



## A HISTORY OF ANNERLEY AND THE SURROUNDING SUBURBS

### The Yerongpan people: early history and early leaders

The earliest known reference to a group and its leaders in this vicinity comes from 'J.W.', who was possibly John Watts, a language teacher in Hobart.<sup>28</sup> In 1838, 1839 and 1850 J.W. wrote reminiscences of his time in Moreton Bay when it was a penal settlement and the events perhaps pertain to the year of 1837. In 1838 he described '*Molrooben*, the chief of the *Kirkham* tribe, and son of the celebrated [?] Billy, whose warlike feats were celebrated by every bard, from *Huon Munday*'s to *Moppee*'s'. The account tells us that *Molrooben* was the 'chosen chief of his tribe on the death of his father'. *Molrooben*, his brother *Delackey*, and two of the Amity Point tribe crossed the [Brisbane] river in two canoes from the scrub on the south side and landed on the northern side a little below Breakfast Creek. *Kirkham* seems to be a descriptor name for the *Molrooben*'s tribe who were from the 'other' (southside) of the river.<sup>29</sup> J.W.'s reminiscences go on to describe a formal battle with a chosen warrior from a northern tribe regarding a stolen woman near the chain of 'Ponds' which was east of Taylor's Range and about one and a half hour's walk from the residence of J.W.<sup>30</sup>

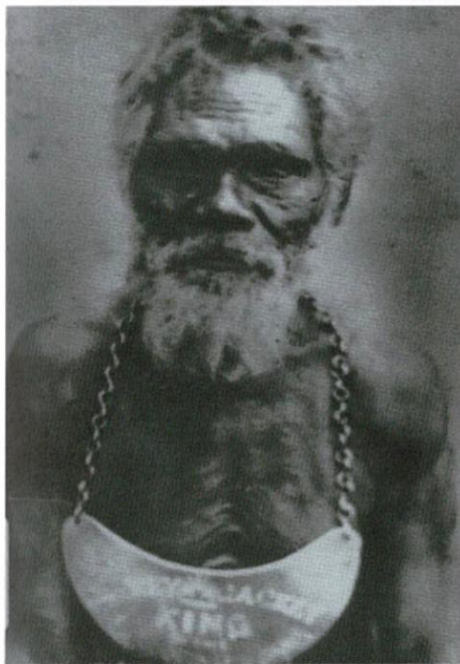
In an 1850 recount of the events noted by J.W., *Molrooben* was described as 'a celebrated chieftain, whose hunting grounds extended from the Dividing Range to the Logan River'<sup>31</sup> which included the Yerongpan domain. *Molrooben*' seems to be the same person William Clark (who lived in South Brisbane from about 1849) recalled as 'the South Brisbane tribe of Aborigines' head man or fighting chief... *Molrubin*'.<sup>32</sup> Undoubtedly this was also 'the well-known *Malrobin*' who was reported as being murdered by another 'native' at a camp near Doughboy Creek in 1852.<sup>33</sup>

### Chepara (coast) alliance vs other alliances

The 1850 news report (noted in the previous paragraph) details a Coast (Chepara) clan group alliance which included the *Molrooben* (of the Yerongpan), Amity Point and Settlement tribes. This coast alliance fought against the wild mountain people described as *Beppo Jackeroos*, including the *Moppe* tribe (named after the headman who was described as being 'about forty years old') and the Peak Mountain tribe.<sup>34</sup> The fight took place on the eastern side of Taylor's Range.

In 1854, *The Illustrated London News* repeated a story published in the *Moreton Bay Free Press* on 22 December 1853 that an 'Aboriginal Affray' between the 'Logan' (Yerongpan) people and Amity (Stradbroke Island) peoples, against a northern alliance of *Ningi Ningi* (of Toorbul Point) and Bribie Islanders who were from the *Kabi [Kabi]* language group. The fight took place on a green flat 'above a mile' beyond Burnett's Swamp, which was located along Norman Creek between what is now known as Stones Corner and Ekibin.<sup>35</sup>

### King Jacky



'Jackey Jackey, King of Logan and Pimpama',  
JOL, image negative 63306.

It would appear that from at least 1863, if not from *Malrobin*'s murder in 1852, King Jacky, 'King of the Logan and Pimpama' emerged as the Yerongpan's headman remaining such until his own death near the century mark (1900). King Jackey travelled with at least one of his wives and companions including 'Lumpy' or *Yucum* [King] Billy (headman of the Albert River tribe) or *Minnippi* Rawlings (headman of Tingalpa [Creek]).<sup>36</sup>

The name *Bilinba* refers to the place of the totem bird, *Billinn* means 'peewee'<sup>37</sup> and the suffix 'ba' means place. *Bilinba* appears to relate to the similarly spelt *Bulimba* which was originally the name of Whites Hill in Holland Park. This area straddles the country between the water catchment tributaries of *Bulimba* Creek and *Coorparoo* Creek (now called *Norman* Creek). About 2-3 kms from Whites Hill in Holland Park is a hillock called *Mount Pleasant* which was a permanent campsite area where King Jacky and his second wife *Queen Mary* periodically visited with about 30-40 others as late as the early 1880s to the 1890s.<sup>38</sup> They held corroborees near *Mott* Creek with another invited headman identified as *Lumpy* Billy (*Yucum* Billy), King of the Albert River tribe.<sup>39</sup> One notable corroboree was staged for the public with a penny entrance fee which King Jacky collected in a hat.<sup>40</sup>

Until 1888 the whole area was within the *Bulimba* Divisional Board area and the locality was named *Coorparoo* from 1888. *Mott* Creek is a tributary of *Norman* (*Coorparoo*) Creek. Professor F.W.S.



## Chapter One

### Women of Chépara and the Regional Society

Katharine J. Wiltshire\*

The following account has images and names of people who have passed, some of whom have known living descendants. Some of the descriptive language used in the 1800s to 1900s may be considered derogatory today.



City of Brisbane map Electoral Wards and Local Shire Areas up to 1924: Stephens Shire in Logan & Oxley (Abolished by City of Brisbane Act 1924) Queensland State Archives Digital Image 2865.

Since 1855 the Chépara People and their Yuggara language have been misnamed in eastern coast districts of the Pine Rivers, Brisbane northside (*Migunjin*), and Brisbane southside to lower Logan (*Yerongpan*).<sup>1</sup> The traditional boundaries of these three eastern districts and other southwest parts of Chépara country have been misunderstood. Despite the findings from a judgement in 2015 from the Federal Court, people without biological descent from this region's ancestors have been registered as an Aboriginal Party under Queensland's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003.<sup>2</sup> Also in various publications and photographs some of the female apical ancestors have been confused or conflated with other same named women leading to the construction, in some instances, of false genealogies. Other notable daughters of Chépara Yuggara-bul speaking ancestors have been excluded in native title claims over southwest Chépara country because their living descendants had not been identified or were ignored.

With a regional focus, this paper further clarifies the tribal names and boundaries as explained in *Echoes of Stories of Stephens*.<sup>3</sup> It covers important aspects relating to women who belonged to Chépara country as wives, daughters, and female descendants of Chépara ancestors. It adds to the research and postulates the most likely alternatives to the names assigned to some women in publications and photographs. Finally, it reveals the notable women who were the wives and daughters of Chépara Yuggara-bul speaking ancestors and their living descendants.<sup>4</sup>

#### Yerongpan connection to 'Stephens' in Logan

The southside *Yerongpan* (sandy) country includes the former Logan, Oxley, Kurilpa, Bulimba and Wynnum wards (excluding the Cleveland district) on the 1924 electoral map.<sup>5</sup> In the 1800s to early 1900s the Brisbane southside *Yerongpan* were also called 'Logan blacks'. The **Logan** ward included parts of, or all of, the former Stephens, Coorparoo, Belmont and Tingalpa shires. Those on the Brisbane CBD northside were generally referred to as 'Brisbane blacks' or the 'settlement' tribal clan.

#### Connection to Country: Legends and Stories

The Chépara connected country includes the Pine Rivers, south of *Kabul*, the carpet snake (*Cabool-ture*) to *Nulgul*, the native dingo (Ormeau, Pimpama River) and extends southwest to the headwaters in the Scenic Rim. The dividing ranges protect country with the timeless warriors, who are set in stone, with their ancient legends that passed down from generation to generation.

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## Chapter Two

### Fred Burnett, a Queensland Aboriginal soldier in the First A.I.F.

Rod Pratt<sup>1</sup>

Fred Burnett was, in many respects, typical of Aboriginal enlistments across Queensland during the Great War of 1914-18. Typical in that his service in the Australian Imperial Forces (AIF) was not wanted until the high casualty rate of the Western Front resulted in a relaxing of the racial restrictions facing recruits that were embodied in the Commonwealth *Defence Act* of 1911. Yet Burnett was unusual as he not only had prior military service in the pre-Federation Queensland Defence Force (QDF), he was also exempt from the provisions imposed by *The Queensland Aboriginal Protection Act* of 1897. The issue of Aborigines enlisting for service raises other paradoxical questions. Why did these young Aboriginal men offer their lives to protect a land to which they had already lost their claims, to defend freedom and democracy a privilege they were denied, to safeguard a political system from which they were excluded and to safeguard a white populace who largely ignored and despised them? Before we examine Fred's service in detail, it is first necessary to give an overview of the role of Indigenous soldiers during the Great War.

By the late nineteenth-century the view widely held by white Australians was that the Aborigines were a "doomed race" whose demise was seen as inevitable as disease, alcohol and later, opium were working towards a form of slow genocide.<sup>1</sup> By the 1890's the Queensland Government had conducted a survey of Aboriginal settlements across the colony to decide what to do with the Aboriginal population. This survey resulted in the drafting of the *Aboriginal Protection and the restriction of the sale of opium Act* of 1897 (Qld) (the Act). This legislation impacted all Aborigines. The term Aborigine was defined, it specified where they could live, what work they could do, whom they could marry and even their personal finances were managed. The proponents of this legislation believed that Aborigines should be removed from their homes and relocated to artificial communities such as Barambah, Yumba, Deebing Creek, Palm Island and Durundur. Such isolation enabled greater control, removed them from the tempting vices of white society and above all kept them out of sight and out of mind.

For those with a mixture of European heritage, such as Burnett, the situation was more ambiguous. "Half-castes", as they were commonly called, only fell within the ambit of the Act if they lived or habitually associated with Aborigines (that is, with those already within the *Acts* purview). To escape such control while living in or near an Aboriginal settlement, it was necessary to have an Exemption Certificate (known universally and derogatorily as a "Dog Licence").

The degree of disruption to family life cannot be over-stated as children were often required to live apart from their parents lest they too would fall under the Act's authority. Initially in 1897, Queensland was divided into a Northern and Southern Protectorate with physician and early ethnographer William Edmund Roth appointed as the Northern Protector and self-publicist Archibald Meston the Southern Protector. This arbitrary division became impractical and soon all of Queensland was administered by a single Chief Protector of Aborigines, John William Bleakley. It was Bleakley who was directly responsible for determining who could be released from his department's control to serve overseas.



F. A. Burnett

The Queenslander  
29 December 1917

The other piece of legislation relevant to Aboriginal enlistments into the AIF was the Commonwealth *Defence Act* of 1911 (1911 Act). Unlike the earlier Queensland *Defence Act* of 1884, the 1911 Act contained section 61(h), which stated that only persons who were "substantially of European origin or descent" could be accepted in the defence force. The fact that the Queensland *Defence Act* had no racial exclusion clauses was not a result of any enlightened attitudes towards race, rather no one considered that Aborigines would want to enlist. The reason for the introduction of this racial exclusion clause into the 1911 Act appear to be the result of several incidents rather than one significant reason. In one instance, the son of an Afghan camel driver and a white woman attempted to enlist at Duntroon Military College but was turned down on racial grounds.

In another case, various rifle clubs sought clarification from the Defence Department as to whether Aborigines could join. It is notable that the 1911 Act coincided with the introduction of the Universal Training Scheme ("Boy Conscription") which actively excluded boys who were not "substantially European" from compulsory service.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rod Pratt has authored several books and published papers on Aboriginal history, the British Army in Moreton Bay, the early Queensland Volunteer forces and other military history topics.