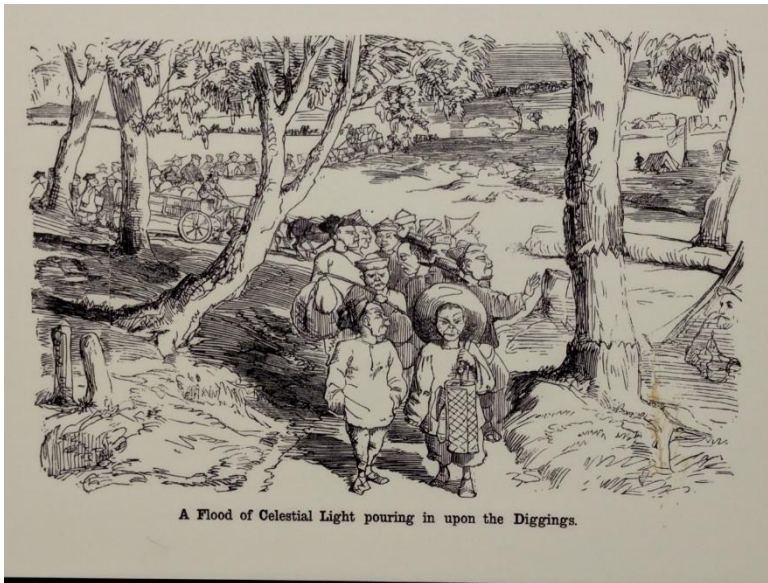


Our trip to **Ararat** Monday 14th September 2026.



Vic Rail appears to be running normally again so we travelled all the way by train, via Ballarat. 1hr 30mins to quite a big city. Much evidence of past opulent days. Magnificent architecture, built on the huge profits of a bygone era.

It's hard to imagine what life was like back in 1850's. The place was empty.... then the gold rush hit. 20,000 settlers appeared within a couple of weeks and lived under

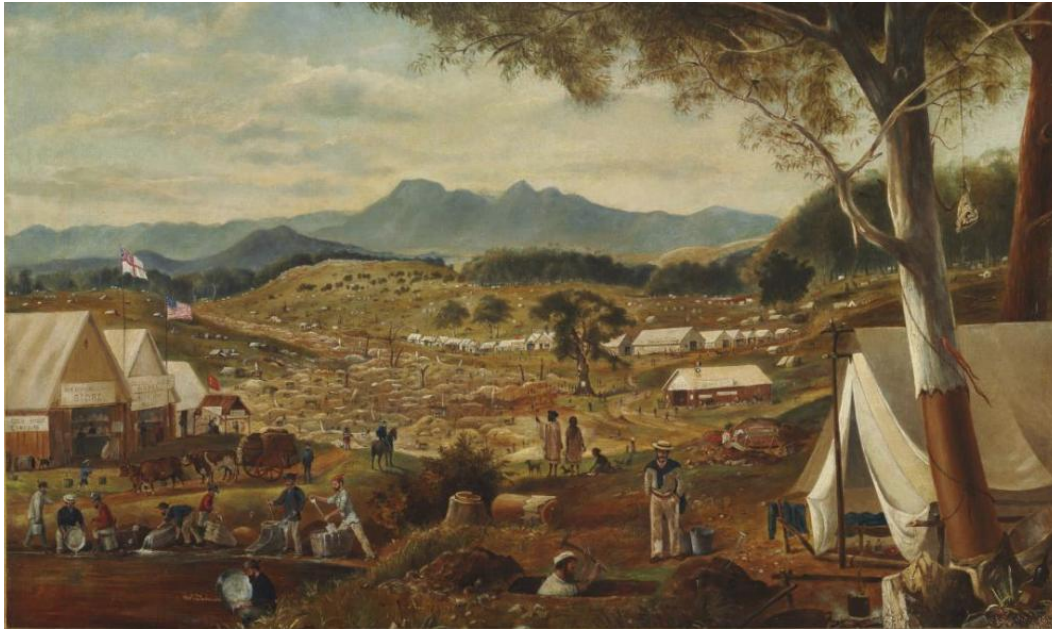


canvas. At the height on the gold rush 40,000 lived there like that. The land was turned upside down by prospectors feverishly searching every inch for the buried treasure – gold. Back then, it was worth £3.00 (≈ AU\$6.00 - if “dollars” had existed then). Today it is around AU\$6000 a troy ounce. Ararat is the only city in Oz founded by Chinese immigrants (1857) after they found

the Canton Lead gold reef. The Chinese have a magnificent museum - Gum San (Gold Mountain) Heritage Centre (31 Lambert Street) and includes this statue. Now 25 years old with many prominent visitors in their books. The museum will be a visit for another day. Ararat is built on top of the goldfields. For those that live there now, it makes digging in their back garden a whole lot more interesting!



Just down the road from the Chinese Museum is the Ararat RSL. It stands on a different site from its original premises. Over the years had huge developments and mega bucks gone into it. Variousy redeveloped therefore much improved and enlarged. This is where we had our lunch.



Edward Roper's painting of the Ararat diggings shows a group of Aboriginal people standing in the centre of the field. One of the figures is kneeling and could be panning for gold.



enlarged section of the painting

The impact on the environment is also clearly visible. We see a vast, largely treeless field, with mounds of unearthed clay. The landscape had been literally turned upside down by diggers.