St Lucia before 1852

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St Lucia History Group Research Paper 1
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1. THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

The peninsula of St Lucia covers some 336 ha (830 acres). It is one of the most southern foothills of the Taylor Range which is part of the D’Aguilar Range, stretching from Woodford through Mt Glorious and Mt Nebo to Mt Coot-tha. The D’Aguilar Range was formed millions of years ago, and the Brisbane River starts on the west side of the Range and has flowed along varying paths finding its way eventually to Moreton Bay.

A spine of varying height runs south from the 244 metres-high Mt. Coot-tha, through Taringa and along Swann Rd before crossing into St Lucia at Gailey Five Ways. The ridgeline then climbs slightly to its highest point in St Lucia, at the junction of Carmody Rd and Swann Rd, where it is 55m above sea level.\(^1\) The principal line of the ridge is then marked by Hawken Dr as its height decreases, then through the University Great Court until finally finishing at The Elbow.

A subsidiary ridge runs off the main ridge to the north-east at Ironside School, and after a few dips, rises to a slight peak between Seventh, Eighth, Tenth and Eleventh Ave. The highest point there is 50m above sea level. A further ridge line branches off down Ryans Rd reaching the edge of the river, and another runs on the east side of Gailey Rd, eventually becoming Glenolive Lane before also reaching the river. The following is a hand drawn map from around 1900, and illustrates the ridges of St Lucia.

The Brisbane River is as meandering as it is because, from its headwaters at the north-west of the D’Aguilar Range, it runs through the Brisbane River Valley to Fernvale before heading east, working in and out of the foothills of the Range. Where the path of the river hits a rocky face such as St Lucia, or Highgate Hill, then the swept side is often quite worn away to present a steep face as occurs at The Esplanade. Conversely the lea side is usually river flats of low-lying alluvial material, as can be found along Macquarie St and Sir William MacGregor Dr.

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\(^1\) Brisbane City Council Contour Plan of St Lucia, Bimap system accessed 26 March 2003.
The hills forming St Lucia are generally of the Palaeozoic Metamorphic type. The material is quite hard but can be ripped by machine, and can be seen clearly in excavations on the hills. The following photograph shows excavation adjacent to the Great Court.

Excavations adjacent to the Great Court, University of Queensland, showing rock marl with a thin soil covering on the hill top.

When John Oxley passed by he referred to the forest as ‘brush’ - a NSW colloquialism for natural vegetation; the more common Queensland term is ‘scrub’.

On the surface of the hills is a quite thin layer of decomposed material, only enough to grow small trees and scrub. The valleys had deeper and better soils and some of the types of bush

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that grew there can be seen on the labelled Bushcare walk through the Ironside Park in the Guilfoyle St gully. The general description that was given to the lower parts of the peninsula was ‘rainforest’. A newspaper reported that in the 1850s prior to cultivation the land comprised ‘a dense scrub in which stood cedar, ironbark and giant gums’.\textsuperscript{3} To this can be added silky oak.\textsuperscript{4}

The following quotation illustrates the lack of tree cover in 1870, from Ironside School:

‘[which] overlooked Dart’s…sugar mill on one aspect and the Indooroopilly farmlands on the other…its wide outlook, extending to the New South Wales border mountains, Lindesay and Barney, to the Great Dividing Range…and to the heights of Moreton Island…’\textsuperscript{5}

As land development in the nineteenth century occurred, much of the bush across the peninsula was cleared, leaving only remnants of original vegetation. The trees that are generally seen today, such as the jacarandas, camphor laurels, and Poincianas, are not native to the area and have been planted by residents, mainly since the 1950s when town water was available.

In the wetter months various creeks ran from the ridges to the river, sometimes leaving water holes that encouraged the presence of wildlife. The now semi-tidal Toowong Creek and Sandy Creek form part of the borders of St Lucia. The most prominent freshwater creek line was that which even today runs between the houses on Hawken Drive and Ninth Avenue. It continues through the original waterhole, now Acacia Park, and across the University land where it used to link several waterholes including a later dam for the sugar mill, at the University gates – now the roundabout at the start of Sir William MacGregor Dr. The waterholes had many water lilies growing on them, and yabbie would have thrived.

Another major creek was the one that still runs from Swann Rd roughly down the line of Douglas St, exiting to the river in the low point of Sandford St. Another creek, sometimes called Smythe Creek, runs from Guilfoyle St behind Ironside State School, down Depper St into Brisbane St and Guyatt Park. Yet another unnamed creek also sometimes referred to as Smythe Creek, but known locally now as Alvey Creek, starts in Banksia Park behind Carmody Rd and joins the river where it forces a break in Macquarie St.

The river flats are of a deep sandy loam, laid down and replenished by constant floods over many centuries. From the 1850s onwards Europeans clear felled the scrub and farmed the fertile soils, before they eventually were developed for residential or academic use.

Before 1852 wildlife was no doubt quite plentiful because of the undisturbed nature of the area, and the availability most of the year of water in the waterholes and creeks. Mosquitoes and sandflies would have been common, as would have been snakes, lizards, termites, frogs and leaches. Bigger animals probably included kangaroos, iguanas, and possums.

Bird life would have been plentiful as it is today, although many of the current species have been introduced, attracted by human occupation. Kookaburras, finches, ducks, and Fruit bats lived in the area and probably have for thousands of years. Many fish would have lived in the unpolluted river and creeks; perch, prawns, eels and mud crabs included.

\textit{Toowong, A community’s history} published by the West Toowong Community Association, has an excellent chapter on the natural environment. Written by John Robinson who has a life long interest in nature, it covers Toowong specifically, and Brisbane more generally and thus to a degree covers St Lucia as well.

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\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Brisbane Cutting Book} p281 dated approximately 1917, JOL.
\textsuperscript{4} MOB ‘Silky Oak Exhibition’ May 2009.
\textsuperscript{5} Ironside State School Diamond Jubilee 1930 kindly provided by the school.
Brisbane River has a long history of flooding, and this was recognised in 1824 when the decision was made to put the penal settlement on a cliff top, well above the potential flood level. The first recorded major flood of 1841 may well have been the highest ever recorded during European occupation. It is thought to have been up to 8.43m (27 ft 8 in.) above normal levels. The river flooded again in 1844 to about 7.03m (23 ft) above normal and again in 1845 to about 6.40m (21 ft).

It is worth noting that another group of major floods occurred around the early 1890s. These included the ‘Great Floods’ of 1893, so called because by that time the area had a small population and infrastructure base, which suffered devastating damage. The earlier floods had been forgotten or were deliberately ignored. This was the first flood where detail records of inundation of St Lucia were kept; the height was about 8.35m (27 ft 5 in.).

The area from the river almost to Carmody Rd was underwater between Guyatt Park and Brisbane St east towards Coleridge St. At the University, all of Sir William MacGregor Dr, the current sports fields, the lakes and all the sloping ground, except the higher area around the now Great Court and the end of Hawken Dr were inundated. At Toowong Creek, Perrin Park, Jack Cook Park and much of the now Sandford St were under some 8.25m (27 ft) of water.

2. EUROPEAN EXPLORATION AND DISCOVERY

The first European to see the future St Lucia was the ex-convict, Thomas Pamphlett, now memorialised in the naming of the bridge over Oxley Creek. He and two colleagues were ticket-of-leave cedar-getters who were lost and trying to find their way across the river.

The first Europeans to actually set foot on and even sleep on St Lucia were the explorer John Oxley and his crew.
John Joseph William Molesworth Oxley, (1785-1828) a former British naval lieutenant, was by 1822, the Colony’s Surveyor General and its most noted inland explorer, having discovered much of the outback beyond Sydney. Thirty-five years after First Settlement occurred in Sydney, Oxley sailed north in the HM Colonial Schooner Mermaid. His task was to search for a site for a new penal settlement at either Port Bowen, Port Curtis – later Gladstone, or Moreton Bay, all areas reported as having potential by Matthew Flinders on his 1799 expedition up the coast.

On this journey he kept a series of pen and ink notes in five small pocket books and later wrote a report to the Governor. All of these are available for study in John Oxley Field Notes – Original Pocket Book 1823 - typed transcription by Margaret Chittick, and Letter of report from John Oxley to Governor Brisbane 10 January 1824- typed transcription, both at the John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland. John Oxley’s story is told in full in the book The Exploration of Moreton Bay District 1770 – 1830.6

Finding Port Curtis unsuitable, and the onset of the ‘wet’ season in the Far North discouraging him from continuing on to Port Bowen, Oxley turned south and on 29th November 1823, following Matthew Flinders charts, he landed at Point Skirmish (Bribie Island). Upon anchoring Oxley was surprised to meet the ex-convicts Pamphlett, Parsons and Finnegan mentioned earlier, who were being looked after by the local Aboriginals.7

Whilst John Oxley was away exploring, John Uniacke, one of his fellow travellers on the Mermaid remained behind to interview the ex-convict Thomas Pamphlett and write a narrative, verbatim from Pamphlett. The full story can be found in the chapter ‘Narrative of Thomas Pamphlett as told to and recorded by John Uniacke’ in The Discovery and Exploration of Moreton Bay and the Brisbane River Part II, by George Mackaness.8

In December 1823 John Oxley explored the west shore of Moreton Bay in a small whaler rowing boat with four days of rations, accompanied by Lieutenant Stirling of the Buffs as chart drawer, ex-convict John Finnegan as guide and possibly two oarsmen. They were looking for the river the three ex-convicts had travelled down. Oxley later wrote in his letter

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7 J G Steele, p. 93.
8 George Mackaness 1979 The Discovery and Exploration of Moreton Bay and the Brisbane River II.
of report to the Colonial Secretary ‘on the second day we had the Satisfaction to find the tide sweeping us up a considerable Inlet’.9

He had found the mouth of the river, which he duly named River Brisbane after the Governor of the Colony of New South Wales.10 Travelling up river, charting as he went, Oxley went past the future Sandford St, noting it as Station 12 on 2 Dec 1823. The depth of the river was recorded here as 7.78m (4 ¼ fathoms). He wrote in his field book ‘the low land on starboard shore commences having cypress intermingled with the brush’.11

Oxley then made an overnight camp near what later became known as Six Mile Rocks being 9.65 klm (six miles) up-river from Brisbane Town, and recorded in his field book:

Station 14. To brush on this shore. Four to 10 fathoms to this station. Next station, north 236 degrees one mile, brush on both shores with cypresses. At half-past six landed at the termination of the brush on starboard shore on a piece of forest land. River quite fresh, low water. The tide has a rise of at least five feet and up to this point, a distance of 20 miles [32.18 klm] the river is quite navigable for vessels of any burthen; a rock midway in river.

Wednesday Dec 3rd [1823] Calm and sultry. We passed a miserable night, mosquitoes and sandflies almost devoured us. At half-past five, resumed the examination of the river.12

A plaque is displayed at Emmanuel College, Queensland University foreshore to commemorate the camp site, although its exact location is not confirmed.

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9 J G Steele, p. 119.
10 J G Steele, p. 122.
11 J G Steele, p. 111.
12 J G Steele, p. 112.
St Lucia History Group member Ian Venables explains that when John Oxley visited, the Brisbane bar still existed and no dredging had occurred. This meant that salt water did not reach as far up as St Lucia and thus no mangroves grew on the river banks.

Oxley proceeded up the river past Seventeen-Mile Rocks as far as what he named Termination Hill (Goodna) before returning to Mt Ommaney for his second night. In his later report to the Colonial Secretary wrote:

…the country on either side of a very superior description and equally well adapted for cultivation or grazing…
…it is by far the largest fresh water river on the eastern coast of New South Wales, and promises to be of the utmost importance to the colony…
…appeared to me to be capable of supporting the cultivation of the richest production…
…the scenery was peculiarly beautiful; the country on the banks alternately hilly and level, but not flooded; the soil of the finest description of Brush wood land, on which grew Timber of great magnitude, and of various species…

He noted that Hoop Pine (Araucaria Cunninghamii), and Red Cedar (Toona Ciliata) grew in abundance. Oxley forecast the river would allow water communication with the vast extent of country, a great portion of which appeared to me capable of supporting the cultivation of the richest production of the tropics’. Even the natives ‘appeared to possess a most friendly disposition’.

Sick from sunburn and exhaustion but exhilarated by his find, Oxley returned to his ship.

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13 J G Steele, pp. 120, 121.
15 J G Steele, p. 123.
Governor Major General Sir Thomas Brisbane KCB is memorialised in Brisbane not only by the city name and the river, but also by the Sir Thomas Brisbane Planetarium at the Botanical Gardens.

3. THE CONVICT ERA

Less than a year after his first visit, John Oxley returned from Sydney in 1824 on board the HM brig *Amity*, bringing the first group of convicts and soldiers to make up the new temporary Moreton Bay penal settlement at Red Cliff Point. Various plaques on the beach there today show the position and extent of the camp.

Accompanying Oxley this time was Alan Cunningham (1791 – 1839), the King’s Botanical Collector, visiting Australia from Kew Gardens in England. In September that year, Oxley, Cunningham and Hoddle set out again to explore the upper reaches of the Brisbane and Bremer Rivers. They travelled past St Lucia on the 17th September 1824 on their way to establishing a base camp near Mt Crosby weir.16

On their journey back downstream, reaching again the Long Reach (Milton Reach) of the river, they stayed the night of 26 September at a freshwater creek (Moorlands Park). They had some trouble with the natives here. Later the following day, they proceeded down the river, landing … to look for water… and found… by no means an ineligible station for a first settlement.

In November that same year, 1824, Governor Sir Thomas Brisbane and a distinguished group including the Chief Justice Sir Francis Forbes and John Oxley were rowed up the river.17 In September 1825 the explorer, Major Edmund Lockyer made a month-long exploration of the headwaters of the river.18 In 1827 the tyrant Commandant, Captain Patrick Logan, passed by St Lucia on an exploration to the Bremer River, where he discovered limestone at a place now named Ipswich.

Also in 1827 Alan Cunningham explored the land north of the outpost of Bathurst, and eventually reached an area he named the Darling Downs. He sailed again to Moreton Bay in 1828 and established a route south over the Great Dividing Range to join his inland route. On that exploration he discovered the much valued coal seams on the Bremer River.20

The convicts probably had no contact with the future St Lucia, it being a fair way from the Settlement, and separated from it by deep tidal creeks, and flood prone land. However, the river passing St Lucia was used for transporting coal and limestone from the Bremer River, and produce and timber from the convict outstation at Oxley Creek.

John Oxley died in Sydney in 1828 aged only 45, from the rigors of naval life and his bush exploration.

The Moreton Bay penal settlement was initially established to house convicts who were, according to Governor Brisbane:

报刊通令 offenders… its means of immediately affording employment and subsistence… and the facilities that a penal settlement in the first instance will afford to the free settlers, when it may be deemed expedient to throw open that part of the colony… 21

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17 Johnston W R, op.cit. p.16.
19 Steele J G, op.cit. p.280.
20 Steele J G, op.cit. 280, 281.
However it was soon housing recidivist convicts of the worst kind, sent to Moreton Bay as there was no means of escape.

In 1825 it moved from Redcliff to the future City of Brisbane. The history of the penal settlement has been written in great detail in the book *Brisbane Town In Convict Days 1824-1842* by J G Steele. A track was cut westwards to the Moggill area, but the convicts appear to have had no impact on the future St Lucia, although it is possible they felled some trees.

Most of the farming of produce for the settlement was carried out at the City Botanical Gardens, and Eagle Farm, with an outstation at Oxley. The river passing St Lucia was used for transporting limestone from Ipswich and produce and timber from Oxley. The penal settlement began to close in 1839, and Brisbane Town became open for free settlement on 11 February 1842.

4. ST LUCIA AND ABORIGINES

Some years after his return to England on the *Endeavour* Sir Joseph Banks advised the King that England could not ‘buy’ the new country because there was nothing that could be offered that was of interest to the natives apart from food. He supposed that they would soon ‘abandon the country to the new comers’.²²

Whilst we are still learning of the long-term history of the Aborigines before the coming of white man, there are extensive written records of contact between early Europeans and Aborigines in south-east Queensland. Generally the history is one of conflict when large groups of white men appeared to be invading the country, compared with one of help and friendship when lone white men were in trouble. The gun was the weapon that gave so much advantage to the intruders.

When Mathew Flinders landed on Bribie Island in 1799 he gave the name Skirmish Point to a particular place where he had his first brush with the natives. Twenty odd years later, the ex-convicts Pamphlett and Parsons and Finnegan owed their lives to help provided to them by those very same Aborigines.

In 1824 John Oxley ran into some problems with the natives in the area of Moorlands Park Toowong. The penal settlement was constantly in conflict with the Aborigines, partly through lack of understanding of different cultures by both sides, but mainly through the natives showing their dislike for what they saw as the invasion of the white man, and the destruction of their habitat. Commandant Patrick Logan, who treated convicts, soldiers and natives harshly, was supposedly killed by Aborigines on one of his expeditions south of the Settlement.

The Turrbal people were generally thought to have been occupying the north side of the river, and it is believed that their number totalled about 5000 by mid 1840s, but may have been double this prior to the arrival of Europeans. Their name for the Brisbane River was ‘Meirwah’, wah being the word for river, Meir being the name they gave to what we call Moreton Bay Chestnuts that used to line the river bank in those days.

Historian J G Steele writes that an extensive area north of the river was inhabited by the Yaggera (language group of the Turrbal) people.²³

Historian John Pearn writes of the Jaggera aboriginal peoples of the Yugarabul language group having occupied the area.²⁴

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²³ Steele, J. G., *Aboriginal Pathways of South East Queensland*, University of Queensland Press, 1983
Historian Helen Gregory has written of the Aborigines of the Yaggera language group having occupied the area of South East Queensland for probably more than 30,000 years.\textsuperscript{25} The Aborigines roamed widely in pursuit of food; there appears to be no physical evidence of Aboriginal use of the peninsula of St Lucia in particular. According to Helen Gregory the area around Toowong was regularly used as feeding grounds and as camp sites for visiting groups.\textsuperscript{26} According to research by Ray Kerkhove, St Lucia was possibly a crossing point for northern-side aborigines to canoe or swim the river to visit gatherings at Woolloongabba.\textsuperscript{27}

Wildlife probably flourished, including kangaroos, and the river would have been full of fish and shellfish. A rich variety of fruits, nuts and berries grew for most of the year. The natives practised ‘Firestick farming’ to chase out animals for capture, and to encourage new plant growth.\textsuperscript{28}

One report suggests that Toowong creek was not a camp as such, but a hunting and gathering area,\textsuperscript{29} and thus possibly an occasional camp. J B Fewings, a Toowong identity in the 1890s wrote of the years in the 1860s that:

Blacks camps were not unknown…and swarthy Aboriginals might be seen leaving their gunyahs and wending their way towards the city in quest of alms, chiefly money, rum, tobacco, and bread…\textsuperscript{30}

From the reminiscences of ex-pupils of the early days of Ironside School:

the blacks’ camped on Anderson’s Creek [Long Pocket], with gunyahs along the creek and blacks spearving fish.\textsuperscript{31}

The Head Teacher of Ironside School in 1958, J L Murray, wrote in similar vein and added ‘Lubras would often come to beg for food at the doors of the early settlers.’\textsuperscript{32}

No physical evidence remains today of Aboriginal use before the European population arrived, but if any did exist it may well have been destroyed in the clearing of the land. The early St Lucia settlers probably had little respect for, or understanding of the original owners, and may not have even recognised any sacred areas that they came across. However the anglicised version of some local Aboriginal names were adopted such as tu-wong (koel or storm bird, Toowong), ku-dhe (honey from the large native bee, Mt Coot-tha), nyindurupilli (gully with leeches, Indooroopilly), Moggill (water lizard), and Taringa (stones).\textsuperscript{33}

Lloyd Rees wrote of the period circa 1905 that:

Often on moonlit nights, we sat on the side steps of Mobolon with Ruby, an Aboriginal girl who worked for us, listening while she played the accordion, all of singing to the moon as it went in among the clouds. We had a number of Aboriginal girls who worked for us over the years, but none of them stayed for very long. I don’t think my mother understood their need to go walkabout. They came from an Aboriginal home across the river and gave a sense of mystery and strangeness to our lives.\textsuperscript{34}

\textsuperscript{26} Helen Gregory, \textit{The Brisbane River Story}, p. 12.
\textsuperscript{27} \textit{West End to Woolloongabba} Ray Kerkhove, 1985, State Library of Queensland
\textsuperscript{28} Helen Gregory, \textit{The Brisbane River Story}, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{29} Colliver and Woolston in \textit{Brisbane Retrospect} 1976 Seminar report, Lib Board of Queensland.
\textsuperscript{30} Helen Gregory 1990 \textit{Arcadian Simplicity – J. B. Fewings Memoirs of Toowong} p 25, Boolarong Press
\textsuperscript{31} \textit{Ironside State School Diamond Jubilee} 1930 provided by the school librarian
\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Ironside State School Centenary} 1870-1970 provided by the school librarian, p 41.
\textsuperscript{34} Lloyd Rees \textit{Peaks and Valleys} Collins 1988
A 2004 Folio by Karen Kecskes *Indigenous Place and Space – University of Queensland* does not add to the history.  

It gives guidelines on how the University could ‘illustrate’ some cultural aspects, by for example, using the riverside walks to tell how the Aborigines may have used the river.

The Forgan-Smith Art and Law Building of the University acknowledges the Aboriginal ownership of the land with thirty carved sandstone panels on its external walls.

5. THE EARLY YEARS OF FREE SETTLEMENT

The transition from the Moreton Bay penal settlement to struggling Brisbane Town is well described in the book *Brisbane The First 30 Years* by W. Ross Johnstone.

During the convict era there had been a prohibition upon any free settlers coming within 80 klm (50 miles) of the penal settlement.

In 1840 Robert Dixon, then the NSW Surveyor in Charge of Moreton Bay, laid out a town plan for the free settlement of Brisbane Town. Recognised as the first plan of streets, it comprised a square grid based upon the soldier’s basic two streets as they already had modest buildings, yards etc associated with them.

Sales of Crown Land both in and around North and South Brisbane began in 1842, and included suburban lots along the south side of the river at West End in 1844, and Hill End in 1850. Further west, sales of country lots occurred in areas such as Kenmore, and Wacol; *Wolston House* was built in 1851. However, sales on the northern riverbank immediately to the west of town only extended as far as Boundary Creek, now Hale St. During the highest ever-recorded flood of January 1841, much of the area beyond Hale St was metres under water, and even today, we recognise the flood zones with parks and sports grounds - Lang Park, the old Milton tennis courts, Moorlands, Anzac, and Perrin Parks at Toowong.

Many tracks through the bush had been made by Aborigines over the centuries, and it is possible one existed along the north bank of the river through what we today call Milton and Auchenflower. In convict days parties went out exploring and cutting timber and may have made their own wagon tracks to the west.

Whilst the main track from Brisbane Town to the inland pastoral areas was on the south side of the river via Oxley:

> In 1849, the government instructed surveyor Warner to report upon a new ‘practicable’ route from North Brisbane [the City today] to Ipswich, staying north of the Brisbane River…the government voted £50 in 1850 for the north road to Ipswich. Already Warner had laid out the Brisbane-Moggill stretch, about seven miles [11.23 klm] and this was being regularly used by wool and timber drays.

In fact the section of the Ipswich route along the river bank near *Milton House* was not in use for some years; in 1855 the owner Mr Eldridge wrote to his neighbour Mr Brookes, requesting that he remove the fence at the riverbank which was preventing access to his property.

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36 Robinson F W Professor, *The University of Queensland St Lucia Brisbane*, 1957, UQ Press, JOL P 378.943
40 Moreton Bay District Surveyors Office, notes from Letterbooks 1844-1860, A Derbyshire private papers; NSW Gazette 17/6/1851 p 772.
The track along the riverbank was initially known as Farm Rd then progressively Moggill Rd, River View Rd, River Rd, and eventually renamed in 1937 as Coronation Drive. It continues today up High St Toowong where it reverts to its earlier name of Moggill Rd.

6. EARLY CROWN LAND LEASES AND SALES TO THE WEST OF BRISBANE

According to a recent newspaper report Darby McGrath was likely the first settler in the Parish of Indooroopilly, leasing 1000 ha in 1848 on Moggill Creek.41 Leases were for grazing only not for cropping, and fences and buildings were not permitted.

By Gazettal on 27 May 1851 the Government advertised lands for lease including 900 acres in the Parish of Indooroopilly, at the annual rate of ten shillings per 640 acres, at an auction on 17 June 1851.42 These leases were normally triggered by a particular person requesting a lease of the specified land. It is not known precisely where this land was, or whether it was actually leased.

About 4th August that same year the Government advertised land for lease including two Lots each of 640 acres in the Parish of Indooroopilly at an upset price of 5 shillings per section for the half year, at an auction on 11 September 1851.43 Again, it is not known precisely where the land was, or wether it was actually leased.

Similar Lots were advertised again in 1852 by Gazettal on 16 July 1852 for auction on 28 July 1852.44 Similar Lots were advertised yet again in 1853 by Gazettal approximately 18 March 1853 for auction 21 April 1853.45 No further Gazettals appear to have been made.

It was later reported that:

As related by Mr Fewings, the whole of the…country extending as far as Moggill and including Toowong was known as McDougall’s Station, being under lease from the New South Wales Government.46

It is not certain that the foregoing quotation is accurate, and is questioned by many, particularly as Mr John Frederick McDougall was based in Sydney at the time the leases were auctioned in Brisbane. Although his wife is recorded at giving birth to a son at Cambooya, Darling Downs in July 1855 J F McDougall’s arrival in Brisbane Town by ship was first noted on 29 October 1855, by which time the land along the north bank of the river right through to today’s St Lucia had been sold at Freehold.47 He purchased Milton House in 1856.

It is possible leases gazetted above covered the future St Lucia and Long Pocket areas however they may have covered other parts of the Parish such as Kenmore. Any leases would have been terminated or expired, prior to the St Lucia land being sold freehold between 1852 and 1859.

The first sales of freehold land in the Parish of Indooroopilly, Portions 1 – 6 had been surveyed and numbered in 1849, as had six Portions in the Parish of Moggill.48 Portion 1, Indooroopilly 32 acres, Portion 2 32 acres, Portion 4 42 acres, and portion 5 64 acres were

41 The Courier-Mail 7 September 2013 p 67.
42 The Sydney Morning Herald 29 May 1851 p 4.
43 NSW Gazette 11 September 1851 p 1298, 1300; The Moreton Bay Courier 30 August 1851 p3 c1; The Sydney Morning Herald 23 August 1851 p 3.
44 The Sydney Morning Herald 21 July 1852 p 2.
45 The Moreton Bay Courier 16 April 1853 p.2 c.5; The Sydney Morning Herald 18 March 1853 p 2.
46 Early Brisbane Clippings (previously Brisbane Cutting Book) OM91-36 Box 9256 c.15 June 1917, p.281; The Brisbane Courier 26 May 1906 p12; The Courier-Mail 20 March 1954 p 2.
48 Warner survey map for Brisbane/Ipswich road north side of river, 1849.
advertised for sale on 28 November 1849.\textsuperscript{49} They were recorded in the Government Gazette as sold in 1852 to W R Howe Weekes, an officer of the 58\textsuperscript{th} Regiment of Foot. \textsuperscript{50} Portion 3 28 acres and Portion 6 24 acres were advertised for sale on 17 February 1855.\textsuperscript{51}

These six portions were all on the east bank of Moggill Creek (now Kenmore) with Portion 6 being on the Brisbane River and other portions then proceeding north up the Creek until ‘John McGrath’s land’.

Just to confuse the issue Portions 3 32 acres and portion 4 42 acres (both different areas to above) on Moggill Creek were advertised for sale by Government in 1853.\textsuperscript{52} Two more Portions were reportedly sold in early 1854, Portion 6, 24 acres purchased by J McGrath, and Portion 3 purchased by B. Cribb (brother of Robert Cribb).\textsuperscript{53}

The first formal survey along that northern riverbank to the west of the Town boundary for sales of freehold ‘suburban’ land, was carried out by Warner in 1850, and created the start of today’s Upper Roma Street/Milton Road from the now William Jolly Bridge to Western Creek (John Oxley Centre/Milton Park near old Tennis centre) and included Boomerang Street, Cribb Street, Little Cribb Street and Park Road. The new road to Moggill is shown on the riverbank, although as there were no bridges across the creeks the road was not in use.\textsuperscript{54}

The sale of these twelve suburban Lots in North Brisbane, and fifteen in the Parish of Enoggera was held on 14 August 1851.\textsuperscript{55} At the auction not all the Lots sold, but those facing the river ‘realised good prices’ with R. Cribb buying a Lot of 2 ¼ acres for £29/16/4, and another of 34 ½ acres for £34/2/6. Pharmacist Ambrose Eldridge also bought two Lots.\textsuperscript{56} The unsold Lots were offered again on 8 January 1852 and Eldridge was the main buyer, this time for three Lots.\textsuperscript{57}

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\item \textsuperscript{49} NSW Government Gazette 10 October 1849 p 1504
\item \textsuperscript{50} NSW Government Gazette 1852 p 1050; 1854 p 626.
\item \textsuperscript{51} NSW Government Gazette 1854 p 117
\item \textsuperscript{52} The Moreton Bay Courier, 15 October 1853 p3.
\item \textsuperscript{53} The Moreton Bay Courier, 14 January 1854 p1; 8 February 1854 p2.
\item \textsuperscript{54} Johnston W R, Brisbane The First Thirty Years, 1988, Boolarong Press, p.239
\item \textsuperscript{56} The Moreton Bay Courier, 16 August 1851, p.2 c.4.
\item \textsuperscript{57} The Moreton Bay Courier, 10 January 1852, p.2 c.5.
\end{itemize}
The first substantial house to be built was Milton House at Milton Farm erected by Ambrose Eldridge in 1854 on one of the higher pieces of ground, and this house still exists today, albeit in an expanded form.

This area that later became known as Milton, and as in other areas:

the colonists [sic] built their substantial suburban homes, lived on the area, farmed some of the land [in the ten acres and a cow style]...they awaited the opportune time to dispose of the unused portion as development proceeded.58

Freehold land sales outside Brisbane Town were largely meant to provide farming land to produce food for the community, but such purchases were beyond the means of the average man, and investors became the main buyers. Pastoralists were active in buying property around Ipswich and country areas, and some such as T L Murray Prior invested heavily in the near Brisbane area too. A group partly comprised of the immigrants introduced by Rev. Lang, bought tracts of land just outside the town limits; Robert Cribb and Isaac Markwell were prominent amongst this group. Some then leased out smaller areas of land to farmers, for the production of crops including cotton.59

By 1851 J. C. Burnett had surveyed thirteen more Lots along the riverbank, generally between 15 and 20 acres.60 These ran from Western Creek to just past Toowong Creek, and from the road or riverbank to about the line of, but without creating, Lang Parade, Jephson St, and Burns Rd. Some included a road reserve to continue the riverbank road up today’s High St.

Burnett used the name Toowong Creek on his plans and this may be the first official use of the name Toowong.61

Figure 1 Lots from Western Creek to Lang Farm

60 Burnett J C, Plan of 13 Suburban Allotments B1234.18, Oct 1851, Museum of Lands Mapping and Survey.
Following Proclamation on 9th January 1852, these Lots were advertised in *The Moreton Bay Courier* for sale on 18th February 1852.

“for sale by auction at the Police Office, Brisbane, on Wednesday the 18th February next, at 11 o’clock in the forenoon”

Twelve of them were Portions 17 - 28 Parish of Enoggera and today some of them form the commercial heart of Toowong. The thirteenth Lot was just past Toowong Creek in the Parish of Indooroopilly. It was shown on the J C Burnett survey map as having at its corners an “Oak” and a “Gum”.

All blocks were given auction lot numbers, and the one block to the south of Toowong Creek became auction Lot 25. It was marked on the J C Burnett survey plan as having an “Oak” and a “Gum” at its corners. This piece of land was later officially delineated on the map as Portion 7, Parish of Indooroopilly, County of Stanley. The upset (reserve) price was the standard for ‘suburban blocks’ of £2 per acre (0.405 ha).

In those days the whole area still had swamps and tidal creeks and there was plenty of more desirable land available elsewhere. The auction result:

…shows the depressed conditions of affairs at present, only [one] Lot having been sold, viz., Lot 25 R. Cribb £39.64

The future commercial heart of Toowong received no bids. However Robert Cribb paid just the upset price for auction Lot 25 - Portion 7 Parish of Indooroopilly, and in purchasing it became the first owner of a piece of land in today’s St Lucia.

The unsold Portions 17 – 28 Parish of Enoggera and others elsewhere were re-advertised in the economically better times of 1853. The sales were more successful and prices were sometimes higher than the reserves:

The attendance was very good and the biding spirited…the result of the sale evinces a considerable improvement in monetary affairs. Confident of the future, earlier purchasers were now consolidating and expanding their holdings. There was a large attendance of buyers, and the competition for the Lots…was very spirited.

The portion covering the future heart of Toowong sold but not the two portions to the south, however Robert Cribb was bidding again and bought the last portion south, Portion 28. This was about thirty-eight acres of land on the north-western bank of Toowong Creek, across to Burns Rd and Moggill Rd including Perrin Park, and north to about where the BP service station is today. The purchase price was £253 or nearly £7 per acre (0.405 ha).

The adjoining Portion 27, still closer to Brisbane, of some 15 acres, was bought originally by a Mr Buckley, but was on-sold to Cribb in 1854, which took his land almost up to today’s Glen Road.

Not content, Cribb then purchased Portion 256, 21 acres of adjoining land closer to Moggill Rd, now the Campbell St area. He had become the owner of a huge swathe of land from about

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64 *The Moreton Bay Courier Supplement*, 18 February 1852, p.1.c.4.
65 *The Moreton Bay Courier*, 2 April 1853, p.3.c.1.
67 *The Moreton Bay Courier*, 23 July 1853, p.3.c.1.
68 *The Moreton Bay Courier*, 23 July 1853, p.3.c.1
69 The Cribb and Forte Families:Part IV by Nancy Foote, unpublished manuscript 1985
70 The Cribb and Forte Families:Part IV by Nancy Foote, unpublished manuscript 1985
the Glenn Rd/Archer St junction around the river edge to Gailey Ck south to about Bellevue Tce west through Heroes Park, Perrin Park and Campbell St, then back along Moggill Rd and High St almost to the Royal Exchange Hotel. The total area was about 93 acres and the combined purchase price about £600 - £700.