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Placenames Australia

Newsletter of the Australian National Placenames Survey

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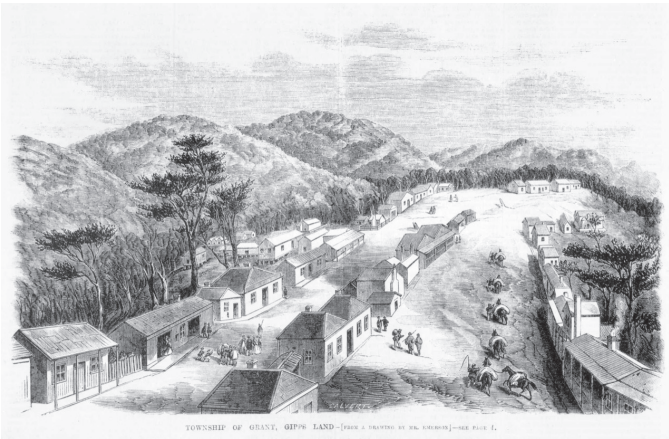
Who was Peter the Swede?

In the Victorian high country, near the Gippsland town of Dargo, is the locality of **Peter the Swede**. It lately gained some prominence during bushfires in early 2019 when emergency warnings and advice messages were being issued for it and many other places nearby.

Peter the Swede lies in the **Grant Historic Area** within the Alpine National Park,[1] which covers the area of the Crooked River gold diggings dating back to the 1860s. To the west is a ridge known as Scandinavian Spur. No-one lives there now. Most of the towns and villages disappeared a century ago and visitors are few enough. But its sudden prominence during the fires did prompt many bemused observers to ask not just 'where' but 'who' was Peter the Swede?



Township of Grant, Gipps Land. 1865. (State Library of Victoria)

Given the Australian predilection for bestowing nicknames, it should come as no surprise that there was many a Peter the Swede on the Victorian goldfields in the 19th century. One such was Peter Petersen (or Paterson), who as 'Peter the Swede' was identified to be an early discoverer in 1859 of the Emerald goldfield in the Dandenong Ranges, near Melbourne. A belated claim by him in 1864 for a reward was rejected by the government.[2]

A recent article has suggested that Petersen may be the one and the same Peter the Swede who ended up at Crooked River.[3] While possible, it seems fairly unlikely. The only extant reference to a Peter Petersen in the area involves a mining lease application by the Square Mountain Sluicing Company some miles to the north on the Upper Dargo many years later in 1884.[4] There were certainly other Petersens mining (and farming) in the high country, but they were mostly further east towards Cobungra and Bullumwaal.

In truth, it seems just about anyone with a Scandinavian name could end up being dubbed 'Peter the Swede'. A Swede named Peter had his purse stolen in a brothel in Fitzroy in 1871.[5] One Peter the Swede was implicated in the infamous *RMSS Avoca* gold robbery in South Gippsland in 1879.[6] A young Peter the Swede narrowly escaped being struck by a falling branch in the Yarra Valley in 1897.[7] Meanwhile, in Tasmania in 1884, Peter the Swede killed a man at Ringarooma.[8]

The high-country Peter the Swede was none of these. Even more remarkably, his real name quite possibly wasn't actually Peter.

Identifying someone on the goldfields simply by their first name and nationality (sometimes even this was a bit

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In this issue:

From the Editor

Who knew? Even the ANPS team had missed the existence of a locality called *Peter the Swede*—so we were delighted when John Schauble gave us the story of this Victorian placename as our lead article for this issue.

We've also turned our attention to Queensland parish names, thanks to the work of historian Diana Beal. Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the article (see page 5) is that the official name of one of the parishes seems to have been misspelt somewhere along the way.

We're all rather conscious of viruses this year. To follow Joshua Nash's article in our previous issue, Jan Tent has looked at some other viruses prevalent in Australia, and has discovered (page 9) that many of them (unlike the COVID19 virus) have toponymic names.

Among the many effects of the COVID19 pandemic, there's one I should mention here. We would normally be holding the Annual General Meeting of Placenames Australia in October, probably at the same time as the planned Melbourne conference of the Permanent Committee on Place Names. That gathering won't be happening now; our AGM is likely to be in Brisbane instead, in February. Details in the December issue!

David Blair
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And here is the news...

... from New Zealand

The *New Zealand Herald* alerted us in July that the Geographic Board had been very busy that month. And indeed it had—notice of approval for 636 official geographic names was gazetted on 16th July, we discovered from the Board's website. But that wasn't the most surprising aspect of the announcement: one of the placenames approved as official was **Wellington**, the nation's capital! We send a cheery *kia ora* to our colleagues in Aotearoa New Zealand and say 'better late than never!'

Can you help?

Our reader Allen Sundholm is an entomologist with an onomasiological (look it up!) claim to fame: the *Castiarina allensundholmi* species of beetle was co-discovered by Allen and named after him.

Allen is currently trying to identify a place called 'Boiling Springs'—it appears on the label for an old beetle specimen he's entering in his database. The location would most likely be inland NSW or Qld.

The ANPS team were only able to suggest *Boiling Water Springs*, but that's in the Northern Territory; or, better, *Boiling Spring Gully* near Toowoomba, Qld.

We do know of similar names, but they all seem to be the sites of boiling down works—unlikely candidates. If you know of a place that goes by the name of 'Boiling Springs', send an email to the Editor and we'll let Allen know.

***Puzzle** answers - (from page 14)*

1. Venus Bay
2. Juno Head
3. Europa Gully
4. Pluto Creek
5. Io Reef
6. Neptune Islands
7. Lake Callisto
8. Titan Point
9. Lake Mercury
10. Mount Ceres
11. Lake Helios
12. Lake Jupiter
13. Selene
14. Lake Uranus
15. Lake Ganymede
16. Lake Vesta
17. Mars Shoal
18. Mount Eros
19. Halleys Comet Mine
20. Saturn Island

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...Peter the Swede

of a guess) was a common practice. An 1865 list of 217 debtors to hotelkeeper Henry Augustus Rosenberg at Matlock on the Woods Point goldfield west of Crooked River lists, among others, Bill the German, Scotch Jim, French Bob, Peter the German, Alec the Frenchman, Johnny Irish, German John, Peter the Dane, Yankee Jack and George the German.[9]

The Crooked River goldfield has been dubbed 'Victoria's forgotten goldfield', in part because few physical remnants of its once bursting settlements can be found today. Unlike other Gippsland mining localities like Walhalla or Woods Point or even the tiny settlement of A1, few buildings, let alone townships, survived into the 20th century. Grant grew quickly into a substantial town with eighteen hotels, four banks, fourteen general stores, two cordial manufacturers, nine stores, three wine and spirit dealers, two chemists, several barristers and solicitors, a post office, a great number of restaurants, a school, church, mining exchange, newspaper office and government camp.[10] Within 20 years, most of this had gone; the town disappeared completely by 1916. The nearby village of Talbotville had a store until the 1940s. Dargo alone survives today. A supply town en route to the goldfields, it was reinvented as a farming centre and more recently a tourist hub.[11]

At its peak, more than 2000 miners, some with their families, had flocked to the remote Crooked River field as an alluvial rush unfolded, followed by deep lead quartz mining. All manner of nationalities arrived. The Irish predominated, but there were English, Americans, French, Germans, Italians, Swiss, Scandinavians, along with the native born and—in the early days—a large number of Chinese, most of whom came overland from the Ovens and Omeo fields.[12] (Not all were after gold. Jimmy the Chinaman, a market gardener on the Crooked River, lost his home in an arson attack in 1882. A local subscription was set up to help him out.)[13]

Scandinavians—Danes, Norwegians, Finns and Swedes—appeared in number on the Victorian goldfields. In the early years, many were sailors who had deserted their vessels. Prominent enough in central Victoria, they 'played an outstanding part in the minor diggings of Gippsland'.[14]

Among them was one named as Peter Nodschou, described as 'a powerful looking Swede'[15] who worked as a miner around Grant for a few years from the early 1860s. What little we know of this Peter the Swede is gleaned from reports in the local papers and, sadly, later from records relating to his committal into mental institutions.

This Peter the Swede surfaces in the *Gippsland Times* in early 1870… and the circumstances are unfortunate. To confuse things, his name is also recorded as 'Victor Nodskow'. Mispronunciation and jumbled reporting aside (the anglicisation of difficult European names in 19th century Victoria was common), it is all but certain the two are one and the same man.

As Nodskow, he first appears in 1865 as applicant for a mining lease over a 25-acre site between the Found at Last and Jeff Davis reefs near Grant.[16] This was at least a couple of miles to the north of the area now referred to as *Peter the Swede*, although over time miners would work multiple claims in different areas. Two years later he faced (along with associates) a summons from the mining warden at Grant over a contested claim on the Upper Dargo which was said to be unworked and hence up for forfeiture.[17]

On 18 January 1870, Nodskow fronted the Grant Police Court before Alfred Howitt PM:

> UNSOUND MIND
>
> Victor Nodskow was brought up by the police, charged as above. It appears that the officer in charge had received several letters, drawing his attention to the state of the prisoner. Several parties were examined, but the evidence only proved that the accused was eccentric. The bench did not consider there was any evidence in support of the charge, and would order the accused to be discharged.[18]

Ten days later, he disappeared from a job he had obtained at Eaglevale Station, owned by Constantine Holme, taking with him a gun but giving no indication of his intentions.[19] He reappeared three days later,

> but his actions and manners show such unmistakeable symptoms of insanity that the owner of the station (Mr. C. S. Holme) believing him to be dangerous has requested the police to arrest him again, which has been done, and he will be brought into Grant today.[20]

Two weeks later, now being named as 'Peter Nodschou' in the *Gippsland Times* and having been remanded in Grant, the big Swede appeared before the Sale Police Court on charges of being illegally on premises and

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larceny. Holme gave evidence that he had known the defendant for three or four years and had employed him on the station. When Holme told him that he would not pay his wages in full until a pair of missing blankets was returned, the man 'became a nuisance', smashing a stable door with a stone and breaking a window. Damage was estimated at 10 shillings.

Another witness, James Saddler, gave evidence about the broken window and of the prisoner's disappearance, which the *Gippsland Times* suggested 'tended to prove his insanity'.

> He had gone away, at one time, for three days with a gun, and being asked on his return what game he had shot, he replied that he had shot a lizard and had eaten it. Witness considered that he was a lunatic, and judged of the state of his mind by his eccentric behaviour.[21]

Although the larceny charge was withdrawn, this time he was remanded on 8 February 1870 for seven days to undergo a medical examination. A week later, on the recommendation of Drs Arbuckle and Hedley of Sale, Peter the Swede was committed to the Yarra Bend Lunatic Asylum in Melbourne.[22]

As Victor Nodskow, he was received at the asylum on 18 February 1870. He was released as 'cured' on 20 July that year.[23] Within a month, he was back in Crooked River—and again before the courts.

This time the Grant correspondent of the *Gippsland Times* did not mince words:

> We have got at least a three months' respite from the vagaries of one of the madmen who recently returned to this district, 'who was lately discharged from the Yarra Bend Lunatic Asylum' as cured. Ever since this man returned he has been considered dangerous, and from his wild actions has kept the police here [in] constant dread that he would commit an injury to some person.
>
> Yesterday this man… was brought before the bench here charged with breaking into the residence of an old lady residing near Grant, and, judging from the evidence given, there can be little doubt that but for the presence of a gentleman with a gun in his possession, who happened to be in the house at the time, the prisoner would have done some damage to the family, but the sight of the gun seemed to intimidate him. That this man is mad, there cannot be a shadow of doubt, and having previously been sent to the asylum it seems strange that he should be again turned loose on society.[24]

Edward Whiting JP sentenced him to three months' imprisonment in Sale gaol. The *Gippsland Times* opined that there was 'little doubt that on his release he will return again at once, and will be a constant source of annoyance and dread to the residents'.[25]

It was not to be. On 1 November of that year, he was readmitted to Yarra Bend in November, this time remaining until he was transferred to the new Kew Asylum in July 1873.[26] Here he was noted to be in reasonable physical health but suffering dementia: 'noisy and impulsive—strikes occasionally'. He had no known relatives.[27] In November 1875, he was transferred to the Beechworth Asylum, from which he escaped briefly in May 1876 before being 'retaken'.[28]

With his case file marked as 'incurable', this Peter the Swede spent the remainder of his life in the Beechworth asylum, dying of 'old age and abscess on the hip' after being knocked down by another patient on 14 September 1897, aged 'around 75 years'.[29]

While Peter Nodschou (aka Victor Nodskow) may have a strong claim to being the Peter the Swede after whom this remote corner is named, definitive evidence at this stage remains elusive.

John Schauble

Endnotes

[1] -37.38431° / 147.18208°

[2] Flett, J. (1979). *The history of gold discovery in Victoria*. Melbourne: Poppet Head Press. pp.56-57.

[3] Williams, D.B. (2019, Autumn edition). Along Old Emerald Road. *U3A Emerald Newsletter*, pp.20-23.

[4] *Gippsland Times* (1884, March 21). p.2. The Square Mountain claim was one of the most productive sluicing operations in the district over many years.

[5] *The Age* (1871, October 24). p.3.

[6] *The Age* (1879, July 9). p.6.

[7] *Lilydale Express* (1897, November 26). p.4.

[8] *Mount Alexander Mail* (1884, March 18). p.3.

[9] Bailey, A. & R. (1998). *A windy morn of Matlock: the history of a Victorian mountain goldfield.* Melbourne: Mountain Home Press. pp.118-26.

[10] Victorian Heritage Database Report, Grant Township and Cemetery, https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/10985/download-report.

[11] See: Christie, R.W. & Day, G.D. (1996). *Victoria's forgotten goldfield: a history of the Dargo, Crooked River goldfield* (2nd ed.). Dargo: High Country Publishing.

[12] Christie & Day. (1996). *Victoria's forgotten goldfield*, Appendix 4; *Gippsland Guardian* (1861, June 14). p.4.

[13] *Gippsland Times.* (1882, February 22). p.3.

[14] Lyng, J. (1935). *The Scandinavians in Australia, New Zealand and the Western Pacific*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press. p.22.

...Peter the Swede?

[15] *Gippsland Times* (1870, February 15). p.3.

[16] *Gippsland Times* (1865, February 22). p.4.

[17] *Gippsland Times* (1867, November 30). p.2.

[18] *Gippsland Times* (1870, January 25). p.3.

[19] *Gippsland Times* (1870, January 29). p.2.

[20] *Gippsland Times* (1870, February 8). p.3.

[21] *Gippsland Times* (1870, February 15). p.3.

[22] *Gippsland Times* (1870, February 15). p.3

[23] Alphabetical lists of patients in asylums. 26 Oct 1848 - 11 Nov 1912. VPRS 7446/P0001/Unit 1 (Yarra Bend).

[24] *Gippsland Times* (1870, August 23). p.3

[25] *Gippsland Times* (1870, August 23). p.3.

[26] Alphabetical lists of patients in asylums. 26 Oct 1848 - 11 Nov 1912. VPRS 7446/P0001/Unit 1 (Yarra Bend).

[27] Asylum Records from the Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV), Series Number VA 2840, Case Books of Male Patients, 1871-1912 and VPRS 7398/P0001/000001; Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria, Nosdcow Victor, Death Reg. No. 7784/1897.

[28] Alphabetical lists of patients in asylums. 26 Oct 1848 - 11 Nov 1912. VPRS 7446/P0001/Unit 6 (Kew); VPRS 7446/P0001/Unit 4 (Beechworth).

[29] Public Record Office Victoria, Inquest Deposition Files, Victor Nodscow, VPRS 24/ P0, unit 677, item 1897/1090.

Two Queensland parishes — Stetchworth and Halliford

Stetchworth and **Halliford** are two parishes south-west of Dalby within the Western Downs Regional Council area on the Darling Downs in Queensland. The two parishes together form a rough square with 24km sides, comprising approximately 550km^2. The 2016 census recorded a population in the area of zero.

Zero? That is correct, because all of Stetchworth and most of Halliford is State Forest. This was not always the case as you will shortly learn. But how can this be, when it is well-known that the Darling Downs has some of the best agricultural soils in Australia? The Downs, stretching 300km northward from Warwick to beyond Warra, and with its floodplain around the Condamine extending east-west about 150km, has fertile and well-structured soils derived from the basalts of the Great Divide.

The present use of the two parishes for forestry on land which would seem ideal for other agricultural uses is not the only surprise. If you search the Queensland Place Names Register[1] for information on a parish 'Stetchworth', you will find nothing. There is, however, an entry for the parish of 'Stretchworth' which contains some historical information (and that same information also appears in the entry for Halliford parish). *Stetchworth* or *Stretchworth*? Records and maps seem to use one or the other name randomly with no attempt to sort out a generally-accepted name.

Although the historical record reveals that the name was originally *Stetchworth*, the Queensland Register opts for *Stretchworth*. It notes that both parish names stemmed from the names of early pastoral runs held by Watson and Roebuck, with the source of these statements given as the famous 1864 Buxton's *Squatting Map of the Darling Downs*. A check of the map (next page) clearly shows the run to be named *Stetchworth*. Oh well!

'Stetchworth' and 'Halliford' were both pastoral runs which were first applied for in late 1848. Commissioner of Crown Lands Christopher Rolleston noted in his records on 13 November 1848 that Henry Stuart Russell (1819-1889) claimed both these (named) tracts of land which amounted to 16,000 acres each, with carrying capacities of 100 cattle and 3000 sheep (TDDFHS, 2008). (Rolleston was a careful detail-oriented man as his later career as statistician, Registrar of BDMs and auditor-general will attest, so it is unlikely he misspelt the name.)

Henry Stuart Russell had previously claimed an enormous tract of land immediately adjacent to the new claims; he named it 'Cecil Plains' after his mother, Cecil Charlotte, née Pemberton. He also named 'Stetchworth' and 'Halliford'.

What then are the origins of these names? Several histories give Halliford as the place of Henry's birth, unfortunately without provenance. I checked *FamilySearch* online for his baptism: 'baptised 14 April 1819 at St Marylebone Parish Church, Marylebone Road'. Oops! However, all was not lost, for I knew that this was a family proud of

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Queensland parishes...

Buxton (1864): detail, showing Halliford and Stetchworth parishes, lower left

its connections with the nobility, and likely therefore to select a church with family connections even though not their parish church. A bit more digging in the records revealed that Cecil Charlotte herself had also been baptised at St Marylebone.

Then I found the will of Henry's father, Samuel Henry Russell (1780-1834), and this threw a great deal of light on the question. In the will, Samuel gave the 'perpetual advowson of the Rectory and Parish Church of Shepperton in the County of Middlesex unto Christopher Pemberton of the Town of Cambridge …'. This statement needs a bit of translation. 'Advowson' here refers to the living or benefice or cashflows from the parish church. 'Rectory' implies that the appointment of the collector of the cash tithes was the responsibility and right of the owner of the living. (The rector did not have to be an ordained man.) Christopher Pemberton, obviously one of Cecil's relatives, was one of the executors of the will. Shepperton was the most southerly parish in Middlesex at the time on the north bank of the Thames. (It is now in Surrey.)

So we have established that the Russell family had strong connections with Shepperton. One source noted the Russells had a country house there, to which they retired frequently to give them respite from city living. This seems to be a reasonable explanation of Samuel's ownership of this particular living. Moreover, when Cecil Russell died in 1867, she died at Halliford in the Parish of Shepperton. So, it is likely that they did have a house there in 1819 and that Henry Stuart Russell was indeed born there in Halliford, but was baptised at their city parish, for society reasons and the convenience of family and friends.

Now we come to 'Stetchworth'. The known links to Henry's life are not so strong here, but obviously the name was important to him. Stetchworth is a village in Cambridgeshire, about 20km east of Cambridge. We know he had a relative in Cambridge itself and Henry may well have visited him there, and had pleasant memories of the village. (As for the 'Stretchworth' spelling of the name, there appears to have been no village or place in England called *Stretchworth*, and we know Rolleston was a careful man.)

Regardless of why Henry named the runs as he did, he kept them for less than 12 months. The reason is not at all hard to understand; in fact, the hardest thing to understand is why he applied for them in the first place. This is country with poor soils and unreliable water supplies. (Perhaps the mid-1840s was a period of good rainfall, so that there were both water and grass on the runs.)

Russell may have taken up these runs as they were unclaimed land immediately 'next door' to 'Cecil Plains', and thus gave him extra grazing nearby. The land was almost surely much more open and grassy in 1848 than it has been in the last 170 years of suppressed fire regimes. (If the local Aboriginal population had managed this country with fire, and there is no reason to assume they

...Stetchworth and Halliford

had not, it would have been more open and 'park-like' than in recent times with much more available grass for stock.)

Regardless of the extent of the grassland, the area was and is mainly forested with cypress pine (*Callitris glaucophylla*), spotted gum, narrow-leaved ironbark, Moreton Bay ash or carbeen (*Corymbia tessellaris*), bulloak (*Allocasuarina* sp.) and many Acacia species. When the lease for the land was transferred from Henry Stuart Russell in late 1849, the two runs had been reassessed as being of 25,000 acres (56% larger than the estimate a year earlier) and capable of running 3500 sheep each. Given the sort of country, this appears to have been an heroic assumption, but Rolleston provides a clue. He noted in his records that 'Stetchworth' was 'thinly grassed, badly watered and incapable of carrying the stock prescribed by the regulations'. 'Halliford' received the same assessment, as 'poor, sandy and incapable …'.

The leases, always treated as one holding, passed through several hands until the Watson brothers took the holding up in 1854 for a rather longer tenure. The Watson brothers were Richard Henry (1808-1868) and Henry Barton Nuttall (1811-1898). Richard had arrived in Australia before 1850, as he married Sarah Clark (1830-1901) in Brisbane on 1 December 1849. Henry married Harriette Alcock in Brisbane on 21 September 1851. Richard and Sarah lived at 'Halliford' and, between 1854 and 1864, had seven more children there to add to their two sons and one daughter born previously. The family spent a decade at 'Halliford' and it seems to have been the defining event of their lives. Until the 1890s, 30 years after leaving the property, members of the Watson family appended to notices of family events 'late of Halliford'. Almost surely, they were the only owners who actually lived on the property. All the others, both previously and subsequently, used the runs as auxiliary or relief grazing incorporated with other better or larger holdings. (This situation meant there were managers living on the place, but not owners.)

Even though the Watson family spent more than a decade at 'Halliford', the legal ownership of the property was not so clear cut. Only four years after the Watsons bought the leases of the two runs, notices started to appear in the press that the properties had been transferred successively from one firm of shipping agents, general merchants and quasi-bankers to another. Presumably they had lent Richard money on the security of the leases of 'Halliford' and 'Stetchworth'. It is most likely that these so-called owners were more mortgagees than full owners. In any event, even though these financial arrangements had been in place for some six years, Buxton in his investigation of the ownership of the Downs runs in 1864 identified the ownership of 'Stetchworth' and 'Halliford' as belonging to Watson and Roebuck.

So, who was Roebuck? Roebuck was George Douglas Roebuck (1836-1885) who had been born at Cawnpore, India, to Henrietta and Major George Roebuck of the Bengal Army. After Major George died in 1846, Henrietta took her four children home to Scotland but, by 1862, young George was in Australia and turned up at 'Halliford'. On 22 March of that year, he married Elizabeth Clark (1839-1862), none other than Sarah Watson's sister, at 'Halliford'. The fact that George Roebuck was regarded by Buxton as a part-owner suggests that he too joined the rather long line of backers who put money into the 'Halliford' sheep run. After Elizabeth Roebuck died at age 23 years on 11 October, less than seven months after her marriage, George stayed on the Downs for another couple of years before moving on to Brisbane, no doubt about the time the Watson family moved away from the property in late 1865 or early 1866.

For the next seven decades or so, the leases of the runs changed hands regularly, but always to buyers who had other lands and used the runs as relief grazing. The area of the holding waxed and waned over the years as contiguous freehold lands mostly outside the parishes, leased areas and annual occupation-licensed country were put together in various combinations by various absentee owners.

The value of the timber in the area was recognised after the turn of the century. Cypress pine had been used as posts and sold off 'Halliford' before WW1. However, a great increase in the cutting and milling of cypress pine occurred in the 1920s and 1930s. By the 1920s, hoop and bunya pine (*Araucaria* spp) from the rain forests were in great demand for internal linings for housing, and cypress was milled for flooring and used in places where termite resistance was an advantage.

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...Stetchworth and Halliford

Queensland has a plethora of types of leases pertaining to public lands, each with differing conditions. Broadly speaking, the pastoral leases offered for the 'Halliford' land almost certainly stipulated that the ownership of the timber growing thereon remained with the Crown. Occupational licences were annually-renewed rights to graze land where the timber rights definitely remained Crown property.

The Forest Officer in Dalby was able to hold sales of timber from Crown lands, State Forests and Timber Reserves, and the 1930s saw more than one million super feet of cypress sold from the Parishes of Halliford and Stetchworth in lots, initially, of 30,000 s ft and later 100,000 s ft. (A super foot of timber was a piece one foot wide, one foot long and one inch thick. Thus, there are about 420 s ft of timber in the modern measure of one cubic metre.)

A 1921 map of the Parish of Stetchworth shows a gazetted timber reserve on Wilkie Creek in the centre of the parish. This reserve was likely gazetted between 1900 and 1910 when large numbers of reserves were declared under the *State Forest and National Parks Act* passed in 1906. Nowadays, almost 90% of the combined area of the two parishes is reserved land for forestry held by the Crown.

The prickly pear (*Opuntia inermis*) invasion which reached its peak in Queensland during the 1920s no doubt played a part in the conversion of grazing land here to State Forest. The pear was particularly bad in this south-west part of the Downs. Many pastoral leases were forfeited back to the Queensland Government when the lessees could not fulfill the unrealistic conditions imposed by the Government that the holders should clear pear, often by as much as 20% of the holding annually.

This is the brief story of two runs taken up to depasture sheep. That there were originally two runs, rather than one, indicates an unfounded optimism regarding the sustainable carrying capacity of the land. In addition, it almost surely indicates long-run Aboriginal management of the landscape with fire which depressed the spread and growth of cypress pine on the predominantly light soils and encouraged the grass growth which attracted the first claimant.

Subsequent leaseholders saw value in the then single holding as an auxiliary area attached to other pastoral runs, but where a living could not be made on this land alone. The last 100 years have seen a short period of pastoral disaggregation initially followed by a much longer period of re-aggregation for forestry purposes.

The mainly cypress-pine forests are managed nowadays on a natural system to produce valuable timber. Cypress grows slowly and cannot tolerate fire. Hence forest management is directed towards the exclusion of fire and the avoidance of fire risk. Thinning and pruning are not carried out, selective harvesting rather than clear-felling ensures sustained forest cover, and sustainable yields are calculated to safeguard forest longevity. This case is a prime example of the fact that the European settlers in this area took only 100 years to figure out what to do with this country.

Diana Beal

Toowoomba and Darling Downs Family History Society

Endnote

[1]https://www.dnrme.qld.gov.au/qld/environment/land/place-names/search

References

Buxton, J.W. (1864). *Squatting map of the Darling Downs district, Queensland shewing the proposed line of pre-emptive purchases, townships, reserves, roads and approximate boundaries of runs, with head stations.* Brisbane: J.W. Buxton.

TDDFHS (Toowoomba and Darling Downs Family History Society). (2008). *Initial settlement on the Darling Downs 1843-1852: a transcription of Rolleston's records.* Toowoomba, Qld.

New from ANPS

Two new Occasional Papers, both by Dr Jan Tent, are now available from the ANPS website

The 'Sugarloaf' and *Landscape Ontologies* can be downloaded from our Publications page at www.anps.org.au

Australia's toponymic virus names

At this time of the SARS-CoV2 virus pandemic we thought it might be opportune to abridge an article that ***Jan Tent*** *co-authored with Dr Ranil D. Appuhamy and Prof. John S. Mackenzie and published in the* Medical Journal of Australia, *December 2010, 193(11/12), pp. 642-646*

Many viruses are named after the site where they were thought to have originated. These include **Ebola virus** (< Ebola River Valley, DRC), **Lassa virus** (< the town of Lassa, Nigeria) and **Coxsackie virus** (< the town in New York, USA). There are many toponymic viruses in Australia, too. They include **Trubanaman virus**, **Edge Hill virus**, **Stratford virus**, **Wallal virus** and **Warrego virus**. But the most commonly known ones are **Hendra virus**, **Ross River virus**, **Murray Valley encephalitis virus**, **Barmah Forest virus** and **Menangle virus**. This latter Australian group is well worth closer toponymic inspection.

Hendra virus

The Brisbane suburb of Hendra has long been associated with horse racing. Eagle Farm racecourse was established in 1863 and soon became Queensland's premier horse racing destination, drawing large crowds.[1] To enable easy public access, a railway line was established to service the racecourse.[2] One of the railway stations on that line was named *Hendra* after a place in Cornwall,[3] and the station gave its name to the suburb. 'Hendra' is an old Cornish name meaning 'old place' or 'old farm'.[4]

Figure 1: Hendra Station. (Photo by D Bailey, 1967, courtesy Ken Rogers Memorial Library, Australian Historical Railway Society QLD)

In September 1994, an outbreak of a previously unknown virus killed 13 horses associated with a Hendra stable and infected two humans, one of whom died. The causative virus was initially named 'equine morbillivirus' but subsequently renamed 'Hendra virus'. The virus also infected a farmer in Mackay (almost 800km north of Hendra) who had assisted in the autopsy of two infected horses a month prior to the Hendra outbreak. He died a year later after developing a severe encephalitis.

The host of the Hendra virus is a species of bats from the *Pteropus* genus. Horses are thought to acquire the disease by ingesting material contaminated with bat urine, saliva or birth products. Human cases have had close contact with secretions of infected horses and have presented with respiratory and/or neurological symptoms. There have been a further four human cases of Hendra with two fatalities (both veterinarians who had cared for infected horses).

Ross River virus

The Ross River, near Townsville, was explored and named in the mid-19th century. Among the early settlers of the region was a Scotsman, John Black, who moved to north Queensland and established a very successful farm there. Because of the high cost of overland transport, Black thought that it would be economically advantageous to find a port close to his properties, so in 1864 Black sent two of his managers to find a suitable port nearby. In their search, they found a narrow river mouth suitable for small ships and with good inland access. They named the newly discovered river after William Alfred Ross, who was a business associate of Black.[5,6] The 45 kilometre long Ross River played a crucial part in the development of north Queensland.

In 1928, an 'unusual epidemic' of skin eruptions and arthralgia (joint pain) was described in New South Wales. There were further outbreaks of 'epidemic polyarthritis', as this syndrome was later called, during World War II. In 1959 an arbovirus (that is, a virus transmitted by arthropods such as insects, spiders and crustaceans) was isolated from mosquitoes collected from mangroves near the Ross River. It was subsequently named 'Ross River virus' (RRV), and was first isolated from patients with clinical disease during a large epidemic in the South Pacific during 1979-1980, and subsequently in 1985 from patients in Australia.

continued next page

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RRV is the most common arboviral infection in Australia with about 5000 cases notified each year, mostly from Queensland. It is maintained in a mosquito-vertebrate cycle, with native macropods (kangaroos and wallabies) thought to be the major vertebrate hosts. Infection can be asymptomatic or cause a self-limiting illness characterised by polyarthralgia. There can also be a fever, rash, myalgia (muscle pain) and fatigue.

Murray Valley encephalitis virus

Figure 2: Sketch of the Murray River junction with the Darling by Captain Charles Sturt (1795-1869) who named the river. (South Australian State Library)

The Murray Valley derives its name from the Murray River that runs through it. The first Europeans to explore the river were Hamilton Hume and William Howell in 1824. In 1830, another explorer, Captain Charles Sturt, reached the river by boat after travelling down one of the river's tributaries and continued further down the river to reach its mouth. He named the river in honour of the British Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, Sir George Murray,[7] not realising it was the same river that Hume and Hovell had encountered further upstream and had named the Hume River.[8]

Between 1917 and 1925, epidemics of severe encephalitis with a high fatality rate were reported in Eastern Australia. This new disease was called 'Australian X disease'. There were no further epidemics of encephalitis reported for over 25 years until cases similar to Australian X disease were reported in the Murray Valley region between 1950 and 1951. The disease was given the name 'Murray Valley encephalitis' (MVE). The clinical features of these two diseases were indistinguishable and are thought to be the same disease. In 1960, it was isolated from mosquitoes, its major vector.

MVE virus is a closely related to the Japanese encephalitis and West Nile viruses. Since the last major epidemic in 1974, there have been over 75 cases of MVE reported, largely in Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

Barmah Forest virus

Barmah Forest is a river red gum forest located in Victoria, 225 kilometres north of Melbourne. The name *Barmah* is derived from the Yorta Yorta language. The meaning is unknown,[9] although it has been suggested that it is derived from the word *paama* 'meeting place'.[10] In the late 1800s, there was widespread uncontrolled logging of the forest.[11]

The 1974 epidemic of encephalitis in the Murray Valley region prompted researchers to collect pools of mosquitoes to characterise the species involved in the transmission of MVE. This not only led to the isolation of MVE, but the incidental isolation of 10 other viruses, among which was the isolate collected from mosquitoes trapped at the Barmah Forest site. This was a new and previously undescribed virus, which was subsequently named 'Barmah Forest virus' (BFV). Interestingly, around the same time a new virus was isolated in central Queensland and named 'Murweh virus' after the local shire council, but was later found to be a strain of BFV. BFV was first associated with human infection in 1986, and recognised as the aetiological agent of an epidemic in 1992.

BFV is related to RRV and is the second most common arboviral infection in Australia; the number of cases varies with seasonal conditions, but more than 400 cases are notified annually in Queensland alone. A number of mosquito species are able to transmit BFV but little is known of the vertebrate hosts. The illness caused by BFV is very similar to that caused by RRV, with symptoms including arthralgia, myalgia, fever and a rash.

...virus names

Menangle virus

Menangle is a suburb of Sydney. The name comes from the Dharawal language, meaning 'a place of swamps and lagoons'[12] The name (with early spellings 'Manhangle' or 'Manangle') was applied to a small lagoon near the Nepean River. In 1805, a 2000 acre land grant was awarded to Walter Davidson, who named the farm 'Manangle', after the lagoon. After a few years, the farm became part of a larger property and a small village, named *Menangle* after the initial grant, was established in it.[13]

Menangle virus infection was first recognised in 1997 following an outbreak of reproductive disease in pigs at a commercial piggery in NSW. It caused a decrease in the farrowing rate and live births and an increase in abortions and still-born piglets. The virus was isolated at the Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute at Menangle. Bats are thought to be the reservoir for the virus. Two human cases have been reported, both piggery workers who had an influenza-like illness, rash and headaches.

Conclusion

Naming of diseases after places is often controversial. Although there are no apparent objections to the naming of these Australian viruses, others cases have been met with fury. For example, in 1993, local residents objected to the US Centers of Disease Control naming a new hantavirus 'Four Corners virus' or 'Muerto Canyon virus' after a local landmark. The virus was subsequently named 'Sin Nombre virus', which in Spanish means 'no name'.[14] In 2006, Malaysian state authorities objected to naming a new bat-borne virus 'Melaka virus' after the state where it was first isolated.[15] Such reactions are not surprising, because apart from denoting and identifying human habitation sites, geographic features and political boundaries, toponyms form a medium that provides public and personal reference.[16] People have strong attachments to placenames because they are linking agents or symbols of attachment between themselves and a place. We can see this in the occasional labelling of a virus for political ends. Donald Trump's provocative and unhelpful identifying the SARS-CoV2 virus as the 'Wuhan' or 'China' virus is a deliberate act of demonising the place, country and people from where the virus originated. China's displeasure at such a branding is understandable. This is another excellent example of how naming can be a highly political act.

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'No body knows what'...

Seldom do we encounter light-hearted naming by explorers. Toponyms bestowed are usually rather detached and formal—descriptive, associative, occurrent, evaluative or eponymous names. The same applies especially to topographic descriptors (i.e. a descriptive noun phrase or a sentential description not functioning as a toponym), because these were intended as navigational aids and warnings for future navigators—a means of wayfinding. So, I was rather surprised when I came across a chart of Dusky Bay (NZ) drawn by George Vancouver in 1791, which contains two rather droll topographic descriptors of sorts. But first some background.

James Cook spent about six weeks anchored in a bay he called *Pickersgill Harbour* in what he called *Dusky Bay* (now *Dusky Sound*) on the southwest coast of the South Island of New Zealand. He arrived there in late march 1773 after 117 days at sea. The sound offered safe anchorage and plenty of resources for the revictualling of the *Resolution*. During his sojourn, Cook explored the area thoroughly and made a detailed chart and descriptions in his journal (see Fig. 1).

If you look closely at the chart, you will notice that the head of the northern sound (top righthand corner) (today's *Breaksea Sound/Te Puaitaha*) is not shown (see Fig. 2, next page). Cook's journal entry for 8 May 1773 explains why:

> At seven in the morning, on the 8th, Mr Pickersgill returned, together with his companions, in no very good plight, having been at the head of the arm he was sent to explore, which he judged to extend in to the eastward about eight miles. In it is a good anchoring-place, wood, fresh water, wild fowl, and fish. At nine o'clock I set out to explore the other inlet, or the one next the sea; and ordered Mr Gilbert, the master, to go and examine the passage out to sea, while those on board were getting every thing in readiness to depart. I proceeded up the inlet till five o'clock in the afternoon, when bad weather obliged me to return before I had seen the end of it. As this inlet lay nearly parallel with the sea-coast, I was of opinion that it might communicate with Doubtful Harbour, or some other inlet to the northward. Appearances were, however, against this opinion, and the bad weather hindered me from determining the point, although a few hours would have done it. I was about ten miles up, and thought I saw the end of it: I found on the north side three coves, in which, as also on the south side, between the main and the isles that lie four miles up the inlet, is good anchorage, wood, water, and what else can be expected, such as fish and wild fowl: Of the latter, we killed in this excursion, three dozen. After a very hard row, against both wind and rain, we got on board

Figure 1: Map of Dusky Bay, N.Z. and Resolution Island, showing track of 'Resolution', lakes, rivers, anchorages; place names. Pl. "No. XIII" from: A voyage towards the South Pole. Vol. 1. facing p. 92. (Whitchurch, 1777).

...'Some body knows what'

about nine o'clock at night, without a dry thread on our backs.

Because Cook did not find the head of the sound, he inscribed his chart with the curious words: 'No body knows what'.

On board the *Resolution* was a certain George Vancouver, who would return to Dusky Bay in 1791 on his own voyage of discovery in the *Discovery* and *Chatham*, knowing the sound would provide food, water and wood for his ships. Vancouver had the opportunity to complete Cook's survey, to find the sound was split into two branches (later called Vancouver Arm and Broughton Arm). Vancouver's chart shows the heads of both arms (see Fig. 3) where we see cheekily inscribed 'Some body knows what' (perhaps in other words 'I know what').

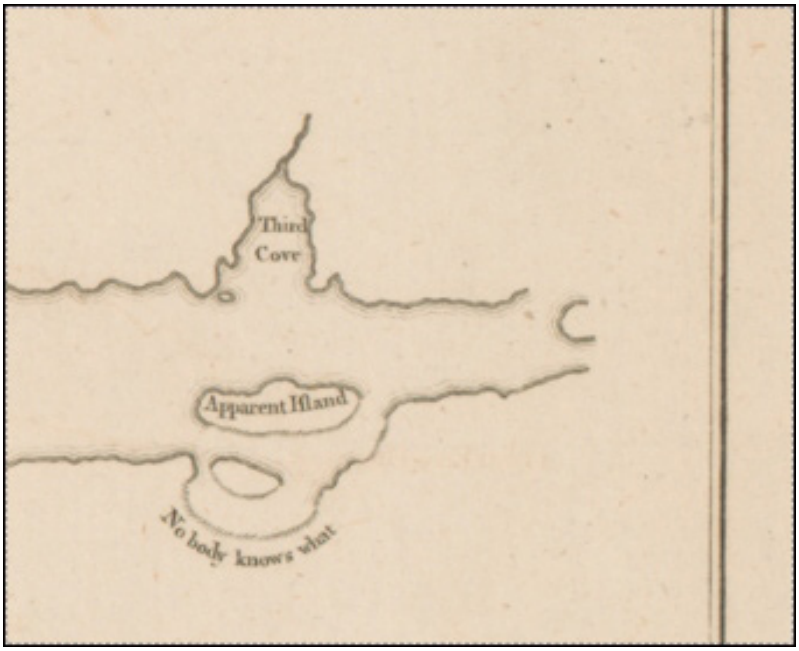

Figure 2: Detail from Fig. 1

It's rather refreshing to see some drollness creeping into the normally sober recording, naming and charting of the early European explorers of the region.

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Figure 3: Section of Vancouver's A chart shewing part of the S.W. coast of New Holland […] (1798) showing Vancouver Arm and Broughton Arm

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Placenames Puzzle Number 75

Solar system toponyms

*Geographic feature and locations sometimes bear the name of bodies and objects in our solar system. Example—(*TAS, lake) asteroid named after the daughter of Triton who acted as foster parent to Zeus's daughter Athena: *Lake Pallas*

1. (SA, bay) planet named for the Roman goddess who was the mother of the Roman people
2. (NSW, headland) asteroid named after the Roman goddess who was the sister and wife of Jupiter
3. (VIC, gully) Jovian moon named after the mother of King Minos of Crete
4. (VIC, creek) dwarf planet named after the Greek god of the underworld
5. (QLD, reef) Jovian moon named after a priestess of Hera who became one of Zeus's lovers
6. (SA, island group) planet named after the Roman god of the sea
7. (TAS, lake) Jovian moon named after a nymph who was one of Zeus's lovers
8. (TAS, headland) Cronian moon named after the second order of Greek divine being
9. (TAS, lake) planet named after the Roman messenger of the gods
10. (QLD, mountain) asteroid named after the Roman goddess of agriculture
11. (TAS, lake) Greek name for the sun
12. (TAS, lake) planet named after the Roman king of the gods
13. (QLD, locality) Greek name for the moon
14. (TAS, lake) planet named after the Greek god of the sky
15. (TAS, lake) Jovian moon named after the cupbearer of the Greek gods and one of Zeus's lovers
16. (TAS, lake) asteroid named after the Roman goddess of the hearth, home and family
17. (QLD, shoal) planet on which running water was discovered late in 2015
18. (TAS, mountain) asteroid named after the Greek god of love
19. (WA & SA, mine) comet which appears every 76 years
20. (AAT, island) planet named after the Roman god of agriculture

[Compiled by **Jan Tent**
Answers on page 2]

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