

VICTORIAN RACEWALKING CHAMPIONSHIPS: 1892 - 1920

Victoria's first athletics club, the **Melbourne Harriers**, formed in 1890 at a meeting at the George Hotel, St Kilda, where the idea of forming an athletics association had first been raised.

In September the following year, a committee was formed by the Melbourne Harriers to draft the rules for a proposed association. On 8th October 1891, the Victorian Amateur Athletic Association (VAAA) was officially formed, at the Port Phillip Club Hotel on Flinders Street. Along with the Melbourne Harriers, the founding members of the VAAA were **Melbourne University**, **Hawthorn Harriers**, **Melbourne Grammar School** and **Wesley College**.

Over the next few years, more clubs were formed and the VAAA expanded across the colony of Victoria.

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1892

The VAAA held its first championships at the East Melbourne Cricket Ground in the Easter of 1892, followed by an inaugural Men's 10 Mile Cross Country Championship at Caulfield Racecourse in October of the same year. This marked the official start of amateur athletics in Victoria. State T&F Championships were to be held annually, with the interclub competition that would evolve into today's AV Shield first taking place in 1913.

[Arthur Barrett](#) of Melbourne Hare & Hound won both walks. Alas, only the winner is recorded so we have no idea how many walkers in total contested these two events. Barrett would go on to become the first Australian racewalking superstar, his 14 Victorian championship gold medals and his 8 Australasian medals over a 12 year career making him one of the most prolific champions in local racewalking history.

Sadly, the results from these early Victorian Championships often only included the first few placings, if that! Further, as was the norm in those time, the winner's time was often the only one recorded for posterity.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 23 April 1892

1.	Arthur Barrett	Melb.HH	7.55.0
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3 MILES WALK, Saturday 23 April 1892

1.	Arthur Barrett	Melb HH	24.00.2
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VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1893

It became obvious that an Australasian Championship was required, so in 1893 a Memorandum of Agreement was entered into by the Amateur Associations of NSW, New Zealand and Victoria to hold 'Australasian Championships' every two years, the venue being rotated between the three associations.

The first Australasian Championships were held at the MCG on 9 and 11 November 1893, in conjunction with the 1893 Victorian T&F Championships. With 7 victories, NSW finished ahead of Victoria and New Zealand. One of the notable winners was [Edwin Flack](#) who won the mile in 4mins 44.0secs. Flack was to become Australia's first Olympic competitor and double gold medallist at the 1896 Olympic Games.

Honours in the walks were shared, with **A. Bullock** of NSW winning the 1 Mile event and Arthur Barrett of Victoria winning the 3 mile event.

3 MILES WALK, Thursday 9 November 1893

1.	Arthur Barrett	Melb.HH	24.00.2
2.	G.Galloway	New Zealand	
3.	G.Elkington		
	T.Challinor	NSW	DNF

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 11 November 1893

1.	A.Bullock	NSW	7.13.4
2.	G.Galloway	New Zealand	20 yards
3.	T.Challinor	NSW	

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1894

The 1894 Victorian Championships were held at the St. Kilda Cricket Ground on the weekend of 15-16 December. The walks were contested as straight finals, with Barrett winning again, to make it 5 golds out of 6.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 15 December 1894

1.	Arthur Barrett	Melb.HH	7.31.2
2.	Francis Garner	Melbourne	

3 MILES WALK, Saturday 15 December 1894

1.	Arthur Barrett	Melb.HH	24.11.4
2.	Francis Garner	Melbourne	1/2 yard
	J.Holt	Walkers Club	DNF

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1895 (held in 1896)

The 1895 Victorian Championships were held at the Ballarat Oval in Ballarat on Sunday 27 January 1896. The walks were contested as straight finals, with Barrett again dominant – that made 7 golds out of 8.

1 MILE WALK, Sunday 27 January 1896

1.	Arthur Barrett	Melb.HH	7.02.5
2.	Jock Ashworth	Malvern	100 yards
3.	Francis Garner	Melbourne	50 yards

3 MILES WALK, Sunday 27 January 1896

1.	Arthur Barrett	Melb.HH	23.17.2
2.	Francis Garner	Melbourne	300 yards
3.	James Paterson	Ballarat	

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1896

The 1896 Victorian Championships were held at the St. Kilda Cricket Ground on Saturday 14th November 1896. Since the 1895 Victorian Championships had been held in January 1896, it meant two sets of Victorian Championships in the one Calendar year.

The second Australasian T&F Championships had been held in Christchurch in New Zealand in January 1896 and Barrett, as undisputed Victorian champion, had made the trip across the Tasman. There he had been soundly beaten by New Zealander Francis Creaner who won both walks in convincing style. Up till that time, Barrett had struggled to break 7 minutes for the mile but Creaner's graceful rhythmic style was a revelation to him and he came home determined to emulate it. Soon he was flowing with new found speed and his Victorian title wins that year set new Australasian records of 6:42.0 and 21:36.2 respectively.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 14 November 1896

1.	Arthur Barrett	Melb.HH	6.42.0	Australasian Record
2.	J.Holt	Walkers Club		

3 MILES WALK, Saturday 14 November 1896

1.	Arthur Barrett	Melb.HH	21.36.2	Australasian Record
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1896 was also significant in Victorian racewalking annals, as it marked the first ever Victorian Roadwalk Championship. The distance was 50 miles, the date was 21st April 1896, and the course was out and back along Sydney Road, north of the city of Melbourne. James (Jimmy) McDonald deserves some attention.

Born in Auckland in 1867, Jimmy McDonald learned rowing in New Zealand and achieved some success with the Ponsonby Rowing Club, Auckland. Once he moved to Australia, he joined the Yarra Yarra club about 1890. He was included in the club's crew that won the Victorian champion eights of 1891-92-93. During this period, the club boasted one of the most formidable eights ever brought together in Australia.

During his rowing career, he started in 23 races for 18 wins, 3 seconds and a third. Only once did he finish out of a place.

A versatile athlete and blessed with almost unlimited stamina, he turned his attention to pedestrianism in 1892, joining Hawthorn Harriers and becoming a foundation member of the Melbourne Amateur Walking and Touring Club.

He soon gained State honors as a member of Victoria's winning team in a five mile cross country championship in Sydney. But it was in walking that he achieved his greatest heights and this culminated in his great victory in the 50 mile walk in the Sydney Road in 1896 when he established an Australasian record of 10 hrs 9 mins 40 sec.

VICTORIAN 50 MILES WALK CHAMPIONSHIP, Sydney Road, 21 April 1896

1.	McDonald, James	Hawthorn H.	10:09:4 (Australasian Best)
2.	Ashworth, H P	Malvern	10:38:0
3.	Miller, William	Ballarat	10:58:0
4.	Haines, F		11:08:0

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1897

The 1897 Victorian Championships were held at the St. Kilda Cricket Ground on Saturday 23 October, with Barrett winning again, making it 11 golds out of 12 Victorian walk championships.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 23 October 1897

1.	Arthur Barrett	Melb.HH	6.47.8
2.	A.Greig	Melbourne	100 yards
3.	Reg Purbrick	Melb.HH	

3 MILES WALK, Saturday 23 October 1897

1.	Arthur Barrett	Melb.HH	21.53.0
2.	A.Greig	Melbourne	300 yards
3.	Reg Purbrick	Melb.HH	

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1898

The 1898 Victorian Championships returned to the St. Kilda Cricket Ground but Barrett was a notable absentee. By now, he was heavily involved in administrative fields. He was the inaugural club secretary of the Melbourne Amateur Walking and Touring Club from 1894-95, and assumed the Vice-Presidency position in 1899 (he went on to hold this position till 1918). He was also a key figure in the new VAAA and one of the driving forces behind the Australasian Association.

In his absence, Nolan and Myers won the walks, albeit in much slower times than Barrett.

1 MILE WALK, Friday 18 February 1898

1.	T.Nolan	Melbourne	7.06.2
2.	Reg Purbrick	Melb.HH	
3.	C.Myers	EMH	

3 MILES WALK, Friday 18 February 1898

1.	C.Myers	MH	24.44.0
2.	T.Nolan	Melbourne	400 yards

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1899

The 1899 Victorian Championships were held at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in October of that year. For the first time, a serious racewalking controversy arose when, in the 3 Mile Walk, the first two finishers (Myers and McDonald) were disqualified. As four of the other walkers failed to finish, the officials had the embarrassing situation of only 1 competitor out of 7 starters completing the race successfully.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 7 October 1899

1.	Reg Purbrick	Melb.HH	7.18.4
2.	C.Myers	EMH	12 yards
3.	James McDonald	Auburn	

3 MILES WALK, Saturday 7 October 1899

1.	J.Sevier	Malvern	27.56
	C.Myers	EMH	DQ (1st)
	James McDonald	Auburn	DQ (2nd)
	William Miller	Ballarat	DNF
	Reg Purbrick	Melb.HH	DNF
	F.Hedger	Clifton-Northcote	DNF
	E.Garlick	Melb.HH	DNF

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1900

The 1900 Victorian Championships, which were held at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in November of that year, saw Arthur Barrett make a welcome return to the track to win a further Victorian Championship title. Unfortunately, his time is not recorded.

1 MILE WALK, Monday 12 November 1900

1.	Reg Purbrick	Melb.HH	7.11.6
2.	E.Garlick	Melb.HH	
3.	E.Nicholls	EMH	

3 MILES WALK, Monday 12 November 1900

1.	Arthur Barrett	Melb.HH	
2.	E.Garlick	Melb.HH	

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1901

January 1st 1901 was a hugely significant date for the Australian colonies as they collectively became states of the Commonwealth of Australia. Before this date, those who lived in the colonies could identify at 'Australians' at a conceptual level. Now they could state with certainty that they were Australians.

The 1901 Victorian Championships, held at the St. Kilda Cricket Ground in November of that year, could now be billed as a State Championship rather than a Colonial Championship meet. This would have been a significant change to the athletes of that period.

For the record, Reg Purbrick won both walks to take his Championship gold tally to four.

1 MILE WALK, Monday 11 November 1901

1.	Reg Purbrick	Melb.HH	6.56.8
2.	E.Garlick	Melb.HH	
3.	James McDonald	Auburn	

3 MILES WALK, Monday 11 November 1901

1.	Reg Purbrick	Melb.HH	24.28.2
2.	E.Garlick	Melb.HH	
3.	James McDonald	Auburn	

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1902

The 1902 Victorian Championships, which returned to the St. Kilda Cricket Ground in November of that year, saw a significant change for walkers.

Arthur Barrett, along with fellow VAAA administrator R. H. Croll, realising that walking needed formal rules, had submitted a series of propositions to the Australasian Convention of all the amateur associations in Auckland in December 1901. They were there adopted as the formal rules governing racewalking.

1. *That a racing walker must have contact with the ground with one foot during a stride, and with both feet at the end of a stride.*
2. *That the heel of the front foot must touch the ground before the back foot leaves it.*
3. *That as the heel of the front foot touches the ground the leg must not be bent, its knee must be locked.*
4. *That the body and head must be kept upright*

These rules stayed in effect in Australia for the next 55 years and the current racewalking rules have changed little in essence from this initial interpretation.

E. Gerlick, after dual silvers in 1900 and 1901, finally broke through to win both walks, showing that persistence does sometimes pay dividends.

1 MILE WALK, Monday 10 November 1902

1.	E.Garlick	Melb.HH	6.56.4
2.	D.Gill	Melb.HH	60 yards
3.	L.Pomeroy	Melbourne	
4.	M.Dobie	East Ballarat	
	E.Strain	Coburg	DQ

3 MILES WALK, Monday 10 November 1902

1.	E.Garlick	Melb.HH	25.54.0
2.	E.Strain	Coburg	60 yards
3.	D.Gill	Melb.HH	
4.	M.Dobie	East Ballarat	

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1903 (HELD IN 1904)

The 1903 Victorian Championships travelled to Bendigo, where they were held on New Year's Day 1904. These would be the last Victorian Golds for Arthur Barrett, taking his tally to 14.

1 MILE WALK, Friday 1 January 1904

1.	Arthur Barrett	Melb.HH	7.05.2
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3 MILES WALK, Friday 1 January 1904

1.	Arthur Barrett	Melb.HH	24.41.0
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A second Victorian 50 Miles Walk Championship was held in 1904, this time on the Scotch College Track. Just as in 1896, Jimmy McDonald won, with a time of 9 hrs 43 mins 2 sec. Reports of the time state that he had a 7 minute refreshment break at the 25 mile mark, and that he was the only finisher. His 50 Miles performance was a Victorian State Record (Track) and an Australasian Best. Further, his intermediate distances for 15 miles upwards were also recognised as Victorian State records.

VICTORIAN 50 MILES WALK CHAMPIONSHIP, Scotch College, 9 April 1904

1.	McDonald, James	Auburn	9:43:02 (Australasian Best)
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Amazingly, given the interest in long distance walking overseas, no further similar races were held until the 1920's and thus his time stood uncontested for nearly 20 years.

McDonald's interest in the sports of rowing and walking never waned but as time went on, walkers saw more of him as an official than did the oarsmen. When the Victorian Amateur Walking Club was formed in 1921, he immediately joined as an official and was, for many years, one of the Vice Presidents of the club.

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1904 (HELD IN 1905)

The biennial Australasian Championships finally returned to the Melbourne Cricket Ground in Melbourne in late January 1904 and they provided a fitting farewell for Arthur Barrett who finally broke through to win both the 1 Mile walk and the 3 Mile walk. His winning times of 6:43.8 and 22:53.6 were still competitive even though he was 34 years of age and now an administrator first and an athlete second. This same year, he was awarded life membership of VAAA and announced his retirement from racing.

Barrett was awarded the position of chief walking judge by the Council of the VAAA. In this and various other capacities, he continued in the sport as an administrator for many years and earned further life memberships of the Melbourne Amateur Walking and Touring Club (1918) and the Melburnian Hare and Hounds Club.

Victorian walkers had to wait over 12 months before the 1904 Victorian Championships were finally held at Melbourne Cricket Ground (in February 1905). With Barrett now finally gone from the track, the way was opened for new champions.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 25 February 1905

1.	B.Harrop		7.19.2
2.	Harry Sanneman	Bendigo	300 yards
3.	Norman Purbrick	Melb.HH	
4.	M.Clark	Melb.HH	
5.	J.Greig		

3 MILE WALK, Saturday 25 February 1905

1.	Harry Sanneman	Bendigo	24.28.4
2.	A.Adams	Melbourne	300 yards
3.	Francis Ferguson	Melbourne	
4.	M.Clark	Melb.HH	
5.	J.Greig		
6.	Norman Purbrick	Melb.HH	

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1905 (HELD IN 1906)

The 1905 Victorian Championships continued the trend of previous years, being held at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in the following calendar year. Harry Sanneman and A. Ryan won the walks. Alas, the times during these years were generally well outside the standard previously set by Barrett.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 10 March 1906

1.	Harry Sanneman	Bendigo	7.14.8
2.	E.Morgan	EMH	
3.	A.Ryan	EMH	
	A.Tye	Unattached	DNF
	W.Aitken	Essendon	DNF

3 MILES WALK, Saturday 10 March 1906

1.	A.Ryan	EMH	23.23.8
2.	Harry Sanneman	Bendigo	23.33.2
3.	A.Adams	Melbourne	
	A.Tye		DNF

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1906

The 1906 Victorian Championships finally returned to the correct calendar year, being held at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in November. Alas, it was a disappointing meet from a walks perspective, with Victor Aitken the only starter in the 1 Mile walk and with the two entrants in the 3 Miles walk failing to finish.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 10 November 1906

1.	Victor Aitken	Coburg	walkover
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3 MILES WALK, Saturday 10 November 1906

The two entrants did not compete

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1907

The 1906 Victorian Championships went to country Victoria, being hosted by Bendigo. Harry Sanneman won both walks, but in quite slow times. After one gold in each of 1905 and 1906, these wins took his gold count to four.

1 MILE WALK, Wednesday 3 April 1907

1.	Harry Sanneman	Bendigo	7.41.0
2.	Harry Abbott	EMH	150 yards

3 MILES WALK, Wednesday 3 April 1907

1.	Harry Sanneman	Bendigo	25.41.4
2.	Harry Abbott	EMH	440 yards

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1908

For the first time, the 1908 Victorian Championship results were more comprehensive and included what was probably a full list of finishers in the walk. The championships had returned to Melbourne and were hosted for the first time at the Melbourne University track in Parkville.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 25 April 1908

1.	H.Wigg	Melb.HH	7.14.0
2.	J.Grigg	EMH	
3.	C.Bailieu	Melb.HH	
4.	Harry Abbott	EMH	
5.	J.Fink	Melbourne	
6.	N.Appleton	MUAC	
7.	A.Curtis	Clifton-Northcote	
8.	A.Ryan	EMH	
9.	W.Jennings	Melbourne	

3 MILES WALK, Saturday 25 April 1908

1.	J.Grigg	EMH	24.45.0
2.	Harry Abbott	EMH	
3.	A.Smith	East Ballarat	
	A.Adams	Melbourne	DNF

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1909

The Victorian Championships returned to the country in 1909, being held at the City Oval in Ballarat. Sadly, the walking community were still looking for a new talent to come to the fore.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 3 April 1909

1.	E.Morgan	EMH	7.23.2
2.	J.Grigg	EMH	
	R.Greville	East Ballarat	DQ

3 MILES WALK, Saturday 3 April 1909

1.	R.Greville	East Ballarat	25.59.8
2.	J.Grigg	EMH	7 yards
3.	J.Langley	EMH	
4.	G.Dickenson	Ballarat	
5.	E.Morgan	EMH	

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1910

The Victorian Championships returned to Melbourne Cricket Ground the cricket ground in 1910, with bigger walk fields than previously. A new name appeared in the listings, with William Murray 5th in the 1 Mile Walk and 7th in the 3 Miles Walk.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 2 April 1910

1.	E.Morgan	MUAC	7.05.2
2.	A.Ryan	EMH	5 yards
3.	T.Saxon	Euroa	25 yards
4.	E.Gilbert	SSH	
5.	William Murray	Melbourne	
6.	S.Ferguson	Melbourne	
7.	E.Barnard	EMH	
8.	W.Lewis	East Ballarat	
9.	R.Greville	East Ballarat	
10.	J.Grigg	EMH	
11.	R.Bain		

3 MILES WALK, Saturday 2 April 1910

1.	A.Ryan	EMH	24.36.6
2.	R.Grevill	East Ballarat	50 yards
=3	R.Bain		
=3	S.Ferguson	Melbourne	
5.	E.Morgan	MUAC	
6.	J.Grigg	EMH	
7.	William Murray	Melbourne	

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1911

The 1911 Victorian Championships, held at the Albert Park Cricket Ground, saw [William Murray](#) winning both walk events in fine style, with times reminiscent of the great Arthur Barrett. Murray, then aged 28, had only swapped from running to walking the previous year and his improvement was quick. With these two wins, he now came to the attention of the wider community, especially since his 1 mile time was a new Victorian and Australasian record, beating Barrett's 1896 time of 6:42.0.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 27 March 1911

1.	William Murray	Melbourne	6.40.8 (Australasian Record)
2.	E.Morgan	MUAC	
3.	A.Ryan	EMH	

3 MILES WALK, Saturday 27 March 1911

1.	William Murray	Melbourne	22.38.6
2.	E.Sincock	Melbourne	
3.	J.Grigg	EMH	
4.	Bevan Purnell	Geelong Guild	

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1912

Murray's improvement continued with the 1912 Victorian Championships, held at the St. Kilda Cricket Ground on 24th February. This time around, he was even faster, winning the titles with records that the general sporting population could hardly credit - his 1 mile time was 6:22.8 and his 3 mile time was 20:56.0. The NSWAAA Council Meeting of 12th March 1912 acknowledged these feats, along with a subsequent World Record time of 14:49.4 over the 3500m distance.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 24 February 1912

1.	William Murray	Melbourne	6.22.8 (Australasian Record)
2.	R.Bonham	NSW	
3.	C.Bonham	NSW	

4.	A.Hume	Malvern
5.	W.Millett	EMH
6.	F.Symonds	Hawthorn
7.	E.Morgan	MUAC
8.	L.Welch	MUAC
9.	M.Smith	EMH
10.	E.Roberts	Melbourne
11.	D.Gawler	Carlton

3 MILES WALK, Saturday 24 February 1912

1.	William Murray	Melbourne	20.56.0 (Australasian Record)
2.	C.Bonham	NSW	
3.	R.Bonham	NSW	
4.	W.Millett	EMH	
5.	F.Symonds	Hawthorn	
6.	B.Purnell	Geelong	
7.	G A.Dickinson	Hawthorn	
8.	E.Morgan	MUAC	
9.	M.Smith	EMH	
10.	H.Shovelton	Essendon	

Controversy was quick to follow in his footsteps. The chairman of the Australian Amateur Athletic Union, Mr Richard Coombe had commented “*No man in the world can walk that fast*” and others had joined the chorus. But Bill was strongly supported by A. O. Barrett, whose records he had just broken. Barrett was the founder of the Melbourne Amateur Walking and Touring Club (1884) and was a highly regarded official at this time. He actually judged in the 1912 races and had this to say about the performances:

It was my pleasure to judge the Amateur Championships held on the St. Kilda Cricket Ground on 24th February, 1912, when W. Murray broke my records in the 1 mile and 3 miles Championships of Victoria, and set fresh records for Australasia. The day was sunny, no wind, and cool. In both those races he walked absolutely faultlessly, and the cheers of the spectators during the last laps must have been as gratifying to him as it was to all of us in the official part of the arena, and only proves what a valuable and noble contest a walking race is in our sports when it is exemplified by a properly trained athlete.

The new records he created were one mile in 6 min. 22.8 sec., and later on the same afternoon he walked the three miles in 20 min. 56 sec. For these details I am indebted to the Hon. Sec. of the V.A.A.A., Mr. F. H. Pizzey.

These 2 performances were so ahead of their time that they withstood all challenges over the next 36 years. When the last Victorian 1 mile and 3 mile walk championships were held in 1948, they still stood as championship records. George Knott walked 21:29.0 to win the 3 mile in 1940 and walked 6:23.2 to win the 1 mile in 1948 – close to but not as good as Bill’s 1912 performances.

His performances were duly recognised with 1912 Olympic representation, but he was disqualified in the 10,000m walk, one of a number of victims of overzealous judging.

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1913

Once Murray returned from the Olympics, he put the disappointment behind him and continued his local Victorian athletic career (there were few Australasian titles in those days). He won the Victorian 3 Miles Walk titles in 1913-1915 to make it 5 title wins in a row. He also showed good distance potential, winning the inaugural Victorian 25 mile walk in 1914 in 3:58:15 (a time that stood as the Australasian record for many years, finally being bettered in 1927).

Firstly to the 1913 Victorian Championships which were held at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in late March. While Murray was disqualified in the 1 Mile Walk, he bounced back later in the day to win the 3 Miles Walk for the third time in a row, with a good time of 22:54.0.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 29 March 1913

1.	E.Morgan	MUAC	7.11.0
2.	Lloyd Cox	Malvern	
3.	J Kenealey	Carlton	

William Murray

Melbourne

DQ

3 MILES WALK, Saturday 29 March 1913

1.	William Murray	Melbourne	22.54.0
2.	E Morgan	MUAC	23.16.2
3.	H Dooley	MUAC	

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1914

The 1914 Australasian Championships, held every 2 years, finally returned to Melbourne in January of that year, staged at a new venue called the Amateur Sports Ground. This was what had been previously known as the Friendly Societies Ground and stood on the banks of the Yarra River. This was eventually replaced by what became known as the Motordrome, before finally being redeveloped as Olympic Park. From its development into a world-class stadium in 1951 to its demolition in 2011, Olympic Park was considered the spiritual home of athletics in Victoria, serving as the administrative headquarters of the VAAA and then AV for much of that time.

NSW walker **Alfred Pickard** won both Australasian Championship walks, holding off title holder Bill Murray in each race, winning by 12 yards (1 Mile) and 3 yards (3 Miles) respectively. This was the only time his name appears in Australian championship results. He was a new walker on the block but his budding career was to be cut short by the coming war.

The 1914 Victorian Championships followed 2 months later, at the same Amateur Sports Ground venue.

Lloyd Cox, who had been second in the 1913 Victorian 1 Mile Walk, went one better in 1914, winning gold by the small margin of 1 foot from Murray. The positions were reversed in the 3 Miles Walk, with Murray first (his fourth win in a row in this event) and Cox second. Cox had finished behind Murray in third place in both the 1 Mile and 3 Miles walks in the 1914 Australasian Championships 2 months earlier, so it was no surprise to see him going head to head with Murray in the Victorian Champs.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 28 March 1914

1.	Lloyd Cox	Malvern	6.55.0
2.	William Murray	Melbourne	1 ft
3.	F. Lloyd	Hawthorn	

3 MILES WALK, Saturday 28 March 1914

1.	William Murray	Melbourne	23.02.0
2.	Lloyd Cox	Malvern	
3.	N. Dooley	MUAC	

Two new Victorian walk championships were added in 1914, a track based 10 Mile and a road based 25 Miles. Both titles went to Murray, as expected. Never mind the distance, Murray was the master.

10 MILES, Saturday 18 April 1914

1.	William Murray	Melbourne	1:21.32.4
2.	Edward Drayton	VAWC	1:28.15.0
3.	J. Smirl	Hawthorn	1:29.07.5
4.	R. Hodgson	Clifton & Nth	
5.	Lloyd Cox	Malvern	

25 MILES WALK, Saturday 17 October 1914, Richmond

1.	William Murray	Melbourne	3:58.15.0
2.	Edward Drayton	VAWC	4:05.10.5
3.	N. Dooley	MUAC	4:09.07.6

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1915

The 1915 Victorian Championships were once again held at the Amateur Sports Ground and, once again, it was Cox and Murray who spared the spoils in the walks. Murray, now only 1 month short of 33 years, showed that he had lost little of his speed with another very good 3 Miles Walk time of 22:24.2.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 27 March 1915

1.	Lloyd Cox	Malvern	6.57.5
2.	R.Russell	Carlton	2

3 MILES WALK, Saturday 27 March 1915

1.	William Murray	Melbourne	22.24.2
2.	W.Pitt	Hawthorn	
3.	H.Dooley	MUAC	

The Victorian 10 Miles walk, contested two weeks later, saw yet another title to Murray.

10 MILES WALK, Saturday 10 April 1915

1.	William Murray	Melbourne	1:19.08.3
2.	Edward Drayton	VAWC	1:23.55.0
3.	J.Smirl		1:24.42.5

With Australia entering the First World War in August 1914 and with the Anzac Cove debacle to hit the headlines later in April 1915, the athletes must have guessed that this would be the last Championship meet for quite some time. But few of them would have guessed correctly that the hiatus would last 5 years.

The first casualty of war was the 1915 Victorian 25 Mile Walk which was scheduled for later in the year. It did not proceed.

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1916 - 1919

There were no Victorian Championships conducted between 1916 and 1919 due to World War 1

"Lest We Forget"

VICTORIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 1920

The outbreak of World War 1 had put an end to further sporting aspirations for Murray and all other Australasian walkers, and he was one of the many who enrolled in the Armed Forces. It was not until 1920 that Victorian Championships were resumed, but by then, Bill was 38 years of age. The venue chosen on this occasion was Scotch College.

Despite his age, he still won the 1920 State 1 Mile Walk and 3 Miles Walk championships, albeit in slower times (7:05.8 and 24:20.6) than in previous years. That made six Victorian 3 mile titles in a row (1911-1915, 1920). He now stood second only to Arthur Barrett who won that same title on 8 occasions between 1892 and 1903.

1 MILE WALK, Saturday 13 March 1920

1.	William Murray	Melbourne	7.05.8
2.	Leslie Mudge	Melbourne	
3.	Thomas Radich	Carlton	

3 MILES WALK, Saturday 13 March 1920

1.	William Murray	Melbourne	24.20.6
2.	Leslie Robinson	Carlton	
3.	Sydney Clarke	SSH	