

# HISTORIES OF TOOGOOLAWAH



**Cressbrook Station Homestead**

**(Photo courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. C. McConnel)**

## **A. HISTORIES INDEX**

- 1. Toogoolawah & District Timeline**
- 2. The Cressbrook-McConnel Family**
- 3. Those Were the Days by H. Flower**
- 4. Toogoolawah & Upper Brisbane River Valley by H.E. Flower**
- 5. In the Days of Esk When the Coach Bugle Sounded by G. Launder**
- 6. A Town named Toogoolawah**
- 7. Memories of Brisbane Valley over 60 Years by T. Fox**
- 8. The Town that Grew up on Milk by E. Smith**
- 9. Early History of Brisbane River Valley**

## **PHOTOS**

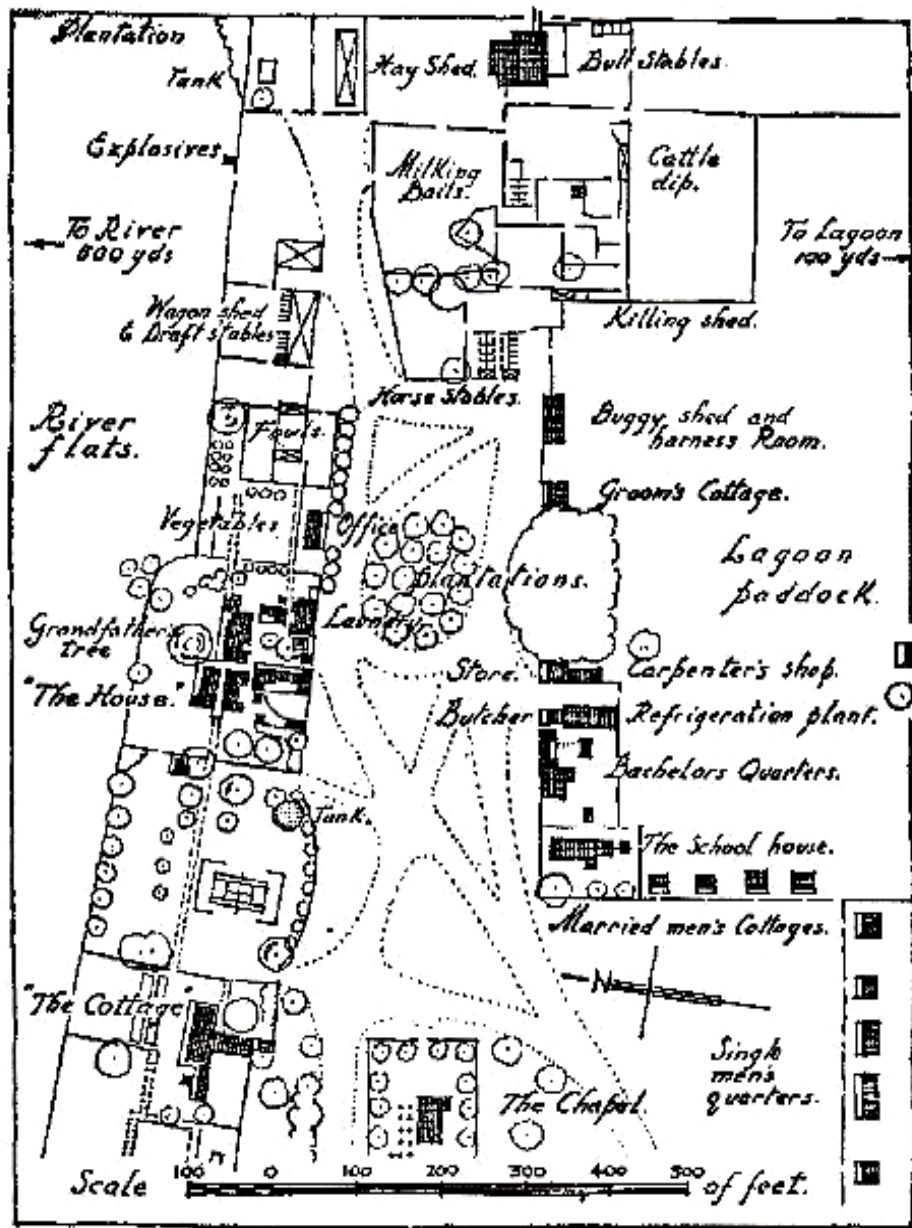
**Introduction: Cressbrook Homestead  
Plan of Cressbrook Homestead, 1910**

- 1. H. J. McConnel**
- 2. Station Master's House**
- 3. Cressbrook Street**
- 4. Club Hotel**
- 5. George Launder**
- 6. McCallum's Coach 1910**
- 7. Original Nestle's shed, 2009**

PLAN OF CRESSBROOK HOMESTEAD 1910  
 Courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. C. McConnel

(Grandfather's Tree is the huge Bunya Pine central to the previous photo of the homestead)

# Cressbrook Station 1910



## Toogoolawah & District Timeline

1841	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ D.C. McConnel took up land between the Brisbane River and Cressbrook Creek</li> </ul>
1865/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The bushranger, James McPherson alias “The Wild Scotsman” was operating about these parts</li> <li>▪ Baptist Church celebrating services in German</li> </ul>
1857	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Floods</li> </ul>
1865	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Floods</li> </ul>
1870	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Floods</li> <li>▪ Cressbrook school opened privately with Mrs. Charlotte Bowen as teacher</li> </ul>
1873	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Red deer presented by Queen Victoria to Queensland were released at Scrub Creek on Cressbrook Station</li> </ul>
1874	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cressbrook School received government funding</li> </ul>
1877	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Drought</li> </ul>
1880	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Floods</li> </ul>
1880+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Land from Cressbrook Station released for closer settlement</li> </ul>
1882	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ German settlers took up selections in Mt. Beppo district</li> </ul>
1883	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Further German settlement</li> </ul>
1884	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Apostolic Church &amp; cemetery (Burial Ground of the Apostles) established</li> </ul>
1885	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Biarra State School opened, closed December 1929</li> </ul>
1886	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Esk Railway opened 9<sup>th</sup> August</li> </ul>
1887	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Biarra Town surveyed.</li> <li>▪ Union church was built at Biarra township</li> <li>▪ Flooding</li> </ul>
1888	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Biarra State School opened by W.G. Shaw</li> </ul>
1890	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ H.P. Somerset took possession of Caboonbah Station</li> </ul>
1893	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mt. Beppo State School opened, last enrolments recorded 1967</li> <li>▪ Floods</li> <li>▪ Ivory’s Creek School opened privately in August by Jane Arnold</li> </ul>
1894	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ivory’s Creek Provisional School receives government funding in March</li> </ul>
1895	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Drought</li> </ul>
1896	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ceratodus introduced into Cressbrook lagoon</li> </ul>
1897	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cressbrook Dairy Company manufactured condensed milk at a factory built on the banks of Cressbrook Creek by J.H. McConnel</li> <li>▪ Crossroads Provisional School (Mt. Brisbane) opened</li> <li>▪ T.J. Coleman’s dairy farm established: first to supply milk to McConnel’s Factory</li> </ul>
1898	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Newton-Esk Provisional (later Ottaba State 1905) School opened, closed Dec. 1935</li> </ul>
1899	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New school built on Ivory’s Creek, occupied in September, closed May 1917</li> </ul>
1902	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Drought</li> </ul>
1903	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Railway (goods carriage only) reaches Cressbrook Condensery</li> </ul>
1904	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First passenger train arrived on 8<sup>th</sup> February</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Station name changed from Cressbrook to Toogoolawah and first town allotments were auctioned</li> <li>▪ Originally there was a navvies store, which was a tin shed near the present police station and operated by J. Devaney</li> <li>▪ On April 4, Thompson &amp; Francis moved from Esk and opened a store on the present site of the Co-Op with George Allen and Frank McNamara as managers</li> <li>▪ Arthur Henry <u>Thompson</u> &amp; Walter <u>Francis</u>, register first land sale in Toogoolawah (subs 1.2, Section 6), June 20</li> <li>▪ George Graham of Esk operated a butcher's shop</li> <li>▪ J.W. Peile's residence was built near the present sawmill</li> <li>▪ Robinson Watchmakers tent-shop and dwelling was established beside T&amp;F</li> <li>▪ The station master's residence was built for George Launder</li> <li>▪ Mail was delivered by train to T&amp;F's and later to an early 'unofficial' post office in Cairnscroft Street</li> <li>▪ First recorded burial in Toogoolawah cemetery</li> <li>▪ Moorabool Hotel built at Yimbun by RCS Thorne, licensed to Thorn 24 September, transferred to Betsy McCallum 13 December</li> </ul>
1905	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Toogoolawah State School was opened on 30<sup>th</sup> May by Miss Ann Scott</li> <li>▪ Caboonbah Udenominational Church opened in November</li> <li>▪ RCS Thorne licensee of new Club Hotel, Toogoolawah</li> </ul>
1906	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Queensland National Bank opened with William James as Manager and Horace Evelyn Flowers as his assistant</li> <li>▪ Police Station was opened with Constable Raynor in charge</li> <li>▪ The Esk Co-operative Dairy Association Limited was established with J.H. McConnel as Chairman</li> <li>▪ Alexandra Hall was built</li> <li>▪ Toogoolawah Amateur Gardening &amp; Progress Association formed</li> </ul>
1907	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cressbrook Dairy Company sold the factory and seven farms to Nestle &amp; Anglo Swiss Condensed Milk Co</li> <li>▪ Shoemaker W.G. Daly was established</li> <li>▪ W. McCallum opened a billiards saloon</li> </ul>
1908	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ M. Dalton is first licensee of Commercial Hotel (now Toogoolawah Hotel) which was Teske's Boarding House</li> </ul>
1909	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lars Andersen opened the Toogoolawah sawmill</li> <li>▪ W. C. Schank, plumber, moved from Esk to Toogoolawah</li> <li>▪ The Toogoolawah school building was too small and became the kitchen on the school house when the new school building was erected</li> </ul>
1910	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ James Henderson established a Saddlery Business, corner Fulham &amp; Cairnscroft Streets, now Lees Tyres</li> <li>▪ Opposite Henderson's on Fulham Street was A.C. Bierley's clothing store which later became a printery for B.V. Advertiser and was later bought by Kassulke Motors</li> </ul>
1910 cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opposite the clothing store on Cairnscroft Street was Dillaway's Garage which later became Webb's Garage and then Seymours Garage</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Next to Dillaway's was Seymour's Blacksmith shop</li> <li>▪ Across Fulham Street from Seymours was Gorrie's Blacksmith shop (dates unknown)</li> <li>▪ Opposite Henderson's on Cairnscroft Street was Otto Granzien's butchery</li> <li>▪ Race Club established</li> <li>▪ Murrumba State School opened, students transferred 19<sup>th</sup> June, 1953</li> </ul>
1911	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Toogoolawah Branch of Bank of Australasia was opened in small building next to Exchange Hotel by Samuel G. Smith on January 27 with the account of the Nestle &amp; Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Factory</li> <li>▪ Mt. Esk Pocket State School opened 19<sup>th</sup> July, closed Dec 1967</li> <li>▪ L.L. Randall is first licensee of Exchange Hotel</li> </ul>
1912	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nestles' dairy farms are offered for sale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Anabranh (Home Farm), 396 acres, £7,575</li> <li>○ Bellambi, 251 acres, £5,350</li> <li>○ Grasstree, 335 acres, £6,500</li> <li>○ Belltree, 202 acres, £3,600</li> <li>○ Gunyah, 327 acres, £5,850</li> <li>○ Mangerton, 451 acres, £6,300</li> <li>○ Clearing Farm No. 1, 468 acres, £7,250</li> <li>○ Clearing Farm No. 2, 203 acres, £4,600</li> <li>○ Gunyah Back Paddocks, 274 acres, £1,550</li> <li>○ Waterfall Grazing Farm, 708 acres, £2,950</li> <li>○ Ridge Farm Paddocks, 483 acres, £2,150</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Windmill and tanks are recorded in Recreation Reserve (McConnel Park)</li> <li>▪ Dedication of St. Andrew's Anglican Church by Archbishop Donaldson on Sunday May 12</li> <li>▪ Herbert G. Daly operating as an auctioneer</li> <li>▪ Kipper Provisional School opened, closed 1932</li> </ul>
1913	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Toogoolawah Choral Society gave its first concert in the Alexandra Hall</li> </ul>
1914	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ World War I: 197 men enlisted, 38 paid supreme sacrifice</li> <li>▪ Agricultural Show Society established</li> <li>▪ Brisbane Valley Advertiser establishes a printing office in Bierley's clothing store</li> <li>▪ Post &amp; Telegraph Office opened in present Post Office building</li> <li>▪ From Brisbane Valley Star, 30/8/1957 "On June 17, 1909, a semi-official post office under the control of T.E. Swan was opened. Mr. Swan received £187 per annum. In 1910 – on November 1 – the total annual salary paid to the new post master (Mr. W.W. Atkin) as assistant and a messenger was £195. Of this sum Mr. Atkin received £104. The office was accorded full official status on Jan 3, 1912"</li> </ul>
1915	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Patriotic Day Procession, August 28</li> <li>▪ St. Agatha's Catholic Church opened May 16</li> </ul>
1916	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lower Cressbrook State School opened, closed Dec 1953</li> <li>▪ Dr. Edith Emily Fox MB Univ Syd 1910 practices in Toogoolawah</li> </ul>
1917	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ War memorial erected in McConnel Park in 1916/7, made by F. Williams &amp; Co., Ipswich and unveiled on March 31 by Rev. Chaplain Merrington</li> <li>▪ Inverness was built for A.C. Munro, Manager of Nestlé's factory at that time</li> </ul>

1918	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Diphtheria epidemic in the district</li> <li>▪ Peace Parade</li> </ul>
1919	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Toogoolawah Brass Band formed</li> <li>▪ Band Rotunda opened in McConnel Park</li> <li>▪ Influenza epidemic</li> <li>▪ Dr. Edith Emily Fox had established Foxborough Hospital, opposite Post Office on Abbotsford Street</li> <li>▪ Drought</li> <li>▪ Brisbane Valley Advertiser &amp; Toogoolawah Times in operation</li> </ul>
1920	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fulham State School opened, closed 1953</li> <li>▪ Dr. Arthur Herbert Crowley MB Univ Melb 1916 registered to practice in Toogoolawah</li> </ul>
1921	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Solicitors Young &amp; Wilson began practising in Cressbrook Street</li> <li>▪ RSSILA formed on 18<sup>th</sup> November</li> </ul>
1922	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Toogoolawah District Co-Operative Society opened a store in Fulham Street with Frank McNamara as Manager. It burned down on 12 June, 1955</li> <li>▪ Dr. Arthur H. Cowley opened Beleura Hospital as a Private Hospital in Cairnscroft Street.</li> </ul>
1923	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ QATB photographed on corner of Dingyarra Street (which later became a butcher shop) and in Cressbrook Street opposite the Club Hotel</li> <li>▪ Q.C.W.A. formed, July 24; Restrooms opened in Order of Good Templars Hall now Christadelphian Hall, corner Cairnscroft &amp; Gunyah Streets</li> </ul>
1924	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dr. Arthur Hunter Powell MB BS Univ Melb registered to practice in Toogoolawah</li> </ul>
1925	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ H.E. Teske bought Toogoolawah Sawmill from Lars Andersen</li> </ul>
1926	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fire breaks out in Gibson's Jewellery Shop on April 26. All shops between the Club Hotel and Menzies Bakery were destroyed including Flaskas Café, R. Dalton &amp; J.S. Francis Buildings, B.J. Edmunds clothing store, J.L. Campbell's newsagency, tobacconist &amp; barber shop and Primary Producers' Bank. Many were rebuilt in brick with Campbell adding a billiard's room.</li> <li>▪ Presbyterian Church dedicated by Rev. M. Henderson, November 13</li> <li>▪ Exchange Hotel, Bank of Australasia (later ANZ) and "shop next door" were destroyed by fire, November 14</li> <li>▪ Bush fires threatened Nestles Waterfall holding &amp; Staghurst, November 23</li> <li>▪ (Unwin's) Cordial Factory was operating</li> <li>▪ Sandy Gully State School opened, closed 1953</li> </ul>
1927	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nestles factory provides electricity to Toogoolawah, June 20</li> <li>▪ New premises built for ANZ Bank next to National Bank before October 28</li> <li>▪ Equipment Day for Toogoolawah Troop of 14<sup>th</sup> Light Horse, March</li> </ul>
1928	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Roxy Theatre opened in what is now RSL Hall by Grummit family</li> <li>▪ Rural School opened in grounds of Toogoolawah State School, March</li> <li>▪ Rail motor service on Brisbane Valley Rail line</li> </ul>
1929	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Toogoolawah celebrates its Silver Jubilee</li> <li>▪ Nestles closes its factory</li> <li>▪ H. Redlin starts carrying business which closed in 1999</li> <li>▪ Apostolic Church leases and renovates the Union Church which had been relocated from Biarra township to present site in town before 1904</li> </ul>
1929	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Diphtheria epidemic</li> </ul>

cont.	
1930	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alexandra Hall burned down</li> </ul>
1931	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ P. Contojohn's bakery in Flaskas café burned down</li> <li>▪ Ireland's Cordial Factory operating</li> <li>▪ Toogoolawah had a semi-official landing ground for planes</li> <li>▪ RSSAILA formed Ladies Auxiliary</li> </ul>
1932	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ireland's introduces an ice service</li> <li>▪ J.L. Campbell has new shop built by H.A. Teske between the solicitors and Exchange Hotel where Bank of Australasia had been, with a reading room and barber (now Red Cross Shop)</li> <li>▪ Pig trucking yards were erected on a siding</li> </ul>
1933	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bayard's opened in Cressbrook Street</li> <li>▪ Early work begun on Stanley (later Somerset) Dam, finished 1953</li> <li>▪ Scrub Creek State School opened, closed 1955</li> </ul>
1936	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Drought</li> </ul>
1937	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eric Gorrie's Cash &amp; Carry store is established beside his father's Blacksmith shop (current bakery) in Fulham Street</li> </ul>
1939	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ World War II, 15 men paid supreme sacrifice</li> <li>▪ Watt's Bridge Airfield in use by Air Force</li> </ul>
1940+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cream deliveries to Esk Butter Factory by P. Teske (Mt. Beppo), C. Cowley (Biarra), H. Alford (Scrub Creek), H. Redlin (Cooeeimbardie, Fulham &amp; Cressbrook, Lower Cressbrook)</li> <li>▪ Establishment of Cornerstone Lutheran Church, Toogoolawah</li> </ul>
1942	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nestles management evacuated important records and key members of their staff to their Toogoolawah premises. The original Manager's house (Inverness) accommodated 17 girls</li> </ul>
1947	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bowls Club opened January 25</li> </ul>
1949	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ R.S.L. bought Roxy Theatre Hall</li> </ul>
1951	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nestlé's factory building burned down, September 15</li> </ul>
1954	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Small schools closed</li> <li>▪ New school bus service takes students to Toogoolawah School.</li> <li>▪ After their closures Sandy Gully School was moved into town to become Toogoolawah Kindy, Fulham School also moved to become Kenman residence and Scrub Creek School building became Zernike's barn.</li> </ul>
1955	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Toogoolawah State School celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee</li> <li>▪ Secondary Department opened in May</li> <li>▪ Town water connected to Toogoolawah</li> <li>▪ Esk Co-Op leased Cowley's store (now Primac)</li> <li>▪ Serious flooding in the district</li> </ul>
1956	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Most of Toogoolawah State School destroyed by fire, July 26</li> <li>▪ Esk District Co-Op expands and buys T&amp;F's, January 1</li> </ul>
1957	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Drought</li> <li>▪ School children educated in Uniting Church Hall and R.S.L. Hall while Toogoolawah State School is being rebuilt</li> </ul>
1958	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Plaque erected to H.P. Somerset at Somerset Dam</li> </ul>
1959	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Celebration of Queensland Centenary</li> <li>▪ Clay pigeon Shooting Club</li> </ul>
1968	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Drought</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mt. Beppo State School celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</li> </ul>
1969	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Properties quarantined because of “Biarra tick”</li> <li>▪ Influx of DPI families in town</li> <li>▪ Last steam train to Yarraman on the Brisbane Valley rail line (29 Nov)</li> </ul>
1972	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Toogoolawah sewerred</li> <li>▪ Resumption of properties for Wivenhoe Dam</li> </ul>
1973	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ State wide flooding, Dec &amp; Jan.</li> </ul>
1973	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Watt’s Bridge washed away and never replaced</li> </ul>
1975	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Toogoolawah Preschool opens in old Sandy Gully School building</li> </ul>
1976	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council Swimming pool opened</li> </ul>
1977/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ District in drought.</li> <li>▪ Lions-4IP fodder drive from Brisbane to Brisbane Valley, January</li> </ul>
1979	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Toogoolawah Drop Zone (Ramblers) opens (QT, January 4)</li> </ul>
1982	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opening of new Ambulance Centre, October 30</li> </ul>
1984	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opening of Courthouse, July 18</li> </ul>
1987	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Secondary Dept. Toogoolawah State School extended</li> </ul>
1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alkira Hostel opened, September 17.</li> <li>▪ Toogoolawah High School opened</li> <li>▪ Brisbane Valley Rail line closed to passenger service</li> </ul>
1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Town name temporarily changed to “Boongoolawah” for making of film Rough Diamonds, September</li> </ul>
2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Initial planning for Centenary Celebrations by Toogoolawah Chamber of Commerce and Industry, September</li> </ul>
2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Toogoolawah’s Centenary Celebrations 7<sup>th</sup> February 2004, one hundred years after the coming of the first passenger train</li> <li>▪ Dedication of cairn near Railway Gates honouring first station master, George Launder, who served the town from 1904 until his retirement in 1937</li> </ul>
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Toogoolawah State School celebrated its centenary</li> </ul>
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Toogoolawah Police Station celebrated its centenary</li> </ul>
2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rail Head for the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail from Ipswich to Blackbutt opened in the Toogoolawah Railway Station grounds, 28 November celebrating the last passenger service by steam train from Ipswich to Yarraman, 29 November 1969</li> </ul>

## THE CRESSBROOK - McCONNEL FAMILY

### Pre Toogoolawah.

David Cannon McConnel settled Cressbrook Station in July 1841 making it the first run to be taken up by white settlers in the Brisbane Valley, outside the 50-mile settlement limit to the penal colony at Moreton Bay. Cressbrook is still owned by the McConnel family and was identified in 1996 as the oldest family business in Queensland.

In 1850 David and Mary also owned a 173 acre farming property in Brisbane called Bulimba. They built the first stone house in Brisbane on that property (known as Bulimba House). At this stage in history there were only 202 selectors in the Moreton Bay Colony. David and Mary sponsored families from England to join their enterprise. Once here, David would finance them onto their own properties using very easy terms. Some of these families joined them at Cressbrook. The Coleman family had their genesis at Bulimba.

The Colony of Queensland was proclaimed in 1859. David McConnel was invited to join the Legislative Council or Upper House. He declined due to hearing difficulties. (Legislative Council was abolished in 1922.)

During 1873, David built the Presbyterian Church in Esk (Sandy Creek) in memory of their Silver Wedding Anniversary. (Mary's brother, Rev. Walter McLeod, was a minister of the first Presbyterian Church in Moreton Bay, 1852.) Esk (Sandy Creek) was made a township. The McConnels helped apply for a state school. Many of their workers bought land there. It has been suggested that Mary helped finance many of the purchases.

In 1873, Queen Victoria sent a gift of two stags and four hinds to the state of Queensland, so called in her honour. They were released on Cressbrook Station. There were subsequent releases of deer on Cressbrook up to 1878. (Shire Logo)

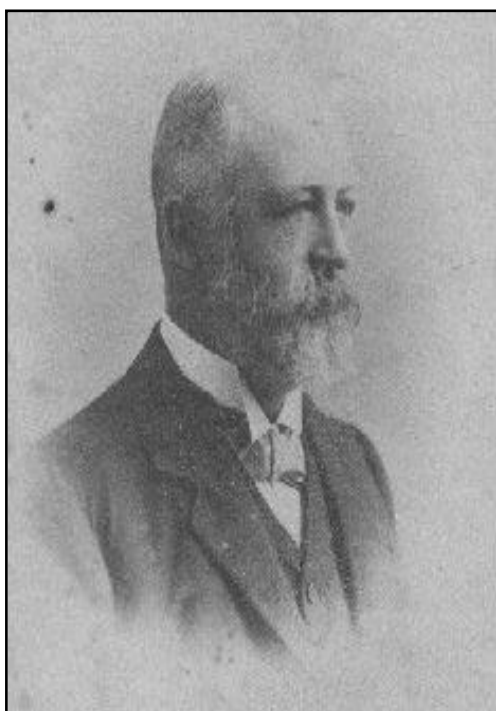
By this stage Cressbrook was a thriving property with a massive population. It was like a small town. It had a butcher shop, school, blacksmith, Post and Telegraph Office and a stagecoach stop (McCallum's). At its peak it is said to have had a population of over 200. Cressbrook covered approximately 60 000 acres.

David's wife Mary strongly believed in the welfare of migrant women and their children. Her greatest achievement was the founding of the Royal Children's Hospital in Brisbane in 1877. (Members of the family are to this day on the hospital's "Cressbrook Committee".) She also established a school on Cressbrook well before State schools were established.

In 1872, David's eldest son, James Henry took over the management of Cressbrook Station. In 1976 James married Mary Kent (her family owned Jondaryan, Rosalie and Euston).

### **The founding of Toogoolawah.**

In 1889 James McConnel began to sell off small parcels of land from “Cressbrook” for dairying. He was keen to give his loyal workers every opportunity to purchase their own land. He would help by financing them with very easy terms of repayment. “Dingyarra” was one of the first farms. It was bought by Henry P. Gardner. “Caboombah” went to Henry Somerset in 1890 when he married Katherine McConnel (David McConnel’s daughter). “Cainscroft” was sold to Tom Coleman in 1898. Mangerton Farm (first owned by Ned Edwards) and Abbotsford Farm, now both owned by the Masters were also amongst the original farms sold off. The Mears family (Mear’s Pavilion) bought their property (Mordon) from James McConnel later in the new century.



**James Henry McConnel**

In 1900 James McConnel built a condensed milk factory on the banks of the Cressbrook Creek. It was called the Cressbrook Condensed Milk Factory and was the first of its kind in Australia.

To assist the dairy farmers, factory workers and their families, James gave parcels of land towards the establishment of the township; in particular the State School, McConnel Park and the site for St Andrews Church.

When the railway finally made its way to the area in 1904, the Railway Department wanted to call the railway station “Cressbrook”. James McConnel suggested it be called Toogoolawah after where his father’s property “Bulimba” was in Brisbane. (James was born at Bulimba House.)

(The aborigines in Moreton Bay called the Bulimba area Toogoolawah, being “shape of heart”, which the area resembles. The name Bulimba came from the Aboriginal “Boolimba” then given to the White Hill area.)

James McConnel was a member of the first Esk Divisional Board (now the Somerset Regional Council). James’s wife, Mary (Madge) established the Amateur Gardening and Progress Society in 1906. The Alexandra Hall, owned by the society is still in use.

### **The McConnel family’s continued association with Toogoolawah.**

James’s son, Edgar McConnel was responsible for the raising of the Toogoolawah Troop of the 13<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Regiment. Although prevented by family duties and ill health from participating in overseas service he played an active part in training reinforcements for the Light Horse at Enoggera during the Great War of 1914-1918, retiring as a Major.

Edgar was also a member of the strikebreakers who went to Brisbane to quell the 1912 general strike. He was a patron of the Toogoolawah R.S.L. that was formed in 1919 after a meeting in the Alexandra Hall.

Edgar was President of the Toogoolawah Show Society until 1926 and Patron until his death. He was also President of the Toogoolawah Amateur Gardening and Progress Association. His wife Phyllis was involved with Toogoolawah Red Cross.

In 1955 Duncan McConnel (Edgar's son) gifted the McConnel Family Coat of Arms to the Toogoolawah State School for use as their emblem and motto, "Victor in Arduis" – Triumph over Adversity.

Duncan was also part of the Upper Brisbane River Pasture Improvement Group and on the committee for the Toogoolawah Show Society. His wife, Erica (Echo) helped entertain troops during the Second World War. She was also a member of the Toogoolawah Red Cross.

**Origin of names that were part of Cressbrook.**

***Cressbrook Station.*** David McConnel named his property Cressbrook after his brother's property Cressbrook Hall and village in Derbyshire, where he was a successful fine yarn manufacturer.

***Cressbrook District.*** So called after part of the property that was sold during the 1920s/30s.

***Cressbrook Creek*** and ***Cressbrook Street*** are named after the McConnel's property. ***McConnel Park*** is named after the Cressbrook McConnels for their interests in developing the district.

***Brummy's Waterhole.*** Brummy was a station blacksmith. He built himself a bark hut close to the deep waterhole.

***Barney's Rocks Bridge.*** Mrs. Barney was an old and frail friend who wanted to have one last ride. Mr. David McConnel accompanied her to this pretty spot. The area was named Mrs. Barney's Rocks in remembrance of her.

***Bessie's Nook.*** Named after a picnic the McConnel's had with the Bigges and Bowmans from Mt Brisbane. Mrs. Bigge was the life of the party. Her name was Bessie.

***Monsaldale.*** (sic) Named in 1844 by David McConnel when he took up the run as a heifer station. It was named after the area where his eldest brother came from in Derbyshire.

***Mt Stanley.*** Named because it was incorrectly assumed that the major river, which had its head in the mountains, was the Stanley River instead of the Brisbane River.

## **THOSE WERE THE DAYS, Brisbane Valley, 1906-1908** by Horace Flower

(Newspaper report unspecified held in local scrapbook)

You had your choice of three ways of reaching the tiny village of Toogoolawah at the beginning of July, 1906 – carry your swag, on horseback or in one of the three trains per week that ran from Ipswich to Kannangur. The line pulled up at Kannangur then, just four miles from Toogoolawah, and from which terminus Wally McCallum drove the coach to Nanango in alternation with his brother Archie. (*Wally McCallum's brother was actually Alex McCallum*)

The first motor car that travelled the Esk-Nanango road came through from the Lumley Hill's famous property Bellevue towards the end of 1907. It was owned and driven by Mr. Warry Taylor, of Toowoomba, a brother of Mrs. Lumley-Hill's first husband, Con Taylor. Some car I can tell you; painted with bands of black and red (about four inches wide), the racing colours of Warry Taylor. We could hear it approaching from a mile away, and every horse in the district went into a mad gallop. The ancient blue gums on the bank of Cressbrook Creek, beside Herbert Prescott Gardner's place Dingyarra, were deeply shocked at the appearance and smell of such an evil creature.

Toogoolawah got its name from the McConnells of Cressbrook, upon part of whose freehold "run" it was located, and they gave it the name of David Cannon McConnel's original town property at Bulimba Point, Brisbane. In passing, this is the home that Mr. A.E. Moore, ex-Premier of Queensland, afterwards acquired under the title of "Bulimba House".

The government had surveyed a township along the Esk-Nanango road, up near James Arnold's farm, nearly opposite the roadside gates leading into Cressbrook homestead, or village, as it was. But in spite of "Jimmy Guvmint" saying "Here's where you'll build", Mr. & Mrs. Harry McConnel planned their village or township, just where it stands, on what was then a paddock of Cressbrook station. They owned the condensed-milk factory close by on Cressbrook Creek, and most of the large dairy farms which they'd established in proximity to supply the raw materials for their factory. So, as is often the case, the bureaucrats and their plans were side-stepped by the common sense of the citizens on the spot, and there was no restrictive legislation in force then to interfere with the will of the people.

Toogoolawah grew quietly, building by building, under the keen and sympathetic eyes and hands of the Harry McConnells; he the eldest son of the pioneer David Cannon McConnel who took up Cressbrook in the early eighteen forties and she one of the Kents of Jondaryan Station, so well known also in Queensland's pastoral history.

Harry McConnel was a Q.N. Bank constituent, and, when his baby was still in its swaddling clothes he decided that a branch bank would be useful, as a sort of feeding bottle for the closer settlement plan he was carrying out. This led to me being informed, under the deepest oath of secrecy, one day, by the late Marmaduke Granville Haymen, who was then accountant of the head office of the bank, that I was just to disappear the following Monday, with a rail ticket to Toogoolawah and my

spare shirts, boots etc., to become the pro-accountant of the new branch which would be opened.

Just picture me dismounting from the train there on the Monday midday, with a shotgun in its leather case, wearing a bowler hat, and all my other possessions in an ancient portmanteau, and a Gladstone bag. George Launder was the station-master, and is probably still there, living in retirement, after nearly half a century of the place.

The manager of the new branch was William James, who was sent there from his previous post as accountant of the Burke-town branch, which my late father had opened and managed from 1885 to 1887. James was a very good horseman and a son of one of the early mine-managers on the Gympie gold-fields; he finished his banking career as manager of the Toowoomba branch some 10 years ago. The Q.N. and the Royal Bank were in Esk, and none else until you came to Nanango, although poor old Fawcett-Smith (Royal Bank manager at Esk) had to make a fortnightly round trip to Mooretown by buggy and pair (60 miles return), to maintain an agency for his bank.

James was paid a total of £200 per annum and I got £65 salary and £35 allowance, and I think Fawcett-Smith was about on the same mark as James. In those days the banks sacked any member of their staff who married on less than £200 per annum, so if a “shotgun wedding” faced a bank officer, he got his girl and lost his job, unless the holder of the shot-gun made up the difference in income, which was “not very likely.”

An interesting smattering of folk lived round those parts. The earliest settlers on the Upper Brisbane River, dating from about 1840 were the McConnel family. Harry McConnel, managing the affairs of the “D.C. McConnel and Sons’ properties, there and further West” lived at Cressbrook. Eric McConnel (managing partner of Bigge and McConnel) lived at Mt. Brisbane with Hague Kirk as manager of that property, where they bred and fattened some lovely Herefords.

Kirk, who later became a partner in the McConnel properties, was married to a cousin of mine. Ned McConnel lived at Marshlands, up beyond Nanango, where one of his daughters, Miss Marjorie McConnel, subsequently carried on the remnants of the property, and the breeding of good cattle, until the other day.

William Royston Butler, now of Staghurst, up beyond Toogoolawah (known to all of us as Roy) managed Cressbrook for several years and handed over to A.E. Ogg, previously of Banana Station, just before I came to the district. He was the eldest son of Mr. William Butler, who managed the famous Kilcoy Station, until it was cut up and sold to new settlers, the owners being the famous family of Hope, the Earl of Hopetoun being first Governor-General of the Commonwealth.

In those days the town we call Kilcoy was called Hopetoun, and the spacious old Kilcoy Station homestead lay close by.

Roy Butler married a daughter of the Murray-Prior family, pioneers of the pastoral industry across Boonah way, and had two sons growing wool on their properties in the Central-west, whilst Tallyabra, near Quilpie, is another fortress of the same clan, with Colin Hope Butler watching the “doings” from the side-lines nowadays. David Orme

Butler, another of the clan who was with Dalgety's for years, entered the Brisbane Grammar School with me in 1902; grand folk on our pastoral front.

### **CROMWELL DESCENDANT**

Herbert Prescott Gardner, owner of Dingyarra, was said to be a direct descendant of Oliver Cromwell, and was a fine athlete, having won some lengthy swimming championships when in England. His earlier partner in the property was John W. Peile, whose own property lay just on the outskirts of the village. He was the son of an Oxford Don, his father being master of one of the colleges of Oxford University. He could also claim the famous Lord Kitchener as his first cousin.

Down the river from Cressbrook, at the junction of the Stanley and Brisbane rivers, lay the lovely little property known as Caboonbah, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Plantagenet Somerset. He belonged to the family of the Dukes of Beaufort, his cousin Lord Henry Somerset being a well known musician and composer, whilst Mrs. Somerset was a sister to Harry McConnell.

Then at Gunyah Farm (headquarters of Cressbrook Farms) was Russell Phipps, son of Lord Henry Phipps, who became later only one remove from the heirdom of the Marquess of Normanby. Russell and I became inseparable friends, and never once would one believe that he felt anything more than a plain Aussie youth who loved a good horse, an odd pot of beer, a game of tennis and a "flirt with a lass." He "cashed his checks" in the fierce 1916/1917 winter on Salisbury Plains in England, serving his country in khaki, and his body was interred in the family vault of his people.

Perhaps an account of the period would not be properly introduced unless I refer to "Jews-harp" Robinson, whose manorial castle, manufactured from old packing-cases, beaten out biscuit tins etc. stood about five feet high in one of the side streets beside the Thompson and Francis store. "Jews-harp" wore mutton-chop whiskers and a liberal moustache, occasionally entertaining others of similar disposition and circumstances in his "rubbidy" as we called it. Poor old "Jews-harp" was not an offensive man as a rule, and sometimes joined us at the only dining-table maintained by Ronald Charles Stuart Thorn (relative of Mrs. Lumley-Hill) at his Club Hotel. This nearly ended my good looks, for one night I giggled at some stupid boast of "Jews-harp", and he picked up the carving fork and let fly; it stuck, quivering, in the wall just beside my left ear – and I left there hurriedly, before he got a second throw at me.

---

## **TOOGOOLAWAH AND UPPER BRISBANE RIVER VALLEY – 1906-1908**

Summary of an address given by Horace Evelyn Flower to the Historical Society of Queensland (Inc.) at Newstead House, on the night of Thursday March 22, 1956

Let me take you back to the beginning of July in the year 1906, when the Honourable Alfred Deakin was Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, and the Honourable William Kidston was the Premier of Queensland. Times were peaceful, employment was plentiful, and the price of goods extremely moderate compared with what we of today know, whilst income tax only affected a handful of people with large incomes, who paid sixpence in the pound or some such nominal amount.

As a young bank official of nineteen years of age, in the service of the Queensland National Bank Ltd., I was that day bound for the tiny village of Toogoolawah, then in its swaddling clothes. At the request of the McConnel Interests, linked with “Cressbrook Station,” various dairy-farming interests, and their condensed milk factory, the Q.N. Bank Ltd. had agreed to provide a branch of the bank in Toogoolawah. William James (promoted from accountant of the Burketown Branch) had been appointed as manager, and I was to be his assistant on a salary of 65 pounds per annum, with an allowance of 35 pounds per annum. The manager was paid 150 pounds salary and 50 pounds allowance, or a total of 200 pounds per annum from which he had to provide his own means of transport and keep up the appearance of the bank required of its managers.

Travelling to Toogoolawah by railway train (there was then no alternative mode of transport available), via Ipswich, I found myself fifty-five miles north of Ipswich and twelve miles beyond Esk, in a very tiny village. Close by the village stood the condensed-milk factory, on the bank of Cressbrook Creek, with its quarters for permanent staff and its amenities. The McConnel family had established this industry a few years earlier, and had established a group of large dairy farms on part of their “Cressbrook Station” to create a foundation of milk-supply. Other farmers came into production of milk for supply to the factory, as lands were made available through further subdivision of portions of the ancient “Cressbrook Station” freehold.

The tiny township contained a line of buildings facing the railway fence across what became the main street, there being a couple of small cottages between the factory and the township main street. A boarding house, kept by an old chap called Teske, and his wife, stood close beside the small bakery of Walter Turner. Past vacant blocks one came to the village inn – The Club Hotel – conducted by Ronald Charles Stuart Thorn, a grandson of old George Thorn, whose first inn at Limestone (later called Ipswich) is historically famed. Thorn was a cousin of Mrs. Lumley Hill of “Bellevue Station,” Coominya, just south of Esk, for she had been the daughter of George Harris, famed Brisbane merchant of “Newstead House,” by his first wife Jane – daughter of George Thorn. Thorn’s wife was a daughter of old man McCallum, host of the Kannangur Hotel at the terminus of the railway line (four miles north of Toogoolawah), from which hostelry the Nanango coach set out twice weekly. That Nanango coach was driven by the two McCallum boys alternatively, Archie and Wally, who handled the ribbons equally as well as any Cobb and Co. coach driver.

Across a side street from the hotel stood the large general store of Thompson and Francis (leading storekeepers of Esk), under the management of the cheery and popular Frank MacNamara. Here one could purchase anything from a bale of lucerne hay to a packet of pins, or from a suit of clothes to the monthly journal "Life". With Frank MacNamara were Ernest Barber, Rickards (book-keeper), and Billy Fitzgerald (carter and spare assistant). Opposite the store were the gates to the railway station and the goods shed, with the stationmaster's residence to the left.



Here George Launder ruled as station master for a lifetime, or rather, until his retirement – for he still lives in Toogoolawah as a vital part of the community. With his wife and small children, George Launder set a high standard of behaviour and took an interest in the tennis club and other amenities.

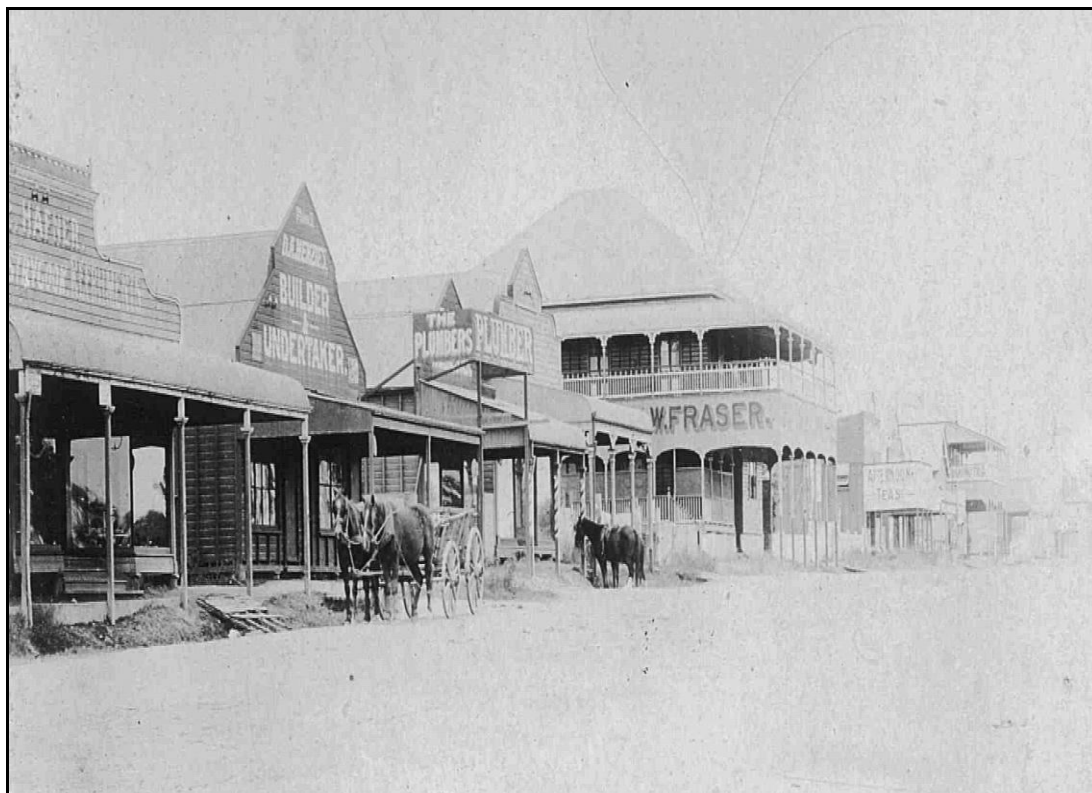
The railway station held the only telephone in the village, as well as the telegraph station and post office, so that it was the Mecca of the district on train-days as well as in between. Three days per week (Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays) a mixed train left Ipswich at 9 am, for the fifty nine miles run to Kannangur (four miles beyond Toogoolawah), which was then the terminus of the Brisbane Valley branch line. The train left Kannangur on its return to Ipswich at 2 pm. making about a four-hour run of the fifty nine miles. Occasional special cattle trains ran to carry fat bullocks or cows to the meatworks or to the fat stock saleyards at Newmarket, from "Cressbrook, "Colinton", "Nukinenda", "Taromeo" or other stations in the vicinity, or from the families such as the Francis brothers, the Grieves, Hardings or Williams.

The origin of pastoral settlement in the upper Brisbane Valley, and the appearance of Toogoolawah out of the mists of time, lay in the drive and enterprise of David Cannon McConnel, who followed the Darling Downs pioneers and pushed on to the Brisbane Valley in 1841, at which time the New South Wales and other pioneer runs

**Early photo of Toogoolawah Station Master's residence on left,  
railway gates (centre) & railway station on the right**

were taken up on the heels of the McConnel party as they marked out the run of “Cressbrook” and other areas.

The village or Toogoolawah grew slowly but steadily, most of the houses being erected by D.A. Menzies and his team of men, under contracts let to him by the McConnells and other folk.



**Cressbrook Street, L; T. Hafner, Baker & Pastrycook; D.A. Menzies Builder & Undertakers; The Plumbers; Chemist; barber shop; unidentified shop, W. Fraser’s Commercial Hotel.**

The “Cressbrook” people built homes for a number of their employees on easy terms, and assisted others who were vital to the community’s needs. The internal combustion engine and the motor vehicle had not then disturbed the peace of the place. Two of the vital community needs concerned the mode of transport that was universal – the four-legged horsepower in the form of saddle-horses, buggy- horses, gunners and draughts.

Accordingly a fine saddler and harness-maker, Mr. Fred Hill, assisted by Jim Rafter and Mr. Hill’s son (Syd Hill, now one of Australia’s leading saddle-makers), attend to the needs of a wide area. Mr. Brook, another fine type of man, looked after the horse-shoeing and black-smithing needs of all within call of Toogoolawah, from his smithy over the line from the railway station.

Later business places included a second hotel, set up by old Maurice Dalton and his wife, who sold out of an Esk hotel and then converted Teske’s boarding house into the new centre for mankind’s thirsts, hungers and bodily weariness. Grand and generous people the two Daltons were. Close to the Club Hotel eventually a hairdresser set up

his establishment, to the great relief of all the males of the area from the ages of five to ninety. Previously we were obliged to either attempt to cut our own hair or to wait until we could get to some centre where there was a hair-dresser; the more fortunate ones, like myself, were able to line up on a Sunday morning at "Dingyarra," across the creek, where H. P. Gardner's ploughman, Ned Mason, acted as barber on the Sabbath mornings for a modest fee. Ned would seat his waiting clients on a couple of old logs in the shade of nearby shrubs, and set up a dining-room chair from the men's quarters in the open, where he had unbroken light from the sun. Those Sundays morning gatherings of folk (privileged to be on Ned's good books) were the centre of much news and gossip in a district that relied on word of mouth for most of its real happenings and information.

The principal industry of the Valley was the breeding and fattening of high-quality cattle, mainly Herefords in those days, and both "Cressbrook" and "Mount Brisbane" maintained a high standard. Two outstanding Hereford studs, constantly in rivalry, were run at "Cressbrook" by the McConnells and at "Bellevue" by Mr. & Mrs. Lumley Hill; the rivalry between these studs resulted in a continuous upward trend in quality, both importing high-priced sires from Britain. Dairying and maize-growing were also on the increase, especially the former following the establishment of the condensed-milk factory by the McConnells, and the continuous cutting-up of the "Cressbrook" and "Colinton" runs for closer settlement. The felling and hauling to rail of pine and hardwood logs was another steady branch of primary industry, and much lovely hoop pine was brought to the trucking-yards at Toogoolawah by bullock wagon during 1906/7/8.

Two of the principal owners of bullock teams, engaged in hauling the timber, bore the same surnames but were said to be no close relationship that could be traced. One was dear little grey-bearded Jack Gannon whose bullocks worked like magic and wheeled "on a three-penny-bit" (to use a colloquialism) to his quiet voice and the waving of his whip; rarely did the whip fall on the backs or rumps of his willing team of sixteen bullocks. On the other hand, Jim Gannon was red-headed and moustached, with a voice like that of a crack sergeant-major, a flow of language that was educative if somewhat appalling, and he thrashed his team sadly as they milled and muddled under his wild attempts to direct them. From my window in the little bank I saw all the activities of timber and cattle loading at the siding across the road; if I have a good vocabulary of "cuss-words" I learned most of them in those days of simple living in Toogoolawah.

The large condensed-milk factory was under the management of Mr. Willie Munro (W.A. Munro), whose brother Archie Munro, had assisted in setting it up. With Munro there was dear old Fred Bode (of the Bode family at "Tent Hill" station on the Lockyer), as chief engineer; Begbie (Sydney University man), V. Bladd (a Swedish specialist), and Jeff Wakefield were the condensers, who supervised the process of condensing the milk.

As Dairy Inspectors there were Ned Watson (a younger brother of Professor Watson-Professor of Surgery at Adelaide University) and Stanley Hudson (second son of A. H. Hudson, the well-known Brisbane sharebroker), whilst Friend and Allan George (now one of the senior Stipendiary Magistrates in Brisbane) looked after the

books. All of these fine chaps helped to make the social side of life brighter for we two bankers and those other young men of the store staff; their lending-library at the factory was a boon to a lover of books like myself.

The arteries of communication, apart from the railway with its three passenger trains per week, comprised the Highway that ran from Ipswich to Nanango, and the radial roadways leading over to Hopetoun (later called Kilcoy) to Crows Nest, to Toowoomba and Gatton via Esk. But few of the folk made the long trips involved in visiting other towns beyond Esk. We younger men rode or drove for tennis, cricket and football matches at Esk, Biarra, Linville, Mooretown and Hopetoun as the occasion arose. Occasional dances in these various centres drew us eagerly, for eligible lasses were scarce and at most dances in Toogoolawah or other places, at least 30 per cent of men had to “sit out” or cool their heels by the wall. I was one of the very fortunate younger men, receiving much friendly hospitality from the McConnells and their staff at ‘Cressbrook,’ where Alf Ogg was manager, Percy Smith the bookkeeper.

The Somerset family, down river at “Caboonbah,” where the Stanley River joins forces with the Brisbane, made their homes a real haven for Russell Phipps of “Gunyah Farm” and myself. The Tommy Moore family at “Colinton Station” also extended their hospitality to me on a number of occasions, so that I moved round freely and rode probably 200 of 300 miles each month.

The economics of the period were simple and sound. There was no taxation of any kind affecting the average citizen directly, the only income tax then being a State Income Tax of about 6d. in the pound, applying to people on an income of 1,000 pounds or more per annum. The average bank manager or store manager received probably not much above 200 to 300 pounds per annum in the rural areas, station managers getting perhaps 150 pounds and keep. The milking hands on the dairy farms (vulgarly referred to as “Teat-jerkers”) were paid 15/-per week plus keep, and their hours were limited by available daylight and the whims of the boss. The currency was mainly gold and silver (including the popular half-crown which was popularly called a “half-dollar”), but notes were carried by some bushmen such as drovers and those who were on the move a great deal. Goods of all sorts were plentiful, and the qualities were high. The following will give an idea of some price-levels:

- Tobacco-6d. per ounce for best brands.
- Cigarettes-4d. to 6d. per packet of 10.
- Best Scotch whisky-30/- per gallon wholesale, and readily obtained.
- Beer-6d. per full pint-pot, or 3d per glass.
- Felt hats-ordinary 7/6 to 10/-.
- Riding-cord trousers-15/ per pair.
- Cotton shirts, good quality-2/6 to 5/-.
- Haircuts-6d.
- Shaving -3d.
- Hotel Board-

Full board and lodging at the Club Hotel ran into 27/6 per week for regulars.

Meals only (21 meals per week) ran out at 15/-per week.

The newspapers in circulation at that period included “The Brisbane Courier,” “The Queenslander,” “The Queensland Times” from Ipswich, and the weekly “Esk Record” in the Valley, with occasional copies of “The Australasian” or “The Review of Reviews” coming along. “The Telegraph” was never seen outside Brisbane or Ipswich in those days.

There were no police closer than Esk, where Sergeant Clare and his few troopers kept order in the large district under their control. One of the troopers, Neill, not long out from Ireland and a good-looking young man, was extremely popular amongst the ladies, and did a lot of patrol work in the rural districts. Odd cases of drunkenness caused fights and trouble occasionally, but these were dealt with by common-sense and the strong arm of the sensible citizens in the village of Toogoolawah.

On one notable occasion the small township was indeed “painted red”. At the time there was a big force of men camped adjacent to the township, engaged on ballasting the comparatively new railway track. It so happened that these men were paid on a Saturday morning that coincided with the pay day for the condensed milk factory staff, the “Cressbrook Station” employees (about thirty there) and the pay day of the milk hands and farm staff on the Cressbrook Farms-four in number.



**The Club Hotel in later years**

The great bulk of these men all decide to “blew” some of all of their cash on beer, whisky, rum, gin, and other liquids with a kick in them. As secretary of the Football Club I was busy at the Alexandra Hall that Saturday night, where we had put on a dance in aid of our funds. However, about 10 p.m., I came up the street to get

something from my room at the little bank and found the street full of drunks, some of them convivial and others most aggressive, whilst the Club Hotel bar, verandas and passage-ways were thronged by many more of the thirsty ones.

By midnight there were at least sixty of these men lying hors-de-combat in the street, in the hotel, or in the railway yards, some from alcoholic insensibility, but others as a result of a “king-hit” in a “box on” having put them to sleep. The affair reached the ears of the police in Esk, and a trooper rode out, some days later to get an account of the “jamboree”, but strangely enough nobody seemed to know that there had been such a happening. He grinned as he closed his notebook and rode off, but reined in to call us: “I’ll tell the sergeant that somebody must have mixed up Toogoolawah with Dublin or Tipperary, when they made the report”.

The district notabilities included some figures linked to well-known British families, such as:

Mr. Henry Plantagenet Somerset, married Miss Katie McConnel, and owned “Caboombah,” between Cressbrook and Mount Brisbane. He was a brother of Lord Henry Somerset, and a scion of the family of the Duke of Bedford.



**Caboombah Homestead 2009**

Russell Phipps of the “Gunnyah Farm”, which he managed for the McConnel family, was the eldest son of Lord Henry Phipps and only one away from the heirdom to the Marquis of Normanby.

Herbert Prescott Gardner, owner of “Dingyarra Farm,” was a notable athlete in his earlier days in England, winner of long distance swimming events, and a direct descendant of the great Oliver Cromwell.

John W. Peile of a farm above the township, ex-partner of H. P. Gardner, was a son of a famous Oxford "Don" the Master of one of the great Colleges. He was also a t cousin of England's great soldier, Lord Kitchener.

Whilst I was at Toogoolawah the first motor vehicle to travel the highway from Ipswich to Esk and beyond passed through Toogoolawah. It came from "Bellevue Station" and was the property of Warry Taylor (son of the Hon. James Taylor, M.L.C. of "Clifford House", Toowoomba, owner of "Cecil Plains Station") and was painted with wide alternate stripes of black and red paint, the racing colours of its owner. Another novelty was the installation on "Mooroombin Farm" (owned by Fred. G. Brown of the O.K. Copper mine in North Queensland) of the Hartnett milking machines; on the same farm mules were used for drawing the carts and other farm vehicles.



**Bellevue Homestead, Coominya**

On Edgar McConnel's farm "Wairumbah," situated at the junction of Cressbrook Creek with the Brisbane River, L. K. G. milking machines were soon after installed.

One of the outstanding figures of the district was Ernest Aubrey Pickering, general manager of the Cressbrook Farms, an outstanding specialist in dairy farming. He was an immensely strong man, having won medals at competitions in America for weight putting and other feats of strength. He could pick me up in one hand, gripping the waist band of my trousers, and raise me above his head easily, although I weighed 11 stone. He was abnormally strong in the hands and fingers, and would walk into the bank, ask for three new pennies, take them between the fingers and thumbs of both hands and bend them into hoops, throwing them on to the counter. Pickering was a great horseman and horse lover, owning amongst other animals the famous trotting horse, "Kentucky," bred at "Cressbrook" from their noted stud trotting stallion, "Harold".

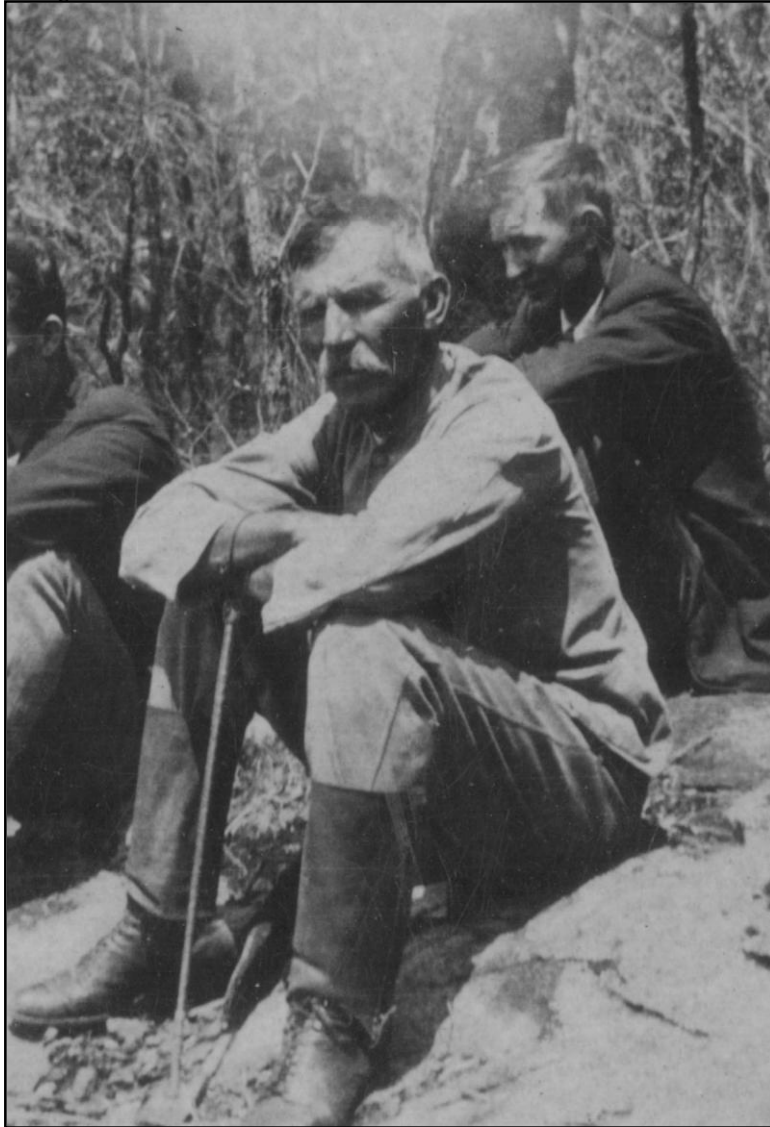
The horse was the centre-piece of life in the Brisbane Valley at that period I write of, 1906 to 1908, before the petrol driven motor vehicles made their appearance. The

movements of the people were limited by the easy movement of their “four legged horse power” and life was much more leisurely, generous and full of hospitality than it is today. To the traveller by road then the “open door” was a comfort and a great privilege to be availed of with a sense of responsibility in maintaining respect for the good folk who opened their doors willingly to the wayfarers. There was time for so many of the simple but invaluable kindnesses and actions that make life pleasant for all. This short account merely touches the simple but happy picture of community life that ruled in the upper Brisbane Valley and in the township of Toogoolawah in the years 1906, 1907, and 1908.

---

## IN THE DAYS OF ESK WHEN THE COACH BUGLE SOUNDED

*Published in the "Stanley Bulletin", 26<sup>th</sup> November, 1948 and reproduced here in full. This article was written by G.L. (George Launder), appointed Station Master at Toogoolawah in 1904*



**George Launder at Toogoolawah**

Memories of Esk of more than half-a-century ago bring to mind the transformation of a town which has always been prominent as the centre of pastoral activity, and which figured as one of the principal places in the then colony's coaching days. In fact, the changes that have taken place have almost completely altered the town's aspect and location, inasmuch as its chief business area then was on the Ipswich side of Sandy Creek, where the post office, police station, School of Arts, Queensland Bank, McDonald's hotel, Thompson and Francis's and J.M. Chaille's stores, McFarlane's bakery, a butchery, Edwin Broad's smithy, and other buildings were situated.

On the Toogoolawah side of the creek near the bridge, the Central Hotel was kept by Mr. John Vernon. This is the building now known as the Club Hotel, owned and occupied by Mrs. M. McGrath, it having been moved bodily some years ago. On the site of the Council Chambers was a general store kept by Mr. P. Clifford, and further along Redbank Street stood Mr. P. McNamara's boot shop. (Mr. P.F. McNamara, of Toogoolawah is a son.) It is worthy of note that at that time practically everybody had their boots made to order, few buying "slop-made" boots.

The Commercial Hotel stood where it is today, and was then kept by Mr. Webb. In Ipswich Street was J. Andersen's smithy; the same building is now occupied by his

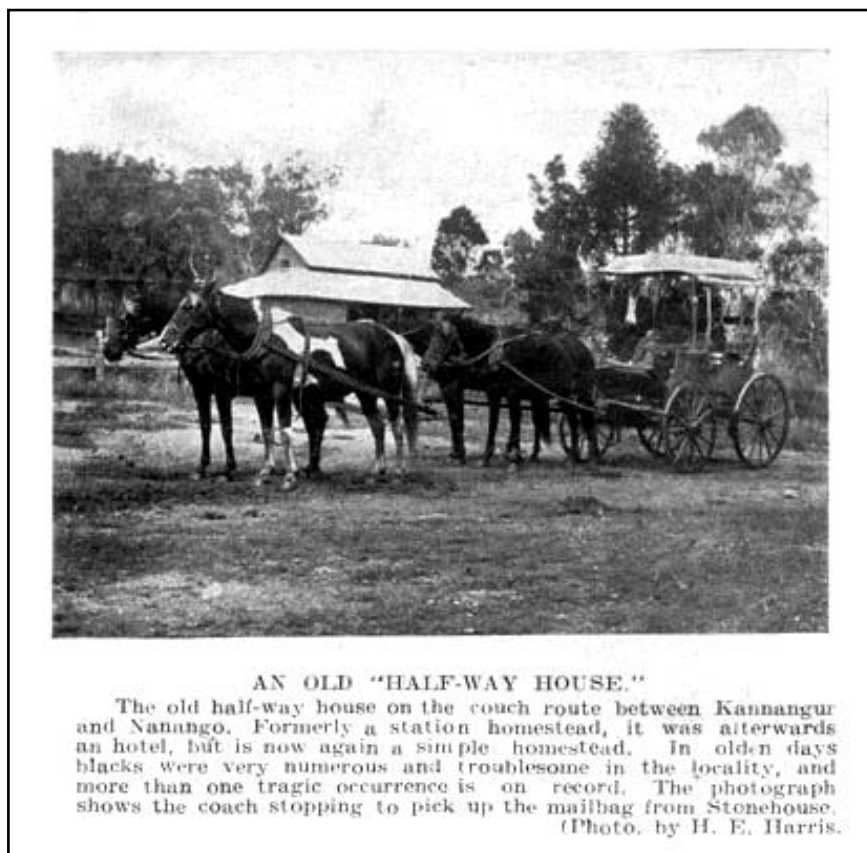
son William. Mr. Pat Lawlor had a smithy near Andersen's, and there also was Finnemore's saddler's shop.

Right opposite the old Central Hotel near the creek bank was the Divisional Board office. At the time a pile-driving unit was standing in the yard, and in the 1893 flood it went into the creek when the bank was undermined by flood waters. It is said that the machine was never again seen.

### A NOTABLE LANDMARK

A landmark of the township was "The Brick House" on the present site of Mr. R.D. Munro's engineering works. It was occupied by Mrs. McLean and family. The bricks were made in what is now Chaille's paddock, near the State school and the house was erected early in 1880 by either a Mr. Wheeler or Mr. Ensor. It probably was the first house built on that side of the creek.

Blank Bros. operated a large sawmill between the railway trucking yards and the creek on the western side of the line. Mr. Lars Andersen was a cabinet maker, and a monument to his workmanship is the R.C. Church, which he both planned and built. Mr. Ben Markwell, who previously had kept a hotel, then lived in the cottage subsequently owned by Mr. W.H. Tapsall, and now the property of the Esk Co-Operative Dairy Association. The doctor of the time (Dr. Aird), who came to an untimely end, once resided where Dr. Whyte now lives.



The Royal Mail from Esk to Nanango went by McCallum's coach twice weekly, leaving on Sunday mornings. The drivers were John Williams and Alex McCallum, jun. W.Y. (Wally) McCallum frequently drove a special coach to convey commercial travellers and others travelling in parties. Of these gentlemen,

Alex McCallum has passed on,

McCallum's coach at Stonehouse, from *Queenslander*, 30 April 1910

Mr. Jack Williams is a stipendiary steward with the Q.T.C., and Mr. W.Y. McCallum is in business at Toogoolawah.

**When the coach left, the driver signalled his departure with a bugle.**

Three changes of horses were made on the journey, the first at Cressbrook, then Stonehouse (near Moore) and at Taromeo. The climb up the Blackbutt Range was a trial of strength for the team, passengers other than women and elderly men having to alight and walk up the steeper pinches. Most of the road was through dense scrub, and mostly very steep. It is doubtful if a horseman could now travel the old track.

**THE OLD GAOL**

In those days there were no such places as Benarkin or Blackbutt. Cressbrook was then a staff post and telegraphic office, and the road into the station was through what is now Golinski's farm. The old gaol - said to have been used by the early cattle stations, Cressbrook, Colinton and Mt. Brisbane to detain refractory aboriginals - was just across the gully opposite to where the Toogoolawah sanitary depot now is. Mr. W.Y. McCallum has a relic of the gaol - a pair of leg-irons - that were used to lock offenders to a post.

The Postmaster at that time was Mr. B. Clune, who had two sons, Glen and Frank. One has often wondered whether the latter is the Frank Clune of "Try Anything Once" fame. There were two daughters, Beatrice and a younger one, whose name I have forgotten. Barney Clune was a keen sportsman, and frequently left Esk on Saturday afternoon with a packhorse to go deer shooting on Cressbrook. It was stated that J.H. McConnel had sworn to catch him in those days - but never managed to do so.

Officer in charge of police was Sergt. Carroll, father of the present Commissioner of Police; but I have no recollection of his family. The Divisional Board - forerunner of the Shire Council - had two permanent officers, a Mr. Gore and a Mr. Burman. I am not sure of their respective positions. The State School then was a two-roomed building, and Mr. Charles Clarson was Head Teacher, and Miss Harrap as assistant. Miss Harrap, who subsequently became Mrs. Nicholson, boarded at Mr. Jones's home on Redbank Creek, and walked several miles to and from school each day. Miss Coulson, who recently retired from the teaching staff at Esk, was at the time a pupil there.

**PORTER TO GENERAL MANAGER**

The Station Master at the time was M. O'Donoghue, who had with him as lad porter, James Hudson, who afterwards became General Manager of the Northern Railway System. Mr. W. Aitcheson was the engine driver and Jas. Salisbury fireman, with Tom Shanks as engine cleaner. Sam Scanlon was guard, and if I remember rightly, W. Perro was the fettling ganger. Mr. A.S. Alexander was Manager of Q.N. Bank.

Esk was then the terminus of the railway, it having been extended from Lowood on August 8, 1886. It remained the terminus until February 8, 1904, when it was extended to Toogoolawah. Much of the merchandise for Nanango and centres beyond came by rail and went forward by horse teams. Cattle-raising was the most important industry. The Esk saleyards, erected in 1890 or thereabout, by Mr. Chas. Baisden, father of Messrs. Stan and Eric Baisden of Toogoolawah, were the rallying

point for cattlemen, a sale of 2000 bullocks being no uncommon occurrence, and at one time the yards held the record of having 5000 head for a sale. The yards were built and operated by a company, of which, I think Mr. Tom Pryde was Secretary. What dividends the company ever paid is not known to me, but the sight of the dilapidated fences today takes my memory back to its thriving days.

The Mount Beppo district had not long been established, but the farmers brought their maize to sell to the Esk stores, or sent it to Cribb and Foote, Ipswich. One has distinct memories of these early struggling pioneers bringing in their six or eight bags of maize and returning with perhaps a bag of flour and a part bag of sugar received in exchange for the maize.



**Mt. Beppo School residence with school behind left, 2010**

As far as I remember, there was little, if any, dairying in the district, but Alfred Williams, of Gregor's Creek, made cheese and bacon, much of which was sent to Brisbane, where there was a ready sale, especially for the excellent sides of smoked bacon.

A feature of the social and educational life of the town was a very lively Parliamentary debating class which met in the old School of Arts near the present Presbyterian Church. Mr. Pat Clifford was "Premier", and had with him all the leading men of the town either as colleagues or in "Opposition". Frequently I listened to the debates and as a result became more keenly interested in politics.

Among the residents of the day were Mrs. McLean, of "The Brick House", and her two daughters, Ann and Letitia, who subsequently became Mrs. G.P. Spencer and Mrs. W.J. Cavanagh (mother of Mrs. Eric Vaughan, Mrs Nicholson and Mr. Jack Cavanagh, Toogoolawah), and her three sons, James, Allan and George; Mrs. Thorn

and her son Ronald; Edwin Broad's two sons Rupert and Wallace; Mr. Webb, of the Commercial Hotel, and his son Corrie; Mr. McDonald and his son Dick; Lars Andersen; Mr. Pat Clifford and two sons, Con and Eddie, and daughter whom we called Cis.

### **FOOTBALL DAYS RECALLED**

My chief memories are of the young men with whom I played Rugby football, which then was a favourite game. Esk fielded a lusty team. The nearest club they could meet was in Ipswich where they competed against the then premiers, "The Bells". I don't remember whether Esk ever beat them but recollect that I subsequently journeyed from Brisbane to play with Esk when we were beaten by a narrow margin.

Football players of the day included Ernest and Stuart Lord, of Eskdale; J.J. Noonan of Well Station; Eddie Clifford, Corrie Webb, Ron Thorn, the three McLean's, Dick McDonald, Tot Lewis, two McGrory's (Dick and Shadow) and George Spencer.

It was during my stay at Esk that a consignment of live hares arrived from Clifton to be liberated at Glen-Ken, Mr. James Barbour's property. Mr. James Barbour at the time was Sergeant of Police at Clifton, and I have a suspicion that it was James Barbour, jun., the President Chairman of the Esk Shire Council – then a boy – who liberated them. I hope Cr. Barbour will not be displeased at my giving him the distinction of introducing – obviously innocently – what has since become a pest, to agriculturists.

The foregoing has been written from memory and from particulars kindly supplied by Mrs. Nicholson and Messrs. W.Y. McCallum, Frank McNamara and C.H. Langton, of Toogoolawah to whom I express thanks.

---

## MEMORIES OF BRISBANE VALLEY OVER 60 YEARS

Toogoolawah, March 26 (year unknown)

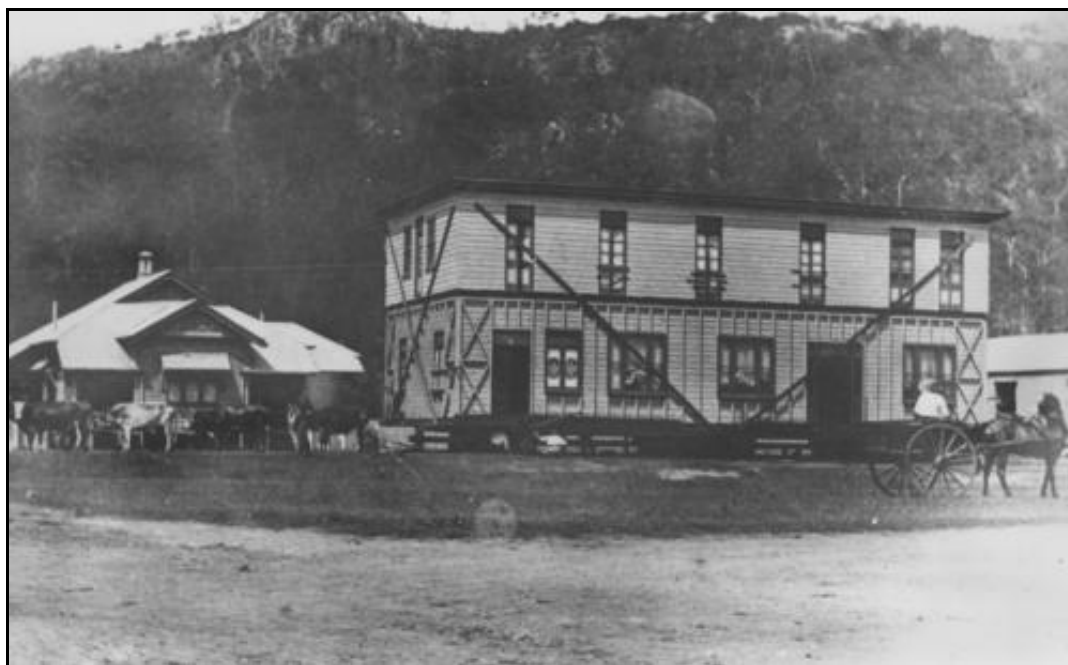
Mr. Thomas Fox, a former Esk resident is holidaying in Toogoolawah. Mr. Fox was born in Scotland in 1886 and migrated to Queensland with his mother in 1891. His father died when Mr. Fox was quite young.

He worked for Mr. Jimmy Andersen, a blacksmith and sometimes shod a whole team of horses (between 12 and 20) alone. The horse teams in those days would draw timber to the Esk Sawmill from as far away as Linville, 36 miles.

The railway line at this time was as far north from Esk as Yimbun, which was first called Moorabool, and then changed to Kannungar, but this name was confused with the town of the South Coast called Canungra, so it was changed to its present name, Yimbun.

He also retyred the iron wheels of the bullock wagons.

The Club Hotel (Esk) was moved along to the northern end of the main street by two bullock teams, which were united for a quarter of a mile. Mr. Adam Dunlop and Jimmy Barbour owned the bullock teams. Two wooden wheels were cut from the trunk of a huge iron bark tree, and a long heavy hardwood axle was placed between the wheels. The process of moving the hotel took a week. The roof was removed before the hotel was moved. Mr. Davies, the then Postmaster, thought telephone wires may be broken otherwise.



**Moving the Central Hotel (now Club Hotel) Esk**

Mr. Fox was a musician (violinist) and with pianist Miss M. Dalton, daughter of the licensee of the Club Hotel (Esk) and later the Commercial Hotel (Toogoolawah), played for many dances held in Toogoolawah and Esk. He married Miss Dalton. He

would go on horseback carrying his violin and music to barn dances outside Esk, accompanied by a male friend. Playing the accordion!

At the end of 1907 he returned to Brisbane, joined the railways as porter, and was sent to Yimbun. Later he was a shunter at Brisbane until 1911 and guard until 1921. After living at Sandgate for 10 years he became licensee of the Commercial Hotel, Toogoolawah, in 1931.

#### FURTHER OLD TIMES

Mr. Eric Baisden's items of interest were that the Queensland National Bank was opposite the Royal Hotel, the manager being Mr. Alexander and the teller was Mr. Heron. Mr. Chas. Clarkson was a schoolmaster. On the opposite side of the creek was the Central Hotel kept by John Verner. Pat Lawlor's blacksmith shop and the Esk Divisional Board were on the bank of the creek, Mr. Gore being in charge.

After 1893 flood, a swing bridge was built from bank to bank. It was common sight to see some on hands and knees.

Blank Bros. had the first Sawmill on the bank of Redbank Creek. Carl Blank was the bookkeeper and August ran the mill. Christy had the bullock team, and brought pine from Coal Creek, then known as Wheeler's Crossing.

Mr. John Gorrie (grandfather of Eric Gorrie, Toogoolawah) was the benchman and afterwards took up land at Yimbun.

Mr. Goldstein visited Esk every month from Ipswich doing watch repairs. Teamsters came from Nanango to Esk for their goods, until the railway. Aborigines used to go collect honey from beehives at Milford Rocks.



**Club Hotel Esk, 2012**

## A TOWN NAMED TOOGOOLAWAH

From The Sunday Color Magazine, August 12, 1973

In America the sensation of the moment is clearly the Watergate scandal. In the Pacific area, it is the French nuclear affair. At Toogoolawah, 70 miles or so up the Brisbane Valley, public interest of late has been split three ways between the school concert, a dance featuring the popular Rockin' Robins from Kilcoy and the proposed Wivenhoe Dam.

There are some experts down in Brisbane who smell doom for Toogoolawah in the new dam. They say the town will fall to its financial knees when many surrounding farms are drowned. But I could find little support for this gloomy theory when I went visiting. While the population of 750 was ready to argue on the meaning of the name of the town – some say it means “Place of the Heart” and others “The Bend in the Creek” – there was a united front against the suggestion that the Wivenhoe project would put the mocker on Toogoolawah.

One line of reasoning strongly offered is that what fire has not been able to do a big pool of water will never succeed in doing. History's page reveals that time and time again fire has visited the township, blaster the buildings but never withered the spirits of the people. Proudly Mr. Eric Baisden, 86, and his wife Alice, 84, stressed this point. Fire might have burned down the concentrated milk factory in 1951, killing probably forever the town's main secondary industry, but it didn't stunt hope and enterprise. And in 1927 [*actually 1926*] fire took out half the main street including Mrs. Edmund's drapery shop, Mr. Gibson's jewellery shop, Flaskas' café, Martin's chemist shop and the Commercial (now the Toogoolawah) Hotel. Every one of those buildings rose again from the ashes bar the jeweller's shop.



Toogoolawah town fire, 1926

In their time the two other hotels in the town – the Exchange and the Club – have been burned down and rebuilt. Thirty years ago the Alexandra Hall, heartpoint of social activity in Toogoolawah, was burned out. The people rebuilt. Then there was the fire at the school... “Fire couldn’t win and water can’t,” declared Mr. and Mrs. Baisden bravely and in unison.

Toogoolawah people are not much interested in Brisbane. They wouldn’t want to live there. But currently they’re cooking up a plan aimed at encouraging city folk to come and live with them. The idea is to get the State Government to build a new road from Toogoolawah through Mr. Byron, Mt. Nebo, Dayboro and Petrie, thus reducing the current road distance from 70 miles to about 40 and so enabling city workers to settle in the township, enjoy the prime country air, and commute daily. Cynics may say “fat chance” but in Toogoolawah the plan seems rich with reason

New settlers would be able to adopt 132 years of local history (in 1973) as their own. They would be entitled to claim they lived in the area which produced Queensland’s only notable bushranger – the dreaded Alpin McPherson, alias “the Wild Scotsman”. Alpin was born, so I am assured, on local Cressbrook station which was established by Mr. David McConnel, “first man into the Brisbane Valley”, in 1841. The scoundrel Scot made a speciality of stealing fast horses and robbing such people as Pat McCallum who was carrying the mail between Nanango and Gayndah in 1865. (He pinched Pat’s horse as well as the mail.)

Mr. David McConnel had his problems when he built Cressbrook. Local natives told him that flood waters would never reach the high point he selected as a building site. Later, 3ft of water over the floor boards proved the blacks had spoken with forked tongue. Those same blacks began throwing spears a bit too freely so Mr. McConnel locked up Bungaree and John Bull, two of their number, for hostage purposes. He spread the word that if there was any more cheeky fella stuff he’d knock the blocks off his prisoners. Toogoolawah has suffered little from native uprisings since then and new settlers would find themselves in an almost crime free situation.

In the past year the most serious crime committed in the district has been the picking up of a wandering turkey from the road by a motorist. The man was charged with turkey theft in Toogoolawah Courthouse and was fined for the misdeed. The lady who owned the turkey in the case presented it to the local ambulance station for raffling.

Toogoolawah could be described as a town of churches because it contains active congregations of Roman Catholics, Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Baptists, Anglicans and Christadelphians. Halt! I almost missed the Apostolic Church. The pride of Toogoolawah, churchwise, is the Anglican Church which is noted for its new shingle roof dedicated in April, 1966, by the Dean of Brisbane, the Very Rev. Dean Baddeley. The old shingle roof had been letting the water in and the congregation could raise only enough money to replace it with a corrugated iron roof. But an unexpected angel in the form of Mrs. J. H. McConnel, of Cressbrook station, put up the difference in cost. And so pure shingles it was.

The thumbprint of the McConnel family and Cressbrook is naturally clearly evident in and around the town. There's McConnel Park – a pretty place right in Toogoolawah – Mt. McConnel, Cressbrook Creek and Cressbrook Street, the main street of the township.

There is a sharp rivalry between Toogoolawah and Esk, which stands 15 miles by road and, say, 100 miles apart in sympathique. The point of issue is which town is top dog of that particular bit of the Brisbane Valley. Esk clearly has the posher buildings. There's simply no denying that. But there is one hard fact that clearly decides which is the superior town, according to the Toogoolawah folk. One has been strong enough to keep its Saturday night talkies going while the other has been forced to abandon that form of entertainment. The strong town? Toogoolawah! And, by jove, there's a story behind that achievement.

---

## **THE TOWNSHIP THAT GREW UP ON MILK** (By Eunice Smith)

unspecified newspaper and date

The Brisbane Valley town of Toogoolawah, born in 1904, thrived on milk and in 1921 had a population of 1096 persons – the highest in its history. Toogoolawah Town, once part of Cressbrook Station, was surveyed in 1904. Prior to that date most if not all the people employed in the area would have been working on Cressbrook Station.

Mr. J. H. McConnel, owner of the Cressbrook property, had started a condensed milk factory on the banks of Cressbrook Creek about 1901, and with prospects of the railway line forging ahead from Esk, a town to be called Toogoolawah was on the way to becoming a reality.

The railway line was constructed as far as the now town of Toogoolawah in 1904. Nestle's Milk Company took over the McConnel factory in 1907. Toogoolawah was then on the way to becoming a thriving township. By 1909 it was necessary for another Government survey to be made to provide much needed residential allotments. It is interesting to note that in 1904 closer settlement in the Brisbane Valley was coming into being and part of Cressbrook Station was being sold for use as agricultural and dairy farms.

### **200 WORKERS**

Nestles, in their peak periods of condensed milk at their Toogoolawah factory, employed 200 people.



**Original Nestle's Factory, Toogoolawah** (photo by Will Crandell)

The Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics gives the highest population figures for a census year as 1921, when there were 560 males and 536 females,

making a total of 1096 persons residing in the locality of Toogoolawah. The 1966 census figures gave 363 males and 358 females for a total of 721 at Toogoolawah.

The late George Launder, writing of the early history of Toogoolawah, said, "When I arrived with my wife and little children at Toogoolawah in June, 1904, there were two buildings – the station master's cottage and Thompson and Francis's tiny store, of which Mr. Frank McNamara was manager and Mr. George Allen was his junior. The building was on the site where the Esk Co-Operative Dairy Association's store now stands. In later years the old Thompson and Francis building was removed to the corner of Cressbrook and Dingyarra Street.

"Originally it was a single roomed place with skillion sleeping quarters at the rear. The side verandahs were added later as trade increased. In addition there was in what is now Fulham Street, a small tent with a large sign, 'Robinson Watchmaker'. Mr. T. Coleman's dairy farm was then in operation.

"J.H. McConnel and Son had commenced the manufacture of condensed milk on the bank of Cressbrook Creek some years before the railway opened. The condensed milk factory was managed by Mr. W.A. Munro with his brother Mr. A. Munro, as engineer.

"When the railway station was opened in February 1904 it was named "Cressbrook". (*This was changed to Toogoolawah on 26.2.1904 by approval of Executive Council.*) A staff post and telegraph office was in operation at Cressbrook, with a Mr. Shine as postmaster, and owing to the confusion caused by letters for the railway construction staff then building the extension to Yimbun (*then called Moorabool by the same Executive Council minute above*) Mr. J.H. McConnel (*together with Mr. W.H. Moore, M.L.A.*) was requested to suggest a new name.

He decided on Toogoolawah, it being the name of his parents' city home at Bulimba, being the aboriginal name for the Bulimba reach, meaning a bent tree or a heart shaped bend. According to Tom Petrie's story of the early days, the spelling was "Tugulwa." (*The Royal Geographical Society suggested this spelling to the Railway committees who rejected it in favour of the anglicised spelling used since 1904.*)

Mr. Launder, who was station master at Toogoolawah for many years, also wrote of a navvies' store on the main road where the police station now stands. It was opened and operated by J. Devanny.

Mrs. Judith Biggs, a daughter of the late Mr. H.J. McConnel of Cressbrook Station, now living at Toowoomba, in a letter said, "You might be interested in the origin of the name Toogoolawah. When the railway was extended from Esk to Yarraman, the line came through part of Cressbrook land, and the authorities, without consulting my father, called the station 'Cressbrook'. My father did not wish the name to be used for a township. (*Railway records, 21.4.04 suggest H.J. McConnel recommended Bakewell initially rather than Cressbrook "or if you are much in favour of an aboriginal name "Toogoolawah" – the old black name for Bulimba (where I was born) and too good a name to let die out".*)

He was then asked to suggest a name instead, which had some connection with the family. There was a small newspaper published in Bulimba (Brisbane) which at that time was called Toogoolawah, and the announcement of my father's birth was one of the first names to be recorded in the 'Toogoolawah Chronicle' in 1950. So my father suggested that – though the authorities changed the spelling. Later when a local newspaper was started it was called the "Toogoolawah Chronicle."

Nestle's factory closed about 1930. On September 7, 1951, the factory buildings caught fire and most of them were destroyed. Mr. John Somerville, a plumber of Toogoolawah, bought one of the remaining buildings where tins of condensed milk were packed in cases for sale. Mr. Somerville also bought 10 acres of land at the site

In June 1967, Mr. Somerville had two acres of solid concrete on the banks of Cressbrook Creek torn up by heavy caterpillar tractors and has sown the areas with pastures, as he had done with the rest of the Nestles land he bought in 1962.

The two acres of concrete torn up was the concrete base of Nestles condensed milk factory. The strength of the factory's foundations can be gained from the markings on some of the concrete slabs. They show reinforcing material as R.S.J. 12 in by 6 in. The old chimney stack was blasted down some years prior to 1962. At the time it was estimated to contain sufficient bricks to build 10 average homes. Mr. Somerville uses the packing shed formerly owned by Nestles for his plumbing business.



**The original Nestles shed, 2009** (photo by E. DeLacy)

## **EARLY HISTORY OF THE BRISBANE RIVER VALLEY**

The history of the early settlement of the Brisbane River Valley by literate well-connected squatters is well documented. The McConnel brothers (John, David and Frederick) and the Archer Brothers, (David, Charles, Thomas, John, William and Archie) intended to settle on the Darling Downs, but found that there were few suitable tracts of land still available to these relative late comers in 1841. They continued over the Dividing Range and took up selections in the Brisbane River Valley. David McConnel registered the first station east of the Dividing Range at Cressbrook on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1841, and he did so by having sheep on the property by that time. This was a necessary condition for the granting of a pastoral license, and it is clear that he brought them overland with him from the Darling Downs.

Three other family groups, the Mackenzie brothers (Evan & Colin), the Balfour brothers (John & Robert James) and the Bigges brothers (Frederick & Francis, sometimes referred to as Little Bigge) travelled directly up the Brisbane River Valley following the river to select their station sites. According to Mackenzie-Smith (1991 "They had access to the most reliable intelligence and adopted the same strategy.....one brother would travel the long, arduous overland journey with the flocks while the other brother would proceed to Brisbane by sea thereby arriving several months ahead of rivals who took the more conventional route." (p3) All three of these families were almost certainly established in the Brisbane River Valley at least a month before David McConnel, but their flocks of sheep arrived later. Evan Mackenzie's advanced party arrived in Brisbane before the middle of May, 1841 and even under extreme conditions, he and his "loyal core of Scottish workers, mainly derived from his father's Belmaduthy estate in Scotland" (McKenzie-Smith, 1991, p3) could not have taken two months to begin the establishment of Kilcoy Station. It is recorded that the Balfour's sheep arrived at Colinton Station in August, 1841 and it is reasonable to suppose that the trip to Kilcoy Station with their livestock took approximately as long.

The Archer brothers were the last of the early pioneering families into the Brisbane River Valley, and John at least certainly had mutton and yams to eat on an early station somewhat south of Durundur by November, 1841. These pioneers seem to have been the most prolific writers, communicating frequently and in detail to their Scottish family living in Norway at the time, and much of the documentation of the people and properties of the Brisbane River Valley comes from their extensive correspondence between 1841 and 1855 (John Oxley Library). The head stations of these early families became known as "Colinton" (Balfours), "Kilcoy" (Mackenzies), "Durundur" (Archers), "Cressbrook" (McConnels), and "Mt. Brisbane" (Bigges). By 1844 they had been joined by Graham & Ivory at what Graham called "Blazes" (according to correspondence from Henry Mort, the manager of Cressbrook), but otherwise known as "Eskdale", by Uhr (and later Ferriter), by the Scotts and the Norths.

These early pioneers of the Brisbane River Valley were very different from those who frequented Sydney town, at least according to the Archers. They were all clearly well educated, multilingual and well connected to the administration of the colony of NSW of the day. Evan Mackenzie had been educated at Eton and was a cavalry officer of the Austrian Emperor's honour guard. Not surprisingly he spoke German,

as did many of the other “gentlemen settlers”, which was noted by the explorer Ludwig Leichhardt as he moved from one station to the other throughout the Brisbane River Valley in 1843.

The Archers read Norwegian and Henry Mort, the superintendent of McConnells’ Cressbrook station, read French, the diplomatic language of the day. Most of these pioneers were Scots, which was not a matter of jubilation for Thomas Archer who thought them less scrupulous than the English and altogether “too canny”.

The McConnells and the Archers did not enjoy the same level of political support that the Mackenzies, Balfours and Bigges had. The McConnells were “educated among Dissenters (Non Conformists) in Manchester,.....and . there are, besides themselves, fortunately none, as far as I know, in this district.” (Rev John Gregor’s missionary journal, 1843) The Archers were ex-patriate Scots living in Norway who, like the North’s had incurred a family debt of honour that had to be repaid before their return home.

On the other hand, the Mackenzies were the sons of Sir Colin Mackenzie who was a merchant at Kilcoy, “a Whig activist and relative of the secretary of state for the colonies, Lord Glenelg”, (Mackenzie-Smith, p3).

The Balfour brothers were the sons of James Balfour, Manager of the Wine Company of Scotland and friend of Sir Colin Mackenzie. They were described as school companions of the Mackenzie brothers and may also have been educated at Eton. The Bigges were not Scots but nephews of J.T. Bigge, whose report, according to Mackenzie-Smith (1991. P3) “re-oriented the official policy towards the development of New South Wales.”

The advantages of privilege that many of these early pioneers obviously enjoyed did not necessarily protect them from criticism from their fellows. Thomas Archer damned the Balfours and the Mackenzies with faint praise when he wrote to his father in 1846 that, “Some of our friends are very different from those I have been describing – such are our friends the Bigges, McConnel and David Graham; the former in particular would be considered estimable men and gentlemen in any country” (MacKenzie-Smith, p 62)

Photos of the Bigge brothers suggest neat, fastidious and dapper men whose living arrangements reflected the same values. David McConnel will be described in some detail later and David Graham was the son of Professor Graham, Edinburgh University and was called home on the death of his father in 1846.

Some of the antipathy between Thomas Archer and the Mackenzie brothers may have stemmed from an incident on a trip to Brisbane in 1842 when Archer “found my blackfellow dead drunk (on Mackenzie’s dray), which made me so angry that I went on Mackenzie’s drays and broke all the brandy bottles I could come across” (Mackenzie-Smith, 1991, p12 ).

In spite of any bad feeling between the two families, the Mackenzies and the Archers were later instrumental in persuading the new Queensland Government to

raise a loan for the extraordinary sum of £2,900 for a road to the Burnett via Durundur in 1863.

The Balfours were similarly advantaged with a cutting through Balfour's (now Blackbutt) Range, so that the settlers of the Brisbane River Valley had several useable roads for the transport of produce to Ipswich and Brisbane. By this time there had also been significant changes to the political life of the pastoralists which had included changes to the squatting regulations proposed by Sir G. Gipps (Charles Archer, 1847) and to the Land Regulations by Lord Grey (Charles Archer, 1847).

Archer's complaint about the latter has a surprisingly modern ring to it. "The clause which gives most dissatisfaction to the squatters, is one which enacts that new runs shall be put up to public competition, so that the individual who discovers new country has no more claim to it than the speculator who quietly sits in his armchair in Sydney" (Mackenzie-Smith, p33). Gladstone had again raised the spectre of transportation from Britain to ease the labour shortages in the Colony and in 1859 separation had produced a new state of Queensland.

The changes to statehood brought into sharp focus the casual way in which administrators in Sydney had recorded the necessary functions of government in the far north of NSW. The Government Gazette of the time was full of overzealous, duplicated and sometimes conflicting information, or it was completely absent as in the case of Post Master General's Reports until the confusion could be presented as at least capable of future management. By this time there had also been several changes to the ownership of the older stations. But the new leasing arrangements for those who could afford them provided the certainty of tenure that had been lacking previously, and the properties became the self supporting villages so necessary for survival in the days before government support.

There was little government infrastructure, but the prosperity derived from cattle, after the sheep had proven impractical, drew its entrepreneurs. Perhaps the earliest "businesses" within the district were the public houses, offering succour to travellers and workmen alike. Mary McConnell (wife of David McConnell) mentions the Wivenhoe Inn on her original journey to Cressbrook as a young wife in 1849. Records show that this public house is 22 miles from Ipswich and was first licensed in 1850 by Jn Smith who remained the licensee until 1861. Mary McConnell describes a supper of "fine ham, new laid eggs, good bread and delicious fresh butter".

An even earlier public house was established at Nanango that linked the Brisbane River Valley with the Darling Downs. It was originally called Goode's Inn because the original licensee was Jacob Goode who held that license from 1847 - 1858. It was renamed the Burnett Inn when the license was transferred to Jn Bright who managed it from 1858 - 1870 and to his wife/widow Mary Bright from 1870 until Federation.

The first of the public houses in the Esk district was the Glenrock Hotel, located at Sandy Creek (Gallanani) on the Mt. Esk - Cressbrook/Burnett Roads. It was first licensed in 1872 to Geo Percy who was followed by Jn Moore (1874-77), Mary Moore 1877, Jas Percy 1877-78) Geo Peters (1878-79) Geo Peters snr 1879-81 and Geo

Peters (1881-2). After this erratic decade of changing hands it disappears from the records forever.

The Travellers' Rest or the Travellers' Home built on the Brisbane River at Sandy Creek (3 miles on Wivenhoe Road) was licensed to Michael O'Sullivan between 1873-1881, then to Elizabeth O'Sullivan (Hay) in 1881 and transferred to Adam Hay from 1881-1884. Again this hotel disappears from the written records without a trace. Much more lasting is the Royal Hotel with Edward McDonald as the popular licensee from 1876 – 1886. The license was transferred to Jn Fitzgerald from 1886-7 and then transferred back to Edward McDonald from 1887 – 1900.

It was from this hotel that the first Mail Coaches to settlements between Esk and Nanango started, with Edward McDonald winning the lucrative mail contracts from Esk to Nanango from 1879 – 1892.

After driving the then Premier McIlwraith from Esk to Colinton on his tour of inspection in 1883, McDonald delivered the northern mail by coach from 1884 –1892, when he lost the contract to Alex McCallum. Before this, the mail had been delivered to pioneers along the Brisbane River Valley by pack horse.

As land was resumed from the larger pastoral leases for closer settlement, farmers moved north along the fertile Brisbane River to select their land and there was now an urgent need for reliable routes south for the wool, beef, pigs and timber that the Brisbane River Valley supplied in abundance.

As early as 1863 there had been considerable expenditure on roads to and from the Burnett to Brisbane and Ipswich via Durundur and Colinton. Twenty years later the importance of rail transport was clearly established, and there was a strong push for a reliable rail service into the Brisbane River Valley. Initially it had proved too difficult to establish a rail line in the marshy country between Brisbane and Ipswich, but starting at Wulkuraka (Blacksoil) the first line to Lowood was completed in 1884. This was followed by an extension to Esk in 1886, to Toogoolawah in February 1904 and to Yimbun in September, 1904. Slowly the railway line snaked up to Linville, Benarkin and finally to Yarraman in 1913.

E. DeLacy

#### Bibliography

Brisbane River Valley 1841-50, Brisbane History Group Sources No. 5, 1991 edited by John Mackenzie-Smith

---