

## The Streets of York

Do you live in Bland Road?



Revett Henry Bland (1811-1894), was born on 2 February 1811 at Newark, Nottinghamshire, England, son of Dr Thomas Bland and his wife Emma, née Revett. Educated at Newark Grammar School and intended for the medical profession, he was sent at 14 to St Bartholomew's Hospital, London but never became a doctor. He arrived in the Swan River Colony in August 1829 on the *Marquis of Anglesea* and in December, at the age of eighteen, was appointed superintendent of government stock at York. Because of the money and property he brought with him, he was granted 8,000 acres on the left bank of the Swan River, part of which became the Houghton estate. In 1831 Lieutenant-Governor Sir James Stirling asked him to lead an expedition through the Darling Range and establish a government farm at York. Bland was a member of the first party of settlers which set off for the Avon Valley on 6 September 1831, and he selected a place 2 miles south of Mt Bakewell near a broad reach of the river. As instructed by Stirling, by the end of September 1831, Bland had built the first house in York 100 yards above the ford and established the government farm 1,480 feet to the west of the Avon River ford. Bland partnered with Arthur Trimmer, who with his brothers had brought Merino sheep to the colony, and established the Government farm "mostly at his own expense". Bland was to run the farm but both of them worked it for some years.

In 1832, Bland and Trimmer rented the 1,000-acre Government stock farm for "one peppercorn" per annum for two years provided that they house soldiers sent to York. The Government later awarded 1,000 acres on the east side of the river to Bland as a reward for having settled it.

Bland also received a grant south of the town. He called this land Balladong Farm from as early as 1831. By 1834 he was Resident Magistrate of York and Justice of the Peace.

In October 1841 Governor John Hutt recommended Bland for appointment as Protector of Aborigines. He received high praise for developing good feeling and mutual confidence between the settlers and the local aborigines and held this office until October 1843 when he was granted eighteen months leave to go to England for treatment of his eyes. He left in November and returned to York in 1845. While in England, he secured a contract with the British Admiralty to supply them 400 loads of Western Australian timber. He also lobbied for more Parkhurst lads to ease the labour shortage in Western Australia

A few months after his return from England in 1845, Bland lost his wife, Emily nee Lutzen, in childbirth and in September 1846, was appointed acting Government Resident of Albany.

In 1847, Bland sold "Daliak" to Thomas and Henry Carter and in 1848 he sold Balladong Farm to the Parker family.

From January 1849 until June 1850, he became Acting Colonial Secretary. He was expected to have been appointed as Colonial Secretary but this did not take place as he sailed to South Australia in March 1850 for treatment of his persistent eye complaint, his health deteriorated and he lost the sight of an eye. In August 1851, with much reluctance, he resigned and in January returned to England for further medical treatment.

Returning to Australia yet again Bland went to Victoria where his business ability and contacts with the London Stock Exchange led to his appointment as director of the Port Phillip and Colonial Gold Mining Co. In Ballarat in 1856 he collaborated to begin mining operations at Clunes where he installed an extensive plant. In 1863-65 Bland was a director of the National Bank, and in 1881 he was a juror for the Australian International Exhibition and offered a medal for his impartial and painstaking efforts.

In 1848 at St George's Church, Perth, Bland had married the widow Martha Emma Hinds, née McCallum. She and their four children predeceased Bland who died on 18 February 1894 at Clunes and was buried in the Melbourne general cemetery.

### References

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*Flora Smith and Donald Barrett-Lennard, A History of Houghton, Perth, c. 1975.*

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*Perth Gazette & Western Australian Journal, 18 May 1833, p.78; 4 June 1836, p.705.*

*Wikipedia*

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