

## **An ‘Island’ Within an Island: the Maritime/Riverine Culture of Tasmania’s Pieman River Goldfield 1877–85**

**By NIC HAYGARTH**

*Hon Associate, University of Tasmania*

**D**uring its initial phase (1877–85), the Pieman River goldfield on Tasmania’s West Coast had a maritime/riverine culture unique among Australian goldfields. That is, located on the lower and middle reaches of the river system within a few kilometres of the Southern Ocean, it was virtually an island within the island of Tasmania, served almost entirely by sea. With no proper land access, the Pieman miners relied upon coastal shipping for communication, passenger transport, stores and mining equipment from Launceston or Hobart. The goldfield had an unusual dependence on the only other major economic activity in the area, logging, which paid for the ships to visit the Pieman. Waterways were used as conduits, and the fish and birds these provided were a significant food source. Many miners on the field, such as ‘Sailor Jack’ Neul, were ‘old salts’ (sailors) who were sometimes pressed into navigating entry to the Pieman River over its dangerous sand bar.<sup>1</sup>

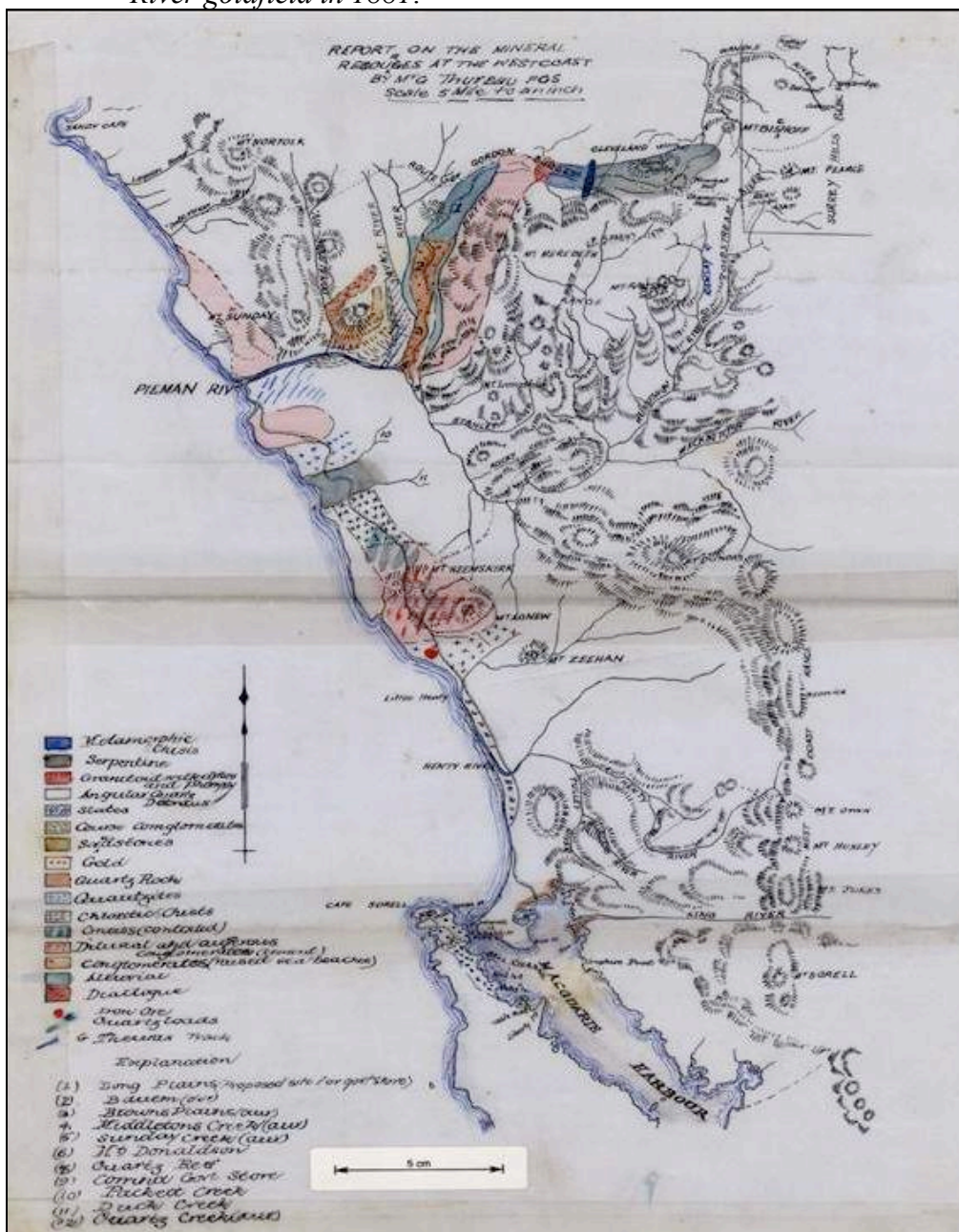
This maritime/riverine culture was appropriate for the coastal fringe of Tasmania’s West Coast mining province, in which water was all-pervasive. Mining in the wet environment of western Tasmania was very different from the mining experience in much of Australia. Water was so scarce on the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Western Australia’s inland goldfields, for example, that discovering it, not gold, became the prospector’s primary concern, being so rare a commodity that the breeze or even lung power was used to separate red dust from ore.<sup>2</sup>

By contrast, in western Tasmania water was pivotal to the separation of ore from detritus (by panning, cradling, sluicing and dredging) and the driving of machinery. As Geoffrey Blainey suggested in *The Rush That Never Ended*, the Mount Bischoff tin mine in western Tasmania possibly made more use of water power than any other Australian mine—and there were plenty more like it nearby.<sup>3</sup> Mining plants were driven by pelton wheels (for example, at the Magnet silver-lead mine and Cleveland tin mine); waterwheels (such as those used at Mount Bischoff, the West Bischoff, and the Specimen Reef and Princess gold mines); and hydroelectric power stations (Mount Bischoff, Mount Lyell copper mine, Federation tin mine and Magnet).<sup>4</sup> The second phase of the Pieman River goldfield, the hydraulic sluicing craze in the years 1894–98, would be another expression of water’s ubiquity availability, with long races being cut in order to blast the high gold-bearing terraces with water at high pressure. Unfortunately, hydraulic operations at Corinna were too small and the terraces too elevated to make the process economical.<sup>5</sup>

The Pieman River goldfield was also unsustainable in its first phase. There was enough gold to satisfy small parties, but extracting it was physically taxing and unprofitable except when a regular shipping service operated. The lush vegetation resulting from the high rainfall was very challenging. No mainland-mining field had

such thick, tangled scrub. In western Tasmania a legend arose about prospectors walking on an elevated platform of horizontal scrub (*Anodopetalum biglandulosum*) as the only means of progress.<sup>6</sup> Prospectors drowned while crossing and boating on rivers and creeks. In Mark Ireland's reminiscences of the pioneering days on the West Coast, water is a grim reaper which can be cheated once but which will ultimately claim its marked prey.<sup>7</sup> A useful mainland Australian comparison is tropical northern Queensland, where a high rainfall and isolation presented the miner very similar challenges on goldfields like the Russell River and Starcke River.<sup>8</sup> Even so, neither of these fields was served directly by ship the way that the Pieman River goldfield was.

**Figure 1:** *Inspector of Mines Gustav Thureau's impressionistic map of the Pieman River goldfield in 1881.*<sup>9</sup>



Source: Gustav Thureau, *Report on West Coast Mines: no.1: Pieman River Goldfield*, Parliamentary Paper 82/1881 (1881).

### **First came the Huon piners**

Gold exploration at the Pieman River preceded the landmark discovery of tin at Mount Bischoff in 1871, making it the earliest post-convict mining site on the West Coast of Tasmania.<sup>10</sup> From the beginning, the Pieman goldfield had a culture based on water transport. The first discovery of any significance was by the Slater brothers and Weber in 1874, when they sailed the cutter *Alma* up the Pieman River and spent a month prospecting the dense horizontal scrub near the confluences of what were later named the Owen Meredith and Paradise Rivers.<sup>11</sup>

They were following in the footsteps of other adventurers and ‘piners’. The Pieman River catchment is the most northerly habitat of Tasmania’s endemic Huon pine (*Lagarostrobos franklinii*). The state’s oldest resident is thought to be a male Huon pine that germinated above the Pieman River near Mount Read 6,000 years before Egyptians celebrated their Great Pyramid.<sup>12</sup> With due care, this rare endemic species will also outlast its man-made children of the last two centuries—dug-out canoes, sailing ketches, cruisers, plus the bowls and furniture of today’s expert craftsmen. The creamy yellow wood, soft, light and infused with rich, aromatic oil, is noted for its durability in water, which makes it perfect for boat building.<sup>13</sup>

Yet while Huon pine built many ships, some were also lost while obtaining the pine. From the 1850s, pining vessels including the *Dolphin*, *Rose Ann*, *Moyne* and *George Town Packet* perished on the sand bar at the entrance to the river.<sup>14</sup> Stranded seamen defied starvation by trekking south on foot to Port Davey or north to Cape Grim.<sup>15</sup> Pining and gold mining at the Pieman became symbiotic, however, since only carting stores to the goldfield and backloading with the diminishing Huon pine made both enterprises profitable.

### **Exploration stimulated by success at Mount Bischoff**

At the time of the momentous discovery of tin at Mount Bischoff in 1871, Tasmania had not yet established a stand-alone Department of Mines. Aside from appointing Charles Gould as Government Geologist in 1859, The Tasmanian government had so far left development of the mining industry to private enterprise. From 1872 to 1878 the isolated Mount Bischoff tin mine, unaided by the public purse, struggled to pay handsome dividends.<sup>16</sup> However, during these years, the government did respond usefully to the discovery of tin by facilitating mineral exploration by District Surveyor for Table Cape, Charles Sprent, whose second expedition in 1876 prompted the development of the Heemskirk tin field south of the Pieman River.<sup>17</sup> The future of mining in the Pieman River catchment could almost have been foretold when, in addition, Sprent found iron ore at the Savage River and ‘platinum’ (osmiridium) on the Whyte River. Yet Sprent found no gold, and his prospecting track from Waratah to Mount Heemskirk via the Ramsay River, Yellowband Plain and the middle reaches of the Pieman was not a supply route, being too rough for packhorses.

The best approach—by sea—was taxing. In the summer of 1876–77 the Meredith brothers, sons of the east coast grazier/politician Charles Meredith and the artist/writer Louisa Ann Meredith, failed to emulate the party of the *Alma* two years

earlier by sailing up the Pieman. Finding the bar across the river mouth too difficult to cross, the skipper of the schooner *Secret* disembarked the prospectors at Hells Gates, Macquarie Harbour, instead, leaving them to tramp about 50 kilometres up to the Pieman and raft upstream. George Meredith found the view from the river daunting:

The hills are as steep as gothic house roofs right to the water and are one mass of trees and scrub. Nothing would give a better idea of the course of the river than a gridiron made of iron hoop.<sup>18</sup>

The Meredith brothers represented the Emu Bay and Pieman River Prospecting Company. Tom Moore worked for the Corinna Mining Company. At first, Moore's principal interest was in the Mount Heemskirk tin field south of the Pieman, where he became apprised of the hardships of mining on the isolated West Coast. Even the durable Moore suffered scurvy at Heemskirk.<sup>19</sup> Any variation to a diet of tinned meat and damper was a plus, and the Pieman waterways were bountiful in this respect. The most was made of every opportunity to stockpile a food source—be it blackfish one day, eels the next, crayfish, swans, ducks and even platypus. Moore and Owen Meredith slaughtered swans with a waddy; speared crayfish; and caught, salted and smoked 40 or 50 eels at a time.<sup>20</sup> George Meredith developed a method of 'taggling' eels, attracting them with a feather or another form of lightweight lure attached to his fishing hook.<sup>21</sup> Ducks, swans and even platypus were shot for tucker.<sup>22</sup> The river was not yet stocked with trout, but blackfish and native graylings or herrings (*Protoroctes maraena*) were caught.<sup>23</sup>

Fishing and hunting for food were time consuming, energy sapping and unreliable. Although the Merediths and Moore caught 'a mass of eels' one night in early January 1878, within a week they were so short of food or bored with their diet that Owen Meredith and Moore set off for Whales Head (later Temma) in the hope of intercepting the supply vessel the *Pauline*.<sup>24</sup> Prospectors kept the coastal path open by burning, as the Aborigines had before them, but burning created its own hazard. Far from medical aid, Meredith had the misfortune to lose the sight in one eye:

Going along burnt ground Meredith ran a burnt stick in his eye had a great difficulty in pulling stick out but got about a quarter of an inch out of his eye leaving a little charchole [sic] still in. Wanted him to go back but would continue [?].<sup>25</sup>

### **Crossing the Pieman River bar**

The first gold rush came later that year. In December 1878 Jack Brown and his Chinese friend Ah Chow ('Old John' or 'John Chinaman') focused attention on the northern side of the Pieman River by washing gold in a creek at a place known henceforth as Browns Plains. Such was the 'gold fever' that some feared that the then profitable Mount Bischoff tin mine would be abandoned. One of the defectors from Bischoff planned to erect a boarding house and pub at Brown's claim, where an area massed with diggers' tents and enlivened by their foul language earned the name Blackguards Hill.<sup>26</sup> By February 1879, however, the pioneers Jack Brown and Ah Chow had Browns Plains to

themselves again. The overland journey must have deterred many. ‘It seems very absurd carrying rations from Mount Bischoff a distance of over 40 miles over rough country to a spot within ten miles of the navigable waters of the Donaldson [sic: Pieman] River’, the prospector W.R. Bell lamented.<sup>27</sup>

Perhaps Bell had not experienced the Pieman River heads. Getting to the Pieman goldfield remained as much an ordeal as living there. Hearty cheers sent the *ss Pioneer* out of Launceston on its mission to be the first steamer to enter the Pieman (see Table 1). The round trip from Launceston took 11 days. The engineer did not make the voyage, allegedly preferring a bottle. Unfamiliar with the ship’s engines, the ring-in engineer ran the *Pioneer* aground before it even reached open waters.<sup>28</sup> This inexperience may also account for the vessel running out of coal in heavy seas near Cape Grim, on the north-western tip of Tasmania, about half way to its destination. Captain Fitzgerald, apparently no teetotaler himself, disembarked the passengers on a sheep run, and returned to the nearest port, Stanley, for fuel. Stanley resident F.W. Ford described captain and crew as ‘a lot of drunken cannibals’ and the vessel’s condition as ‘the dirtiest I ever saw’. The pilot, Pearson, suffering severely from a syphilitic ulcer, chose this opportunity to refuse to proceed—whereupon the ring-in engineer refused to tackle the Pieman heads uninsured without a pilot. The substitute pilot, George Spiers, watched a huge roller break over the ship, smashing the wheel and knocking two men ‘silly’ as he crossed the dreaded Pieman bar. Inside the heads Owen Meredith, chairing the Pieman River welcoming committee, presented him with a silver watch for his success.<sup>29</sup> It is unknown what congratulations the passengers received for surviving both the voyage and the crew. The diggers whom the chartered *Pioneer* had rescued from dietary boredom, if not starvation, presumably cared little about the vessel’s dubious safety standards.

**Table 1: Steamer services to the Pieman River goldfield 1878–89**

Steamer/line	First Pieman trip	Regular service	Last Pieman trip	Master
<i>Pioneer</i>	May 1878	—	Sept 1878	Chartered. Carried mail. Fitzgerald, Lton.
<i>Amy</i> United Steamship Co	May 1878	Sept 1881–Apr 83 <sup>30</sup>	July 1883	John Reid, Hobt. James McNair, Hobt.
<i>Sarah</i> Henry & Co	Apr 1879	—	Apr 1879	Chartered. P Turner, Latrobe.
<i>Rosedale</i>	June 1879	—	June 1879	Anthony, Melbourne.
<i>Wakefield</i> United Steamship Co	Feb 1883	Oct 1886–Jan 88 <sup>31</sup>	Feb 1889	John Reid, Hobt. James McNair, Hobt.

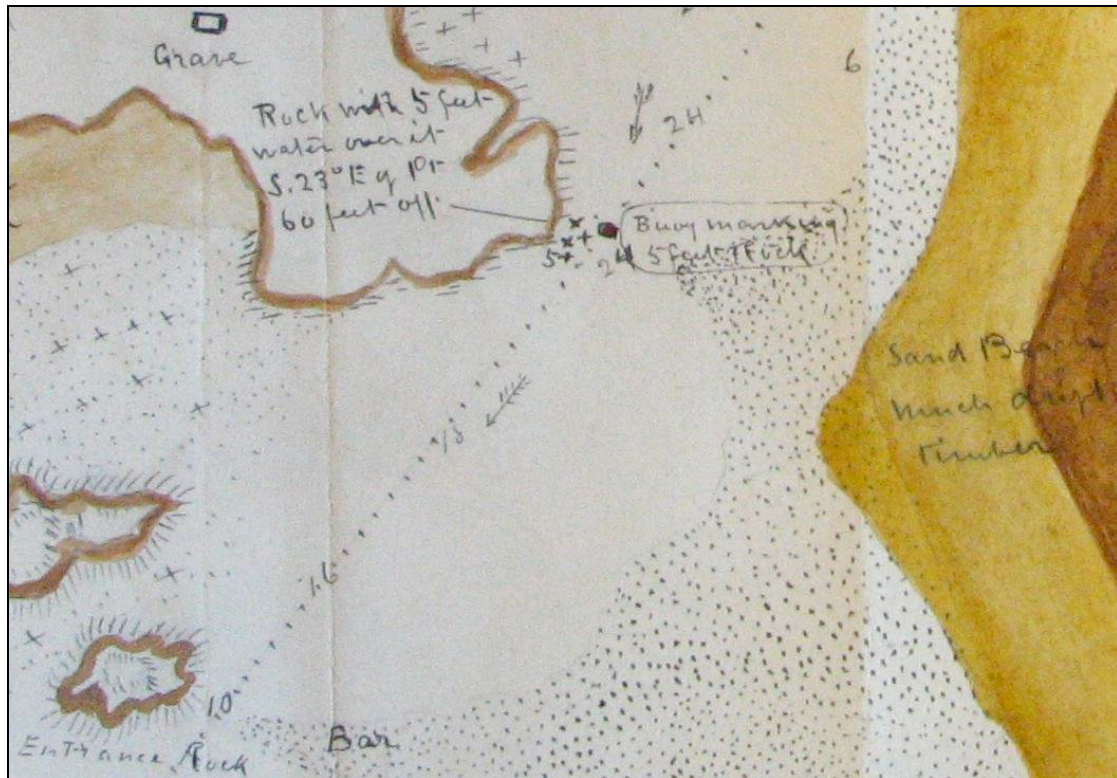
Source: Compiled from shipping information in the *Launceston Examiner* newspaper.

The cutter *North Star* once sat off the Pieman heads for 22 days before the captain risked entry.<sup>32</sup> Some of the less patient or less fortunate came to grief here. Henry Chad Christian was the Pitcairn Island-born 26-year-old great-grandson of Fletcher Christian, leader of the mutiny on the *Bounty*. Arriving in Tasmania from Norfolk Island as a crewman on the whaling barque *Water Witch*, Christian was the first constable appointed to the Pieman River. Although an experienced sailor and strong



swimmer, he drowned when his sailboat was swamped on the sand bar in 1879. Christian's grave on a green knoll overlooking the Pieman River heads afterwards served as a warning to mariners until nature reclaimed it.<sup>33</sup>

**Figure 2:** Marine engineer Theophilus Jones' 1887 survey of the Pieman River heads, showing the grave of Henry Chad Christian (left of centre), the bar across the entrance and the dangerous submerged rock on which Jones placed a buoy.



Source: Courtesy of the Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office, Hobart

Harry Middleton and Axel Tengdahl sent 250 diggers splashing in Middletons Creek, tributary of the Savage River, in the autumn of 1879.<sup>34</sup> Tengdahl was one of the most versatile Tasmanian prospectors. Like other Pieman diggers, the Swede was an 'old salt', which proved handy when his Latrobe (north-western Tasmanian) backers chartered the steamer *Sarah* to bring men and supplies to their diggings. Tengdahl took the helm when a 'long sea roller' on the bar engulfed the vessel:

The water poured on board the helpless craft in tons. Everything movable went by the board ...The steamer was carried on the crest of an enormous breaker, but the wave rolling faster than the boat, she was left in the trough, and the following wave rose over the stern like a mountain, and raked her from stern to stern ...The next roller left the struggling steamer aground on the fringe of the sandbank forming the bar, where, after a second or two for breathing time, an enormous green curling 'beauty' lifted her under the quarter, and with a sort of pitying contempt carried the waterlogged derelict at railway speed past the 'black rock'... the feeble stroke of the engine getting her out of the main current into the rocky basin on the north side of the entrance.<sup>35</sup>

### **Moving upstream in search of gold**

Diggers at the Middletons Creek rush included Tasmanians from Latrobe, New Norfolk, Circular Head and the Huon River; New Zealanders; at least one Queenslander; ‘Sailor Jack’ Neul from England; and a supposed Muscovite, Ernest Brevern.<sup>36</sup> Other notables included Frank McPartland, who had joined former Governor Sir John Franklin’s exploratory party from Hobart to Macquarie Harbour in 1842; James Crotty, the future Mount Lyell tycoon; plus Jack Brown and Ah Chow. While the Chinaman had been accepted at Browns Plains as co-proprietor, he was sent packing from Middletons Creek.<sup>37</sup>

Sunday (now Sabbath) Creek, a tributary of the Donaldson River, and ‘The Badger’ (now Longback Creek), under the hill known as the Longback, were the next to be rushed.<sup>38</sup> The nomenclature tells a tale of regular small rushes with an increasingly international cast. Hangmans Creek recalls 30 men working waist-deep in water in a near starving condition for little return 15 kilometres upstream from the Pieman stores.<sup>39</sup> Frenchmans Creek was probably named in honour of Nicholas St Dizier, a French prospector who chased gold high above the Pieman’s middle reaches.<sup>40</sup> Lovers Falls (formerly True Lovers Falls) reputedly records the breach of trust when a lady’s busy lips divulged the site of her lover’s paydirt.<sup>41</sup>

Gradually the goldfield spread from Corinna on the lower Pieman River up to its middle reaches and to the head of tributaries such as the Savage River. An inlet once called Alma Cove on the middle Pieman recalled the original 1874 prospecting voyage. Believing they had found indications of a gold reef, the Slaters returned to Alma Cove in 1879, forming the Lefroy Gold Mining Company, probably the first attempt at hard rock mining on the West Coast of Tasmania.<sup>42</sup>

Perhaps it was the Slaters who, remembering loved ones, had initiated the theme of female feature names, placing Nancy, Lucy, Amelia and Alice Creeks, plus the Elizabeth Range, on George Meredith’s ‘gridiron made of iron hoop’.<sup>43</sup> Above Alma Cove was Echo Vale (aka Bachelor’s Hall), site of the Slaters’ weatherboard and canvas miners’ cottage which was decorated with pen and ink caricatures and enlivened by concertina music.<sup>44</sup> Long before recreational kayakers tackled the Pieman from the Murchison Highway to its mouth in 1950, miners were pulling up river even further than the site of today’s Reece Dam.<sup>45</sup> Dugout canoes fashioned from Huon pine that grew along river banks were the regular mode of transport. Perhaps the most famous of these vessels was Job Savage’s almost indestructible hotel ferry known promisingly as the *Sluicebox*, which made surprise reappearances after being swept away or sunk by floods.<sup>46</sup>

The Pieman’s tributary rivers were also important conduits. Until 1881 the Savage River was the thoroughfare between the Middletons Creek diggings and the Pieman River. Beautiful reflections of ferns and trees compensated for the snags and logs that had to be avoided in boating the Savage.<sup>47</sup>

Tom Moore described building a river craft by utilising the remains of a Huon pine from which piners had taken only the butt. In three days, on the edge of the Pieman, he fashioned an outrigger canoe and two paddles, the typical prospector’s

vessel. On first sailing the canoe was 'too cranky' and capsized, necessitating a reshape. Next day it was being pulled over rapids of the middle Pieman.<sup>48</sup>

Other prospectors were poorer sailors. Dan Griffin and David Denison nearly drowned in the Pieman in 1882 in a Huon pine dugout capsize.<sup>49</sup> The owner of that dugout, Melbourne digger Matthew Sedgeman, and his Hobart mate Charles McGill, drowned the very next day. Ironically, Sedgeman capsized their dinghy as he leaned over to remonstrate with a man who had 'borrowed' the difficult dugout.<sup>50</sup>

Not all the local forage was water based. Different parts of the field offered different diets. Paradoxically, 'The Badger' offered a smorgasbord of echidnas ('porcupines').<sup>51</sup> Tom Moore lived on 20 of them over the period from 11 February to 13 March 1880. Four days into the all-porcupine diet he reported feeling 'rather bilious. Porcupine too big fellow fat [sic]', but next day he was 'back on the wagon'.<sup>52</sup> Moore and Owen Meredith had learned early in their Pieman days how easy it was to secure 'porcupines', and also how to take honey from a 'bee-tree'.<sup>53</sup> Dogs would often bring home an edible marsupial. Moore described in verse the everyday event of his dogs hunting ahead of him while he tramped:

Climed [sic] up a hill along the track  
With Spero & Spiro my two dogs.  
But soon the dogs a scent had found  
Rushed on in front the game to find  
With noses pointing to the ground  
Left me some forty yards behind  
When lo! I heard a savage sound  
Among the ferns hard by  
As some beast upon the ground  
Yelled out its last its dying cry  
In haste upon some mossy logs

My heavy load was flung  
And quickly to the barking dogs  
... [from?] stones and logs I sprung  
Upon the turf there lay quite dead  
A beast with stripes upon his coat  
Young Spero bit about its head  
While Spiro grasped it by the throat  
So [?] there a noble tigre died  
Just as the sun set golden rays [?]  
Shed light upon the mountain [?] side  
And victors of that savage fray<sup>54</sup>

The only surprise was that on this occasion the prey was not a tasty echidna or wombat, but the much rarer thylacine. A photo staged by Moore bears out the importance of his working relationship with his dog (Fig. 3). The prospector went to the trouble of hauling the dogs and his bush gear into a Hobart or New Norfolk photography studio, and there arranged for artificial snow to enliven the staid studio backdrop. In the photo, Moore proudly sports a cap fashioned from the thylacine killed by Spero and Spiro.

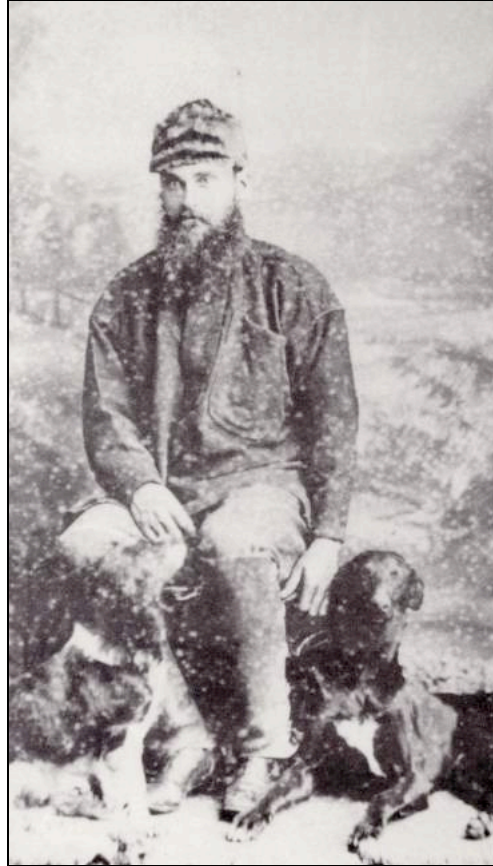
### **Supply by sea: private and government efforts 1880-82**

By 1880 the difficulty of survival at the Pieman had reduced a population of 250 to about 15.<sup>55</sup> A few sheep and beef cattle were probably driven to the Pieman River from Circular Head in 1880 and 1881, but the West Coast stock route only proved economical when the Zeehan – Dundas silver-lead field boomed after 1888.<sup>56</sup> Local subscription had established a track from Waratah to the Middletons Creek diggings, but it was too rough for packhorses, and, arguably, too rough for men.<sup>57</sup> It included the infamous 'Underground Railway', a stretch of almost a mile which compelled users to crawl under burnt spars.<sup>58</sup> On several occasions miners claimed to be threatened by starvation as a result of infrequent shipping services.<sup>59</sup> Petitions to government to rescue



the struggling goldfield asked for one of three things: the cutting of an access track; subsidy of a regular shipping service; and the establishment of a government store.

**Figure 3:** Tom Moore wearing the cap fashioned from his dogs' 'first striped gentleman', the thylacine killed near the Pieman River in 1880.<sup>60</sup>



Source: courtesy of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart.

Job Savage's colourful personality kept the Pieman in the news and in the minds of politicians who might authorise better access. His connection with the Pieman system had begun with a track-cutting exercise in 1864, at which time its tributary the Savage River was named after him.<sup>61</sup> However, the portly, acerbic-witted, wood-chopping, home-brewing ex-ferryman made himself synonymous with the parent river as well.

Savage had learned that supplying other miners was more lucrative than digging for gold himself. He bought what became the Donaldson Inn from William Sutton in 1880 for 4 ounces of gold, and then added a store to it.<sup>62</sup> From this position at the mouth of the Savage River—the thoroughfare from the Middletons Creek diggings—he supplied Pieman goldfield diggers and prospectors at Macquarie Harbour. Like the Corinna Hotel, the Donaldson Inn could only be approached by water. The standard entry to the inn was to cooe across the water for the proprietor to come collect you in the *Sluicebox*.<sup>63</sup> One party yelled into the wind for three hours before giving up.

Gold digger and *Tasmanian Mail* newspaper correspondent Fergus Scott found a novel way to boat to Savage's in August 1880, when he awoke to find boxes, billies and the remains of his mouldy provisions bobbing about beneath his hammock, the Pieman River having risen waist-deep into his hut. A packing case served as an intermediary:

Got on the floor of the hut, and placing the largest case, with the open portion downwards, to ensure its bearing my weight, managed, with the aid of a paling, to float to the punts. This craft, which was full of water, sank beneath me, but fortunately managed I to scramble to the larger boat moored near, and after a tough struggle reached the inn.

To Scott's relief, the water in the Donaldson Inn was only calf-deep.<sup>64</sup>

While awaiting supplies from Hobart in 1880, Scott claimed that many diggers subsisted on damper, kangaroo rats and 'badgers' (wombats), these men obviously lacking Moore and Meredith's fishing and birding skills.<sup>65</sup> In August 1880 Savage chartered the steamer *Amy* to bring enough supplies to last 100 men six months.<sup>66</sup> It was a long time coming. In the meantime, Scott supplemented tinned fish by scraping mouldy flour from a barrel to turn into a linseed meal cake:

That was too much; with no sugar to disguise the taste of the meal the cake was simply nauseous, and the stomach rejected it. Next made a hearty repast off boiled peas, which had been brought down to sow at the [Pieman River] Heads two years ago. The following day the careful pickings of a rice bag gave a relish to dinner; and for tea a small Johnny cake from the flour scraped off the inside of an old 50lb bag was a treat. When the steamer arrived I had only a handful of oats picked out of some horse feed, and about 2lb of damaged seed peas.<sup>67</sup>

The population of the field at this time was only 27. Nevertheless, according to Scott, the arrival of the *Amy* on its third supply mission was celebrated heartily at the Corinna Hotel, with crew members joining in:

The least hirsute members of the company had to be substituted for ladies in the quadrilles and polkas, and they performed their parts as well as could be expected. Proceedings were brought to a close at about 3 o'clock in the morning by the singing of "Auld Lang Syne".<sup>68</sup>

New arrival on the *Amy*, Mrs Foster, then pregnant with her eighth child, must have declined to 'bust a move'. Yet, optimistically, her arrival at the Pieman was heralded as the foundation of permanent settlement. Her daughter Corinna was said to be the first European child born on the West Coast of Tasmania.<sup>69</sup>

Understandably, Savage did not support the establishment of a government store at the Pieman in competition to his own. He accused Scott of concocting the 'Pieman famine' out of self-interest, that is, in order to get a job as Government Storeman.<sup>70</sup> As Glyn Roberts has discussed, Scott used the example of similar ventures in New Zealand to petition for this 'very unwise business venture', one which Moore had originally broached.<sup>71</sup> Scott's newspaper reports pushed the theme that government should step in where private enterprise had failed—but there was no sign of famine in the giant Job Savage.<sup>72</sup> 'We were shocked at his woe-begone and emaciated appearance,' the *Devon Herald* reported his home visit to the north-west coast in December 1880.

He weighed some 17 stone when he last left the bosom of his family at Torquay [East Devonport], and now we should imagine he did not weigh an ounce over 27 stone!<sup>73</sup>

Scott got his way with the Government Store (Fig. 4). He was appointed Storekeeper, Postmaster and Registrar of Mines. The establishment of this store (on the site of today's Corinna Wilderness Experience) and the completion of a track to it in 1881 diverted traffic away from Savage's inn and stores.

Savage, meanwhile, continued to demand a regular West Coast steamer service. He claimed to have gone straight to the top by striding unannounced into Government House, Hobart, to bail up Governor Sir Frederick Weld. Savage's account of the meeting had Weld rushing senior government ministers to his side and asking after the health of 'the old woman and the kids' before sitting Savage down with a cigar and plying him for mining investment advice. Savage obliged:

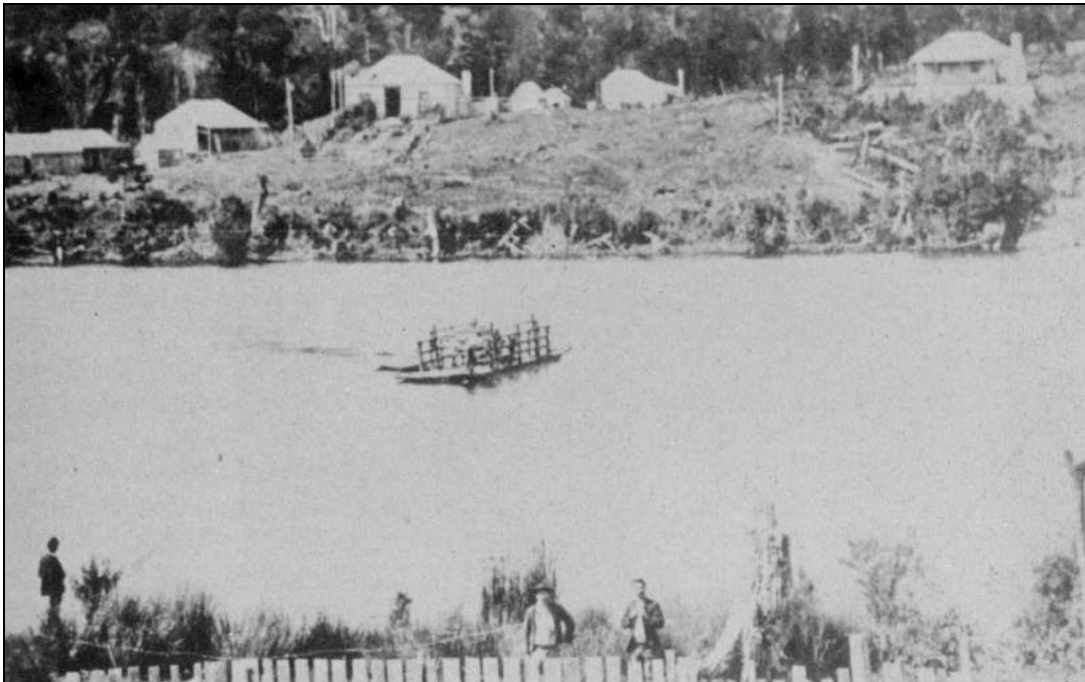
All serene, your Honor, you hand over the spondulicks [money], and I'll do the ryebuck [right] thing for you ... if I don't put you in the way of making a pot of money, I hope I may grow thin.

There was, of course, a trade-off:

But you must promise me that you will get your coves to subsidise the *Amy*; that's the boat for the trade, Mister, and if you can only manage to work that little job for us, we are bound to come out straight. I can see a pile sticking out a foot for every one of us.<sup>74</sup>

Potential profits must have 'stood out a foot' for the proprietor of the *Amy* too, because unaided regular 10-day West Coast services began immediately.

**Figure 4:** *The Government Store (right) and Fergus Scott's eight-berth accommodation house and storeroom (left), Corinna, 1881*



Source: Sketch by O. Jarman from the *Tasmanian Mail*, 14 May 1881.

The consignment of Savage's private enterprise to a slow death was presumably not the outcome sought with the establishment of the experimental Government Store. Perhaps Scott's management was also partly responsible for the store's closure after less than one year. According to Glyn Roberts, an inventory of stock taken before the store's close revealed among the mining supplies bottles of chloroform, brass buttons, bells and a cigar lighter.<sup>75</sup> Yet government still had a part to play in the progress of the Pieman. In March 1882, after visiting the Pieman and Gordon Rivers, Minister of Lands Christopher O'Reilly banned the issuing of further pine-cutting licences, establishing a West Coast Huon pine reserve.<sup>76</sup> The symbiosis between pinner and miner was thereby doomed, making shipping services to the Pieman uneconomical. It now seemed that a government that for two years had pondered propping up a marginal goldfield might have unwittingly killed it instead.

### **Hard rock mining on the Long Plain**

Aside from the Lefroy Prospecting Association, only alluvial work was attempted at the Pieman until 1882. In his progress report on the field in June 1881, Inspector of Mines Gustav Thureau pondered the source of the alluvial gold, encouraging the miners who had hitherto only worked the creeks to tunnel into the 'tertiary washes'. This, he believed, was the future:

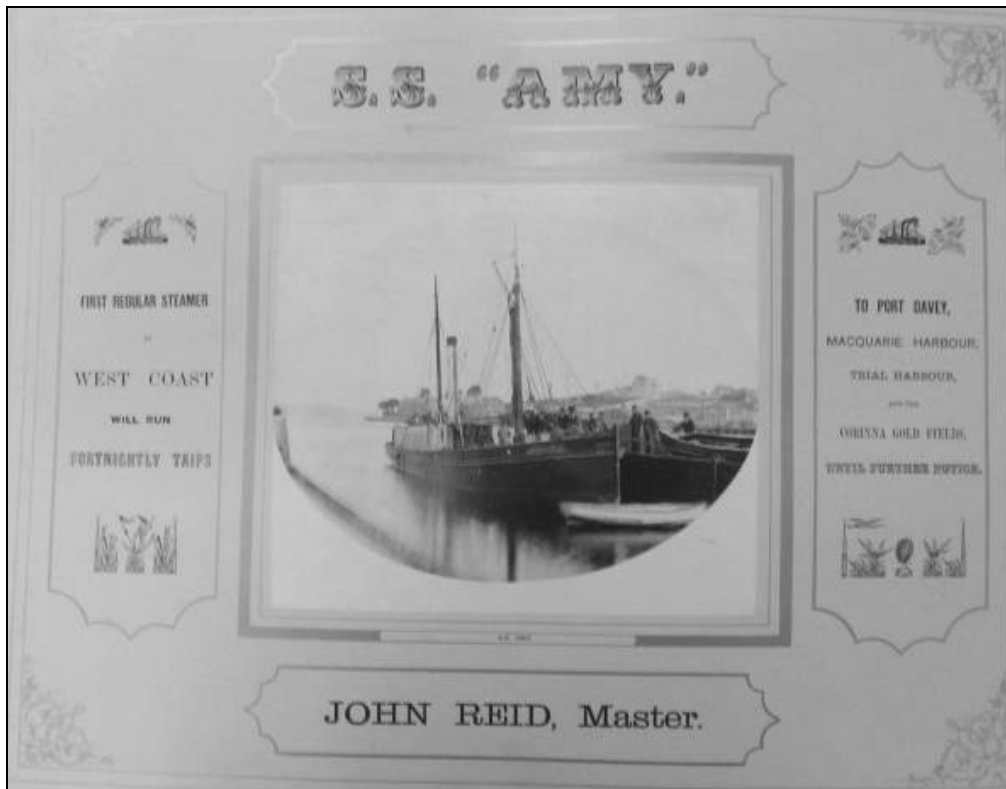
The opening of the 'terraces' as some miners designate the tertiaries, would open a new era of gold mining in Tasmania, and, to judge from indications, promises to be a more permanent and successful undertaking as when the creeks were worked in the last few years.<sup>77</sup>

He pointed out the natural advantages the Pieman River goldfield possessed for mining:

an unlimited supply of running water, which can be used both for sluicing (in boxes or hydraulically with hoses and jets) and as a motive power. Besides that an almost inexhaustible supply of useful timber can readily be obtained to work their mines economically and rapidly with fair promises of success.<sup>78</sup>

The Long Plains gold rush of February 1882 overtook Thureau's efforts to find the source of the alluvial gold. It also carried the focus of activity away from the lower Pieman River and its water-based culture. Soon 90 or 100 men were on the new alluvial field.<sup>79</sup> Ted Peevor and George Johnson's coarse gold find anticipated the recovery of more than 4,000 ounces on the Long Plain. In 1883, James McGinty's efforts nearby at the Rocky River yielded Tasmania's largest-ever gold nuggets, weighing 243 and 144 oz respectively. Befitting the global free-for-all of gold rushes, there were New Zealand prospectors, such as Thomas 'Taranaki' McGrath, at Weetman and Crockford's ('Golden Ridge', or the Long Plains gold mine), near today's Savage River village, and the Swede, Axel Tengdahl, who worked all over the field. Russians were there too, forming the Second-to-None Company on the Specimen Reef, north of the site of the present-day Savage River iron ore mine.<sup>80</sup>

**Figure 5:** The master of the ss Amy pledges regular services from Hobart to Tasmania's West Coast in 1881. These would cease when pining ceased in 1883.



Source: Anson Brothers photo album, *Just the Thing* (1881), courtesy of the Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office, Hobart.

These last two gold mines were the stayers on the field. Weetman and Crockford's claim produced many large, coarse, coral-like nuggets, the most famous being the 'New Guinea' nugget, star of the attempt to float a fraudulent gold mining company in New Guinea.<sup>81</sup> Unfortunately, however, tunnelling and open cutting would confirm that no gold reef underlay Thureau's 'auriferous sheets of quartz' on the Long Plain.<sup>82</sup> The Specimen Reef, discovered by Thomas Greenaway and Joseph Thunder in 1882, was heralded as the West Coast's first gold reef, a claim with which the Lefroy Prospecting Syndicate may have taken issue. More ambitiously, the Specimen Reef was the first mine beyond Bischoff to try to install machinery. The Corinna Track was improved to enable machinery to be hauled in from Waratah in 1883.<sup>83</sup>

Gradually the Pieman goldfield's isolation and, therefore, its dependence on shipping was eroded. The new stores on the Pieman goldfield—Robert Alford's at the Long Plains, and the boarding house and general store of butchers Frank Harvey and James Gaffney at the 20-Mile Mark on the Corinna Track—were served via land from Waratah, not by ship from Hobart or Launceston.<sup>84</sup> The telegraph line between Waratah and Corinna was established in 1882, and a West Coast cattle route from Circular Head was developed from 1880.<sup>85</sup>

Savage outlasted the Government store at the Pieman River, continuing to operate as long as a regular West Coast steamer service supplied him. In 1883 he was said to be contemplating buying his own very large steamer and blowing up the Pieman

bar with dynamite.<sup>86</sup> In April 1883 some Huon pine logs he sent to Hobart on the *Amy* were seized on arrival in Hobart: 16 months later, after moving to Trial Harbour (Remine), Savage explained that it was the custom on the West Coast to cut the pines under licence and collect them at leisure after the licence had expired.<sup>87</sup> It did not do him much good because in June 1885 he was in the Bankruptcy Court.<sup>88</sup>

When Thureau returned to the Pieman catchment in 1884 to report on the Specimen Reef, he remained convinced that the coarse gold found here indicated the existence of a much larger goldfield than yet uncovered. He believed that the density of the scrub and the covering of auriferous drifts by more recent gravels and hard conglomerates impeded the field's progress. Thureau stated that drawing a larger mining population to the Pieman River goldfield was essential to its development and would benefit Tasmania generally.<sup>89</sup> In a few years' time, in the form of the hydraulic gold craze of the 1890s, he would have that population surge. However, the difficulty of bringing pressurized water to elevated terraces and the small amount of wash dirt available ensured that this would be one of Tasmania's most disastrous mining booms.<sup>90</sup>

The irony of the Pieman River goldfield is that it was a far better osmiridium field, but the early diggers could not exploit this alloy. Many reported finding 'iridium' or 'iridiosmium', particularly on tributaries of the Savage River.<sup>91</sup> In 1876, after osmiridium was discovered in the Pieman River catchment at the Whyte River and Parsons Hood, James Smith was quoted £24 per oz as its value.<sup>92</sup> Gold was then worth less than £4. Yet the Pieman diggers seem to have been unable to sell osmiridium at this time, no Tasmanian production of osmiridium being recorded until 1910. While the Corinna-Savage River area is estimated to have produced up to 31,500 oz of alluvial gold, osmiridium production on the Pieman River system of at least 14,000 oz, worth more than £300,000, would eventually eclipse it in value.<sup>93</sup>

When Matthew Sedgeman drowned in the Pieman River in 1882, he was carrying more than 2 oz of gold and 2.5 oz of osmiridium, apparently placing faith in that alloy's future.<sup>94</sup> Similarly, James McGinty, discoverer of the great gold nuggets on the Rocky River, reputedly claimed that in the early days of the Pieman goldfield he stashed two pickle bottles full of osmiridium for safekeeping on a bend in the Savage River, hoping that it would one day amount to something. When it did, he could not relocate the bottles, making him twice a loser.<sup>95</sup> Such was McGinty's 40 years as an alluvial miner on the Pieman River system, battling the rain, the scrub and the isolation for a mere subsistence and a good hard luck story.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Neul came to Tasmania by accident. He was a crewman on the English vessel the *Cambridgeshire*, which struck a reef in the Furneaux Group of islands in Bass Strait in 1875. The crew escaped to Preservation Island, from which they were brought to Tasmania, see 'Our Special Reporter' (Fergus Scott), 'The West Coast Goldfields', *Tasmanian Mail*, 14 May 1881, p. 11. Neul is probably recalled by Sailor Creek, a tributary of the Whyte River.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, David W. Carnegie, *Spinifex and Sand: a Narrative of Five Years' Pioneering and Exploration in Western Australia*, Penguin, Ringwood, Victoria, 1973 (originally published 1898), p. 126; or Leslie Robert Menzies, *A Gold Seeker's Odyssey*, John Long Ltd, London, 1937, p. 107.

<sup>3</sup> Geoffrey Blainey, *The Rush That Never Ended*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Melbourne University Press, 1963, p. 204.



<sup>4</sup> For the Mount Bischoff water system, see Keith Preston, 'Mount Bischoff Tin Mines: Pioneers of Water Power in the Tasmanian Mining Industry', *Journal of Australasian Mining History*, vol.8, September 2010, pp. 148–71.

<sup>5</sup> E.M. Thornily, 'Some Notes on Hydraulic and Ground Sluicing in New Zealand, and Comparisons with the Drift Gravel of the Corinna District in Tasmania', in A.S. Kenyon (ed.), *Transactions of the Australasian Institute of Mining Engineers*, vol. IV, Melbourne, 1897, p. 55.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, 'The Vagabond' (John Stanley James), 'Mount Bischoff', *The Age*, 27 October 1894, p. 11.

<sup>7</sup> Mark Ireland, *Pioneering on North-East and West Coast of Tasmania from 1876 to 1913*, the author, Launceston, 1915?, pp. 12, 22, 39, 40.

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, James Venture Mulligan, *On the Trail of Gold: the Story of James Venture Mulligan*, Glenville Pike, Mareeba, 1988. For the Russell River goldfield specifically, see Robert L. Jack, *Russell River Goldfield*, Geological Survey Office, Brisbane, 1893. For the Starcke goldfield, see Lionel C. Ball, *The Starcke Goldfield*, Queensland Geological Survey Publication no.223, Queensland Department of Mines, Brisbane, 1909.

<sup>9</sup> The map shows the position of the Government Store, the workings north of there at Middletons Creek and the Savage River, which was the early thoroughfare between those diggings and the Pieman River. The designation 'Corinna River' instead of Pieman River reflects contemporary efforts by Tasmanians to distance themselves from the stigma of convictism. The escaped convict Thomas Kent, a baker by trade, gave the Pieman River its name by being arrested near its mouth in 1822. See Dan Sprod, *Alexander Pearce of Macquarie Harbour: Convict, Bushranger, Cannibal, Cat & Fiddle*, Hobart, 1977, pp. 106–18.

<sup>10</sup> Convicts quarried limestone in the Gordon River during the days of the Sarah Island, Macquarie Harbour penal settlement. For early gold exploration at the Pieman, see, for example, 'Circular Head', *Launceston Examiner* 10 December 1870, p. 3; and 'Pieman River', *Examiner* 31 December 1870, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> 'A Cruise on the Tasmanian Coast', *Launceston Examiner*, 30 June 1874, p. 3; Job Savage, 'Pieman River Diggings', *Launceston Examiner* 20 December 1880, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, Graham Lloyd, 'The Oldest Tree', *The Australian*, 10 September 2011.

<sup>13</sup> See Garry Kerr and Harry McDermott, *The Huon Pine Story: a History of Harvest and Use of this Unique Timber*, Marshall Books, Portland, Victoria, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 2004.

<sup>14</sup> See 'The Discoverer of the Pieman River', *Launceston Examiner*, 22 June 1865, p. 2; 'The River Pieman', *Launceston Examiner*, 22 April 1865, p. 4; 'Wrecks on the Coast', *Cornwall Chronicle*, 24 April 1867, p. 2; S.B. Emmett, 'The Wreck at the Pieman, and Rescue of the Last Man', *Launceston Examiner*, 28 September 1867, p. 5; 'Wreck of the George Town Packet', *Cornwall Chronicle*, 13 January 1875, p. 2. The *Spy* also beached at the Pieman Heads in 1855, and a crew-member of the *Dolphin* drowned in 1865, two years before the vessel was lost.

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, 'Wreck of the Moyne', *Launceston Examiner*, 29 June 1867, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> See Nic Haygarth, *Baron Bischoff: Philosopher Smith and the Birth of Tasmanian Mining*, the author, Perth, Tasmania, 2004, pp. 91–110; and Glyn Roberts, *Metal Mining in Tasmania 1804 to 1914: How Government Helped Shape the Mining Industry*, Bokprint and Fullers Bookshop, Launceston, 2007, p. 118.

<sup>17</sup> C.P. Sprent, 'Western Country', House of Assembly Paper [Tasmania] 27/1877. The most detailed account of Sprent's second 1876 expedition was written anonymously by his Assistant Surveyor, David Jones, 'An Exploration Trip to the Pieman River and West Coast', *Cornwall Chronicle*, 5, p. 2; *ibid.*, 9, p. 3; and *ibid.*, 19 June 1876, p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> George Meredith diary 1876–77, 22 December 1876, NS718/1/1, Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office, Hobart [hereafter TAHO]; also reproduced in Alice Meredith Hodgson, *Prospecting the Pieman; George Campbell Meredith's Logbook November 1876 to March 1877*, the author, Sandy Bay, Tas, 2009, p. 41.

<sup>19</sup> T.B. Moore diary 21 April 1878, ZM5616, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart [hereafter TMAG].

<sup>20</sup> T.B. Moore letter home from Macquarie Harbour 26 January 1878; quoted by RW Gowlland, *Some Van Diemen's Land Affairs*, New Norfolk, 1980, pp. 74–78.

<sup>21</sup> Alice Meredith Hodgson, *Prospecting the Pieman*, p. 46.

<sup>22</sup> 'Our Special Reporter' (Fergus Scott), 'The West Coast Goldfields', *Tasmanian Mail* 9 October 1880, p. 8; *ibid.*, 14 May 1881, p. 11.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 June 1881, p. 11.

<sup>24</sup> For the 'mass of eels', see George Meredith diary 1877–78, NS718/2, TAHO.

<sup>25</sup> T.B. Moore diary 14 January 1878, ZM5616, TAHO.

- <sup>26</sup> Daniel Shine to J.W. Norton Smith, 10 January 1879, VDL22/1/7, TAHO. The explanation given for the name Blackguards Hills was that the language used here 'qualified [the diggers] for seats in the New South Wales legislature', see 'Our Special Reporter', 'A Tramp on the West Coast: no.2', *Launceston Examiner*, 26 July 1890, p.7.
- <sup>27</sup> W.R. Bell to J.W. Norton Smith, 14 February 1879, VDL22/1/7 TAHO.
- <sup>28</sup> 'Our Launceston Letter', *Mercury*, 27 May 1878, p. 2. The Launceston correspondent also accused Fitzgerald of being drunk when he set out from Launceston.
- <sup>29</sup> 'Circular Head', *Launceston Examiner*, 12 June 1878, p. 3; F.W. Ford to J.W. Norton Smith, 5 June 1878, VDL22/1/6, TAHO.
- <sup>30</sup> In April 1883 the *Amy* was switched to east coast trade, with the *Wakefield* beginning an irregular West Coast trade.
- <sup>31</sup> The *Wakefield* started a regular service to Macquarie Harbour, Trial Harbour and the Pieman River because of excitement about the discovery of rich gold at Mount Lyell in 1886.
- <sup>32</sup> 'Our Special Reporter' (Fergus Scott), 'The West Coast Goldfields', *Tasmanian Mail*, 17 April 1880, p. 17.
- <sup>33</sup> 'The District Constable for Pieman River', *Mercury*, 7 February 1880, p. 2; 'Our Special Reporter' (Fergus Scott), 'The West Coast Goldfields', *Tasmanian Mail*, 7 August 1880, supplement p. 5.
- <sup>34</sup> Glyn Roberts, *The Role of Government in the Development of the Tasmanian Metal Mining Industry: 1803–1883*, Centre for Tasmanian Historical Studies, Hobart, 1999, p. 101.
- <sup>35</sup> C.J. Binks, *Pioneers of Tasmania's West Coast*, Blubber Head, Hobart, 1988, pp. 100–101.
- <sup>36</sup> 'Flaneur' (T.G. Williams), 'Mount Bischoff Notes', *Launceston Examiner*, 18 June 1883, p. 3; 'CHC' (Con Curtin), 'A Reminiscence of 1879', *Zeehan and Dundas Herald*, 15 March 1911, p. 1.
- <sup>37</sup> Con Henry Curtin, 'Old Times: West Coast Mining: no.14', *Examiner*, 5 January 1928, p. 3.
- <sup>38</sup> For Sunday Creek see 'Mount Bischoff', *Mercury*, 8 August 1879, p. 3; and T.B. Moore diary entry 1 July 1879, AZM5617, TMAG. For 'the Badger' see T.B. Moore diary entry for September–November 1879, ZM5617 (Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart); and, for example, 'Our Special Reporter' (Fergus Scott), 'The West Coast Goldfields', *Mercury*, 3 August 1880, p. 3.
- <sup>39</sup> 'Our Special Reporter' (Fergus Scott), 'The West Coast Goldfields', *Tasmanian Mail*, 4 September 1880, supplement p. 3. Hangmans Creek was originally known as Sydney Toms Creek, after the instigator of the gold rush there, 'Sydney Tom' Normoyle, a New South Wales digger who later became a police constable.
- <sup>40</sup> St Dizier is also remembered by the name Frenchmans Beach in Otago, New Zealand, having been one of a party of Frenchmen who worked a claim there during the 1860s.
- <sup>41</sup> See H. Stuart Dove, 'A Romance of the Pieman', *Advocate*, 21 February 1935, p. 9.
- <sup>42</sup> 'A Cruise on the Tasmanian Coast', *Launceston Examiner*, 30 June 1874, p. 3; Job Savage, 'Pieman River Diggings', *Launceston Examiner*, 20 December 1880, p. 3.
- <sup>43</sup> The Lucy Spur mine, at the head of Lucy Creek, was probably named after a prospector named Richard Spurr, who claimed to have discovered a gold reef there. See 'Mount Bischoff', *Mercury*, 5 November 1881, p. 3.
- <sup>44</sup> 'Our Special Reporter' (Fergus Scott), 'The West Coast Goldfields', *Tasmanian Mail*, 4 September 1880, supplement p. 3.
- <sup>45</sup> Johnson Dean, *Shooting the Franklin: Early Canoeing on Tasmania's Wild Rivers*, 2002, pp. 27–33.
- <sup>46</sup> See, for example, 'Our Special Reporter' (Fergus Scott), 'The West Coast Goldfields', *Tasmanian Mail* 29 May 1880, p. 8; 5 June 1880, p. 7 and 12 June 1880, p. 7.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 March 1881, p. 9.
- <sup>48</sup> T.B. Moore diary 2–10 January 1891, ZMB5627, TMAG.
- <sup>49</sup> 'Waratah', *Launceston Examiner*, 8 February 1882, p. 2; 'The Tramp' (Dan Griffin), 'Deloraine Notes', *The Colonist*, 14 July 1888, supplement p. 3.
- <sup>50</sup> 'Mount Heemskirk', *Mercury*, 8 February 1882, p. 2.
- <sup>51</sup> 'Badger' was the colloquial term for the wombat. Echidnas were commonly called 'porcupines'.
- <sup>52</sup> T.B. Moore diary entries February–March 1880, ZM5617, TMAG.
- <sup>53</sup> T.B. Moore letter home from Macquarie Harbour 26 January 1878; quoted by R.W. Gowlland, *Some Van Diemen's Land Affairs*, New Norfolk, 1980, pp. 74–78.
- <sup>54</sup> T.B. Moore diary 1880, ZM5617, TMAG.
- <sup>55</sup> Glyn Roberts, *Metal Mining in Tasmania 1804 to 1914*, p. 118.
- <sup>56</sup> 'The West Coast Goldfields', *Tasmanian Mail*, 6 August 1881 p. 10.
- <sup>57</sup> See 'Mount Bischoff', *Examiner*, 18 July 1879, p. 3; and 'Gossan', 'Burnie to Corinna', *Examiner*, 29 June 1900, p. 7.
- <sup>58</sup> See 'The West Coast to Bischoff', *Tasmanian Mail*, 26 March 1881, p. 3.

- <sup>59</sup> See, for example, 'Our Special Reporter' (Fergus Scott), 'The West Coast Goldfields', *Tasmanian Mail*, 18 September 1880, supplement p. 3.
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 11 April 1880.
- <sup>61</sup> For Savage's part in the cutting of the Burgess Track in 1864, see Gordon Burgess, 'From the Surrey Hills to the West Coast', *Launceston Examiner*, 27 December 1873, p. 2.
- <sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 April 1880, p. 17.
- <sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 September 1880, supplement p. 3.
- <sup>65</sup> 'Our Special Reporter' (Fergus Scott), 'The West Coast Goldfields', *Tasmanian Mail*, 17 June 1880, p. 6.
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 21 August 1880, p. 18; *ibid.*, 18 September 1880, supplement p. 3.
- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 October 1880, p. 8.
- <sup>69</sup> 'Our Own Correspondent', 'The West Coast Goldfields', *Tasmanian Mail*, 9 October 1880, p. 7; 14 May 1881, p. 11.
- <sup>70</sup> Job Savage, 'Pieman River Diggings', *Examiner*, 20 December 1880, p. 3.
- <sup>71</sup> Glyn Roberts, *Metal Mining in Tasmania 1804 to 1914*, p. 118.
- <sup>72</sup> For Scott pushing this theme see, for example, 'Our Special Reporter' (Fergus Scott), 'The West Coast Goldfields', *Tasmanian Mail*, 21 August 1880, p. 18; *ibid.*, 4 September 1880, p. 4.
- <sup>73</sup> 'The Pieman Famine', *Devon Herald*, 22 December 1880, p. 2. Seventeen stone and 27 stone equal about 110 and 170 kilograms respectively.
- <sup>74</sup> 'A Trip to the West Coast', *Devon Herald*, 8 September 1881, p. 3.
- <sup>75</sup> Glyn Roberts, *Metal Mining in Tasmania 1804 to 1914*, p. 119.
- <sup>76</sup> See 'Tour of the Minister of Lands', *Mercury*, 29 March 1882, p. 3; and 'Ministerial Trip to the West Coast', *Launceston Examiner*, 28 May 1883, p. 3.
- <sup>77</sup> Gustav Thureau, *Report on West Coast Mines: no.1: Pieman River Goldfield*, Parliamentary Paper [Tasmania] 82/1881, 1881, p. 7.
- <sup>78</sup> Gustav Thureau, *Report on West Coast Mines*, p. 9.
- <sup>79</sup> 'Tasmania', *Launceston Examiner*, 4 March 1882, p. 2; 'Tasmanian Telegrams', *Mercury* 15 March 1882, p. 2.
- <sup>80</sup> See, for example, 'Flaneur' (T.G. Williams), 'Mount Bischoff Notes', *Launceston Examiner*, 28 May 1883, p. 3.
- <sup>81</sup> 'A Nugget with a History', *Tasmanian Mail*, 1 August 1885, p. 22.
- <sup>82</sup> W.H. Twelvetrees, *Report on the Mineral Fields between Waratah and Corinna*, Department of Mines, Hobart, 1900, pp. 51–52.
- <sup>83</sup> 'The Owl', 'Notes from the West', *Launceston Examiner*, 30 July 1883, p. 3; 'Mining', *Mercury*, 19 October 1883, p. 3.
- <sup>84</sup> 'The Corinna Goldfield', *Mercury*, 21 January 1882, supplement p. 1; 'Long Plains', *Tasmanian*, 2 September 1882, p. 973.
- <sup>85</sup> 'Tasmania', *Launceston Examiner*, 7 June 1882, p. 2.
- <sup>86</sup> 'Mount Heemskirk', *Mercury*, 21 February 1883, p. 2.
- <sup>87</sup> 'Seizure of Pine Logs', *Launceston Examiner*, 7 April 1883, p. 2; 'Country News: Heemskirk', *Mercury*, 11 August 1884, p. 3.
- <sup>88</sup> 'Commercial', *Launceston Examiner*, 1 July 1885, p. 2.
- <sup>89</sup> Gustav Thureau, *Mount Cleveland and Corinna Gold Fields*, Parliamentary Paper 104/1884, 1884, pp. 1, 6.
- <sup>90</sup> E.M. Thornily, 'Some Notes on Hydraulic and Ground Suicing in New Zealand ...', p. 55.
- <sup>91</sup> See, for example, 'Our Special Reporter' (Fergus Scott), 'The West Coast Goldfields', *Tasmanian Mail*, 9 October 1880, p. 8.
- <sup>92</sup> James Smith to William Ritchie, 3 June 1876. NS234/2/3, Archives Office of Tasmania. The average price during two of the Tasmanian osmiridium industry's peak years, 1919 and 1921, was £23.73 and £24.52 per ounce respectively.
- <sup>93</sup> Figures are from R.S. Bottrill, *Alluvial Gold*, Mineral Resources of Tasmania 11, Division of Mines and Mineral Resources, Hobart, 1991, pp. 5–6; and C.A. Bacon, *Notes on the Mining and History of Adamsfield*, Report 1992/20, Mineral Resources Tasmania, Hobart, 1992, p. 3.
- <sup>94</sup> 'Tasmanian Telegrams', *Mercury*, 6 March 1882, p. 2.
- <sup>95</sup> 'A Town That Was', *Examiner*, 1 December 1932, p. 11.