

Henty Essay

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“enough is enough”

Grenville Henty Silvester

June 2024

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Background

Since the 1990's there has been a concerted effort by some first people, who regard themselves as representatives, that all people who can identify a past relative as aboriginal, are regarded as an aboriginal by a first nation group, or, who identify as Australian aboriginal, must be treated differently from all other Australians.

These representatives want local, state and federal governments to provide, from tax payers monies, a sufficient regular source of funds, benefits and land so they can attain self determination for themselves and the people they purport to represent.

This of course would mean that these self determination presents are to be provided for prior to any other budgetary allocation.

It seems that the definitions for Terra Nullius, massacre and first people were changed in the last recent times by the 'representatives' of first people. The noun 'racist' is widely used for anyone who disagrees with their narrative.

Governments, public servants, educational institutions, sporting organizations and the press have been constantly lobbied. The commercial promotion of first nation awareness programs have been designed and instigated to the wider population through such instruments as 'recognition of the land, 'welcome to country', 'language allowed' and 'naming of public assets'.

It seems that there is not a celebration, news service, sport or function that does not include such programs. All Australians hear and see the result of such programs day after day.

It seems that Australia has been inundated with American styled Western versions of history in the past 30 years. Stories that are built on isolated rumour and observations and leap into a saleable version using hyperbole, association and shock application. Individuals create taxpayer paid positions and go to 'work' to publish more stories.

Stories of altercations between first people and Europeans now need to be examined to remove the fiction associated with them.

With the success of these programs, a period of rewriting history has been undertaken by so called historians who interpret a biased sample of stories. They use some historical and somewhat scientific observations and promote their conclusions as facts in articles.

Many other historians, reporters and members of the public disagree with their conclusions however they find they do not have the energy and resources to compete with the barrage of articles!

Because these articles promote feelings of victimhood and the resultant need to support the rewritten history, some first people make wild accusations to support the case for self determination.

More recently the federal government held a national referendum regarding whether Australians saw the need for a first nation 'Voice' which would ultimately lead to retribution in the form of funds, benefits and land.

Some States took the view that the referendum would succeed in the affirmative and they started processes to identify the scope of such presents. It is widely suggested that the Victorian Government created the Yoorrook Justice Commission to this end.

The national referendum failed spectacularly with every State and NT returning an average of 60.06% NO with an average of 89.92% of Australians recording a vote. Not even 40% of Australians voted for the 'Voice'!

The opening sessions of the Yoorrook Justice Commission saw that the Henty family (first settlers of Victoria) were being accused of stealing land, rape, massacres and even ethnic cleansing. [REDACTED] claimed that memorabilia of the Hentys must be expunged and relatives of one of the Yoorrook commissioners claiming dastardly acts by the Hentys.

The Henty family decided "enough was enough" and that this Essay was to be videoed and accessible as 'Henty Essay' on UTube and verbally presented to the commissioners on 27th June 2024 so all can read and hear THE truth.

Readers and viewers of this essay can contact the presenter on this email: [REDACTED]

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Two of the five commissioners (North and Lovett) presiding over the Yoorrook Justice Commission agreed to hear from the Henty family – for one hour only, not videoed.

This essay is necessarily long and tedious in parts for the purpose of addressing claims made against the true history in the Western District of Victoria. Numeric titles have been used throughout.

001 Introduction of essay presenter

My name is Grenville Henty Silvester

Born in Coleraine, Victoria - in 1952

Lived on the Henty family property of Girrahween, Merino. The portion of Talisker which was a portion of Merino Downs.

Attended school at Merino, Casterton, and Hamilton.

Attended Longerenong Agricultural College, Dooen, Via Horsham.

Served with the Army Reserves, Mt Gambier for 6 years, Cpl, qualified Sgt.

Mobile Intensive Care Ambulance Officer, Melbourne – qualified Deputy Superintendent

Awarded The Australian National Medal for Service.

See CV online.

002 Heritage/authority of essay presenter

The Hentys' history starts from the ancient Anglo-Saxon farming tribes from Europe, 1550 years ago, migrating to England after the Romans left.

This was 500 years before the chimney was invented.

The name Henty means a person of mild temperament showing courteous, kind and gentle traits. The Henty crest was bestowed on them by their peers 900 years ago proclaiming generosity, loyalty and fortitude. Our family motto is Per ardua stabilis which means "Steady in Difficulties".

Every descendant is usually taught at an early age to live up to the Henty traits and proclamations and to honour our motto.

Great Great Great Grandson of Thomas and Frances (nee Hopkins) Henty.

Great Great Grandson of both Francis Henty and Stephen George Henty.

Great Great Grandson of Mary-Anne (nee Lawrence) and Jane (nee Pace) Henty

Great Great Nephew of Edward and Annie Henty



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Great Grandson of Caroline MacLeod (nee Henty) and Alexander Magnus MacLeod (9th Laird of MacLeod and MacLeod - House of Talisker)

Grandson of Alexandra Francis Henty Silvester (nee MacLeod) (known as Lex) and Grenville Archer Silvester (Silvester and Silvester Solicitors – Coleraine and Casterton)

Son of Francis Henty Silvester (known as Henty) and Diana Henty Silvester (nee Smalpage) (known as Di). Both were christened with Henty as their second name.

Henty was a JP, councillor and shire president of the Glenelg shire while running the farming property.

Di was active in community groups while raising a family and sharing the running of the farming property. In the 70s she was appointed as news correspondent by G. J. Adams and wrote many weekly articles under the guise of 'Between you and me – Diana'.

003 Acknowledgement

We would like to begin by acknowledging first peoples and custodians of the land which we discuss today, the people of the Western District of Victoria, and pay our respects to their elders past and present, as well as to emerging leaders.

004 Significance of True Truth

The crest of the MacLeods incorporates a bull and a motto of Hold Fast meaning relatives of the MacLeods are taught to hold fast to the truth.

005 History held by Henty family members

The items shown are but a very small sample of relevant Henty documentation and objects still in the possession of the Henty family.

Some of these include Letter books, station records, diaries and personal records. Others include items of exchange between first people, items used in animal husbandry and first aid the Hentys and items from their marine heritage such as a spermaceti ships candle from the Henty ship, Thistle.



by

These items show that we do have further mid 1800s documentation and items apart from the extensive Henty collection at the state library that my father and mother and other members of the Henty family donated to the Victorian government post WW11.

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006 Principles of life on the land

My father and mother taught me these three Henty principles of life on the land.

Together we live.

Together we share.

Each respecting the other.

In keeping with these, I added, as my principal pillars of communication and assessment:

We, Us and Ours. (Instead of I, me, you and mine)

007 Early history of the Henty family

The Hentys left the 281 acre Church Farm and other leased land in Sussex, England for Australia because of the unknown threat from the Napoleonic wars and the rural Swing Riots which was protesting against the development of the threshing machine which caused widespread rural unemployment. (We now have the combine harvester)

They were promised land in Australia by King William IV which was proportional to their wealth, number of people and stock. They were led to believe that the land would be equitable to their lands in Sussex.

Thomas and Frances rented a vessel and sent their 29 year old son and his two 18 and 16 year old siblings, with employees and stock, to the Swan River Colony in Western Australia. They built a mud-brick homestead on a 2000 acre property that they were allocated and called it Stoke Farm. They leased other land areas.

The land in WA turned out to be sandy soil, poor grasses and with little annual rainfall and fresh water. They, like many other settlers, felt that the bureaucrats had grossly exaggerated the WA land.

They brought the Indian built vessel 'Thistle' (a purpose built coastal supply vessel with the ability to sail sharply into the wind, or 'close hauled') and sailed to Tasmania with their remaining employees and stud stock.

When Edward completed his studies in agricultural science in England and came out to Tasmania with his parents, he found the land at Portland matched the land that they were told to expect when Thomas and Frances decided to leave Church Farm.

Victoria and indeed Australia would be poorer without the Henty family. Their uniquely pure/ line-bred fine wool Spanish Merino sheep provided to John Macarthur in 1805, specifically for Australia, created the backbone of the 220-year industry which is still the envy of the world today.

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Their other purebred livestock provided Australia with blood lines and genetics that can be still recognised today.

As bankers, who did not require brick and mortar security for loans, they provided opportunity to the average person.

The Hentys brought many people who were loyal workers with them, many specialist trades and complete families who the Hentys supported.

The Hentys brought wealth and the knowledge to provide services to farming communities.

The Hentys were all educated and of means, were socially accepted and had a long history of politics, business and caring for others.

We of the Henty family who were born, nurtured and experienced the grace of the Western District of Victoria, carry many truth stories given to us personally and directly by our family and all the peoples of the Western District.

008 The Henty family involvement in the Western District

Many of our family were chosen to represent the communities in both local, state and federal Australian governments and some were chosen by the community to maintain the position of justices of the peace to secure local community safety and fairness.

Many of our family served in the Australian armed services and some gave their life to securing our borders. Nearly all members have served with local community organisations – we have always been involved in a co-operative and positive way!

The Hentys of the Western District shared their names, through marriage, with other proud families such as Hindson, Matheson, Tait, Smalpage, Anderson, MacLeod, Silvester, Bree, Grice, Bishop, Langford and Walker.

Our written histories, achievements, family connections and personal links to the Western District lands are well documented through search engines with many of the family still farming the initial Henty areas inland from Portland.

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009 James Henty and his descendants

James Henty, although being the oldest son of Thomas and Frances Henty, was never involved in actual farming of the land in the Western District but instead his education and interest was as a merchant who profited from trading and transporting wool, oil and other commodities from and to the properties managed by his siblings and the wider areas of the Western District. He did this primarily from Tasmania.

James went broke. He returned to London and then back to Melbourne a couple of years later where he involved himself in politics and again profited from trade, this time from the goldfields, and used that profit and position to purchase a large parcel of land in NSW. He passed away in NSW without him or his offspring having any involvement with the businesses of his siblings.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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010 NSW Governors and their bias.

The land settled by the Hentys was initially denied by NSW Governor Bourke who was annoyed that the Hentys were communicating directly with his bosses back in England and that he may not receive funds from the land settled.

Bourke reacted by sending his surveyor down to Portland with strict instructions to create roadways through every building and asset created by the Hentys. He sent agents each year to land where the Hentys were farming with strict instructions to collect tax for all capital improvements found (including buildings, sheep wash facilities, fences and even stock on hand) These taxes were paid each year – multiple times, over multiple years for a particular asset. The Hentys paid!

This practice continued when Gipps replaced Bourke as the Governor of NSW in 1838 and until Charles La Trobe was appointed Superintendent of Port Phillip District in 1839 when shortly afterward the Hentys paid grazing rights and then were granted pre-emptive right (first offer to purchase) over the current land being farmed.

The Hentys hence paid more for the land to the new Victorian government.

It is said that the Hentys paid three times as much for the land while improving pasture and water sources to farm and graze the land; support all the people in the district (including first people); support the benevolent society at Portland which provided for the needy; fund, maintain and manage the first banking facility; provide valuable commodities to Melbourne and England, and, create and maintain the Port of Portland and the track to the hinterland.

It must be noted that the sole reason for the Hentys wanting to have title over the land was to stop the government and bureaucrats selling the land and their improvements to others. It was NOT to disenfranchise first peoples and to stop them accessing the land.

This was a most critical and compelling lesson passed down through the Henty family.

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011 Soldier Settlement

It has been stated by a relative of one of the commissioners that first nations people were not afforded soldier settlement allocation and inferred that compensation should be provided by the government for such denial of right over land.

We would like to provide a perspective.

One hundred years on from the Bourke and Gipps era, the bureaucrats had another go at the landholdings of the Hentys through the soldier settlement policy.

In 1943 my Grandmother, Lex, passed due to cancer, her sister Caroline (Liny) and her husband (both returned soldiers of WW1) also passed in 1943 after their ship, Melbourne Star, returning from England, was torpedoed, and, Liny's only son, John, was also killed on 8th February 1943 in the crash of the Supermarine Seagull A2-9 while serving in the RAAF. Lex's two surviving sons, now being the principal owners of Talisker, were serving in the AIF.

My father, Henty, had attended Melbourne Grammar, was a jackaroo in outback NSW, completed Agricultural Science at Longerenong College, worked in wool stores and qualified as a dairy herd tester and recorder with the expectation of farming the Henty land. He served with the elite Nackeroos (Northern Australia Observation Unit – coast watchers) for 2 ½ years.

Henty always talked positively about the first people he became friends with while jackarooing and protecting our country. (He ultimately called his section of Talisker, 'Girrahween', place of flowers, out of respect for the first peoples and in memory of his parents).

Alex was an officer stationed at the resupply and admin depot south of Darwin. Henty, Alex and John felt compelled to serve their country and protect their community.

The army would not allow Henty nor Alex a discharge from service when their cousin, aunt, uncle and finally their mother passed in the same year because of their specialist war duties. The state trustees were appointed to administer Talisker while the two boys continued to serve their country.

Since farming was a protected industry where farmers were not supposed to serve in the military, the government policy was that all large land holdings under a manager could be split up into small farms so that returning soldiers could begin farming.

By the time Henty and Alex could show they were not KIA (killed in action) and released by the army 3 months after WW11 because of their specialist tasks, Talisker (4,947 acres consisting of 21 share dairy farms with 57 dependants as well as a school and hall) was taken for Soldier Settlement with cooperation of the state trustees.

The share farmers pleaded (with a signed petition) with the Government not to break up their community and to stay with Henty management.

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Alex and Henty received many hollow apologies from the bureaucrats, paid Henty and Alex £13 an acre for land they had seized and charged them £32 an acre for land that they wanted – land that had been legally left to them by their mother and Liny in their wills. They couldn't afford a legal challenge. They ended up with only 40% of Talisker.

These men were earning military pay – they went into a great deal of debt. My father rode his motorbike to Melbourne, the 500 miles return on gravel roads, every Friday for two years just to service his debt and obligations – just because of bureaucratic policy.



They swallowed their pride, controlled their bitterness and soldiered on with fortitude in true Henty spirit and farmed what was left of the original Talisker area that was originally brought from the Victorian Government by Francis Henty and willed to his daughter Caroline.

My mother, Di, who had also served full time in the army for three years in the AWAS (Australian Women's Army Service) supported Henty building a new house, buildings and infrastructure because of the soldier settlement reorganization.

A few first nations people get upset because their WW11 serving family members missed out on a soldier settlement allocation.

It is extremely upsetting for my family, and similarly affected families, by the sometimes (more often than not) callous bureaucratic policies, to hear of people today bitching about how they missed out and they should be recompensed. It was a world war!!

The Hentys, with other affected and like minded people in Victoria, got on with it!

012 Current bureaucracy meddling with history

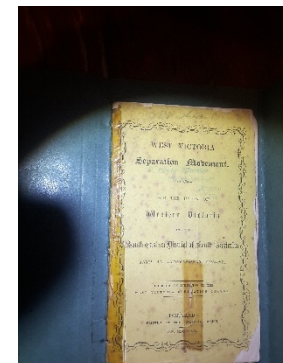
Now, another 70 years on we have 'bureaucrats who have been lobbied' trying to write new history and expunging the very memory of our forebears irrespective of economic depressions, world wars and industrial revolutions. EVERYBODY DID IT TOUGH!!

Is there no end?

013 Princland – Movement to Separate the Western District

The Hentys of the Western District around the 1860s were instrumental in the championing for the Western District Separation Movement called Princland - to rid the district of Melbourne and Adelaide based bureaucratic greed.

The petitioners provided extensive records of assets, and commodities within the area and the population responsible for the generation of such. A document that the Commissioners should be familiar with.

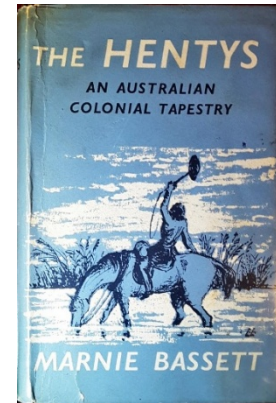


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014 Marnie Bassett and a tapestry of the Henty family

Marnie Bassett, was born at Melbourne University in 1889, her father being Sir David Orme Masson, professor of science and founder of the CSIRO. Her pedigree, qualifications and unquestionable honesty, as well as her family's desire to portray the one true truth, wrote a tapestry of the Henty family in 1952 after personal conversations and knowledge of the Hentys of the Western District through her father. She visited and spoke to many people of the Western District and saw first hand what the Hentys had achieved and how they achieved them. The existing family remember how our parents and grandparents supported Marnie with personal family documents, art and stories passed down.



We would strongly state that any person or body who would question the integrity of any member of the Henty family, first read Marnie's historical book – The Hentys – and then ask the question “is it right for anyone to sully the reputation of a very proud family with impeccable morals, Christian standards and the overwhelming desire to serve the community where they lived?”

015 Good relationship between the Hentys and first people

The Hentys co-existed with the first peoples. Edward respected and showed empathy toward first peoples and shared the Portland area with them on equal terms. First peoples voluntarily explored with Stephen. John and Eliza and later Francis and Mary-Ann supported family groups of first peoples at Merino Downs as depicted in the stained glass window from the Henty St Pauls church. Francis agreed with first people to supply culled and cross bred sheep so they would not spear or steal stud breeding sheep. He understood the importance of dietary fat which was not present in native animals. Francis built his sheep herd to 30,000 on the 20,000+ acres of Merino Downs (an extremely low carrying capacity - to have minimal impact to the land and grasses) which would have been impossible without cooperation from first peoples on and surrounding the property and the 52 miles stretch from Portland to Merino Downs.

The Hentys never interfered with first peoples language, ways of living, skills or beliefs.

016 Hentys never found to be guilty of impropriety

Bourke and Gipps sent investigators to the Henty properties regularly with the intention of getting a guilty finding of some impropriety because of their unfounded bureaucratic bias against the Hentys

– the Hentys were NEVER found to be, in any way, implicit to any impropriety.

The claims in the recent Portland Observer that the Hentys were involved in Ethnic Cleansing is downright libellous and we demand a written apology by the perpetrator!

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017 Implication claims – time to apologise

We now hear that the Hentys have AGAIN been implicated in the so called 'Convincing Ground massacre.' This term came to prominence when Lynnette Peel published 'The Henty Journals' in 1996. Edward Henty's diary entry on the 18th October 1835 stated that he "walked to the 'Convincing Ground'".

None of our family were contacted to be asked what this meant. Instead, activists and would be scholastic know-alls decided it was where fighting occurred.

I remember my mother, at the age of 76, told many people who could have corrected this misnomer but none of them were able to succeed because of closed academic minds and the need to create a negative narrative.

In the more recent times, since 1996, the meaning of Edward's comment has been blown into a world of fantasy and promoted by the same activists and scholastic know-alls.

L Russell stated that the 'Convincing Ground' was the first 'massacre in Victoria; In 2005 R Broome claimed that 60 were killed; In 2007 B Pascoe stated "never convinced of its legitimacy" and also in 2007 I D Clarke stating, as being the 'only' authority, that Connor and Windschuttle* were wrong and what they were claiming was an inaccurate reading of the history. (or did he mean 'narrative'?). (*Connor and Windschuttle are discussed further on).

Please – we are tired of referring people to the facts:

In 1833 (1 year before the Hentys went to Portland) whalers supposedly speared a whale and it washed up dead on the Northern (later known as Dutton Way) beach. The local population witnessed 200 metres of this beach, in width, being washed away by storms in the 1960's. Other storms would have occurred in the preceding 130 years - hence the site where the whale was supposedly located is no more!

The story goes that three of the whalers were dissecting the whale on the beach when a small number of first people arrived claiming ownership of the whale for food. They threw spears at the whalers who were not armed. The whalers either rowed their boat or walked along the beach to their camp at double corner and returned with three single shot muzzle loading guns to frighten the first people away. The single shot firearms were fired once (unsure whether they were loaded with shot) and the group of first people dispersed.

The whalers collected the prize portions of the whale (probably the spermaceti if it was a toothed whale, if not the baleen) and returned to their camp leaving the rest of the whale to the first people.

Ultimately returning to Tasmania after the whale season, stories of the incident were shared through the many Tasmania pubs and over dining tables. The story grew!

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In 1841 (8 years after this supposed incident) the then recently appointed Aboriginal protector Robinson attended Portland and while having dinner in the hut (and no doubt sampling some rum), Edward and the police magistrate, James Blair, provided the before mentioned description of the incident to warn Robinson of the possible warring nature of the first people around the district.

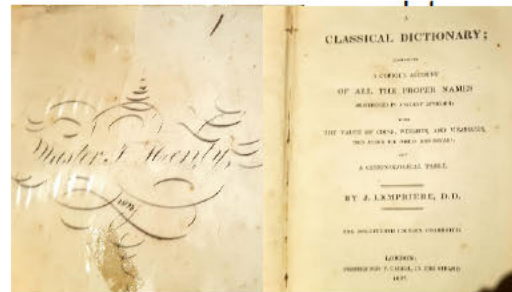
Edward and magistrate Blair quoted the location as at the “Convincing Ground” based on the stories they had heard of the incident.

Robinson was obviously satisfied that the Hentys were not involved in the incident since he did not report otherwise to Superintendent Charles Latrobe who was also at Portland at the time however he did make exaggerated reference to the incident in his diaries at a later date.

This true story of the ‘beached dead whale’ has been passed down through the Henty generations.

Activists and scholastic know-alls – these are the facts.....Yoorrook!

The Hentys were learned people, Edward schooling in England prior to coming out with his mother and father. Edward was schooled in agricultural science as well as being formally introduced to the classics. All Edwards siblings were also aware of the classics.



Greek mythology teaches one about how singing sirens induce sailors to their death. (To stop a siren singing one needs a bronze spear head and blood from an affected person) – sound familiar? - whale hunting! The siren whale, a close deep sea cousin of the humpback whale, is named after this myth.

Edward called the area off the Portland northern beach “The Convincing Ground” since this is where the whales induced the sailors/whalers to follow, often to their injury and sometimes to their death!!!

In 1834 there was no name for the beach itself and as the area was concerned with whaling the Hentys lazily referred to the whole area north of the main settlement as “The Convincing Ground”.

My father and mother and their professional Portland fishermen mates referred to the fishing grounds off Dutton Way as the convincing grounds. The early maps write the words of the Convincing Ground in the water – not the land.

My most vivid memory while I was growing up was fishing repeatedly with my mother and father and a legendary mature aged local professional fisherman in his Cousta boat on the convincing ground.

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Bert would continually teach me “now young fella, face the south and smell the air, feel the breeze on your face, listen to the slap of the waves on the sides and ‘feel’ her with your feet and legs – you are on the fishing grounds that convince you are safe, BUT if the wind backs and the waves are fetched, you will be in all sorts of trouble getting your mum and dad home”. It became my responsibility when to call fishing off for the day – heading south to leave the convincing ground.

Bert would often tell me that the Hentys, my family, were good sailors who understood the sea and her dangers and were not easily convinced by the sea.

What those Portland fisherman - Bert, Bill and my old mate Johnny who I fished with regularly late in his life, taught me was so important when I qualified as a master mariner later in my life. The importance of being aware of any ‘convincing fishing grounds’.

Since I was a young lad, I was told that Edward, Francis and Stephen referred to the fishing grounds to the north of Portland as the convincing grounds. Caroline was taught this by her father, Lex was taught this by Caroline, Henty was taught this by Lex and Henty taught me. My mum also knew of this, the true story, through her grandparents from Stephen George.

Robinson had exaggerated the story told to him by Edward Henty in the hut at Portland, the hut that after he had left that night he got so lost he slept out. Intoxicated? – maybe!

Nothing to do with fighting with first people!!!!!!

171 years on ‘shock jock’ writers such as L Russell, R Broome, B Pascoe and I Clarke created fanciful stories even though they admit to making grave assumptions.

Historian, Michael Connor, summarised the findings of the independent Victorian Heritage Councils 3 person review committee into the fabled ‘convincing ground massacre’, as “misuse of historical evidence” categorically dismissing the myth as “an invented massacre”. His published work in 2007 ‘Convincing Ground: an invented massacre’ clearly denounces the individuals who purport wrongdoing by Europeans.

In 2003 Historian Keith Windschuttle wrote three volumes (656 pages, 1 volume published) detailing how prominent historians have fabricated and deceitfully misrepresented evidence. He states that stories of violence against first peoples is, by large, based on myth rather than reliable evidence.

We would suggest most strongly that Connors publication and these volumes, ‘The fabrication of Aboriginal History’ are read before just accepting what the emotive and shock writings purport as accurate.

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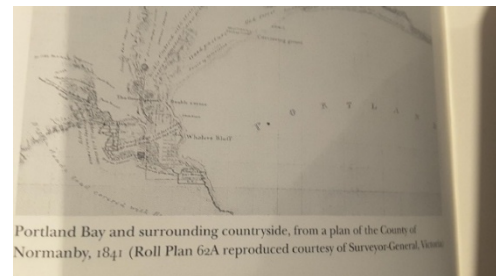
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Australia has been hit with an obviously orchestrated history war and it is paramount that individuals seek to make judgements based on what passes the pub test.

Apart from our corroborated truth telling told to us directly from the very people who originally were the instigators of the term, that others have exclaimed “wow this is bad – I know what this means!”, what makes us Henty family laugh at the stupid claims by people unrelated to our family are –

The word ‘grounds’ commonly refers to marine terms such as ‘fishing grounds’, ‘shallow grounds’, ‘grounds prone to wind change’ etc., NOT to beaches or dunes;

Who on earth would build a whaling station on a surf beach facing the south as claimed by Robinson and the surveyor-general; (or is Robinson actually demonstrating that he knows the true meaning – that Convincing Ground means the whole area of the North Shore, including the whaling station at double corner, OR, for concern that an added enterprise would attract greedy taxes (As experienced at Merino Downs), Edward didn't tell bureaucrats Robinson and the surveyor-general that the buildings further east from the whaling station were for boiling down sheep for tallow (and fellmongery) during the early 1840s economic depression....



NOT a whaling station!;

How people who obviously do not know of the proper location of ‘double corner’, the Whaling or Boiling Down stations and how they operated nor any knowledge of the impact of the 1840s economic depression, actually make comment purporting facts;

The fact that in 1841 the 15 year old supposed survivors (they would have been aged 7 at the time) of the alleged massacre did not show Robinson any fear of the area nor the people where and who were supposedly implicated. Robertson admits in his diary that he was unsure of the interpretation of what he was asking and what they seemed to be replying and claiming;

The fanciful thinking that big, strong whalers would need to walk seven kilometres to have a fight; and

the absolutely stupid, liable and hysterical claim that the reason there are no bones from the ‘massacre’ is because highly educated and moral people (the Hentys) melted down the remains in try pots and sold the bones to collectors in England – what about the body hairs in the oil – oops!

People who tell TALES are laughed at,

People who tell FANCIFUL LIES keep psychiatrists in a job!

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Yet here we are, 192 years on, being labelled as guilty of something serious enough to erase our positive history as judged by the people of the Western District over that 192 years. The incident is now promoted as the first big clash between first and European peoples in Victoria. Surely, this myth has been proven incorrect.

Time to apologise to the Henty family, elders of first people educate based on fact, and, try another un-emotional tact – not victimhood!

It is downright stupefying that [REDACTED] of the Commission states categorically, to the Hentys, that [REDACTED] believes that all the massacres reported are fact – discounting totally what the Hentys of the Western District can prove to the contrary.

018 Motivation behind statements

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Thinking members of the community, which includes the majority of first people, as the recent referendum clearly showed, apply the 'pub test' and reject claims by so called representatives and/or historians that get paid for writing shock articles - that are solely made to promote victimhood and attract funds from the taxpayers purse.

We, as members of the Henty family and keepers of their truth stories are amazed how so called researchers and historians can claim something and not even contact us.

019 Why the Henty family do not normally react publically to individual criticism or stories of impropriety by first people.

Documents detailing widespread incidences of first people improprieties such as fighting, theft, murder, property damage, aggressive social practices, body deformation, cannibalism and infanticide are available online. There are certainly incidences reported by independent news groups of the day. William D. Rubinstein, past Chair of History has written extensively on first people societal practices prior to European arrival.

The Hentys reported the murder of a shepherd on Merino Downs by first peoples. (The publication 'Historical Records of Victoria, Volume2B, Chapter 22, 'Foster Fyans Investigates Alleged Massacre At Portland' provides an exhaustive and detailed account of this incident through eye witness accounts) NO massacre!

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The Hentys, apart from reporting to the authorities, and because they are true to their traits and motto, have never intentionally made public nor promoted these facts since our forebears have always made sure their priority is that the first peoples have sufficient dietary provisions and that they are considered and involved in any pastoral enterprises – we do not try to denigrate a group of individuals based on individual impropriety!

The greater majority of first people of the Western District, and noted during our involved years of experience in the district, have always respected the Henty family and their managers.

We of the Western District Henty family totally reject claims made by first nation activists that our silence is from being guilty of something.

We remember while growing up the regular visitations from swaggies, some of whom were first peoples. Fence posts carried the swaggies mark leading to the front gates of the farming properties who's owners would offer a caring hand. Our parents went out of their way to ensure their needs were met.

A first people man thanked my family for assisting him in his hour of need ('on the wallaby') some years earlier.

020 Defend the true truth

We wish to continue to maintain the principles of life on the land but we will fervently defend the true truth and the honour of the Henty family.

We reject being linked to and judged with incidences that may have occurred somewhere else in Australia, or the world, BUT, the Hentys respected first people, shared the land and showed great patience with all minority groups.

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021 Personal thoughts

Now, personally speaking and my thoughts only, as being bred, bought up, schooled in agricultural science and being a partner with my parents on the portion of Merino Downs known as Girrahween, as well as being intimately involved in Western District community organisations and politics, I share my 72 years of recognized wisdom and personal thoughts.

022 Stated intention of thoughts

The following is not meant to insult any individual or group of individuals – instead the following personal statements, observations and feelings are for the five appointed Commissioners to reflect upon when considering whether they consider that the defamation, based on mischievous verbal rumour and misuse of historical evidence, of one family group and their wider community who wish to celebrate their accomplishments, has anything to do with fairness, law or bringing Australians together into the future.

023 Lobbying of Government

My first observation is that the Yoorrook Justice Commission is funded by a government which has been lobbied for funds, respectability and authority.

024 Meaning of justice

Is not the word justice confined to a recognised legal process with the involvement of appointed judges?

025 Funding of the commission

Assuming everyone involved in the running of the commission is been paid from taxpayers money. Can all Victorians have knowledge of staffing and funding details?

026 Emotional support

The Social and Emotional Wellbeing Officer ONLY provides support to first nation peoples [REDACTED]

Do not people, not claiming first people status, deserve emotional and wellbeing support provided by the commission if statements promoted by the commission cause obvious harm to them?

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027 Commissioner bias

The Chair person has shown a professional attitude throughout the videoed sessions.

Four of the Commissioners have a documented and obvious personal bias toward first people's victimhood stories.

One commissioner has knowledge and qualifications of the law and past experience as a judge which undoubtedly will be used to interpret data collected in the absence of appointed judges and jurors.

Why are there no commissioners from the Western District community who are neutral in view nor bias?

028 Truth receivers

[REDACTED]

029 One rule for me, another rule for thee

Why is it OK for people making statements to the commission to refer to WHITE people?

030 Invitation to be involved in the Yoorrook concept

Since the commission's main focus seems to be on the Hentys, why weren't Henty family members not notified of proceedings?

Instead we found out through friends who accidentally witnessed an article about the Commission, [REDACTED] others and [REDACTED] claims.

031 Briefing papers

The Government officials have read briefing papers prior to their 'testimony' – do these note all sources and interpretations of the literature?

We, the Henty family, or members of the Western District community, have not been asked to submit briefing papers!

Is Marnie Bassett's book a recommended reference text? Are the writings of Connor, Windschuttle and Rubinstein included?

Is the Victorian premier and her ministers aware of all the information to make an unbiased and an objective decision regarding the use of tax payers money paid by Victorians? We would hope that they will read and watch this Henty Essay!

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032 Yoorrook or sophisticated lobbying

Watching the videos of the commission and the cross examination / prompting by commissioners and learned fellows, one would be excused for confusing Yoorrook with government funded lobbying.

Understanding that the NO result of the recent, very expensive, national referendum showed that the greater majority of people, including first people, in Australia, in every State did not agree with the 'Voice' which promoted ongoing lobbying for taxpayer funds.

Yet here we are, spending \$47.445 million, as stated by the letters patent, on just that!

033 Control of statements made

Why has there been no control of statements, by the Commission, of [REDACTED] and other's emotional and outrageous outbursts?

Instead it seems that the Commission has promoted the airing of their statements given to the Commission.

Why has the commission accepted people making statements of 'massacre' when they are not referring to that noun's/verb's true meaning?

Understanding that massacre means 'killing people who are not engaged in hostilities or are defenceless'.

Is not the majority of incidences that are defined as massacres involve armed and aggressive first people?

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034 There were no modern firearms available in the mid 1800s

Being a past collector and user of antique firearms and owner of Francis Hentys shot gun it bemuses me that someone would believe that a small number of farmers or sailors, each armed with a single shot muzzle loading firearm, could kill multiple individuals who each are armed with multiple clubs and spears and experienced in regular tribal warfare.

Since Europeans did not like eating lean, native fauna most guns were shotguns for the capture of birds such as ducks and small game they bought with them. The shotguns were small range and the shot size used was for duck and small game – not humans!

Guns were used for defence and sometimes retribution around Australia but I question the number of casualties inflicted by such a slow loading weapon, used by a relatively small group of 'unskilled in warfare' people at a specific incident.



There was never an incident where a firearm was used against a first person by a Henty!

It is interesting to note that multiple sketches of supposed affrays depict Europeans holding shot guns by the barrel – not a gun but a club!!

As someone who has had military training and experience, is it reasonable to accept that an alleged ambush by Major Mitchell lasted for two days as purported by a so called historian?

035 Respect for first people

The entry in Edward's diary on the 2nd of December 1834 shows, beyond any doubt, that the Hentys and the people assisting them in their ventures respected first people.

Francis Henty's letter-book does not reference any incidences of miss-treatment of first peoples.

036 Introduction of firearms 30 years after the Hentys landed in Portland

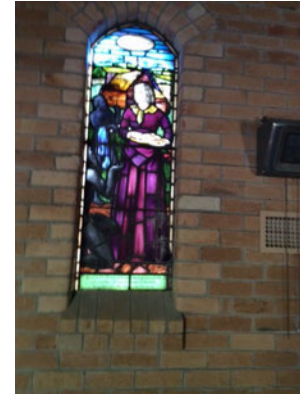
It is true that the police forces in the 1860s were armed with 1855 .55 Cal, captive ramrod, carbines to be used while horse mounted. These were designed for 'quicker' loading on horseback. These firearms were not owned by farmers or sailors in the western district. There were two new, never fired .55 Cal carbine and a 1868 .577 Tower Enfield muzzle loaders displayed during the 1884 bi-centenary of which were given to a museum during the last ten years.

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037 Mary-Ann and Francis well known for supporting first nations people

Mary-Ann Henty involved herself in the welfare of the first peoples lives which is demonstrated by hers and her husbands stained glass windows of the Henty St Pauls church – the only stained glass windows in existence depicting first peoples sharing the land with Europeans.



We are sure that the commission would want those relics protected at all costs but they are currently securely stored against damage from first nation activists.

The church was built by the Henty family to serve all people in the vicinity of Merino Downs.

038 Claims by some are just too difficult to believe

It is difficult to reasonably believe that prior to 1834 up to 700 first peoples could live together in the southern reaches of then NSW in one small area given the minimal non-nocturnal protein animals available and the lack of efficient trap engineering, tillage and substantial vegetable and fruit production.

Have individuals created a fanciful image which is far from the truth?

First people should be proud of their small transit communities which had minimal footprint on the lands resources – albeit as an existence and not a production sharing enterprise. They managed with minimal need for progressive processes.

All Hentys are proud to share the lands with these people.

039 Fortunate for H.M. Government

We all hear that the English, Scots and Irish invaded and took the land once owned by first peoples.

Would those who claim this be able if other countries in our past had succeeded in establishing the first settlements in Australia? The captain of the French corvette vessel Australab was the first to fire upon a first person at Sydney Cove – to the outrage of Governor Phillip.

Would have the first nations people survived if not for His Majesties (H.M.) Government policies?

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040 Terra Nullius

Because the Hentys have been blamed for stealing first person land, the following perspective is shared.

Those who regard themselves as representatives of first nations people, and the activists following their lead, place great stock in the term Terra Nullius. They claim that by Bourke applying Terra Nullius Europeans illegally took control of land that was once owned by first nations people. They infer that the current population, 189 years later on, apart from first nations people, must recompense for such loss.

During the 'period of discovery' where large enough sea going vessels were designed and built and methods of carrying out long voyages were developed, land masses were identified by sovereign states. States that through exploration, product development and developing social order had developed growing populations that required jobs and access to dietary and other requirements.

Prior to 1700 land was seen to be 'available' by a Sovereign State if the religious practice by the inhabitants was not of their religion. This availability criteria was not practiced in the case of Australia.

In the 1700s and 1800's the English view, based on thousands of years of experience, was that for sustainable communities to survive, land and easily identifiable and unified social rules were required to be managed by an individual person – a person who could speak for all others. 'A Sovereign'.

Land was deemed to be **vacant** if there was no Sovereign.

This was demonstrated by the example that many people are needed to build a ship – it wouldn't get built without an identifiable, individual owner/sovereign being able to dictate what, where and how it is to be done.

The legal definition of terra nullius later in the 1800s was 'land over which no previous sovereignty has been exercised'.

Sovereignty in this definition means that not one person has or does speak and is responsible for others.

William Henty was the lawyer of the brothers and kept his father and siblings informed regarding legal matters, especially regarding what is meant by **vacant** land.

In the early 1800s there were reportedly up to 500 first people clan groups, speaking 35 languages just in Victoria.

That is an average of 112,000 acres (10 km in all directions) for each clan group. (Five times the size of Merino Downs). The only transport available in the 1800s was horse, bullocks dray or by foot. That was a huge area to find where the clan was at any one time.

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Not one first person was responsible for and to those groups – each living independently from each other apart from participating in infrequent trade and the occasional meeting celebration for social purposes.

Apparently with individuals or groups in open warring conflict with neighbouring clans.

It is hard to believe that in 1835 terra nullius meant ‘nobody's land’.

This reasonably recent definition seems obviously distracting from the original 1800s meaning while creating an emotive “well of course we were here, how dare you say we were not using the land, you stole it from us!!”

The Henty's clearly shared the land, water and its produce with first peoples and as documented by Edward did not try to enter into a treaty for ownership of land which Batman and the Port Philip Association did.

Francis knew John Batman well, being with him when they first sighted the waterfall at the now Princes Bridge in Melbourne. Francis sailed Batman and Buckley in the 35 ton cutter Mary Ann to the Yarra. Francis helped Batman pitch his tent on Batman Hill.

It is felt that the original definition of Terra Nullius has been changed to fit in with a narrative that is very much wanting, very detrimental to the majority of first people and downright toxic to sharing.

Why is a narrative that promotes victimhood seen to be a solution?

Bourke, in his 1835 two page proclamation, resulting from a report that Batman had entered into an agreement with first people of the Port Phillip bay area, stated that no one could enter into any agreement regarding vacant land that he was responsible for. He further stated that anyone entering into such an agreement would be seen as trespassing on that land and inferred that they may be prosecuted as an intruder. The Irish born Bourke obviously did not agree with Batman's agreement with the first people of Port Phillip. He obviously wanted control!

The proclamation was NOT instigated by HM Government but instead was created by, posted and sent by Bourke to HM Government in England.

This was after 47 years of H.M Government representatives observing and communicating with multiple, independent groups of first peoples and sharing the lands with them.

Terra Nullius was finally coined as a term in the 1870s.

No where in Bourke's proclamation was ‘no man's land’ mentioned.

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The Hentys were unable to find a single person, respected by all other first people and who spoke for all first people in the Portland and hinterland area. These factors together with the changing political will of H.M. Government toward Victorian statehood and settler families such as the Hentys , it prompted the Hentys to expand their stock runs inland.

We find today that there is still not one person who speaks for first peoples – not one person who can take responsibility for a person’s actions in a given area. Not one person recognizable as the leader of first people.

The First Peoples’ Assembly of Victoria Ltd is registered as a charity and purports to be a democratically elected body representing all first people in Victoria. It consists of 31 people with 2 chairpersons and a board. Do they all agree? Is there one person responsible?

041 Negotiations were with H.M. Government

The Hentys were directly and in person negotiating with H.M. Government in London who were the bosses of Bourke and Gipps prior to Latrobe recognising their tenure. At no time were the Hentys removed from their runs by order from H.M. Government. The Hentys were NOT acting illegally as some allege using an interpretation/judgement just to fit a narrative to further portray the Hentys in a bad light.

042 Statues, Monuments and Plaques

Past communities of the Western District have designed, paid for and allocated sites for memorabilia of their history.

There are 19 plus identifiable statues, monuments and plaques referencing the Hentys in the Glenelg shire area – many more throughout Victoria.

Many Victorians share sentiments and need for physical recognition into the future. It is a way of connecting with those past communities that lived their lives at their times.

The current environment sees a very small minority of individuals, with no link to past communities, openly and illegally defacing and destroying this memorabilia.

There are individuals who are openly promoting such illegal action and the Commissioners are seemingly in favour of such open promotion.

This plaque, for instance, represents the three gentlemen who were at the forefront of the early settlement of Victoria by Europeans – Edward Henty, John Batman and Charles LaTrobe.

Is this plaque going to be erased from our history?



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043 Claim of personal injustice

In relation to individuals defacing and destroying memorabilia of past communities, police officers, prosecutors and magistrates need to apply the law to such blatant injustice. We of the Henty family stand today pleading wrongdoing and harm to ourselves by these actions and demand that all perpetrators be charged with offences against public property and individual wellbeing!

044 First nations people could have their own

If first people want to involve the communities of greater Victoria and the Western District in particular and pay for their own statues, monuments and plaques to promote their positive history I am sure local government would provide space for the placement of such.

That would be a good outcome of sharing and respecting a past history while living in the Western District.

Perhaps the \$47.445 million Commission's budget could have been spent on such an exercise?

045 Real threats of mischief

We are aware that individuals, with the commission's promotion, have exhibited irrational and hysterical behaviour and may react to this, our testimony, and seek to incur further mischief to our families.

We therefor require a specific public statement in each of the local newspapers, from each of the Commissioners that such action by any individual or group be condemned by the Commission and swift legal retribution will be exercised!

046 Perspective sharing and questions to identify Yoorrook

As any person who is given the privilege of life knows, we gather both pain and joy during our voyage. We can look back and marvel at how those before us coped with the situations they found themselves in. We cannot practically feel their pain because it was in another time and situation. We cannot look forward to how those following will cope with whatever they experience. The joy in the now will minimise the pain we feel now and provide those following with feelings of confidence.

If another causes one to concentrate on actual or perceived pain, they are doing a massive disservice by causing a feeling of being a victim so they cannot see the joy of the moment nor life after.

Those that laugh and surround themselves with positive people in moments of pain do not feel as a victim.

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Commissioners, consider your recommendations to government based on how to foster positive feelings without presents – solutions based on victimhood will cause more pain.

Thankyou for listening and we trust that you have learnt facts and a perspective this essay has sought to provide. We look forward to answers to our many questions as well as any questions from the Commissioners.

047 Essay close

We are your humble respondents.

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