

# ACTIVITY 2



## Archaeology: Stratigraphy

**STRATIGRAPHY:** *The study of layers*

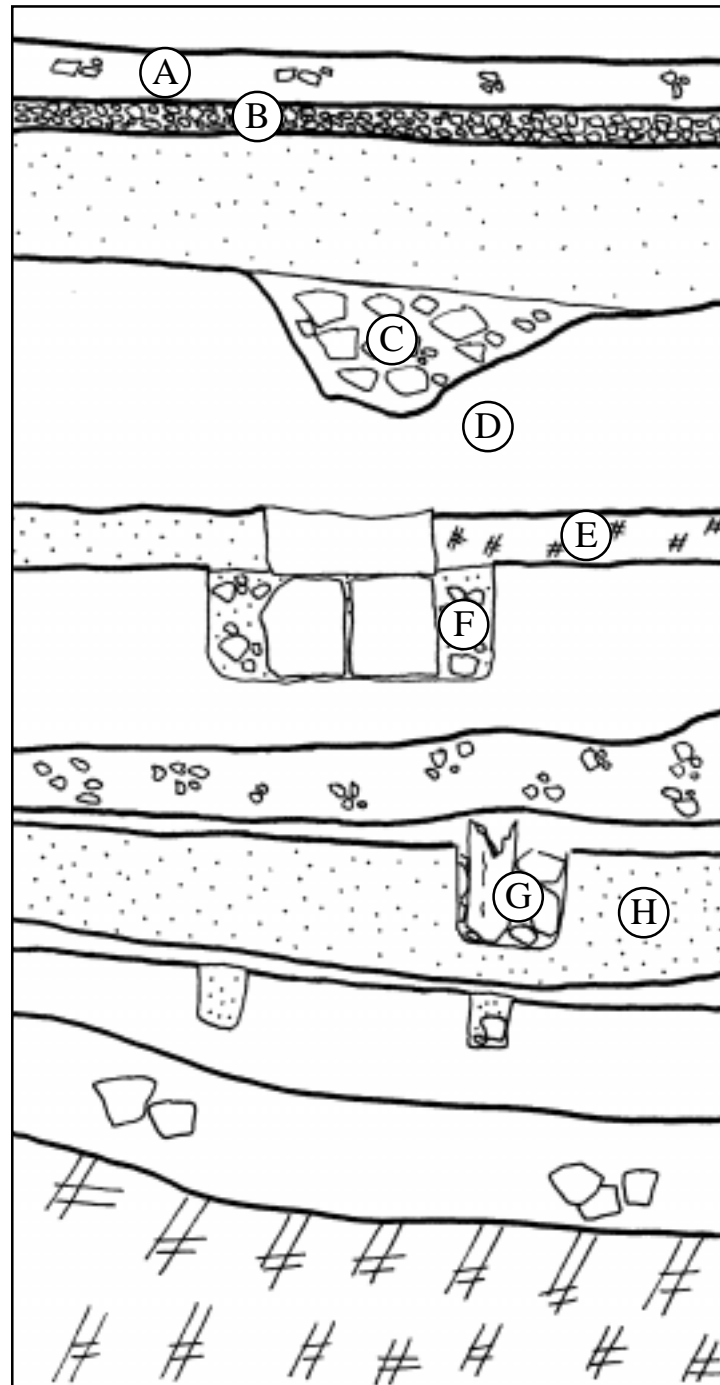
The study of stratigraphy began in geology as people sought to understand which layer of rock was older than another.

Because archaeological sites are also made up of layers, archaeologists saw that the laws of stratigraphy could also be applied to their work.

One law of stratigraphy says that objects found in lower levels will be older than objects found in higher levels.

In archaeology, however, it is not that simple. Post-holes, foundation trenches and ditches might be dug down into earlier layers - so while an object in a ditch might be 'lower' than an object in the surrounding soil, it is actually more recent in date.

A section is a slice through an archaeological dig



Make up a **colour key** for each of the **phases** on the site, and shade the section with the correct colour. Use Activity 2 in your booklet to help you complete this activity.

- Phase 1: Topsoil and construction debris
- Phase 2: Concrete slab construction
- Phase 3: Fill brought in to the site to level it
- Phase 4: Ditch dug, then filled with stones
- Phase 5: Building abandoned
- Phase 6: First stone building on site
- Phase 7: Site covered by erosion run-off
- Phase 8: First wood building on site
- Phase 9: Site covered in gravel fill
- Phase 10: First miners' tents erected
- Phase 11: Aboriginal occupation of site
- Phase 12: Pre-human levels

## QUESTIONS

1. Is Deposit A **earlier/later** than the concrete slab (Deposit B)?
2. Is the drainage ditch (Deposit C) **earlier/later** than Deposit D into which it was cut?
3. Is the foundation trench (Deposit F) **earlier/later** than Deposit E (house floor)?
4. Is the pit with the wooden post (Deposit G) **earlier/later** than Deposit H?

# ACTIVITY 3.1



## Dating a Deposit Using Coins

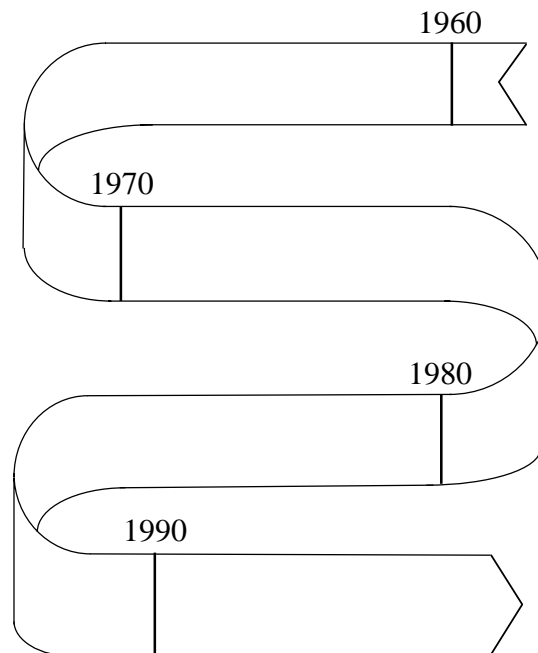
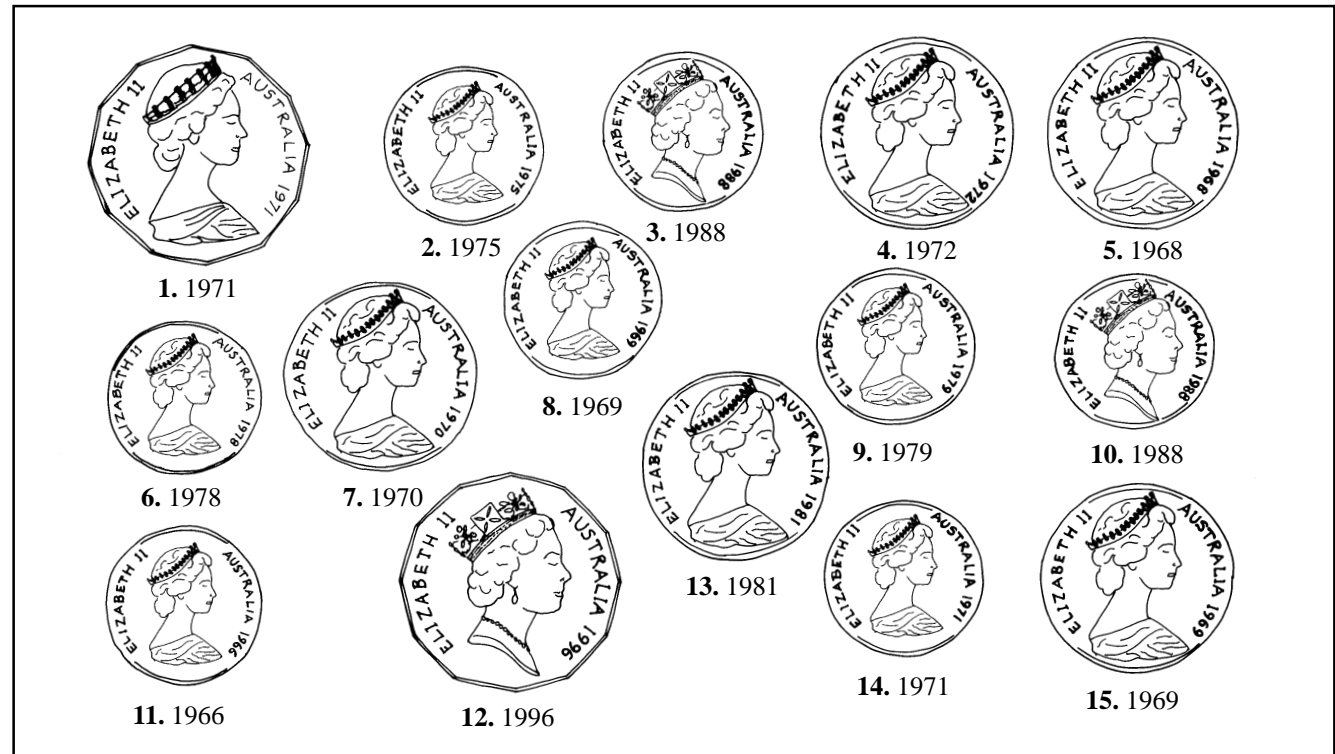
Archaeologists can use many different objects to help them date the layers - or deposits - that they excavate.

If coins are found, they are perhaps the best dating tool of all.

This is because coins survive well in the soil - and they carry a date - either the year in which they were minted, or the name of a ruler.

Archaeologists still need to be careful, however, when using coins to date deposits.

For example, imagine that the **coins** on this page were all found together in **one deposit**. Let's investigate what they can - and can not - tell us.



## QUESTIONS

1. Look at the dates of these coins and write the coin number in the **correct position** on the time-line.
2. How do you think these coins might have ended up **together** in the ground?
3. What is the **earliest** possible date that these coins were hidden or lost?
4. How is it possible that these **coins** may have been lost or hidden as recently as 2001 - even if no coins date to this year?
5. Look at the pictures and writing on the coins. What **information** do these coins tell you about Australia?
6. Sometimes we **don't** find coins in places where people lived. Why do you think this happens?

# ACTIVITY 7



## The Past in Pictures

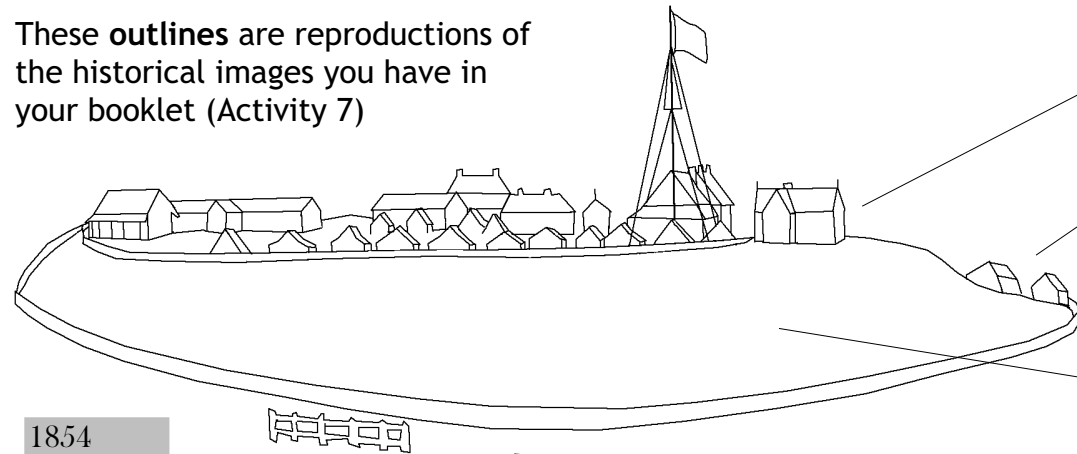
Research concerning Ballarat's Government Camp site has unearthed some old historical images of the Camp.

Both these images show the Camp during its early years. The 1854 illustration is the earliest, but since things changed so rapidly on the goldfields, the lower image shows the Camp only three years later in 1857.

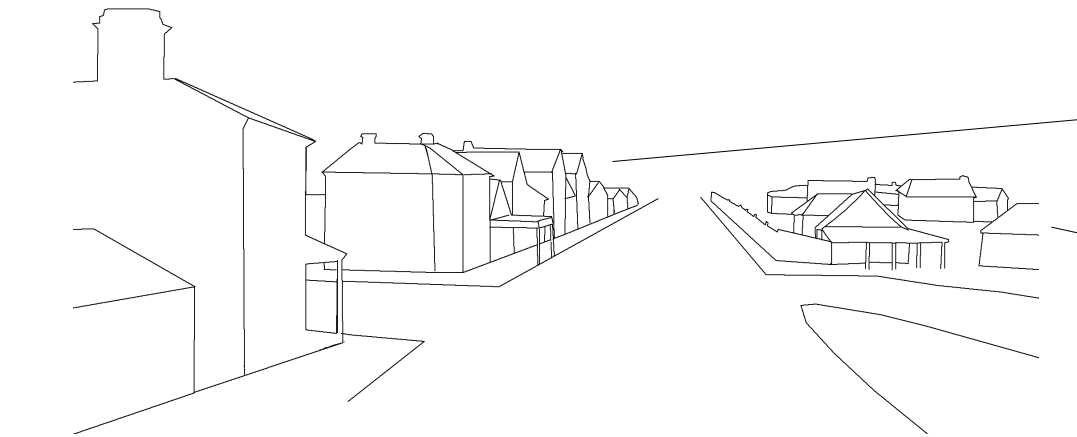
These images were produced to illustrate magazines about life on the goldfields. Now we would use a camera, but in the 1850s we have to rely on the artists of the day to give us an impression of what the Camp looked like.

Although not as accurate as a photo, historical images such as these are still very useful as they give an indication of what archaeological deposits might remain at the site.

These outlines are reproductions of the historical images you have in your booklet (Activity 7)



1854



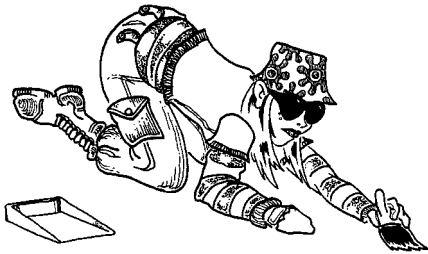
1857

## QUESTIONS

1. What is this building? Why is it **not inside** the inner fence?
2. Why do you think these tents are here? (what **wouldn't** you want close to you?)
3. In 1854 would you **describe** the area as a camp or a fort? Why?
4. What were the **surroundings** of the Camp like in 1854?
5. How did the area around the Camp **develop** from 1854?
6. In this view, how would you describe the **construction technique** of the buildings in the Government Camp?

Make a colour key and on the outlines above, colour where you would expect to find the following deposits in 150 years time	What features created this deposit?
<input type="checkbox"/> Substantial foundations and brick walls	eg. church
<input type="checkbox"/> Shallow foundations, wooden buildings	
<input type="checkbox"/> Post-holes and drainage ditches	
<input type="checkbox"/> street surfaces	

## ACTIVITY 8



### A Soldier's Life

Historian W. Bate describes the Government Camp:

The tents were made from canvas, with tongue and groove wooden floors. Sometimes the tents were furnished with stretchers for beds, with blankets for warmth. Sometimes these weren't available and the Foot Police spent the nights shivering with cold.

The Soldiers' Barracks were built from weatherboards, with brick chimneys and a stove in the fireplace. The floors were made of tongue and groove wooden floorboards. The roofing material was slate tiles. The walls and the ceiling were lined with canvas. The whole building was supported by wooden posts. The building was used for daily living including recreation, eating and sleeping.

# GOVERNMENT CAMP, BALLARAT ANNUAL REPORT 1854

## DESCRIPTION OF THE GENERAL APPEARANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT CAMP

### DAMAGE FROM THE STORM OF AUGUST 10

Because the gale last night the tents were blown up and torn in several places and the rain last night completely saturated the beds and blankets, so much so that the men were all huddled together in one tent.

*Arthur Edward Taylor  
Sub-Inspector of Police*

## REPORT ON THE PAY AND DUTIES OF THE FOOT POLICE AT THE CAMP

## REPORT ON THE LIVING QUARTERS FOR THE FOOT POLICE AT THE CAMP

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PAY AND LIVING CONDITIONS OF SOLDIERS AT THE CAMP

### REPORT ON THE SOLDIERS' BARRACKS

The barracks for the Mounted Men... require immediate repair. I [also] strongly recommend that barracks for the Foot Police be built in the winter, so that the sickness which prevailed to an almost alarming extent from exposure to the inclement weather would be avoided.

*Gordon Evans  
Inspector of Police*