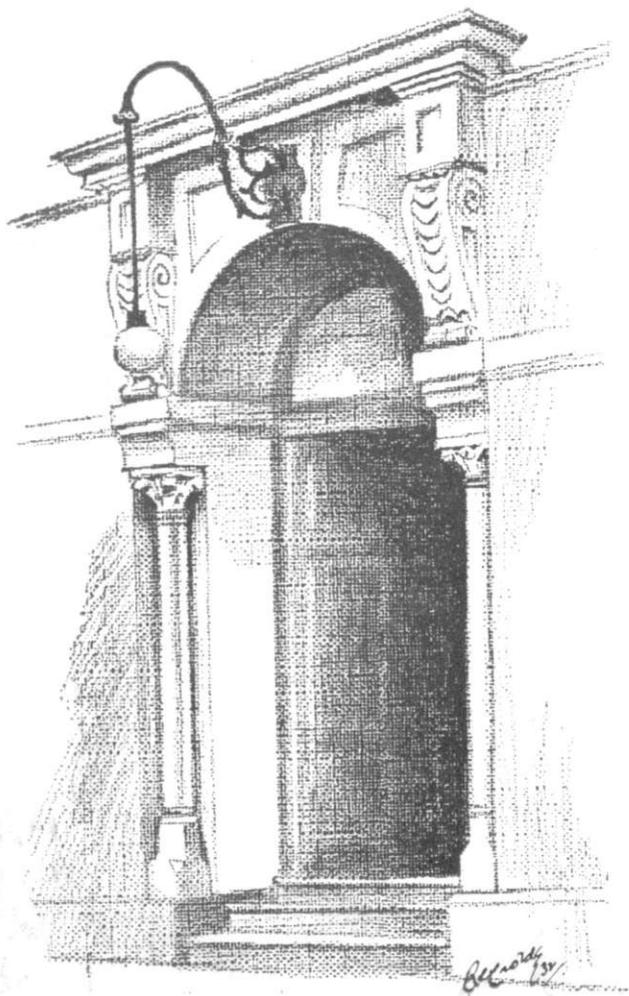


STATE LIBRARY OF VICTORIA



THE NAVAL AND MILITARY CLUB OF VICTORIA



JUBILEE
SOUVENIR
1881-1932

In compiling this booklet in celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Club, one fact has been brought to light.

Practically no records whatever exist of the early activities of the Club, a fact to be greatly regretted, in view of their bearing on the early history of military service in Victoria and of the domestic history of the Club, which would have been of profound interest to every member, both to-day and in the years to come.

It is known that Minute Books and early documents were destroyed by one official at a period when the Club was undergoing one of the removals necessary to keep pace with its expansion.

Most of the information in the following resume has been obtained by interviewing individual members of the Club, including three of the oldest on the Roll—Lt.-Colonel Ewen T. Campbell, Lt.-Colonel G. B. Appleton, and Mr. E. J. Stock, all of whom joined round about the period 1885/6.

The short time in which these notes were prepared has not permitted a wider research, and it may be that there are other members with a similar record of service. If that is so, then it may be possible to call on the recollections of such members to supplement this history, and thus preserve a more complete record for incorporation in the official papers of the Club, so that a full account of its activities may be available in the years to come.

STATE INDEX
DEC 1983
STATE DO.

General H. Nicoll
C.M.P.

LTP
367-99451
N22N

IN the year 1881—as a result of a conversation between officers of the Victorian Volunteer Forces who deplored the lack of a common meeting place for officers of the Services, the Pipeclay Club was formed.

Its rules provided then, as now, for the admission of commissioned officers of the Allied Services.

The moving spirits in its foundation were—Captain A. Blannin; Captain Benjamin J. Wardill (afterwards Secretary to the Melbourne Cricket Club); Captain John W. Hacker and Captain Henry J. King.

From this small beginning the present Club has grown, and this year celebrates its Jubilee of activity in the service of the Forces.

The first premises occupied by the Club were in Swanston Street, where a large first floor room was rented at the Earl of Zetland Hotel.

The immediate success of the Club and its rapid growth are evidenced by the fact that within a year it was found necessary to remove to more commodious premises. These were found at the Royal Arcade Hotel in Little Collins Street.

This fact is established in the first Annual Report, a copy of which was found amongst the late Colonel Perrin's papers and presented to the Club. It hangs in the Secretary's office to-day, providing interesting comparison with the fiftieth Report published this year. Colonel H. W. Perrin, whose name is mentioned in this first report, was amongst the original members of the Club.

By the end of its first year of activity the Club was already attracting members from other States and even New Zealand.

Quarterly dinners and suppers kept the interests of members alive. The first was held in September, 1881, and the following names of participants are on record:—Colonel R. Rede, President; Colonel F. W. Bull; Majors Aldwell; J. I. Buchan; R. J. Ellery (Government Astronomer); H. J. King; J. W. Parnell, V.V.E.; R. H. Shakespeare; W. Collard Smith, M.L.A., a Cabinet Minister who represented Ballarat; J. M. Templeton; Captains J. A. Christopherson; R. Fullarton (R.N. Reserve); G. Ferguson; C. R. Martin, V.V.E.; J. R. Y. Goldstein; W. Gane; Martin, P.W.L.H.; Twycross and B. J. Wardill; Lieut. J. R. Ballenger and Surgeon-Major Peel.



COL. ROBERT REDE,
First President of the Club

Col. Brownrigg Maj. Fellowes
 Col. Disney



On the 15th December, 1881, a quarterly supper was held, at which it was announced that the membership had reached 100 Volunteer officers.

On the 9th March, 1882, a meeting was held, and amongst others the following members were present:—Major Bell; Major Couchman, a Public Service Commissioner; Major Douch (Williamstown Artillery); Captain P. M. Salmon (Garrison Artillery and M.L.A. for Sandridge); Lieut. Macpherson and Quartermaster J. W. Stock.

The first anniversary of the establishment of the Club was held on the 16th May, 1882, at the Club Rooms. Major Caleb Anderson (O.C. Prince of Wales Light Horse) is mentioned as being present.

The first annual meeting of the Club was held in the Royal Arcade Hotel on the 29th June, 1882. Additional members present were Major J. T. Sleep; Captains Henderson and Rodd, and Lieut. S. Crisp. The office-bearers elected at that meeting were:—President, Major J. M. Templeton; Vice-Presidents, Major C. Anderson and Major Sleep; Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, Major A. Blannin; Committee, Majors S. Trythall and R. H. Shakespeare, Captains Martin and J. W. Hacker, and Lieut. S. Crisp.

In September, 1882, the certificate of Membership of the Club was designed by Major A. Blannin. At the same time the motto, "Uniter Agamus," was adopted.

The next removal of importance occurred when the Club occupied as its headquarters a room in Collins Street, over the Vienna Cafe. The Club remained in residence here for a long time.

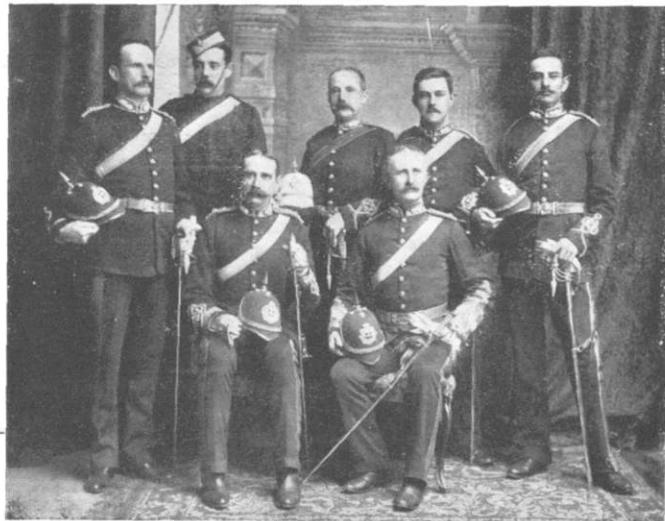
It is a matter for regret that records are not available for the interesting periods in the history of military activity which closely followed the foundation of the Club.

The old Volunteer regiments were, during this period, being abolished in favour of a Militia force, and no doubt fierce controversy raged in the Club on various matters of policy which would be of interest to-day, if only from a purely sentimental viewpoint.

The name of the Club was changed to "The Naval and Military Club of Victoria" late in 1885.



Maj. R. J. Tope Maj. J. J. Hanby
 Capt. Cox-Taylor Maj. John Monash



Standing—Lieut. Rashliegh; Lieut. Harper Campbell;
 Lieut. C. E. Umphelby; Lieut. Miller; Lieut. John Monash
Sitting—Capt. J. Stanley; Maj. Goldstein

The recollection of several old members is dim as to details, but the following were members who joined round about the period from 1885/7:— Colonel Thos. Robert Disney (Royal Artillery); Lieut.-Colonel H. Studholme Brownrigg (Rifle Brigade); Major Fellowes; all seconded officers; Lieut-Col. A. Greenwood Walker (Royal Artillery); Lieut.-Colonel (afterwards Sir) Frederick Sargood (who afterwards became Minister for Defence); Major E. F. Rhodes, a brother of the famous Cecil; Lieut. John Monash (North Melbourne Battery); Lieut.-Colonel Rupert T. H. Clarke; Lieut.-Colonel F. G. Hughes, O.C. Nordenfelt Battery (which was established and entirely maintained by the late Sir William Clarke, Bt., at Sunbury); Major G. B. Appleton; Captain Ewen T. Campbell; Lieut.-Colonel G. W. Turner (O.C. Field Artillery); Lieut. E. J. Stock.

At the Vienna, meals were provided from the Cafe, and it was not until these premises were found inadequate and the Club removed to Edwards Buildings in Collins Street, that the catering was conducted by a staff under the direction of the Committee and officers.

Of the doings domestic and otherwise of the Club during its occupancy of these premises, the records, unfortunately, provide little or nothing of any importance that can be chronicled here.

* * *

One member, however, recalls with amusement the daily games of billiards played by a little coterie of members, whose combined incomes would have balanced the most obstinate Budget, who used to settle their obligations at the end of the day by the exchange of tram tickets and penny stamps with as much solemnity as though the stakes were of the gravest moment.

* * *

The story behind the acquisition of the present premises owned by the Club reads like a romance in Real Estate operations.

Its hero is Fred. Walker. This fact is emphasised by members of the Club, who are familiar with the circumstances, and who aver that the full credit has never been given to him.

When, prior to the outbreak of the War in 1914, it became obvious that the Club was fast outgrowing the premises in Edwards Buildings, Captain A. M. Treacy, then President, looked round for a more suitable building which would provide for the desired expansion.

At that time, the Club's assets could have been bought for a few hundreds, and consisted, as one member describes them, of sundry furniture and fittings and "spoons and forks."

After a long search, a favourable eye was cast upon premises occupied by Gill's Arcade, formerly the German Club.

It was owned by a man called Markwald, at that time a registered enemy alien, who was on parole in England. The greatest finesse had to be observed in negotiating, for if it became known for what purpose the premises were required, there would be little hope of securing them, no matter what price was offered. It was then that Fred. Walker intervened. He immediately offered to conduct negotiations in his own name and cabled to Markwald an offer of £6000. This brought forth the somewhat laconic reply, "Who's mad," from that gentleman, and with this figure as a basis, negotiations were commenced.

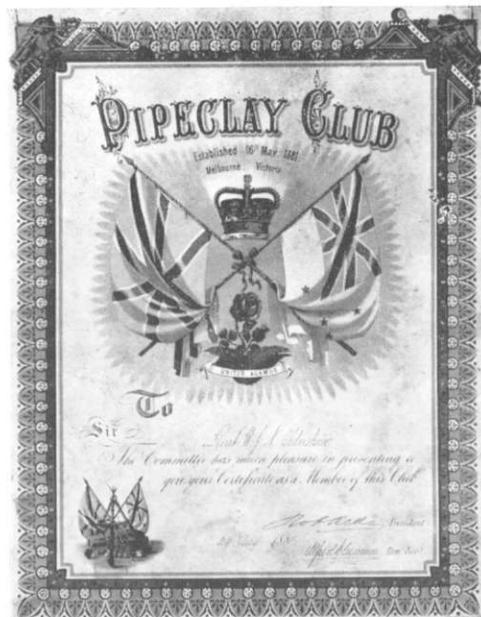
Other buyers, too, began to appear in the field, and at one time there was a suggestion that Dame Nellie Melba might acquire the premises for a Conservatorium of Music.

During all this time Fred. Walker was negotiating, and he finally clinched the deal at £8500, purchasing the property in his own name. As an evidence of the wisdom of the deal, it might be here mentioned that, twenty-four hours after the contract was signed, he was offered a profit of £2000 on his bargain. Needless to say, this was refused, and at a specially convened meeting the property was offered to the Club.

A discharge of high explosives could not have caused more consternation than this bombshell sprung by President Treacy, and fierce criticism greeted the scheme. It was felt that it could not be financed, and the meeting threatened to become a stormy one. Some monied men on whom the Committee relied to help them by the purchase of debentures at first declined to furnish their support, and a member relates how, when one man offered to take ten pounds, President Treacy threatened him with an ancient blunderbuss until the offer was raised to £200.

How the debenture issue was finally floated and subsequently paid off is history within memory of present members, and anyone with a knowledge of land values, even at present-day depression rates, knows that the Club possesses a property that will always remain a valuable asset, no matter which way the Financial Cat jumps. A fairly recent valuation of the Collins Street frontage only, shows that portion to be worth probably more than the amount paid for the entire property.

Thus, half a century has slid away, and within the portals of the Club have passed men whose names have been blazoned on the scroll of Fame and written in the history of a Nation. Some have paid the supreme sacrifice, but their deeds have gone to lay the foundations of an Empire that will endure for ever. Their footsteps still echo in the corridors, and their memories are engraved in the hearts of those left behind. Whatever Fate may be in store behind the curtain of to-morrow, the association of those who have the interest of country sufficiently at heart to place it first and foremost before material things, must be of incalculable value in the building of Nations and in the brotherhood of man.



STAT

The Original Certificate of Membership
of the Pipeclay Club
Designed by Major Blannin in 1882