan Proprietary Company: A Victorian Mining Swindle

BY JIM ENEVER

Lead mineralization was discovered in the limestone area surrounding Buchan in East Gippsland (Fig.1) during the 1860s. Mining activities began in earnest in the early 1870s. From 1870 to the early 1890s a succession of companies worked a number of mineral leases throughout the area (Fig.2). The ore occurrences were typically of argentiferous galena occurring as stringers and patchy cavity fillings within the Devonian limestone host rock.<sup>1</sup> Mining activities generally involved ‘rat-holing’ to follow the leaders of ore from outcrop (Fig. 3).

Figure 1: Location map



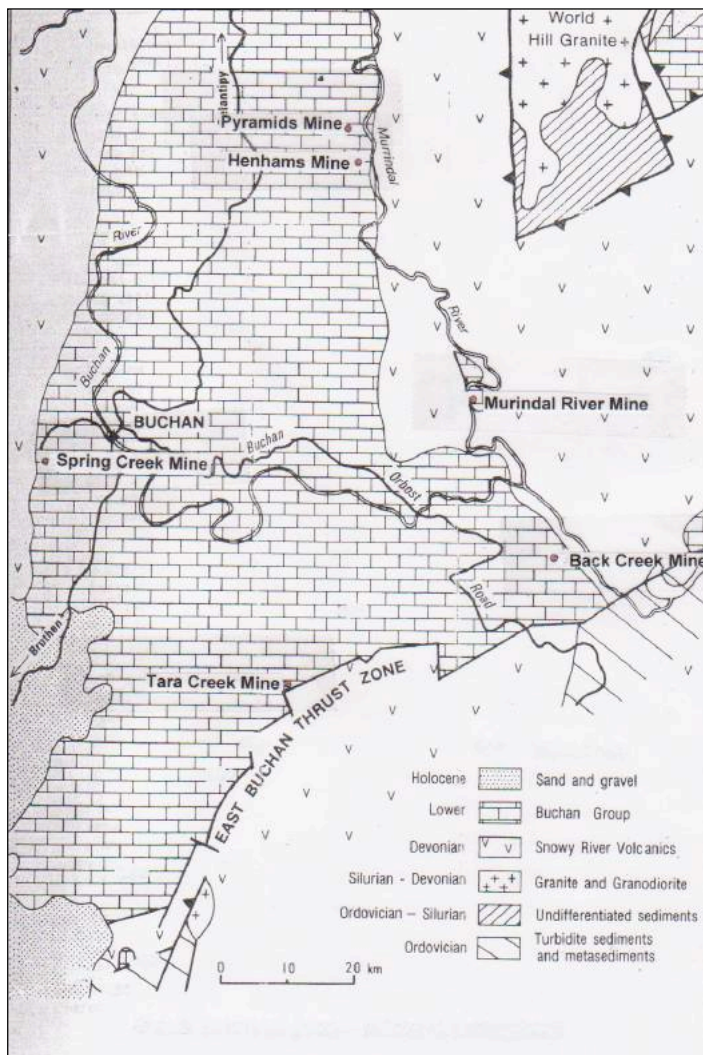
Source: Touring map of East Gippsland, PROV, Map Collection.

Although records are extremely sketchy, it is likely that one or two thousand tons of silver-lead ore was produced from the region during the twenty or so years up to 1890.<sup>2</sup> Much of this ore was transported directly to the UK for processing, some was shipped to Melbourne for treatment in the small smelters that had been established there, and a further amount smelted on site at a plant built on the Murindal River. Whilst not of consequence on the national stage, the lead mining that took place in the Buchan region during this time was of importance to the local economy, and did produce

almost all of the lead ore mined in Victoria during the nineteenth century. Of the numerous small scale mining operations that occurred in the area at this time, two sites

stood out: at Back Creek (Fig. 2) serious attempts were made to explore for a primary ore lode that might provide on going continuity for a mining operation; whilst at the Murindal River site (Fig. 2) attempts were made to establish a smelting operation that might make any mining activity more viable. In the event, neither of these undertakings proved ultimately successful, the existence of a primary lode was never convincingly demonstrated and a succession of technical difficulties and lack of a continuous supply of ore rendered on-site smelting a marginal proposition. Mining activities did, however, continue on a small scale into the early 1890s, based on the recovery of galena ore from the scattered pockets that occurred throughout the area.

**Figure 2:** Location of principal sites of lead mining, Buchan area, East Gippsland, Victoria.



### In search of a major ore body

The Holy Grail for the region was the search for a definable ore body that could provide a platform for a sustained mining enterprise. After early attempts failed to provide evidence of such an occurrence among the individual patches of galena exploited in the region, attention turned to more fanciful ideas. During the early 1880s, extravagant claims were made of the existence of a major silver-lead province in the Buchan district, based, apparently, on an agglomerated view of the numerous pockets of galena ore. The prospectus for the Nevada Lead and Silver Mining Company Ltd. (issued in 1881) contained a report by

**Source:** P.J. O'Shea, 'The mineral potential of the Snowy River Volcanics and the Buchan Caves Limestone, Eastern Victoria', Unpublished Report, *Geological Survey of Victoria*, 1977/77.

Norman Taylor, 'Late Government Field Geologist', in which a claim was made that 'the supply of ore will be found to be practically inexhaustible'.<sup>3</sup> The prospectus claimed that assays had been made, 'giving from 73 to 80 percent of lead, and from

16oz to 42oz of silver per ton of lead'. The Nevada Lead and Silver Mining Company was duly registered, shares sold to speculative investors, and leases acquired in return for generous considerations to the promoters who had held the leases in question.<sup>4</sup> Brief descriptions of activities appeared in the press and elsewhere throughout 1881 and 1882, revolving mainly around the resurrection of the smelter that had been built at the Murindal River site by an earlier company. By 1883, all available resources had been used up and activities ceased without any significant outcome.<sup>5</sup>

**Figure 3:** 'Rat-hole' mining for Galena in the Buchan Limestone.



**Source:** Buchan Heritage Group.

In January 1894 a prospectus appeared in the Melbourne press for the Carbonate Gold and Silver Mining Company NL.<sup>6</sup> The prospectus gave a glowing account of the potential of the recently identified carbonate ore of the Buchan area to produce vast wealth, drawing on a supposed parallel with the geological setting of the Leadville area of Colorado. By this time, many of the mineral leases in the Buchan area were under the effective control of Charles Pattison, a Melbourne based mining promoter. Among these leases was one covering the Back Creek site that had been worked sporadically from 1870 to 1893. The Buchan Carbonate Ore Syndicate NL formally came into existence in July 1894.<sup>7</sup> The articles of association of the Company outlined an agreement by which the lease over Back Creek, and all mining plant on the lease, was to be transferred from Pattison to the Company in return for a parcel of shares and cash. The mineral lease files indicate that this transfer had been affected by August 1894.

### **Colonel Cecil C. Morgan**

The predominant figure in the Carbonate Gold and Silver Mining Company from its outset was Colonel Cecil C Morgan. The prospectus issued in January 1894 was built around his enthusiasm for the prospect and his credentials in relation to the mining and smelting of carbonate ores.

One colourful account of Morgan's background described him as coming from 'a race of soldiers and is related to several members of the titled aristocracy of England'.<sup>8</sup> The same account claimed that he had been a soldier of fortune fighting in Mexico, where he had led his men successfully in daring raids and had suffered a multitude of wounds. More sober accounts, however, simply relate that he had been educated at the 'London School of Mines', leaving there in 1871 and travelling to the USA where he took up the position as assistant superintendent of the Flagstaff Mine in Utah.<sup>9</sup> Over the next few years, Morgan held a number of senior positions in mining operations in California and Nevada before finally moving to Leadville Colorado where he managed a number of mines, was elected as the State Commissioner of Mines and State Assayer for Colorado and appointed by the US Federal Court as Court Inspector of Mines. During his time in Leadville he advised on mining prospects and acted as an expert witness in disputes.<sup>10</sup>

Morgan and his wife became prominent in Leadville society during the 1880s, with Morgan, either affectionately or otherwise, being referred to as 'Lord Morgan' by the Leadville citizenry.<sup>11</sup> During his time in Leadville, Morgan acquired his only certifiable military title, being commissioned as a Captain in the 'Tabor Highland Guards', or 'kilties' as they were known locally on account of their choice of uniform, a private militia force raised in Leadville by Horace Tabor.<sup>12</sup> The Guards were one of a number of groups formed to handle unrest in an essentially lawless town, including keeping in check striking miners. In June 1888, Morgan was severely injured in a bizarre accident when tendons in his hand were severed as his arm broke a plate glass window in his sleep. It was reported at this time that he was 'delirious'.<sup>13</sup> In October 1888, Morgan and his wife moved to Aspen.<sup>14</sup> Morgan appears to have remained there until 1890, managing the Bonnybell Mine and dabbling in Republican politics.<sup>15</sup> By 1891, however, Morgan was back in the UK, apparently repatriated to regain his health after a 'serious illness'.<sup>16</sup> While in the UK the British board of the British Broken Hill Company recruited him and in February 1892 he arrived in Australia to take up his post as the general manager of the British Broken Hill Mine.<sup>17</sup> During his short and somewhat turbulent stay in charge of the British Mine, two characteristics emerged that were to mark his behaviour whilst in Buchan; his penchant for armed confrontation and his tendency to disguise the true state of affairs.

Morgan's belligerent attitude to the work force came to the fore on occasions whilst he was at Broken Hill. Popular accounts of Morgan's behaviour during the Broken Hill miner's strike of 1892 relate how in order to secure the passage of a train carrying supplies to the mine through picket lines, Morgan 'planted himself on the cow catcher of the engine, brandishing a revolver in each hand ... and dared anyone to stop the train'.<sup>18</sup>

**Figure 4:** Cecil Morgan around the time of his arrival in Australia in 1892



Morgan left Broken Hill in June 1893 under something of a cloud. An account of the general meeting of the British Broken Hill Co. held in November 1893, described accounting irregularities that had occurred during Morgan's tenure as manager, which served to materially overstate the true worth of the operation and conceal operating losses.<sup>19</sup> What transpired in the period between Morgan leaving Broken Hill in June 1893 and emerging as the driving force behind the Carbonate Gold and Silver Mining Co. in January 1894 is not clear. There is no real evidence of how Morgan became involved with the latter company, nor if his involvement pre-dated his departure from Broken Hill or not. Similarly, there is no indication of whether he was solicited because of his credentials or was involved in the promotion of the project from the start.

**Source:** *Australian Mining Standard*, 10 April 1892

### **Steady progress**

The plan from the outset of activities at Back Creek appears to have been to explore for the large body of carbonate ore imagined by Morgan to exist near the contact between the Buchan Group limestone and adjacent Snowy River Volcanics (Fig. 2), ore that supposedly had been ignored during previous attempts to exploit the deposit. Early reports describe rich samples of carbonate ore being recovered from the surface in this proximity.<sup>20</sup> Throughout 1894 and early 1895, regular reports appeared in the *Australian Mining Standard* of steady progress, revolving around the sinking of two shafts, one in limestone and the other in the volcanics.<sup>21</sup> By the end of 1894 the focus was on the extraction of lead ore (a mixture of galena and carbonate ore) from the limestone intersected in one of the shafts, with sufficient encouragement to entice the board to instruct that regular shipments of 10 tons of ore be sent to Melbourne.<sup>22</sup>

In April 1895, Morgan, in his capacity as managing director of the Company, reported favourably to the shareholders at the first general meeting, stating in part that the ore was 'of such good fluxing quality that no deduction would be made for the cost of smelting'.<sup>23</sup> A month later, from May 1895, reports on activities began to be made under the banner of the Buchan Gold Silver and Lead Mining Company, describing continued progress with the mine development program, now including the reworking of entries put in place during earlier mining phases, and successful results from an experimental concentration plant employing a manual jig.<sup>24</sup> Testing conducted on a



parcel of ore at the Bairnsdale School of Mines was reported to show excellent potential for smelting.<sup>25</sup>

As 1895 came to an end, the Buchan Carbonate Ore Syndicate NL had been formally wound up and the residual interests transferred to the Buchan Gold Silver and Lead Mining Company NL.<sup>26</sup> At an extraordinary general meeting of the latter company held in November 1895, the meeting was asked to ratify an arrangement entered into by the directors to ‘sell the undertaking, business, property, assets, rights and privileges of this company to a new company to be named the Buchan Proprietary Mining Company NL’.<sup>27</sup> The Buchan Proprietary Mining Company NL was registered in December 1895, with four of the original six shareholders in the Carbonate Ore Syndicate, including Pattison and Morgan, acting as directors.<sup>28</sup>

### **Heady times**

With the injection of capital provided by the formation of the Buchan Proprietary Company, the pace picked up. Reports on activities during the first half of 1896 reflected optimism. An account in the *Omeo Standard* in May 1896 captured the buoyant spirit:

The present position and prospects of the Buchan Proprietary Co. are so bright as to warrant a very spirited forward step which the directors are on the eve of taking. There are now 32 men at work on the mine - a staff which is to be increased forthwith - and a small plant running, about a ton per day of concentrates being produced during the past two months, which have been disposed of in Melbourne, where they have brought a very satisfactory price. The mine, however, has developed to such an extent that, after the most careful tests and disinterested examinations, the directors have decided to erect a plant and concentrating machinery, with a capacity for treating 120 tons a day of crude ore ... The company has the satisfaction of knowing that it has been the means of opening out the first argentiferous lead ore in the colony of Victoria.<sup>29</sup>

The intended plant, as described separately by Government Engineer, Henry Rosales, was to be supplied by Messrs May Brothers of Gawler SA, and was to be designed to produce about 12 tons of concentrate daily from about 110 tons of ore.<sup>30</sup> Information supplied by Morgan to Rosales described the proposed appliances to be incorporated in the plant as ‘a stone breaker, rollers, sizing trommel, coarse and fine jiggers etc’. Steam was to be used to power the plant, ‘for which purpose, as a first installment, a 7 ton boiler has already been delivered on the ground’.<sup>31</sup> The plant was apparently modelled on the North Broken Hill mill.<sup>32</sup>

In a report to shareholders in August 1896, Morgan claimed that ‘6,000 tons of ore had been exposed in a block 95 ft long, 40 ft broad and 23 ft high’.<sup>33</sup> After visiting the mine around this time, Rosales expressed a favourable opinion, and appeared to accept on face value an estimate of 7,000 tons of ore in sight provided by the underground manager, Mr Slee, as justification for investment in a concentrating plant.<sup>34</sup> Rosales’s report on his visit appears to have provided a sense of legitimacy,

given the esteem in which he was held and his background in the mining of carbonate ores in Spain and elsewhere.

The buoyant spirit of the time reached as far as the UK, with the *Mining Journal* joining in the accolades for Morgan, and giving a detailed account of the status of development:

The underground workings consist of an adit level 350 feet long, which at a point 300 feet in connects with the western shaft at a depth of 100 feet ... Crosscuts are driven through the lode from points 200, 250 and 300 feet in the main adit ... The body of ore developed to date above the 100 feet level is proven by a series of jump ups to be over 30 feet in thickness and 100 feet in width ... Splendid faces of carbonates are showing in the extreme eastern faces, and 150 feet in length. Testing rods have been sunk in many places, and the ore body found to go down below the level. Last January it was computed that over 12,000 tons of ore were then exposed; since then double the amount has been opened up and blocked out ready for stoping. All the workings are connected by shoots and hoppers. Tram lines are laid in each of the levels. The ore from the upper levels will be sent by shoot to the main adit and thence to the mill site immediately below the mouth of this tunnel.<sup>35</sup>

Fifty men were reported to be working at the mines, and a railway reported to be planned to join to the State trunk line at Nowa Nowa.<sup>36</sup>

Apart from the Buchan Proprietary's property at Back Creek, two further properties in the area had been added to the stable managed by Morgan by mid 1896. The early operations of one of these, that of the Buchan Consolidated Mining Syndicate, was described in favourable terms by the *Mining Journal* in July.<sup>37</sup> In June 1896, the Buchan-Murindal Silver Mining Company NL was registered, with Charles Pattison and Cecil Morgan as shareholders and directors. According to the articles of association, this company aimed to acquire from Pattison the leases over areas encompassing, among other things, the original Murindal River site.<sup>38</sup>

### **The lid blown off**

Although outwardly everything was looking up, beneath the surface trouble was brewing. By August 1896, the shareholders of the Buchan Proprietary Company were beginning to feel anxious. Failure of the directors to produce audited accounts at a meeting raised the shareholders ire and precipitated moves to spill several incumbent directors. An air of suspicion had become evident, despite Morgan's attempts at reassurance based on his claim as to the quantity of proven ore in place.<sup>39</sup>

In mid September 1896, sensational reports appeared, both locally and in mining centres across Australia, of a mining scandal engulfing the Buchan Proprietary Company.<sup>40</sup> Although detail varied between accounts, the essence of the story revolved around the sudden departure of Colonel Morgan, after having sold his shareholding in the Buchan Proprietary Company and transferring his shares in the other companies to Pattison. The unravelling of affairs appears to have been precipitated by a conversation between the underground manager, William Slee, and Fred May, the contractor for

supply of the ore dressing plant, during which May informed Slee of Morgan's sudden departure. On receiving this news, Slee was reported to have 'ejaculated, in a peculiar tone "Then I'm done" ', and proceeded to declare the mine 'an absolute duffer!'.<sup>41</sup> At a meeting with the Company directors in Melbourne shortly after this, Slee elaborated:

As to getting out anything approaching 6000 tons of ore, as described by Colonel Morgan so recently, he said, if he were paid for doing so, he did not think he could possibly get out 100 tons of payable material ... the Government experts had been deceived by the way in which the mine had been opened up. Observations had been made as to the dip of the shoots of ore, and drives had been put in to pick up those shoots in a way that they could be followed for a little time. Care was also taken always to leave a good face of ore exposed, And not to break into the limestone which was behind it.<sup>42</sup>

When asked about his own involvement in the deception, Slee claimed to have been intimidated into going along with Morgan's plan to mislead the shareholders by providing falsely encouraging opinions about the prospects. Slee was adamant that it was Morgan alone who had dictated the way in which the mine would be developed, and that he assumed that the directors would be aware of what was happening through their association with Morgan. As to the nature of the intimidation, Slee cited his fear of Morgan, who at one stage had allegedly produced a pistol and threatened him, and also the persuasive influence of Colonel Morgan's wife.<sup>43</sup> The details of the latter circumstance were not revealed.

The company acted promptly once Slee's confessions had been revealed, appointing an independent expert to provide an opinion on the properties, and suspending payment of any further calls on shares. Given the role that Henry Rosales's report had played in the lead up to the debacle, the Minister of Mines requested that Rosales provide an explanation, whilst at the same time expressing the opinion that he considered Rosales to be both 'an able and incorruptible man'.<sup>44</sup> In response, Rosales reiterated his faith in the ultimate success of the operation, given the introduction of improved appliances.<sup>45</sup>

Whilst awaiting the report from the appointed expert, Dr Merrilees, a director of the Company, paid a visit of inspection to the property, obtaining a number of sworn affidavits that he believed proved the 'whole affair to be a deliberate swindle'.<sup>46</sup> In a statement made by Carl Johnson, a miner who had been engaged by Morgan and had worked at the mine for two-and-a-half years, the focus began to be directed more toward Slee and Morgan acting in concert. According to Johnson's testimony, all had been proceeding well up to the end of 1895, with promising prospects in evidence during a visit by the directors. Shortly after this, Slee assumed the position of underground manager, a role he had held previously at Broken Hill, and began driving into the exposed ore body, only to reveal barren limestone. With another director's visit pending, Johnson claimed that he had been instructed by Slee and Morgan:

To take out mullock between the timber of the shaft and the limestone, to refill it with ore from the shaft, and to closely timber it with bark etc. The floor was also



covered with ore 3 foot deep. The face was readied up in the same way. A small winze was sunk and treated with specially picked ore, which was let down in bags from the shaft. When the work was done Slee and Morgan inspected it. Both said that you have done that very well Johnson. One director when up [from Melbourne] took all his samples out of these false faces and sides ... The Colonel and Slee were greatly surprised at finding limestone everywhere, especially as the company's money had been wasted in other things, one example being a dam. Johnson believes that they were frightened of letting the truth be known, more especially since Slee and Morgan had been living a fast life and neglecting the mine. Any man who said anything about the mine anywhere was at once discharged, there being a regular system of terrorism ... The men were constantly being dismissed for a week, or even a day, and then taken on again without cause, though every man knew he had to visit a certain house when he came to the township, and be very civil to a certain woman [presumably Morgan's wife].<sup>47</sup>

At a meeting of the Buchan Proprietary Company held in Melbourne on 25 September, the report of the independent expert was tabled, suggesting that there was very little ore evident in the mine workings. By the end of September, a judge of the court of mines for Gippsland had issued a notice that the Buchan Proprietary Company be formally wound up. The paid up value of the 60,000 shares, estimated at 4 shillings a share, was forfeited, a meeting of creditors scheduled, and all activities at the mine ceased, with at best a few hundred tons of ore having been produced. In a further attempt to close the book on the role that Government officers might have played, the Minister of Mines sent Government Geologist Reginald Murray to re-visit the mines that he had last visited some 15 years previously.<sup>48</sup> In his report on the Back Creek mine, Murray commented that:

What ore is visible is very sparingly disseminated ... and I could see nothing to justify the erection of concentrating machinery. It would be a difficult matter at present to get out 10 tons of ore. The mining work done by the present company is not in any way commensurate with the alleged outlay of about £10,000. I should estimate that less than £1,000 would pay for the work since the time of my visit when B.H. Dods was at the mine [1885]. It is very evident that gross deception has been practiced on those furnishing the capital to work the mine, and that the money has not been properly expended on its development. I have read the reports of Mr H. Rosales and of [Geological Surveyor] Mr W. Ferguson on the mine, and consider them to be perfectly correct, and in no way calculated to induce any one to speculate in the shares of the company<sup>49</sup>

In relation to the Murindal River site, Murray further commented that: 'No work seems to have been done on the mine itself since I saw it many years ago'.<sup>50</sup>

### **A retrospective look**

Scams of various kinds were a common feature of the mining boom landscape of the 1890s. The development of the Western Australian gold fields during this period provided many examples of dubious behaviour. For the four years to the end of 1896,

official WA Government figures recorded that around £50,000,000 had been raised on about 800 floats, mainly in London.<sup>51</sup> Of the capital raised, about 30 percent, on average, was estimated to be reserved as working capital, the remainder finding its way into the pockets of sundry promoters and others. The path by which this occurred usually revolved around complex share arrangements set up to the advantage of the promoters, and/or outrageous fees for service. This type of behavior became almost second nature during this period, extending to other states, including Victoria. The term 'Swindle' appears to have been reserved in the popular vernacular for those instances where there was evidence of attempts to deliberately falsify the true value of the property in question, and/or consciously misappropriate company operating funds. Examples of this latter type of behavior are relatively rarer in the records.<sup>52</sup> The activities of the Buchan Proprietary Co. certainly fell into this category.

Whether Morgan initially believed in the existence of a major ore body or not is impossible to judge, given the lack of understanding of the circumstances of Morgan's engagement with the project. Either way, Morgan was undoubtedly a charismatic character with a colorful background, potentially well suited to relieve shareholders of their funds. There is no direct evidence of fraudulent behavior while Morgan was in the USA, but it does appear that his demeanor may have been becoming progressively erratic, possibly linked to a mystery illness. His behaviour during his short stay in Broken Hill can best be described as volatile. Evidence for the 'fast living' supposedly exhibited by Morgan during the time he lived in Buchan directly superintending operations exists in both published accounts and local oral tradition.<sup>53</sup> Several accounts describe Morgan's ostentatious behaviour, his over generous sociability, his involvement in spurious local enterprises outside of the mine, as well as his fondness for alcohol and the opposite sex. Anecdotal accounts relate Morgan's cavalier attitude toward company funds. Morgan's rather irregular behaviour whilst in Buchan is further exemplified by the role of his wife in the goings on and by Morgan's use of firearms to threaten people. Apart from his armed threat on Slee, Morgan is reported to have threatened a local policeman in the town with a gun on one occasion.<sup>54</sup>

Regardless of the circumstances surrounding the genesis of the affair, from the start of 1896 events moved inexorably toward the end result. Morgan's central role in this process, from his talking up of the prospects to his alleged deliberate attempts at salting, as well as the apparent misuse of company funds, made him the prime culprit in most people's eyes. Morgan's precipitant sell-down of his personal holding in the company and his sudden departure from the country appeared to close the case. Despite this, the question as to the extent of the other director's knowledge of the true state of affairs remained a simmering issue. Slee believed that Pattison, at least, knew of the 'real facts about the mine', given his close association with Morgan.<sup>55</sup> Pattison, however, vehemently denied any wrong doing, claiming that he had been a victim of Morgan's deceit and had been left holding the bag. Slee later retracted his assertions against Pattison. Whilst there had been some dubious characters involved with the management of the Buchan Proprietary Company throughout its life, the directors at the

time of its demise appear to have been largely ignorant of events, having been deceived by Morgan's reporting.

### **Retribution**

While legal action was considered 'against those responsible', the board's immediate action was to communicate the circumstances of the affair to the UK, presumably with the intent of damaging any prospect for Morgan's involvement in future mining promotions.<sup>56</sup> It's not clear what effect this may have had in the short term. There is evidence that Morgan was in the UK and living in Sussex in 1901, but no evidence of what he might have been doing in a professional sense.<sup>57</sup> By 1904, Morgan was back in the USA where he was involved in the setting up of Morgan Beddoes and Company, a mining and civil engineering partnership based in Charlotte North Carolina.<sup>58</sup> At this time Morgan was still trading on his position as a US Court appointed inspector of mines. There is a record of Morgan trying to revitalize the local gold mining industry of North Carolina.<sup>59</sup> It appears that Morgan had re-established himself in polite society, even being feted as something of a celebrity, unaffected by events at Buchan a decade earlier and half a world away.<sup>60</sup>

Similarly, any lingering doubts about the possible role played by Charles Pattison appear to have had no lasting impact. Pattison continued to promote and manage small Victorian and NSW mining ventures after the demise of the Buchan Proprietary Company.<sup>61</sup> Some of these ventures appear to have been modestly successful. Pattison became involved in local government in Melbourne, being elected as a Councillor for Moonee Ponds and Mayor of Essendon, but retired from local government to concentrate on his mining interests in 1909. There is no evidence of him being involved in any dubious activities during this time. Pattison died at Moonee Ponds in 1920.<sup>62</sup>

As for Slee, apart from being admonished by the board for his failure to reveal what he knew about the affair as it evolved, there is no evidence of any further action against him.

### **Epilogue**

After the demise of the Buchan Proprietary Company and its fellow traveller companies, interest waned until the early twentieth century, when it was re-ignited from time to time up to the 1920s.<sup>63</sup> In more recent times, modern exploration programs have been conducted over the region in an as yet unsuccessful attempt to discover the elusive major ore body.<sup>64</sup>

### **Acknowledgement.**

The author gratefully acknowledges the members of the Buchan Heritage Group for their valuable input on the life of Cecil Morgan.

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## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> See for example, A.W. Howitt, 'Notes on the Devonian Rocks of North Gippsland', *Geological Survey of Victoria*, Progress Report No 5, Victorian Government Printer, 1878; R.A.F. Murray, 'Silver-Lead Mines at Buchan-Geological Surveyors Report', Appendix C to Quarterly Reports of Mine Surveyor's etc, *Mines Department of Victoria*, Victorian Government Printer, January 1886; W.H. Ferguson, 'Report on Argentiferous Lead Ore Deposits at Buchan', *Geological Survey of Victoria*, Progress Report No 9, Victorian Government Printer, 1898.
- <sup>2</sup> G.W. Cochrane, 'Copper, Lead, Zinc and Barium Deposits of Victoria', *Geological Survey of Victoria*, Bulletin 61, Victorian Government Printer, 1981.
- <sup>3</sup> *The Argus*, 31 August 1881.
- <sup>4</sup> Company Registration Files, VPRS 567/182, Public Records Office of Victoria, [hereafter PROV].
- <sup>5</sup> Report to shareholders on activities of the Nevada Lead and Silver Mining Company Ltd, March 1882, Company Registration Files, VPRS 567/182, PROV; *The Argus*, 22 November 1881, 21 December 1881, 6 May 1882; 'Mine Surveyor's Report, Mitchell River Division', *Mines Department of Victoria*, Victorian Government Printer, June 1881, September 1881, December 1881, June 1882.
- <sup>6</sup> *The Argus*, 15 January 1894; *ibid.* 22 January 1894.
- <sup>7</sup> Company Registration Files VPRS 567/493, PROV.
- <sup>8</sup> *Snowy River Mail*, 14 March 1896.
- <sup>9</sup> *Australian Mining Standard*, 10 April 1892.
- <sup>10</sup> See for example, *Leadville Democrat*, 27 January 1881.
- <sup>11</sup> D. Griswold and J. Griswold, *The Carbonate Camp called Leadville*, University of Denver Press, Denver, 1951.
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>13</sup> *Leadville Daily and Evening Chronicle*, 18 June 1888.
- <sup>14</sup> *Aspen Daily Chronicle*, 13 October 1888.
- <sup>15</sup> *Aspen Daily Times*, 13 July 1890.
- <sup>16</sup> *Australian Mining Standard*, 10 April 1892.
- <sup>17</sup> *The South Australian Register*, 13 February 1892; *The Adelaide Advertiser*, 20 February 1892; *Australian Mining Standard*, 10 April 1892.
- <sup>18</sup> *Snowy River Mail*, 14 March 1896.
- <sup>19</sup> *Mining Journal, Railway and Commercial Gazette*, 25 November 1893.
- <sup>20</sup> *The Argus*, 8 February 1894.
- <sup>21</sup> *Australian Mining Standard*, 10 March 1894, 17 March 1894.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 January 1895.
- <sup>23</sup> *The Argus*, 29 April 1895.
- <sup>24</sup> *Australian Mining Standard*, 6 July 1895, 14 September 1895.
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 July 1895.
- <sup>26</sup> Company Registration Files, VPRS 567/493, PROV.
- <sup>27</sup> *The Argus*, 8 November 1895.
- <sup>28</sup> Company Registration Files, VPRS 567/521, PROV.
- <sup>29</sup> *Omeo Standard*, 13 May 1896.
- <sup>30</sup> H. Rosales, 'Report on Buchan and Murrindal Districts', *Geological Survey of Victoria*, Progress Report No 9, Victorian Government Printer, 1898.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>32</sup> *Mining Journal, Railway and Commercial Gazette*, July 1896.
- <sup>33</sup> *Australian Mining Standard*, 12 August 1896.
- <sup>34</sup> Rosales, 'Report on Buchan and Murrindal Districts'.
- <sup>35</sup> *Mining Journal, Railway and Commercial Gazette*, July 1896.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>38</sup> Company Registration Files, VPRS 567/535, PROV.
- <sup>39</sup> *Australian Mining Standard*, 18 August 1896.
- <sup>40</sup> See for example, *The Barrier Miner*, 12 September 1896, *Bairnsdale Advertiser*, 15 September 1896, *Adelaide Advertiser* 16 September 1896, *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 17 September 1896, *Western Mail* 18 September 1896.
- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *Western Mail*, 18 September 1896.

<sup>45</sup> *The Adelaide Advertiser*, 16 September 1896.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 September 1896.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> *Bairnsdale Advertiser*, 1 October 1896.

<sup>49</sup> R.A.F. Murray, 'Report on the Buchan Proprietary Mine', *Geological Survey of Victoria*, Progress Report No 9, Victorian Government Printer, 1898.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Austin Sprake, *Londonderry, The Golden Hole*, Hesperian Press, WA, 1991.

<sup>52</sup> The history of the Londonderry Gold Mine near Coolgardie provides a notable example of an attempt to deliberately misrepresent the true value of a property to deceive investors. A number of other fraudulent incidents also sullied the reputation of Western Australian mining in the 1890s, especially notorious being the activities of Horatio Bottomley and Whitaker Wright. See for example, R.T. Appleyard and Mel Davies, 'Financiers of Western Australia's Goldfields', in R.T. Appleyard and C.B. Schedvin, *Australian Financiers: Biographical Essays*, MacMillan, Melbourne, 1988, Ch. 8; Jeremy Mouat, 'The Great Tycoon', in *Beaver* [Canada], vol. 75, no. 6, 1995-96, pp. 19-25; Jeremy Mouat, 'Looking for Mr. Wright: A Tale of Mining Finance from the Late Nineteenth Century', in *The Mining History Journal* [USA], 2003, pp. 6-17.

<sup>53</sup> Anecdotal accounts and unreferenced newspaper reports provided by Buchan Heritage Group.

<sup>54</sup> *Snowy River Mail*, 17 October 1896.

<sup>55</sup> *The Barrier Miner*, 12 September 1896.

<sup>56</sup> The report in *The Barrier Miner* of 12 September 1896 described legal action being considered by three of the terminal directors of the Buchan Proprietary Company, one of whom was George Bailleau, the younger brother of W.L. Bailleau. There is no record of any legal action proceeding.

<sup>57</sup> 1901 Census record for the UK.

<sup>58</sup> See for example, *Charlotte Observer*, 23 December 1904.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 8 September 1905.

<sup>60</sup> *The New York Times*, 19 March 1910.

<sup>61</sup> See for example, *The Argus*, 12 January 1909, 26 July 1913, 4 May 1918.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 13 December 1920.

<sup>63</sup> E.J. Dunn, 'The Back Creek Silver-Lead Mine, Near Buchan, Eastern Gippsland', *Geological Survey of Victoria*, Record 2(1), Victorian Government Printer, 1907, H.S. Whitelaw, 'Some Silver-Lead and Other Deposits in East Gippsland', *Geological Survey of Victoria*, Record 4(3), Victorian Government Printer, 1921.

<sup>64</sup> G.W. Cochrane, 'Copper, Lead, Zinc and Barium Deposits of Victoria', *Geological Survey of Victoria*, Bulletin 61, Victorian Government Printer, 1981.