

## SOME NOTES ON COORPAROO.

(By the late Professor CUMBRAE STEWART).

(Read by Mr. C. G. Austin at a meeting of the Historical Society of Queensland, July 26, 1938).

When the boat of the colonial cutter "Mermaid" passed up the Brisbane River on Tuesday, December 2nd, 1823, with John Oxley, Surveyor General, of New South Wales, and Lieutenant Stirling of "The Buffs," the mouth of a water course or tributary to the river was noticed on the southern bank, and marked on the chart.

This tributary, afterwards known as Norman Creek, received the waters falling on an area roughly shaped like a horseshoe, the watershed of which is a line of heights ending in Galloway's Hill on the east and on the west in Highgate Hill.

On the western side the chief stream feeding the Norman were those which formed the "One Mile Swamp" now, in great part, carried by a tunnel into the river, and, further south, the waters of Kingfisher Creek. Norman Creek itself receives the waters flowing down from the southern watershed, of which the chief natural feature is Mount Gravatt.

On its eastern bank, the Norman Creek is fed by Coorparoo and Bridgewater Creeks, which are water-courses rather than permanently flowing streams until they reach salt water. The suburb now known as Coorparoo may be described as the ground drained by these two creeks, swampy in the flats along the Norman, but, for the most part, high lying and well drained, open to the cool sea breezes from the north-west, and affording an excellent panoramic view of the city.

### History of the Discovery.

In the chart of the river which Oxley afterwards published he describes the area as "open hilly country," the swamps and flats which cover the lower part not being visible from the boat. But the story of its discovery begins 24 years earlier.

On July 18th, 1799, Matthew Flinders, in the

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colonial sloop "Norfolk" accompanied by his brother Samuel, both being officers of H.M.S. "Reliance" sailed along the west coast of Moreton Bay, southward past Peel Island, and anchored for the night in six fathoms between Macleay and Stradbroke Islands. During the afternoon, the sloop passed, at a distance of from three to five miles, the mouth of the then unknown river; Wynnum and Manly; Wellington Point, Raby Bay and the land forming the southern head of Raby Bay afterwards called Cleveland Point.

Flinders' chart shows that he made no close examination of the shore to the west of the vessel's course, and nothing further was known of the locality until Oxley's examination of the river in December, 1823, and the resulting settlement of Moreton Bay in the following year. It is possible that the shipwrecked sailors, Parsons, Pamphlett and Finnegan, travelled along the western coast of the bay, crossing the river at Oxley Creek, and reached Pumicestone Channel, where Pamphlett and Finnegan were found by Oxley on November 30th, 1823. A pilot named Gray was sent up from Port Jackson in 1824, to mark the river entrance, but the time of the first examination of Cleveland Point cannot be definitely fixed. There can be little doubt that it was visited shortly after the establishment of the settlement "at the top of Queen Street" early in 1825.

### **Captain Logan's Explorations.**

Captain Patrick Logan, who was in command of a detachment of the 57th Foot, at Brisbane Town from 1826 to 1830, and two of his subalterns, Innes and Bainbrigge, explored a good deal of the country round the settlement. Captain Logan discovered Cowper's Plains and named them after Dr. Cowper, Surgeon of the 57th. He discovered the Logan River and with Allan Cunningham ascended some of the peaks of the Macpherson Range. In his time, tracks were made from the "One Mile Swamp," now the unsightly Railway Yards in Stanley Street, to Cowper's Plains and thence to Limestone Hill (Ipswich) on the west, and to Cleveland on the east. A map made by Allan Cunningham about 1828 shows Cleveland Point (or "Emu Point") the terminus of the track from Cowper's Plains. This track is shown very distinctly on Robert Dixon's Map of Moreton Bay,

which he published in 1843, passing south of Mt. Gravatt and Mt. Petrie and crossing "Tunina" (Tingalpa) and Hilliards Creeks to Raby Bay.

Later a track was made from the "One Mile Swamp." It left the track to Cowper's Plains—now the Ipswich Road—at the point now known as "the Five-ways" to become what is now known as Logan Road as far as Stone's Corner. There it now becomes the "Old Cleveland Road." From the Fiveways it is undoubtedly one of the oldest roads in Queensland. Anyone taking the Camp Hill tram from Queen Street will be carried on along this track, along Stanley Street (where formerly was the One Mile Swamp) across Kingfisher Creek and the Norman, at Stone's Corner; then over the Coorparoo and Bridgewater Creeks to the top of the high ground at Camp Hill. Beyond that the waters flow down to Bulimba Creek.

### Old Cleveland Road.

The Cleveland Road still goes on to Cleveland, which was surveyed in 1840 and named soon after, the Duke of Cleveland being then Secretary for the Colonies. Raby Bay was named after the Ducal residence. At that time and for some years afterwards, Cleveland was considered to be the best place for the port of Brisbane; but, unfortunately for Cleveland, the tide was out when, in the year 1842, the Governor, Sir George Gipps, visited it and was not impressed with its excellence. But worse followed! In 1849, Captain Owen Stanley, R.N., of H.M.S. "Rattlesnake," in a report to the Government at Sydney condemned it finally and recommended that the port should be in the deep water off the end of Kangaroo Point, and that the Custom House should be built where it stands to-day.

But this did not put an end to the old Cleveland Road. In the early fifties of the last century, a good deal of the country between Cleveland and the Logan, and between that river and Brisbane, was taken up and occupied for the purposes of grazing cattle; and the river bank on the south side, now known as Bulimba, was cut up into farms, on which large quantities of bananas were grown as well as vegetables. These were taken to Brisbane by boat. There was a land route, now known as Bennett's Road,

which ran past the Cemetery to the old Cleveland Road and thence across "Burnett's Swamp," through which Norman Creek flowed. At the crossing was a blacksmith's shop. The blacksmith was Stone, and it is "Stone's Corner" to this day.

### **Origin of Logan Road.**

A butcher named Slack took up some country at Slack's Creek, on or near the Logan. He discovered a route to the Logan shorter than the way through Cowper's Plains, and it became known as "Slack's Track." It branched off from the Old Cleveland Road near Stone's Corner, and in later years became the Logan Road.

In 1856 the first bridge across the Norman Creek was built and more direct access from Bulimba was given to the town, the long detour to Stone's Corner no longer being necessary. On the town side the bridge was reached by what was called the Lytton Road, which branched off from Main Street, Kangaroo Point a little north of its highest point. The portion of Lytton Road from Wellington Street to Main Street was later named Shafston Avenue.

### **New Cleveland Road.**

On the other side of the bridge the roadway became known as the New Cleveland Road. It ran over the side of Galloway's Hill to join Bennett's Road at the cemetery and thence through what is now Morningside to its destination. Immediately beyond the bridge the New Cleveland Road ran through Captain Louis Hope's property, then covered with a pine forest.

### **The Name Coorparoo.**

No one who has had any experience with respect to place names will commit himself to any definite opinion as to their origin or meaning. I have heard, and I have no reason to doubt it, that the name Coorparoo was given by an early surveyor to the creek, as representing the call of the little wild doves once plentiful all over the district. It was given to the local school in 1876 and to the Shire in 1888.

The source of Coorparoo Creek lies under the high land at the top of Cavendish Road. The water crosses Chatsworth Road and thence to Pembroke Road, turning off towards Shakespeare Street and

Wellington Street. It crosses the old Cleveland Road at Wellington Street and flows under the Railway line close to the Coorparoo Railway Station, to fall into the Norman Creek close by. The course of the creek is not clearly defined throughout its length except after heavy rain.

### Early Survey Work.

The survey of Moreton Bay began in June, 1839, when officers of the New South Wales Survey arrived overland from the Richmond River. The party was in charge of Mr. Robert Dixon, whose Field Book, preserved in the Survey office in Brisbane, shows that on July 13th, 1839, he ascended Mount Petrie and from that point took the bearings of the Glass Houses with the windmill, still standing nearly a hundred years later, on Wickham Terrace. It is probable that he reached Mount Petrie by way of the Old Cleveland track. The detailed survey took place later. In the '50's of the last century the surveyors worked from "the One Mile" out beyond the old Cleveland Road. There is a plan in the Survey office transmitted to the District Surveyor (Mr. H. Galloway) in July, 1863, which shows the result of the survey at Coorparoo up to that date. The original Cleveland track is shown with the modern surveyed Old Cleveland Road closely following it. Surveyed roads, afterwards named Cavendish and Chatswood, also appear, and the names of the original purchasers from the Crown of the adjoining lands are given. The blocks purchased by Samuel Stevens, along the Old Cleveland Road on both sides of Cavendish Road are noted as having been selected in 1860. Stevens is said to have been a dairymen in South Brisbane in 1854, and one of the first residents of Coorparoo. Bennett's Road is shown. This road, I believe, was surveyed previous to 1848 when the land along the river bank as far as Bulimba Creek was occupied. Bennett's Road was the only means of access to the settlement by land until 1856 when the bridge over Norman Creek near the mouth was built.

### The Roads in 1863.

Some light is thrown on the condition of the roads in and near the district by the evidence given before a Parliamentary Select Committee appointed

in August, 1863, to report on the then state of the main roads of the Colony.

Apparently, there was little wrong with the Old Cleveland Road; but Mr. Charles Coxen, who was then living at "The Terraces" down the river near the site of the present abattoir, brought out that money had been made available "for the road to Lytton where the Telegraph Station was," but the road was impassable. The bad place was going down from Galloway's Hill to the flat. George Edmonstone, the butcher, gave evidence that the Lytton Road from Kangaroo Point was in a bad state of repair, and that the road from Brisbane to Bulimba required to be made altogether. It was so bad that one had to go through private land all the way. He also said that the road to the Logan, called "Slack's Track," which started from the Cleveland Road to the Logan River was in need of repairs.

### Beginnings of Settlement.

Until 50 or so years ago, the only residences, except farm houses, between the Fiveways and the Burnett Crossing were those of E. Deshon, Dr. Prentice, and A. J. Hockings. The two latter are still standing. Deshon Street preserves the name of the third owner, who afterwards moved to Kemerdine, at the top of Chatsworth Road. The original purchasers from the Crown of the land abutting on the Old Cleveland Road beyond Stone's Corner, were as follows:—

H. Opperman (46 acres) in the angle formed by the Cleveland Road and Slack's Track. Opperman afterwards sold to Klump, who later removed to the other side of Mount Gravatt, giving his name to Klump Road. Here tragedy befell him. His wife and child returning from the "One Mile Swamp" with rations were attacked and murdered by blacks.

F. Wecker bought the next block (46 acres). He married a sister of the Glindeman Brothers, whose land lay on Logan Road beyond German Bridge, and the family still live there. Mrs. Glindeman is over 90 years of age.

The next two blocks on the south side of the Cleveland track, separated from Wecker's by a surveyed road (now Pembroke Street) were bought by

Samuel Stevens. They comprised 48 and 43 acres respectively. The same owner also was the purchaser of 47 acres on the other side of Cavendish Road.

The purchasers of the low lying land between the Cleveland Road and Norman Creek were T. B. Stephens (34 acres), and J. Bridges (87 acres and 32 acres). The hill in this low lying land was known as "Langlands." It was acquired by Reuben Nicklin, who sold it about 1887 to Thomas Connah, I.S.O., Auditor General of Queensland, who married a daughter of Mr. T. B. Stephens. Reuben Nicklin was lost in the "Quetta" in Torres Strait in February, 1890. Langlands is now a convent.

Another landowner close by was a Mr. Gorman said to have been a brickmaker with kilns situated near Langlands. The marshy nature of the land may be judged from a statement by Mrs. T. W. Connah to the effect that Coorparoo Creek was crossed by a big log, part of the trunk of a tree, and that often they were obliged to wade through flood waters from Langlands to Stone's Corner.

Separated from Bridges' land by a surveyed road (Cavendish Road) were several blocks purchased by Mr. T. B. Stephens, and 55 acres bought by A. Ross. This block lay on the other side of the Cleveland Road from Stevens' 47 acres.

Beyond the properties of T. B. Stephens and Ross was Bennett's Road coming up from the direction of Bulimba Point.

On the eastern side of Bennett's Road, northward from the Cleveland Road, were the blocks purchased by Schich and Kupfel (64 acres), A. Timpe (88 acres) and M. Morrison (85 acres).

Opposite these, on the south side of the Cleveland Road, the purchasers were A. Holder (46 acres), J. E. Daly (54 acres) and L. Le Gould and J. Cowlishaw (56 acres). To the southward, behind the blocks mentioned as lying along Cleveland Road, were:—J. Reedman (51 acres), abutting on Logan Road. R. Jennings 96 acres, between Reedman and Cavendish Road. On the eastern side of Cavendish Road were: W. Willis (45 acres) and G. Horden (90 acres and a block of 92 acres bought by R. Jennings, F. D. G. Stanley, J. McLeod and T. F. Smith. All these lands abutted on Chatsworth Road.

Southward of Chatsworth Road and abutting upon it, were:—R. G. Rowton, T. M. King, T. Holland, J. E. D. McCarthy and D. Holland. On the south side of those blocks were:—W. Smith and J. Le G. Brereton (on Logan Road), J. Bound and L. and H. Holland. The greater part of this land is now thickly populated. Sixty years ago the area was still heavily timbered, wattle and gum trees predominating.

The Old Cleveland Road was a bush track. It is doubtful whether Cavendish Road and Chatsworth Road were even distinguishable. It is stated that one of the earliest settlers was a man named White who purchased the eminence known as "White's Hill" which overlooks Coorparoo.

Another, if not the earliest to build a residence at Coorparoo, was Alfred Holland, who bought the land, in conjunction with his brother Julius already mentioned. They purchased two blocks, Nos. 176 and 177, of about 100 acres, fronting Cavendish Road just beyond the spot where it bends to the east and backing in to D. Holland's block on Chatsworth Road (portion 175, 52 acres). It was here that, over sixty years ago, Alfred Holland built Mount Vernon. He lived there with his family for several years, removing later to "Montpelier," Main Street, Kangaroo Point, built by Captain Carden Collins about 80 years ago. His widow died there about five years ago. His daughter, Mrs. McLennan, now lives at Montpelier and can remember when she lived at Mount Vernon. There were then no houses beyond Stone's Corner. There were many blacks, but they were all civilized. The nearest place where there were shops, was at the "Clarence Corner" (Stanley Street and Boggo Road). A walk to "The Swamp" from Mt. Vernon was an ordinary experience in those days.

### **Bridgewater Creek.**

While we are at Mt. Vernon, it may be mentioned that Bridgewater Creek, the other stream which reaches the Norman from the high ground of Coorparoo, has its source between Mt. Vernon and White's Hill, and runs down "Green's Gully." The eastern declivity beyond Cavendish Road. In Green's gully a chain of waterholes run down to cross the Old Cleveland Road and flow into Bridgewater Creek,

which falls into the Norman about the spot where Cavendish Road begins—that is to say, nearly opposite the Church of England Grammar School. This creek flows under the railway line, on the Cleveland side. It cannot be said, however, that White's Hill or Mt. Vernon had much to do with the general settlement of Coorparoo.

### **The Coorparoo School.**

It would seem that the rise of Coorparoo must be traced back to the years 1875 or 1876, when Samuel Stevens gave a site for a school upon part of his land on the Old Cleveland Road beyond Cavendish Road, and this is still the school site though the school is no longer a rough wooden hut in the bush. The school was opened on January 31st, 1876. On that day 37 pupils representing thirteen families of the neighbourhood were enrolled under the first head teacher, Mr. Towell.

The Department asked for a name for the school and one was found in the name of the creek through the flood waters of which most of the pupils had to wade to reach it.

The names of the first pupils were given in the Brisbane "Courier" of July 27, 1876, as Barclay, Crust, Deshon, Faust, Foster, Holland, Harding, Harris, Klump, Lade, McCann, Markwell, Nicklin, Robinson, Stephens, Stevens and Stone. The average daily attendance in 1876 was 59. The first visit of an inspector, Mr. David Ewart, was in July when he reported that the building was nearly new, of good design and workmanship, but not of first class timber throughout. The grounds were not cleared or fenced. A garden, however, had been begun.

### **Coorparoo in 1883.**

An examination of the Post Office Directory of 1883-4 shows that settlement had not proceeded very fast. The only name and address which could be found was that of Nathaniel Lade, saddler, Queen Street, whose private residence was St. Leonards, Coorparoo. It appears, however, that Alfred Holland had left Mount Vernon and was living in Montpelier, and that Edward Deshon was living at Bayham, Old Cleveland Road, on the town side of Stone's Corner, where Deshon Street preserves his name.

The Divisional Boards Act of 1879 had brought to Coorparoo the blessings of local government, as part of the Divisional Board District of Bulimba; and, in 1888, the inhabitant householders of Coorparoo petitioned for separation and for the constitution of the Shire of Coorparoo.

On October 24, 1888, by order in Council, the Shire of Coorparoo was constituted. The first election of councillors was held on November 24th, 1888, and the council met in February, 1889, to draw up by-laws. These were sealed with the municipal seal on February 27th and a month later they were published in the Government Gazette for 1889 (January-April page 1119)

The first president of the shire was F. T. Brentnall, whose house and grounds, "Eastleigh," were at the corner of the Old Cleveland Road and Cavendish Road, on the town side. The first shire clerk was J. F. Hallily. Details relating to the shire are given in Pugh's Almanac for 1891. There were 836 rate-payers on the Roll. The president was Mr. G. V. Hellicar, and the councillors were: F. T. Brentnall, R. Dansie, D. O'Connor, J. Hipwood and W. H. Barnes. C. Heslewood was the shire secretary. The shire offices were in Cavendish Road close to Woodhill, the residence of Mr. Richard Newton.

Mr. Hellicar lived on the highest part of Cavendish Road, at Abbotsleigh. At the time of his death, Mr. Hellicar was Crown Solicitor.

Mr. J. Hipwood was a brassfounder carrying on business in Eagle Street, Brisbane, and was Mayor of Brisbane in 1886 and 1887. He lived at Surrey Hill, a property at the top of Shakespeare Street. The house has gone, but a big fig tree marks the site of the garden. Mr. W. H. Barnes, afterwards Treasurer of Queensland, lived on the river side of the Old Cleveland Road.

### **The Railway.**

Coorparoo was connected by rail with South Brisbane in 1889. The station at the town end was in Stanley Street alongside the Dry Dock. A horse train carried passengers along Stanley Street and across the old Victoria Bridge to Queen Street. The railway line was opened to Wynnum and Cleveland on November 1st, 1889, with a station for Coorparoo

on the low-lying ground. This was not of much use to the residents on the higher ground, who used vehicular traffic, and a bus ran from Eagle Street to the top of Cavendish Road for many years.

### **Cleveland in 1890.**

My first visit to Cleveland was made in July, 1890; and my recollection of the railway journey is of a mere passing through interminable bush, except on the flat at Hemmant. At the same time I spent a day at Woodhill with Mr. Richard Newton and saw his horses and stables. So far as I can remember there was nothing visible beyond except bush. From the top of Sinclairs Hill at East Brisbane, we saw a wide expanse of country over which the Brisbane Hunt was running, and we followed them by road to Yeronga without seeing anything but bush, or cleared land and fences.

Among new residents attracted by the opening of the railway was Mr. Justice Real, who built a house called "Ulalie" on the higher ground above Bennett's Road, not far from Norman Park railway station.

### **The Great Flood of 1893.**

Meanwhile an event of far-reaching importance had occurred. The floods in the Brisbane River in 1893 destroyed Victoria Bridge and communication between the City and Coorparoo was interrupted for some time.

The effect of the floods was to discourage settlement on the south side of the river, and to promote the development of the northern suburbs, Clayfield, Hendra, Albion, and the Hamilton. But Coorparoo benefited, for many people left the dangerous low-lying lands near the river for the safe and healthy high lands of Coorparoo. Mr. Edward Deshon went to Remerdine at the highest point of Coorparoo. His property is now the Loretto Convent. The Honourable A. J. Carter, M.L.C., who had suffered at South Brisbane through flood also went to Coorparoo—first to Cavendish Road and then to Hatherston, a two-storied house on the Old Cleveland Road—now the Queen Alexandra Home. Later Mr. Carter moved to Nunnington, Main Street, Kangaroo Point, where he died in 1917.

Captain Mackay, went to Garnet Hill on the Western side of Cavendish Road. Mr. T. M. King, I.S.O., father of Mr. R. M. King, later a Minister of the Crown, went to Erica, at present the property of Mrs. Isaiah Lahey.

Messrs. King, Carter and Hellicar and Captain Mackay used to play whist in those days at each others' houses and "Cavendish on Whist" being the authority on the game, Cavendish Road received its name. Cavendish being the family name of the Dukes of Devonshire, and Chatsworth their chief residence, what more natural than to bestow that name on what is now Chatsworth Road? Another well-known name associated with Coorparoo is that of James Stodart who took up his residence at Coorparoo about this time.

### Coorparoo in 1895.

Some idea of Coorparoo 40 years ago may be obtained from the particulars relating to the shire given in Pugh's Almanac. In the area, consisting of eight square miles, there was a population of 2,580 of whom 60 per cent. were ratepayers. The president of the shire was Mr. G. H. Blocksidge, who with Messrs. W. H. Barnes and R. Groom, represented No. 1 Ward. Messrs. J. V. Francis, C. F. Bardsley and S. Winterbottom, were representatives of No. 2, while those for No. 3 Ward were Messrs. R. M. King, N. B. Lade and N. MacDermot. The shire secretary was J. H. Henzell, Junior. "Henzell's Trig Station" is, according to the map, the highest point overlooking Logan Road.

### "The Greenslopes."

The block of 90 acres purchased from the Crown by Mr. R. Jennings has been mentioned. It lay between Samuel Stevens' land on the Old Cleveland Road and Chatsworth Road. Fifty years ago the timber had been cleared and it received the local name of "the Greenslopes." It ran down to the waterholes forming the head of Coorparoo Creek.

Greenslopes now extends to Logan Road and all along Chatsworth Road is thickly populated, with good houses rejoicing in a beautiful prospect of the distant city.

### Holland Park.

It is safe to assume that Alfred and Julius Holland, who have been mentioned as the Crown purchasers of the adjoining land, have given their name to Holland Road, which enters the Logan Road, on the town side of German Bridge, and to Holland Park. Walking over it 30 years ago from Logan Road to Mr. Hellicar's house, "Abbotsleigh," one saw nothing but stony ridges and stunted trees.

### Early Cricketers.

Cricket came to Coorparoo half a century ago, and probably before that. In those far off days the Nicklins and W. H. Barnes were active with bat or ball, while Hiram Barnes, the father of W. H. and G. P. Barnes, was prominent as an umpire. Mr. H. J. Darragh, who also was one of the players, has seen the growth of the southern suburbs from a few houses at Kangaroo Point. He has seen "the One Mile Swamp" drained and Burnett's swamp bridged and he now sees the Jubilee Bridge rising at Kangaroo Point to render impossible in future any interruption of communication between the southern and the northern suburbs of the City of Brisbane.

