Victorian Crown Grantees Index (Part 3)
1836 to the present day

INTRODUCTION

Victorian Crown Grantees Index Part 3 has been compiled by AIGS volunteers to assist researchers find if, when and where their ancestors were granted Crown land in Victoria, and thus enable them to access further records which can contribute to their family histories. The scope and meticulous quality of its indexing brings access to invaluable data also to local, social and economic historians researching the early history of Victoria.

The names listed are those of the persons who are recorded as the first buyers or selectors of land from the Crown – hence the term 'Crown Grantee'. The Crown Grant Registry – General Law compiled by the Office of Surveyor–General only lists the Crown Grants registered prior to 1862. From that date ownership was registered by the new Torrens system of Titles. Our project includes names from both systems and extends to the present day.

The names have been transcribed from Parish maps and schedules published by the previous Department of Survey and Mapping, who gave permission for this task to be undertaken. This Department is now part of Land Victoria – a section of the Department of Natural Resources & Environment, and is based at *Marland House, 570 Bourke Street, Melbourne.*

As there are 2005 Land Parishes in Victoria the project has been planned in *three* separate stages.

Part 1 was published in 1998 as an Index consisting of 67,000 names from 600 parishes. The Part 1 database is currently being updated and extended in line with Parts 2 & 3, for publication in CD format.

Part 2 is a database published on CD in 2008 containing approx. 148,000 names extracted from 701 parishes.

Part 3 also on CD includes approximately 164,000 names from the remaining 700+ parishes.

The Part 3 database includes a table of the parishes indexed in each Part, so the relevant Part for any parish can be displayed. The county maps included with the Part 3 database also show which Part covers each parish.

Part 4 now in preparation will contain the names of those who selected land in the 909 Townships originally surveyed and mapped in Victoria.

Some assistance has been given by the Hamilton and Birregurra local Historical Societies. The Bendigo area of the AIGS has transcribed the many sheets covering the Parish of Sandhurst. All organisations are deeply grateful to their

members who extracted or checked names and dates from maps or schedules, compiled lists, entered data into computer databases or checked the resulting lists. The AIGS is very grateful for their assistance, and that of its own members for the hours of volunteer service spent on this project.

Details of the indexing for each parish are given in a separate table, Parish Source Part 3, in the database. This can be searched by selecting this table instead of Grantee at the top left of the search specification window. Details of its information are in the Parishes section at the end of this document.

This project does not contain the names of persons who have subsequently purchased land from a Crown Grantee, but the name of the executor or executrix of a selector appears if it is recorded on a map. *Nor does it contain the names of those who selected land in the 909 Townships originally surveyed and mapped in Victoria. These will be transcribed at a later date.*

Part 2 and 3 differ from Part 1 in that they give extra information:

(i)   The Section and Allotment No. of a property. Consulting the Crown Grant Registry – Transfer of Land Act (TLA) will give the Volume and Folio No. of the first title.
(ii) The File Number of the grant. This enables the researcher to view the file of correspondence between the grantee and the Crown which is held at the Public Record Office of Victoria, now part of the Victorian Archives Centre, 99 Shiel Street, North Melbourne.

BRIEF HISTORY OF LAND SELECTION

Between 1836 and 1860 land in the settled areas of Victoria was sold mainly by public auction, but in 1847 squatters were able to lease and obtain licences to hold large pastoral runs and to purchase up to 640 acres for their homestead run.

Following the gold rush of the 1850s, there was a great demand for land and in 1860 the first Victorian legislation was passed for the sale and selection of Crown Land – *the Nicholson Act*. Subsequently portions of Victoria were surveyed and opened for selection. By 1869 all Victoria was opened for selection – in some areas the surveying followed the selection. For historical detail read "*The Lands Manual*" by Peter Cabena et al, published by The Royal Historical Society of Victoria 1989.

Victoria had previously been divided into Counties (37) for land administration purposes, their boundaries being mainly determined by geographical features. But for selection Victoria was surveyed into 2005 Land Parishes and each was mapped showing Section and Allotment numbers of the selected areas of land. The name of each selector and the date they became a freehold owner (i.e. a Crown Grantee) was recorded on each allotment. For land selected under the Duffy Act (1862) or later Acts a file number was added. This relates to official government correspondence regarding licences, leases, improvements and final ownership of the land which it is still possible to view at the Public Records Office of Victoria. This Correspondence File is a valuable asset for family historians.

The division into parishes resulted in some parishes overlapping into adjoining counties. The Land Parish maps have been accessible to the public at various repositories (State Library of Victoria, Lands Dept. offices etc) and are the main source of our data. Apart from the State Library of Victoria we now have the largest collection of hard copy land parish maps accessible to the public.

Many of the names given to the parishes appear to be of aboriginal origin and while some are copies of a UK homeland very few correspond to the present day municipal name. To enable researchers to identify the location of a parish we include a County map of Victoria, and maps of each of the 37 Counties showing their parishes which are listed alongside in alphabetical order and numbered accordingly.

Official Designations: Each parish was then designated for convenient reference by the initial of its name and the sequence number of its creation. eg Dropmore was D 198 i.e. the 198th parish to be created with a name commencing with D. As maps were amended, the number of previous additions was added in brackets e.g. (3) D 198 (3) is the Plan Reference No. for the Parish of Dropmore.

However during last century each parish was allotted a number corresponding to its position in a strictly alphabetical list of parishes and in the range 2001 to 4005. The Parish No. for Dropmore is 2546. This list is published in "*VICTORIA – Lists of COUNTIES, PARISHES & TOWNSHIPS*" produced by the Department of Property & Services, Government of Victoria in 1988. The counties are numbered from 1001 to 1037, while the Townships originally surveyed are numbered 5001 to 5909. A copy of this book is kept in the Reference section at the AIGS Library.

NOTES ON DATA FIELDS IN PART 3

FIELDS: Grantee, Parish, Date, Source, Section, Allotment, File Number

GRANTEE

The names of each selector and the dates they became freehold owners were recorded on each allotment. Usually only an initial was recorded rather than the full given name. When a surname is entered, all entries recorded under that name will be displayed leaving the researcher to identify his forbear or person of interest. Record all the data displayed for the names that interest you.

Names followed by (Exr) or (Exx) are those of the executors/executrixes of the original selector who died before fulfilling the conditions of his lease. Often they were close relatives.

If more than one map (H, M, P) is indicated it is advisable that the researcher consults each type of map as all the possible data may not necessarily be identical on each map if produced at different dates.

PLEASE NOTE: Names are sorted strictly alphabetically so:

a)   names such as MacKENZIE are separated from McKENZIE

b) names containing an apostrophe such as A'BECKETT, O'DAY occur within the relevant alphabetical list.

ABBREVIATIONS USED:

Adr	Administrator	Exx	Executrix	Lse	Lessee
Adx	Administratrix	Hon	Honorable	Rev	Reverend
Asg	Assignee	Jr	Junior	Sr	Senior
Exr	Executor	Lce	Licensee		

DATES: If no dates are given, it could be due to:

i. The Crown Grant was given prior to 1862. Look for your name on the CD – *Crown Grant Registry – General Law*. This disc will give the year and a Memorial No. for records to be viewed at Land Victoria.

ii. The selector may not have fulfilled his commitments for a Crown Grant – but on some maps his name is still visible, but crossed out.

The date indicates when payment was completed and the freehold was granted which may be many years after the initial selection.

SOURCE MAPS – H, M, P, and SCHEDULES – S:

The main record accessible to researchers to confirm their forebears were the original selectors of properties has been the Land Parish Maps, and these have been the source of our data. However, over time, maps have been produced in several forms, on paper – 'hard copy' (**H**), then microfiche (**M & P**), and now (**C**) a digitised format and stored on a CD. In addition names and property data from about 400 parishes were transcribed in Schedules (**S**) at the time of metrication.

The maps transcribed for Part 3 are designated as **H, M, P & S**. Large parishes have been divided into multiple sheets that are numbered, and the relevant sheet transcribed is indicated thus: H1, H2 or M1, M2 etc.

H – 'hard copy' (paper) maps. This was the original form available to the public, and is the easiest medium to peruse and transcribe but is no longer produced. Libraries and historical societies are the most likely sources of copies. However the AIGS has acquired hard copies of over 1600 parishes. It is possible to obtain printouts from microfiche maps and we store these with our other paper maps and classify them as H also. They are not as clear as the original lithographic ones.

M – microfiche. These were first produced 5 frames to a fiche – the parish (or sheet) as a whole, and in 4 parts magnified for easier viewing. They displayed the revised No. of the parish. They were next produced as 'aperture cards' – a single frame of the whole parish inserted into cardboard on which data could be recorded. They display the revised No. and often the original Plan No.

P – 'put-a-way' maps. The earliest maps of a parish sometimes contained the names of the selectors prior to qualifying for freehold, so needed to be amended if the selector did not fulfil the condition of his licence or lease, in which case his land reverted to the Crown and was reallocated to another person. Also land was opened for selection over a long period of time, and following the Closer Settlement Acts in 1904 and later, some land was repurchased by the Crown and reallocated under Closer Settlement and Soldier Settlement Schemes. Subsequent allocation of Crown Land to transport and construction projects also results in amending maps.

Each edition of a parish map was designated so *Dropmore D198 (3) refers to the 4th* edition. Copies of the superseded maps were kept, numbered and filed as 'put-a-way' maps. All editions of most parishes are stored in the Historical section in *Land, Victoria*. In 1999 we were donated a set of the current parish maps on aperture cards and many of these have been used in Parts 2 and 3.

If the data for your ancestor has been transcribed from a 'P' map, check the edition and date of it compared to any 'H' or 'M' maps used. Most editions of grantee maps of a parish are available for viewing in aperture format at *Land Victoria, Marland House, 570 Bourke Street, Melbourne*, so check there for earlier or later editions.

S – Schedules: These are lists of properties in a parish arranged in Section & Allotment order; they contain date, area and most importantly a file number if applicable. They were prepared at the time of metrication by the Division of Survey and Mapping for approx. 400 parishes. The AIGS has a card index of names from 235 schedules which were entered in Part 1.

Almost all the parish maps listed as transcribed for Part 2 and Part 3 are available for viewing at the AIGS Library.

Alternatively, maps may also be downloaded from the Public Record Office Victoria. The procedure is:
1.   Go to http://prov.vic.gov.au/
2.   Click on the *Access the Collection* tab.
3.   Click on *Searching | Search within a Series*.
4.   In the *VPRS* text box input 16171.
5.   In the *words or numbers* text box input the name of the parish you want.
6.   Click on the *Search* button
7.   On the results screen, click on the name of the parish map you want.
8.   On the refreshed screen, in the download field, click on *pdf*.
9.   The map will be downloaded to your screen.
10.   Save the map to your hard drive (Shift +Ctrl + S).
11.   Open this file from your hard drive for ease of use and faster navigation around the map.

SECTION & ALLOTMENT NUMBERS:

Each parish was mapped showing Section and Allotment numbers of the selected areas of land and the size of each. Usually, only large parishes containing many allotments are divided into sections, these being denoted by a letter or larger numeral in bolder type. Roman numerals if used on a map have been converted to

Arabic equivalent numbers for our database. From the Section & Allotment number, the volume and folio of the first title to a property is obtainable on application from The Crown Grant Registry – Transfer of Land Act (TLA). This title was often a source of historical data for the property.

FILE NUMBERS:

For land selected under the Duffy Act (1862) or later Acts, a file number in the form of a fraction was added e.g. 1234/19.20. This relates to the file of official government correspondence regarding licences, leases, improvements and final grant of ownership of the land which it is possible to view and photocopy at the PROV. This is a most valuable asset for family historians. The denominator refers to the Land Act under which selection was made. Most of these are listed in "The Lands Manual" pp. 83 – 91 (a copy is available at the AIGS Library).

For some names and properties, two file numbers are recorded. This usually means that on at least one of the maps listed the earlier file number has been replaced by that of a beneficiary who actually became the freehold owner. It would be wise to seek both correspondence files.

PR – PRE-EMPTIVE RIGHTS.

If PR is entered as either the Allotment or the File No. the grantee was usually the occupier of a large squatting run when that area was declared open for selection. He was allowed to select 640 acres, which usually included his home and other improvements. For further details see 'Crown Lands Pre-Emptive Right Applications Vic. 1850-1854', reproduced by Marjorie Morgan OAM, from a compilation by Andrew Clarke R.E. Surveyor-General of Victoria. This book is also available at the AIGS Library.

Transcribing data from maps is a difficult task, particularly when deciphering details on small and cramped allotments. This has been particularly so for the small numerals used in the file numbers and dates. Entries have been checked but researchers are advised to check file numbers for themselves before ordering Correspondence Files.

The data on the maps was itself transcribed from original Register Books so spelling and other discrepancies may have occurred at the time of entry into these records, or when the maps were produced. Our indexing policy is to record the data precisely as presented on a map or schedule.

PARISHES:

701 parishes were transcribed for Part 3.

An alphabetical list of Grantees within a parish can be displayed by giving the parish name in the search specification and asking for sorting on Grantee.

Details of the indexing for each parish can be listed by selecting the Parish Source

Part 3 table in the search specification window. The results display will include the actual maps used – H, M or P, their editions if known, dates and transcriber as follows:

A – the names from this parish were extracted by AIGS members.
Be – the names from this parish were extracted by Bendigo Area group of AIGS
A, Be – both Societies extracted names for this parish.
A, Bi – AIGS and Birregurra Historical Centre extracted names.
A, H – AIGS and Hamilton History Centre extracted names.

County Name: Clicking on View Details in the results window following a grantee search will reveal a map of the county with an alpha-numerical list of the parishes in it, enabling you to identify the location of your parish. Bookmarks within this file enable you to view a map of Victoria displaying the 37 counties with a legend for identifying them and to view the parish maps for other counties.