

# City of Greater Bendigo: Marong Heritage Study Mining Sites

## UNFORTUNATE BOLLE'S REEF MINE

### Other Names

**Location** Parcel No. 127176, State Forest, near the junction of Old Tom Road and Scotsmans Track, Whipstick

**Map Reference** Epsom 1:25,000 - BV553.419

Victorian Heritage Register No

National Estate Register No

Planning Scheme No



**Description** North of Scotsmans Track is a line of reef workings, about 150 metres in length, running approximately north-south . The workings consist of three collapsed shafts and some shallow open-cutting, from which leads an adit. Several shafts have been sunk onto the underlying drive.

**History** Period of activity: 1862-1865  
Line of reef: Unfortunate Bolle's  
Maximum recorded annual production: 107ozs obtained from 10 tons in 1862  
Total production: unknown  
Deepest working level: 30 feet  
Deepest shaft: 30 feet (above water level)

**Thematic Context** Mining

**Comparative Examples** The site is one of a number of representative shallow-level low-production mines in the study area, namely: Christoff (1856-1898), Wallace (1856-1906), Black Rock (1857-1879), Sandfly (1857-1890), Barkly (1857-1951), Elliott (1858-1889), Unfortunate Bolle's (1862-1865), Shamrock (1862-1881), and Apollo Hill (1864-1887).

**Statement of Significance** The site displays all the characteristics of reefs in the Whipstick area - very rich on the surface and poor at depth and has the potential to illustrate an important phase of mining in this area (criterion C). It also contains some well-preserved 1860s shallow reef workings (criterion D).

**Level of Significance** Regional

**Recommendation** The site should be protected by inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay Table in the City of Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme, by registration with the Victorian Heritage Council, and in accordance with the general principles of the conservation policy for mining sites.

**Heritage Boundaries** The site is approximately rectangular, bounded on the south by the Raywood Channel and extending northwards for a distance of 50 metres either side of the workings along the reef.

**References** 1. F. Cusack, "Bendigo: a history." Melbourne, Heinemann, 1973.  
2. J. Flett, "The history of gold discovery in Victoria." Melbourne, Hawthorn Press, 1979, 495pp.  
3. W. Perry, "Tales of the Whipstick: a history of the Whipstick, Neilborough,

Sebastian, Raywood and Myers Creek gold rushes, Victoria." Eaglehawk, Perry, 1975, 249pp.

4. "The Unfortunate Bolle's Reef." The Bendigo Advertiser, Thursday, 4 September 1862, p2, col.1.
5. "Mining. Unfortunate Bolle's Reef." The Bendigo Advertiser, Saturday, 27 September 1862, p2, col.5.
6. "New reef." The Bendigo Advertiser, Tuesday, 30 September 1862, p2, col.1.
7. "Mining. Whipstick." The Bendigo Advertiser, Thursday, 5 March 1863.
8. "Mining intelligence. Reef in the Whipstick." The Bendigo Advertiser, Saturday, 29 August 1863.
9. Reports of the Mining Surveyors and Mining Registrars, Sandhurst mining district, Raywood division.
10. "The Whipstick. An historic centre ctd." The Bendigo Advertiser, Saturday, 29 August 1931, p2, col.2.

## Notes

**Assessed by** David Bannear in February 1992 and reviewed by Peter Milner in June 1998

- Chronology**
- 06.1862 □ Whilst investors were still licking their fingers after having had them burnt in the speculation blaze, news reached Sandhurst that a German digger, Jacob Bolle had come upon a golden outcrop in the Whipstick Scrub no more than a couple of miles from Sydney Flat. Sandhurst acted predictably ...diggers dragged out cradles and dishes and headed for The Whipstick. In July, Bolle took a couple of hundred ounces from a crushing of twenty tons, but the glittering promise was deceptive- the Unfortunate Bolle's Reef, as it came to be called - was no more than a richly studded blow of quartz. Bolle's discovery was followed, however, by other strikes. [1.133]
- 06.1862 □ Bolle Reef- A German named Nicholas Bolle and a North of England man, Frederick Price ...discovered a rich reef .. visitors inspected the rich claim [and found] a trench twenty feet long and three feet deep had been excavated, and the reef which was small, from three to twelve inches thick, exposed. At the end of the trench a shaft had been sunk to a depth of twelve feet ... Mr. Bolle and Mr. Price handed round among the visitors for inspection, rich specimens ...A newspaper report on 4 September 1862, stated that the latest crushing from Bolle's Reef 10 tons, obtained at a depth of fourteen feet, yielded 107ozs 14dwt . ..Bolle's Reef had a short life, which was typical of most Whipstick quartz reefs. A mining report of Saturday, 14 August 1863, stated that Bolle's Reef had failed to fulfil early promise, and comparatively little work had been undertaken. [3.7]
- 09.1862 □ The fortunate prospectors of the prospecting claim are still doing remarkably well. Their last crushing of 10 tons, taken out 14 feet below the surface, produced 107ozs 14dwt. The reef at that depth makes into an eastward and westward leg, the first named being considerably the richest. One piece of stone, about the size of a man's hand, our informant states, yielded 8½ozs. Mr Smith, of the Epsom branch of the Bank of Australasia, has already purchased from the lucky owners of the claim upwards of £1200 worth of gold. [4]
- 09.1862 □ The prospectors have opened out and worked a large face of the reef with varying success, but always payable. The first claim south (Clisby and Company) is under register, they having gone down about 30 feet; and got a body of stone 6 feet thick, but showing no gold. [5]
- 09.1862 □ We are informed that a new reef has been struck near Old Tom Gully, Whipstick. The stone was struck at 7 feet; some of the specimens shown to our informant are represented as very rich. [6]
- 1862 □ Whipstick- In 1862 Jacobs Reef was discovered, and a party of Germans opened the alluvial at Jacobs Gully; the Unfortunate Bolles Reef, was also discovered. J A Patterson, there in 1862, gives the names of the diggings north east of Flagstaff Hill as the Whipsnake, the Beehive, and Skylark diggings. [2.248]
- 03.1863 □ A new reef has been (found) somewhere near Old Tom Reef, which ... deep (i.e. about 6 feet thick), the trial crushing have gone from 7 to 9dwt. [7]

□08.1863□Bolle, the discoverer of a celebrated Whipstick reef, named the Bolle Reef, having worked this reef till it no longer paid, went on a prospecting tour, and within the last few days has found another reef, 5 miles from the first, towards Elysian Flat, ... [8]

□09.1865□Nine new quartz claims have been registered:- 1, Balle-balle Reef, 80 yards, Scotchman's Gully, Old Whipstick. [9.54-55]

29.08.1931□Not far from Jacob's Reef is the one known as Unfortunate Bolle's, found by a party of foreigners, the results of the first crushing from Bendigo. It was extraordinarily rich - as golden, it was reported by the local press, as any stone ever previously obtained - and unfortunately it was a patch on which the prospectors had lighted, and it was exhausted almost as soon as found, the subsequent crushings having for some time given only 10dwts to the ton. Later, however, the stone again improved, and good yields were obtained from it. [10]