GRAPEVINE CUTTINGS   (December 1998)

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ORIGIN of PLACE NAMES

The origin of the name **Bendigo** should, by now, be deeply embedded in our memories. But what about the origins of the names of other nearby towns and geographical features in the goldfields region? Generally speaking, place names in Australia can be put into four main categories. Firstly, there are those that are derived from aboriginal words. Secondly, those taken from European place names and predominantly from the United Kingdom. Thirdly, there are those named after geographical features and fourthly, those named after people.

Here are some examples of all four categories, beginning with a few aboriginal derivations:
Coliban   *Kailheban* meaning people of *Kai-e-la* (i.e. of the Goulburn River district).
Dingee   Star
Kara Kara   Gold or quartz
Kamarooka   Wait a while
Weeroona   *Werona* meaning quiet, easy tempered
Mandurang   *Mandorong* meaning black cicada
Marong   *Mahrung* meaning Murray Pine tree
Moliagul   *Moliaguli* meaning hill with trees
Tarnagulla   *Tangulla* part of a river, from *tarna* meaning swift and *gulla* meaning low
Laanecoorie   *Languy* meaning resting place and *Coorie* meaning kangaroo
Kangderaar   Blood
Kingower   *Gowar* meaning big hill
Goornong   Kangaroo apple plant (Solanum Laciniatum)
Ballaarat   from *balla* meaning elbow, hence resting on one's elbows or resting place. First called Yuille's Swamp.

The following are some place names taken from the U.K.
Axedale (the Axe river in Dorset)
Bagshot (Berkshire)   **Elmore** (Gloucestershire)
Epsom (Surrey)
Knowsley (near Liverpool)
Kyneton (Kineton, near Stratford)
Maldon (Essex)
Sandhurst (Military College, Berkshire)
Woodvale (Armagh)
Huntley (Aberdeenshire)
Lockwood (Yorkshire parish)
Malmsbury (Wiltshire)
Rheola (Welsh)
Loddon River (Berkshire)
Dunolly (Castle in Scotland)
Taradale (Ross-Shire, birthplace of geologist Sir Roderick Murchison)
Strathfieldsaye (Duke of Wellington's Estate, Hampshire)
Inglewood (forest in Cumberland)
Guildford (Surrey)
Lauriston (Stirlingshire)

Trentham (Staffordshire)
Carisbrook (Isle of Wight)

Now let's take a look at some of the places named after geographical or other features, which in most cases are rather obvious:

Diamond Hill   The hill top was diamond shaped.
Eaglehawk   A shepherd killed an eagle-hawk that was attacking his sheep.
Porcupine   The many-forested spurs on the Porcupine Range west of Mt Alexander were the reason for its early name. A Mr Hawkins opened the Porcupine Inn at Porcupine Flat in 1846, four miles from Maldon.
Pyramid Hill   Named by Major Mitchell in 1836 because of its shape.
Wedderburn   Gold discovered in 1852 by a shepherd. Originally called Mt Korong (Abor. for canoe) then named from the Scottish *Wedder* (wethers) and *Burn* (stream). Also, a William Wedderburn was reputedly a mounted policeman on the goldfields.
Woodend   Marked the end of the Black Forest for travellers to the goldfields.
Kangaroo Flat   Originally called Yankee Boot Flat from the thigh boots worn by miners.
Lake Eppalock   Created as a water catchment and opened in 1964, from Greek *epi* (upon) and Scottish *loch* (lake).
Serpentine   Serpentine Creek, a tributary of the Loddon, having a winding and twisted course.
Bridgewater   Formerly Bridgewater-on-Loddon, location of an early bridge over the river.

Finally, here is a selection of places named after some well known and not so well known people:
Castlemaine   Named by Capt. W. Wright, the chief goldfields Commissioner, after his uncle, Viscount Castlemaine. Gazetted a borough in 1855, a town in 1950 and a city in 1965.
Chewton   Originally Forest Creek, named after Lord Chewton, a friend of Lady Castlemaine.
Elphinstone   Originally Sawpit Gully, it was named in honour of Baron Mountstuart Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay and Madras during the Indian Mutiny, 1857-59.
Faraday   Named after Sir Michael Faraday (1791-1867), the British scientist who experimented with electricity and magnetism. The school opened in 1868 and was the scene of a kidnapping of six children and their teacher in 1974.
Harcourt   After Sir William Harcourt (1827-1904), a prominent British parliamentarian.
Junortoun   Mary Isabella Junor was the wife of Samuel Lazarus owner of nearby Homebush Estate.
Longlea   Named about 1903, after Councillor W.J.Long.
McIvor   Named after A. McIvor a one-time pit sawyer at Emu Creek.
Melville Caves   Reputed to be one of the hiding places of Frank McCallum, alias Capt. Melville. A Tasmanian ex-convict *(Vandemonian)*, he was the leader of the Mt. Macedon bushrangers. Captured and sentenced to 12 years hard labour in 1852, he escaped in 1856, was recaptured and was strangled in Melbourne gaol.
Mount Alexander   Major Thomas Mitchell, NSW Surveyor-General, explorer and classical scholar, named it after Alexander the Great (356-323 BC). He named **Mount Macedon** after Philip II (382-336 BC), King of Macedonia and father of Alexander. **Campaspe** was a Theban princess and a mistress of the said Alexander.
Myers Flat   Formerly Myers Creek, part of Weddikar run taken up by Thomas Myers and a Mr Nicholson.
Maiden Gully   Gold discovered there in 1856, the name is possibly associated with James Maiden the operator of Maiden's Punt across the Murray at Echuca in 1848.
Ravenswood   Fenton and Gibson held Ravenswood station in 1851. In Sir Walter Scott's novel *The Bride of Lammermoor* a bloke named Ravenswood dies in quicksand. Reputedly, quicksands were found at Bullock Creek near Ravenswood Inn from which the settlement took its name.
Raywood   A gold digger named Raywood lost his way in the area in 1863, and found gold.
Redesdale   Named after Capt. Robert Rede, Sheriff of Ballarat in 1873.
Sebastian   A German, Sebastian Schmidt found gold there by Myers Creek in 1863.

Sedgwick   Known as Upper Emu Creek until 1903, it was named after a British geologist, Prof. Adam Sedgwick.

Shelbourne   After the Marquis of Lansdowne, Earl of Shelbourne. Also a village in Ireland.

St. Arnaud   Named after Jacques Leroy de St Arnaud (1796-1854), a French commander in the Crimean War. Died after the Battle of Alma. The goldfield was first called *New Bendigo.*

Rochester   A squatter, Dr Rowe built an Inn in 1853. First known as Rowechester.

Calder Highway William Calder was the first Chairman of the Country Roads Board in 1913.

Maryborough Gold discovered in 1853. Named Simson's Ranges after squatter brothers. The Assistant Gold Commissioner, J Daly, renamed it Maryborough after his Irish birthplace.

Hepburn   Named after Capt. Hepburn, one of the first overlanders to bring cattle from Sydney to the Port Phillip district.

Daylesford   Originally named Jim Crow, a corruption of the aboriginal word *jumcra.* Then named after the home in Worcester of Warren Hastings, first Governor-General of India, 1774.

Reference: Place Names of Victoria (Les Blake) and Place Names of Australia (A W Reed)