

CHAPTER III

St. Kilda's Topography—Its Swamp Lands—House To Let, St. Kilda, 1849 —Highway to Melbourne—St. Kilda Residents Subscribe £25 to Improve St. Kilda Road—Lands Changing Ownership—Auctioneer Brodie's "Flowery" Advertisement, 1847—Melbourne Terrace Becomes Fitzroy Street—Rev. C. Stuart Ross's Recollections, 1849-50—William Moodie's Memories—Bushranging in 1852—Royal Hotel Menaced—Alarm of James Mooney, the Licensee—Government Offers Reward for Bushrangers' Capture—Melbourne Clerk of Courts, a St. Kilda Resident, Complains of Want of Police Protection—Some Vice-regal Place Names—"The Wattle Paddock."

TO-DAY it is somewhat difficult to believe the assertion, A without examination, that St. Kilda by the sea, in the days of its first settlement, had a large portion of its area covered by swamps, or swampy land. If, however, the terrain of St. Kilda is visualised without its present encumbering houses, and without its network of streets, the lay of the land suggests that the drainage from the hill of St. Kilda ran south west, and north west, and the water found its levels in the flat country of West and South St. Kilda from where it percolated slowly, forming swamps in its passage, to the sea. And that is what did take place when the copious rains of winter fell upon the land.

The West Beach land from the St. Kilda lagoon to the sea was marshland, and in South St. Kilda, there was Elwood, with its swamp lands. This flow of local drainage was largely increased in volume by the drainage from the inland watersheds, St. Kilda forming a basin, wherein the waters collected. The hill of St. Kilda started, in an undefined way in the table land, about where the Alma Park is, and as the hill land extended west, it formed into a ridge, that became more marked in outline, until its apex was reached, about the corner of Alma road, and High Street, from where, after a short crown, it sloped away, still going west, till it reached the Esplanade and shore edge. In its passage the fall, on each side of the hill, flattened out, as the rising land of the hill was left, at Fitzroy Street on the

north side, and Inkerman Street, on the south side, and so to the marshy country of Albert Park lagoon lands, and the Balaclava flat, with its creeks, now a large city drain, both north and south parcels of land having more or less arrested falls, not with falls in inches, always diverging to the lowest level, the sea. What is obvious is not always seen. The constant sight of landscape conditions leads in most cases, to a dull acceptance of things as they are without any further thought why they are so. For a hill, the St. Kilda Hill had a steep and sharp elevation at Windsor. The railway train, immediately after leaving the Windsor railway station, enters into a steep bricked cutting, that continues, with a bow like sweep, as far as Dandenong Road, and then the cutting, no longer a bricked one, enters St. Kilda's territory, to score its way through the original Crown Lands' Churches' reserve, Alma Park, cutting the reserve into two pieces. For the Brighton railway company's purposes it was necessary to make a cutting through the hill of St. Kilda. Traces of that hill, at Windsor, do not obtrude themselves to-day. Chapel Street, Windsor, has been built up to meet the crown of the hill, and the crown has been cut down considerably. The crown, extended, a small table land, as far as Alma Road, where Chapel Street dips suddenly, following the lower side of the hill's surface.

It is worth noting, in passing, that the famous Chapel Street, extending, from the river Yarra to the Brighton Road, St. Kilda, was originally a street blocked on the north, at the Yarra, by a hill, through which was wrought by bridge builders a cutting. On the south, Chapel Street was incumbered with a hill, the St. Kilda Hill, over which a road was made. The railway contractors had to make the cutting through the Hill of St. Kilda. More pronounced features of the steepness of St. Kilda's Hill are still visible in High Street, St. Kilda where the contour of the hill's original surface remains almost the same, but not quite, as it was in the *days* of Port Phillip settlement. The peak of the road, over the hill, was cut down by two feet. From Alma Road to Charles Street, the highway was a somewhat dangerous one. More accidents took place at the foot of the hill, opposite Charles Street, than at any portion of the road. The curvature of the road, from gutter to gutter up to the year 1877, was so

great that it was impossible to keep it in good repair. The wheels of heavy drays, and the well laden market gardeners' carts, worked through the surface of the macadam formation, squeezing the stones to the sides of the road, where dangerous holes were formed. When rains drained down the hill, and found lodging places in the holes, the sinking of a carts' wheel to its axle was not uncommon. The condition of High Street, St. Kilda, in those days, was, a newspaper said a standing rebuke to the St. Kilda Corporation. It may have been if the Council was responsible for its condition. The advantages of road making by wood blocks were not known to the St. Kilda Councillors, nor had they learnt how to overcome the drawback of a hill road, with a heavy traffic going over it ; nor had they the money to spend, if they did know, what was to be the solution of the difficulty. Today, the road, laid in wood blocks, recalls nothing of its bogging and its dangerous ways with man, horse and cart.

It is arresting to think, and to realise, the remarkable transformation that has taken place, and how the face of St. Kilda has been improved literally out of sight, if not out of mind.

On October 30, 1843, Robert Latham of Queen Street, Melbourne, advertised in the Port Philip Patriot that he had at "St. Kilda—To be let and may be entered upon immediately, a snug house, neatly furnished, with garden in front." This is, we think, the first advertisement that told Melbourne residents that a furnished house was to let in St. Kilda. The advertisement proceeds, "Attached to the house there is good stabling, coach house and servants' room; also three acres of land, with promising crops of barley and potatoes. Rent moderate."

The fleeting record of the growing crop of barley, and the promising crop of potatoes, shows the rural character of the village of St. Kilda, aged then just one year and eight months.

We learn from Agent Latham's advertisement, that the bush track (St. Kilda road) was sufficiently made to permit a settler, residing at St. Kilda, to drive to Melbourne. In the years of the forties a punt boat was the means used by residents of St. Kilda, Prahran, and southern districts, to cross the Yarra into Melbourne. One day the punt boat sank for ever. Two weeks passed before the boat was replaced by another, with a capacity to ferry man and beast over the river. To avoid any

future delays caused by such accidents the settlers decided to build a wooden bridge. In October, 1845 that bridge, made out of red gum piles and hardwood planks, was opened for traffic.

In 1847 the St. Kilda residents, while enjoying the advantages the bridge gave to them, felt the want of a better road than a bush track. They met together, and agreed to give £25 towards trying to improve the highway to Melbourne. In recognition of the public spirit shown by the residents of St. Kilda the Melbourne Corporation also gave £25 to make "a road from St. Kilda into Melbourne." Such was the modest beginning of the work of improvement of that now broad and beautiful highway to the City—St. Kilda Road.

In the first months of 1847, land in St. Kilda was changing ownership. In January 11 of that year, William Easey, a land agent, was "favored by instructions from the proprietor, who is in England, to sell by public auction allotment 3, situate at St. Kilda, containing three acres having a frontage to the bay and to Acland Street." The allotment 3 Easey referred to is Section 3, with 300 feet frontage to the Esplanade with a depth of 1000 feet to Acland Street, and next to the north side of Alfred Square. It was bought by Captain Hutton at the Crown Land Sale for £225. The advertisement continues, "This allot- men is allowed by all to be the best in St. Kilda. It commands the most beautiful and extensive views, and to parties desirous of privacy it is situated as never to be annoyed by neighbours, or have the views impeded by buildings hereafter erected."

The three acres under Easey's hammer brought £180. The price obtained was referred to as "a high figure that showed the brisk competition for land around Melbourne." The sum realised for the three acres could hardly have caused other owners of land in St. Kilda to put up their lands for auction, since Captain Hutton by the sale lost £45.

A flowery advertisement appeared in the Port Phillip Patriot newspaper in 1847 of the sale of Sections 15 and 21. The first was owned by W. Firebrace ; section 21 by R. Deane. Firebrace's section was divided into six lots, each of which had a frontage to Melbourne Terrace (now Fitzroy Street) of 821 feet by a depth to a right of way from Acland Street 20 feet wide. Lot one had a depth of 264 feet, and the land was "nearly

enclosed and had an extensive frontage to Grey Street." And this is what Mr. G. S. Brodie, the official Government auctioneer of the day, and the vendor's agent says in his advertisement.

"It would be no easy matter," advertises Mr. Brodie, "without incurring the odium of exaggeration to picture the many inducements held out by this "Scarborough of the South" to those in search of health, retirement or an exquisite semi- rural residence. To parties setting any value on such excellencies there is no spot on the face of the globe, from the fabled 'Gardens of Ghul in their bloom' to the Vale of Tempe, more deserving admiration than this miniature Eden. The Village of St. Kilda is distant from Melbourne about half an hour's drive, and the road (as level as one of Thurston's billiard tables) abounds in scenery never surpassed, or rarely equalled on either side of the Equator."

The future vice-regal residence, and the Botanical Gardens ; are also mentioned—as additions to the beauties of the half hour's drive "the town is situate on a slightly elevated piece of table land, and commands a view which" etc "the neat and picturesque habitations at William's Town and beyond them are amphitheatre of mountains, forming a coup d'ceil at once striking and imposing." Notwithstanding that Mr. Brodie said that St. Kilda was placed on a tableland he could not resist the temptation to compare it to "Auburn sweetest village of the plain." It is further— "a panoramic El Dorado that will replace the bloom on the pallid cheek, or restore vigor to the weak. St. Kilda's sea breezes keep the atmosphere at a cool and healthy temperature. Like Southey's night:—

"A dewy freshness fills the silent air

"No mist obscures, nor cloud, no speck nor stain

"Breaks the serene of Heaven."

After that display of Mr. Brodie's auctioneering persuasiveness, more may have been hoped by him than was realised. The report of the result of the auction appears in the Port Philip Patriot of February 2, 1847 It may be that the reserve price put upon the land by Messrs. Firebrace and Deane was considered too high, and for that reason the sale was not successful so far as the number of allotments sold was concerned. Lot 1, with a frontage of 76 feet to Acland Street, with a depth of

60 feet, brought £10. Lot 2, same frontage as Lot 1, with a depth of 60 feet to Melbourne Terrace, £11/0/3. Lot 3, with a frontage of 96 feet to Melbourne Terrace, with a depth of 152 feet, £21. Lot 4, same as Lot 3, £24; another allotment at St. Kilda with a frontage to Melbourne Terrace of 821-feet and a depth of 264 feet brought £33.

The name "Melbourne Terrace" was superseded by that of Fitzroy Street about this time. A proclamation authorising the Crown Land Sales in the parish of South Melbourne was made in February 1847, by "Sir Charles Augustus Fitz Roy, Knight Commander of the Royal Hanoverian Guelphic Order, Captain General, and Governor-in-Chief of the Territory of New South Wales, and its Dependencies, and Vice-Admiral of the same." Three acres abutting upon Grey Street were advertised for sale, the upset price being fixed at £30 per acre.

Two travellers came out to Australia with the intention of spying out suitable pastoral country to be taken up by their principals in Britain. Their names were Messrs. Mosman and Banister, They published their colonial experiences in 1853 in a book called "Australia Visited and Re-Visited." They tell us something of Hobson's Bay, and how its shores looked from the deck of an emigrant ship.

According to Mosman and Banister "There was not much for the artist to sketch in the low sand flats, thinly covered with stunted trees, in the immediate vicinity of the bay. On the eastern shores a clearing upon some rising ground, with a cottage or two visible through the telescope, is all we have for the village of St. Kilda, a watering place in the environs of Melbourne. Later, the travellers wrote: 'Proceeding along the beach of about a couple of miles from the landing in a southerly direction you come to St. Kilda, a pleasant spot, with some agreeable residences on its rising ground, facing the shipping in the bay. It is scarcely large enough to be considered a township. Brighton, however, two miles further on, has more pretensions to that title. The road to it is not by the beach, but by a tolerably good road a considerable distance to the left of it, through some very agreeable open forest land.'

The Rev. C. Stuart Ross writes that the camp on the St. Kilda Beach was "a favorite resort of some of the young people

as far back as 1849-50. Tasty suppers were served there, and tough sea yarns were told which, even more than the suppers, allured us to these hospitable tents. Some of us joined the fishermen in their boats when the night was clear and calm, while others preferred the comforts of a bedroom at Howard's Royal Hotel, which was built in 1847, and was a favorite house much frequented in those early days. The native bush had been cleared away to some extent, but still it was largely in evidence in the neighbourhood, and in front of the building a broad belt of tea-tree fringed the shore. A few small houses, with, here and there, a more commodious residence, were built further on and back from the seaboard. The Junction Hotel stood then in the primeval bush, and a few chains from the building, on the Melbourne Road, there was a stump which was a standing peril to traffic. On the discovery of gold in 1851, and the consequent irruption of population into the colony, in the immediate succeeding years, St. Kilda made rapid progress, and became a favorite residential suburb."

St. Kilda remained in its primitive state and provided little for man" according to a St. Kilda resident of 1853, "except the trees to which convict bushrangers used to tie St. Kilda residents after they had bailed them up." At the time of the gold discoveries, convicts, ticket-of-leave men, bond-breakers, and others of the convict classes, joined the stream of reputable gold seekers, and swarmed into Victoria. Some of these escaped felons came from Van Diemen's Land in pirated boats, others from New South Wales on stolen horses. Their descent on the Port Phillip District has been likened "unto a rush of a horde of hungry rats stealing by night into a barge filled with a cargo of rich cheeses." These human wolves, lurking about the southern portions of Melbourne, frequented the St. Kilda and Brighton Roads.

The late William Moody, who was employed by the St. Kilda Council in the year 1882, and who held his positions of town hall keeper, and later cattle inspector, till he resigned his position, on September 28, 1903, was a very early tradesman, a baker, in St. Kilda. He died on April 2, 1904. Moody opened his shop in Fitzroy Street on December 6, 1852 and it stood about the north east corner of where the George Hotel now stands. At the time there was not a house after Grey Street

was crossed between his shop, and the Esplanade, on the south side of Fitzroy Street. On the north side Fitzroy Street slumped downwards into the West beach swamp. When Moody decided to build his shop, and to start business as a baker, he had great difficulty in carting the timber along St. Kilda Road because of the bad bush track. Moody when on his delivery rounds with his bread, one day in October, 1852, had an encounter with a bushranger.

Moody's story was that "he was riding a heavy draught horse with some packages in front of the saddle, and was making tracks through the wattles, and timber, in the direction of Cochrane street, Elsternwick, when a man on horseback came out of the scrub, and ordered him to 'bail up' ! Moody did not comply with the request because he knew there was another traveller on the road a little in front of him, and so he shouted to the man ahead of him. His doing that seemed to frighten the bushranger, who went back again into the cover of the scrub. Presently Moody heard the 'ping' of a bullet, which frightened him. Moody did not draw rein, but made his way to what was then known as Swanton's Paddock. Swanton lived at the corner of Point Nepean Road and Cochrane Street, and his paddock extended south as far as Elster Creek. The house Swanton lived in was at the time Moody speaks of an hotel, a well known Brighton road side inn called "The Busy Bee."

Moody continuing his story, said that Swanston's paddock led into Little Brighton Road (Cochrane Street) and that when he got near to a brickmaker's place the bushranger had disappeared. He told Sergeant Draper, in charge of the St. Kilda police, but no arrest followed.

We learn from **The Argus**, and also from the "Domestic Intelligence of the **Melbourne Morning Herald** that it was on Saturday afternoon, October 16, 1852, on a bright sunny day, at half past three o'clock, that four or six armed bushrangers, armed to the teeth, swept the country between St. Kilda and Brighton, bailing up and robbing several persons. As fast as they disposed of one they tied him up to their other victims, in order to thereby effectually guard against alarm, or interruption, hiding them in a thicket, where they were ordered to

sit down in a ring, facing each other, whilst one fellow stood guard, the rest plundering away until they had secured nineteen persons in all.

After keeping the tied captives in terror for three hours, they left them and went to a public house, the "Busy Bee" in Little Brighton Road. At dusk they saw a man on a well bred horse, cantering by. They called upon him to "Bail up!" He dug his spurs into his horse, and was out of the range of the bushrangers' guns before they could hit him. In a flurry of haste the bushrangers mounted their horses and started in pursuit. The escaping man left the Brighton Road and, jumping his horse over a fence, entered the "Bullock paddock." Every fence he came to his horse cleared in flying style. The bushrangers were not so well mounted as he, and their homes smashed through the fences. Going well, the pursued one galloped on but he could not shake the bushrangers off. Skirting the shallow bed of the Elwood Swamp, and galloping hard, he passed the St. Kilda Slaughter Yard, and then he reached the south end of the Esplanade.

James Mooney, the licensee of the Royal Hotel, heard the clattering of the galloping horse as it came towards the Hotel. Then he saw, through the bar doorway, a man leaping from his horse. Terrified, the man rushed into the bar shouting, "The Bushrangers are after me." Even as the man shouted, Mooney's customers hurried to the open doorway to see if what the panic-stricken rider said was true. One glance down the Esplanade was enough. Back into the bar they went, crying, "Yes, here they come !"

Mooney hurriedly shut, and locked, the bar door, barricading it with an iron bar. The bushrangers arrived just too late. Hammering at the closed door they ordered Mooney to open the door. The dusk of the October evening merged into night with the bushrangers prowling about the hotel, all outer doors of which were shut and barred, and with armed men behind them. Mooney, loaded gun in hand, tried stealthily to watch the desperadoes. Tired at last of their inaction the bushrangers commenced to try to smash in the bar door with the butts of their guns. Under blows, the door's panels began to splinter. Mooney, with his gun ready for fire, waited behind

the door. Just when the bushrangers looked like succeeding, their blows on the door stopped. They were heard cursing, and afterwards there was silence.

The cause of this sudden stoppage was that the horses of the bushrangers had stampeded. A young man, George Francis, afterwards a Melbourne architect, was one of the imprisoned customers in the hotel. He had crept out, taking advantage of the darkness to do so, to where the bushrangers' horses were tethered. With a sharp knife he had cut their tethering ropes and made them stampede.

The late Henry Tullett, one of the first Councillors of St. Kilda, arrived in Melbourne on the same day as the Royal Hotel was "stuck up" by bushrangers. He went out to St. Kilda and pitched his tent in High Street. His first night as a settler in a new land was a disturbed one. When he had curled himself in his blankets to sleep he was greatly alarmed by hearing a number of horses galloping almost over his tent. In the darkness he could locate them smashing their way through the light scrub that grew on St. Kilda High Street hill. Those animals were the bushrangers' horses that young Francis had stampeded.

Horses and bushrangers disappeared that night. Some days afterwards The Argus stated, on the authority of a mounted policeman that the St. Kilda bushrangers had been seen by him at Bacchus Marsh. Four of them were known as convicts from Van Diemen's Land, who had broken their ticket-of-leave in South Australia, and feloniously entered Victoria.

The Government offered a reward of £2000 in the Government Gazette for the capture of the St. Kilda bushrangers, in the following terms :—

"Colonial Secretary's Office,

"Melbourne, 19th October, 1852.

"£2,000 REWARD.

"INFORMATION having been received to the effect that several persons were waylaid and robbed in the road between St. Kilda and Little Brighton (Elsternwick) on the afternoon of Saturday the 16th inst. by five armed Bushrangers His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor has

been pleased to direct that a reward of £200 be paid for each of the offenders apprehension in any country, and that the reward be doubled on the apprehension of all.

"Fuller information may be obtained at the office of the Superintendent of Police, Melbourne.

"By His Excellency's Command

"W. LONSDALE.

The bushrangers were not caught and tried for their highway robberies in St. Kilda. A well known contemporary artist, William Strutt, painted a picture of the scene, which he visited a few hours after the "hold ups." In the picture the bushrangers are shown surrounded by their bound victims. This picture was, some years ago, reproduced in colors in the "Windsor Magazine." The original oil painting is in England in the possession of C. B. Crawshaw, and it is called "Bushrangers".

With such highway robberies taking place in St. Kilda, and its district, loud protests were heard against the police for allowing the lawless element to terrorise the country side. The Argus complained that St. Kilda had not a police constable to protect life and property. Sometimes, it was stated, the police pitched a tent in St. Kilda, and the tent became a moveable police station, the address of which, it was sarcastically said, was "somewhere in the bush."

When the police made an arrest, their prisoners were chained, and the chains were padlocked to logs prior to the prisoners being taken to Melbourne. It was said that out at St. Kilda "bad characters were harboured in bush huts; that cattle stealing habits were fostered, and sly grog practices existed." St. Kilda residents "out back", meaning settlers about Caulfield or Brighton, frequently complained of the loss of their horses and cattle.

Among other places the newspapers urged the police to visit was the bay line from the Esplanade to the Red Bluff, where several tents were occupied by an undesirable class. Sly grog selling, it was said, was going on in the tents. The vicinity of the tents was strewn with broken bottles. These vagabonds along the sea shore had changed what was once a beautiful walk into a scene of desolation. They had "broken down and walk into a scene of desolation. They had "broken down and

nearly destroyed the beautiful scrub that not long ago was such an ornament, and was so much noticed in this part of the township."

The Argus, with satirical humor, recorded that Mr. Sturt P.M. had "actually been seen in St. Kilda riding out there to dine with a gentleman on Sunday." The Clerk of Courts at Melbourne, Mr. Belcher, made a complaint in Court, October 13, 1852, that St. Kilda was without police protection, and that a riot had occurred there on Sunday that was carried on for some time, but no constable could be found to interfere. Police cadets, he said, rode through St. Kilda but they were more ornamental than useful. As a resident of St. Kilda, Mr. Belcher objected to its utterly unprotected state. The Argus supported Mr. Belcher, and urged the authorities to station one or two constables permanently at St. Kilda.

On June, 1858, six years after Mr. Belcher voiced his complaint, St. Kilda was protected by one sergeant of police, Sergeant Fenton, and nine constables. Fenton lived in Park Terrace, near the police reserve at the Junction.

With the exception of its sea frontage, the Esplanade, St. Kilda is surrounded by vice-regal names. It may be described as edged with the golden braided names of authority. It has Fitzroy on the north, Grey Street on the east and Robe Street on the south. Robe Street was called after Colonel Robe who succeeded Governor Grey as Governor of South Australia in 1845. Grey Street after Captain George Grey, the Governor of South Australia. It has been suggested that Grey Street was so named in honor of Sir George Grey, the nephew of the great Reform leader, Earl Grey. He was Home Secretary in Lord John Russell's ministry when Lord Russell became Premier in 1846. In view, however, of the juxta-position of vice-regal names, the probabilities point to the South Australian Governor as the Colonial Consul after whom the street was named, but we do not know which statement of the two is correct.

Sir Charles Fitzroy was popular in Victoria because he, in 1849, was the means of preventing a cargo of "exiles" in the convict ship "Randolf" from being dumped upon its shores. Prahran, in admiration of his firmness, honored him by changing the name of Chapel Street to Fitzroy Street, which change

lasted long enough to be shown on some early land titles. Confusion was caused by the two Fitzroy Streets, and to remove it, Prahran abandoned the new name and returned to the old one of Chapel Street.

Fitzroy Street is known throughout the English speaking world. Very few globe trotters come to Melbourne who do not visit the Esplanade, St. Kilda. And all visitors admire Fitzroy Street. This passage to the *Esplanade* is both easy and pleasant to walk. Its broad open way is an invitation to stroll along its well kept paths to the sea. The gentle slope of the road from the St. Kilda railway station tempts the visitor so easily do his footsteps fall as he saunters to the beach. Who can deny that streets have characters ? There are "mean" streets, as well as "fashionable" and "wealthy" ones.

Fitzroy Street is worthy of Sir Charles Fitzroy. We can fancy it has a dash of his pleasure loving vice-regal spirit. Sir Charles has been described as "a plump John Bull of the free and easy school; a gentleman whose hospitality extends over a wide circle of his friends. He is a bon vivant in its liberal sense, and is as good a judge of Claret or Burgundy as you will find in the Colony. S. Sidney, an Australian writer, told the truth when he said you would seldom find 'A better governor than this good natured, ball giving, George the Fourth style of Fitzroy.' "

Sir Charles was the "Champagne Charlie," of the Colonists. His name appears to be as permanent in Victoria as the name of Lord Melbourne.

The first days of the village of St. Kilda were linked with the bush track that went through the heart of the place on its way to Brighton, and beyond that to the small cattle runs along the eastern shores of the Bay, as far almost as Point Nepean. The track was what we know now as St. Kilda Road, High Street and Brighton Road. It was first called Great Arthur's Seat Road. In time, about 1842, Brighton as a name for the road superseded Great Arthur's Seat Road. Its continuation became High Street, since it ran up and down a hill, while the southern portion of the road was called Brighton Road in 1841. Reaching Elsternwick the continuation of the road was known as the Western Port Road as late as 1855. That name recalls the memory of one of the first settlements at Western Port, in

1826, of a few soldiers, and some convicts, under the command of Captain Wright. Subsequently the road was called Point Nepean Road.

The name—Nepean—carries us back to December 1800, when Lieutenant James Grant, on his voyage out from London to Sydney, in Her Majesty's little 40 ton brig, "Lady Nelson" sighted a point at the entrance to a bay—Port Phillip Bay. He it was who named the point Point Nepean, after Evan Nepean, a Secretary to the Admiralty. In that way Point Nepean Road—a Southern highway leading to and impinging upon the southern side of St. Kilda—has probably the foremost claim of any Victorian road name to be considered as the first actual link name with Britain.

An interesting place name of Early St. Kilda has been discarded, which is a pity, for it linked a St. Kilda lane with a well known place in London. One of the first plasterers who came to St. Kilda was named Pummeroy, and members of the same family are resident in St. Kilda. He bought land on the crown of the hill off High Street, and assembled the parts of one of the iron houses which were at that period imported from England. He ran a lane from his place to High Street, and named it St. Mary Axe, and the name is well remembered by old St. Kilda residents, who still remain to spend the winter of their days among the changing scenes where they lived, toiled, and settled in the days when life was young and St. Kilda was little more than a seaside village. Pummeroy was born in the neighborhood of St. Mary Axe, in London pronounced Simmery Axe, but it was in Early St. Kilda pronounced as it is spelt. St. Mary Axe was named after the Church of St. Mary At the Axe,—of the sign of the Axe, which no longer exists. It was the old quarter of London where busy Jews were almost as thick as bees, and they were particularly keen traders, which gave occasion for the lines :—

"Jews from St. Mary Axe, for jobs so wary, That
for old clothes they'd even axe St. Mary."

For want of historic sense on the part of someone the name of St. Mary Axe was discarded, and the lane renamed Pummeroy Lane, which it bears to this day. Pummeroy's house and his old time garden still exist off from the busy highway of High

Street. They are, as they stand, (1912), one of the few relics which the finger of modern improvements has not touched in the remains of Early St. Kilda. Not far away from St. Mary Axe Lane was another lane generally known as "Tin Pot Alley," from the row of iron cabins that lined its sides. The iron walls of the cabins were just driven into the ground, in a most primitive way. These extraordinary tenements were owned by Samuel Griffiths, a Crown purchaser of Elwood land, a Melbourne share broker, and a well known man in Early St. Kilda. We shall hear more of Griffiths, who was a man of some note in the isolated hamlet of Elwood. For some reason which is inscrutable, the early residents referred to him by the nickname of "Pontius Pilate."

One of the outstanding place names, in the very early days of St. Kilda, was that of "The Wattle Paddock." The property belonged to Samuel Jackson. Jackson Street recalls Samuel Jackson. The Wattle Paddock commenced at the junction of Grey Street, and The Melbourne Terrace, now Fitzroy Street. Both Grey Street, and The Melbourne Terrace, were named by the Government. The paddock had an extensive frontage to both of these streets. A considerable quantity of the land, abutting on Grey Street, was sold to Messrs. Dalgety & Gurner. The land was regarded as being in one of the "best sheltered positions in St. Kilda." On November 15, 1853, the Wattle Paddock was divided into allotments and offered for sale by auction by a well known Melbourne auctioneer, W. H. Cropper. In his advertisement of the sale he says, that up to that time, no land had been submitted to competitors with frontages to the Melbourne Terrace. He describes, "How this street begins at the entrance of the township, and continues, in an unbroken line, to the Bay, thence along the sea coast, to the termination of the village."

The termination he refers to, is the south end of the St. Kilda Esplanade. We have found that highway described, in other sale advertisements, as "The Melbourne Terrace"; that is the whole length of Fitzroy Street, and The Esplanade, was called "The Melbourne Terrace." The village of St. Kilda terminated at the southern end of the Esplanade, because its extension, any further in that direction, was arrested by swampy ground. The swampy land, lying seaward, to the

south of the Esplanade, was, eventually, one of the several works of reclamation carried out by the St. Kilda Council. The process of reclamation was nearing its completion, in the year 1887. The south end of the Esplanade, between the Esplanade, and the sea, was the site of a municipal tip. The rubbish dumped there was used for the formation of a street. The height of the tip, including covering material was four feet six inches. The rubbish was kept well covered with sand, and the sand formed the surface of the tip. The tip was within the distance of five chains of the Esplanade. The quantity of rubbish, and household refuse, from St. Kilda houses, buried each day, in the tip, was eleven cart loads.

We retrace our steps to Fitzroy Street, the Melbourne Terrace, and listen to what Auctioneer Cropper has to say to us across the gulf of seventy seven years of time. He assures us that, "It has always been considered that those who were so fortunate, as to hold land, in this street, were owners of the primest parts of St. Kilda, and it is very rare to find anyone willing to part with any portion they happen to possess. It is also the main entrance into St. Kilda. The allotments for sale are within 200 yards of the beach, and have each an ample frontage, and depth. No land can be sold by the Government on the opposite site of The Terrace."

Auctioneer Cropper's statement of the land, on the north side of Fitzroy Street, not being saleable by the Government was made, no doubt, in good faith, but time showed that the Government was not restricted from selling the land, when an impecunious Ministry desired to do so. At the time of the sale of the Wattle Paddock, the land opposite to it, the north line of Fitzroy Street, was a portion of the reserved land of Albert Park, but at that date the park lands were not permanently reserved. There was no railway cutting the main park off from this sea shore land. This land, abutting on Fitzroy Street, sloped away, (it was the St. Kilda hill's base), and low lying swampy land, and became in winter, a swamp. Its appearance was such that no man would have coveted it for the site of his dwelling house. According to Auctioneer Cropper, and he knew, if anyone did, "the Government did intend, and eventually may form docks, opposite these very lots ; in that case the value of them would be equal to some of the best

situations in the city it." He added in an emphatic way, "The foregoing are absolute facts." Such impediments as sand banks, and the shoaling shores of St. Kilda did not enter apparently into Cropper's mind. The low lying land of the West Beach, commencing at Fitzroy Street, or The Terrace, had suggested to some one, the Government itself Cropper said, that here was a suitable place for a series of docks. We can try to fancy today, how the north side of Fitzroy Street would look, edged with great docks, and with numbers of modern tramp steamers discharging their cargo, along the Fitzroy Street wharves !

That was a probability, made of the stuff of which dreams are made, but let us to the realities, that too, in the prophetic alchemy of the mind of Cropper, were superimposed also with dreams. The St. Kilda Jetty Company had formed their proprietary company, and we have the information given by Auctioneer Cropper that, "at the last meeting of the company, it had determined the site for its pier. The bill for the incorporation of the company had virtually passed the Legislative Council; the funds were all forthcoming, and operations to build the pier are to come immediately. This jetty is to be built in a line with the Melbourne Terrace, and within 300 yards of the allotments to be sold." Then upon these premises Mr. Cropper asks, "Who can calculate or foretell, the enormous passenger traffic, there will be then at St. Kilda, to, and from the Bay, in addition to all the requirements of its inhabitants being landed there, direct, instead of paying the expensive carriage from Melbourne?" The Cropper vision adumbrated St. Kilda with pier, and docks, as a seaside port, but a possible railway to St. Kilda was not foreshadowed. In substance, so far as "the enormous passenger traffic" was alluded to, Cropper was right, but in detail he was wrong. The passengers come not by ships from the West, but by railroad and tram tracks from the East, North and South. He was right, time has proved him to be so, when he said, "the corner allotment of Grey Street and The Terrace is unequalled in its position for an hotel, and a sure fortune could be made there in a very short time," and he discloses, that Mr. Jackson had had offers privately to buy the corner allotment for an hotel site. Mr. Jackson did not sell to those private buyers, or at least we infer so, since a private

buyer bought the opposite corner, and upon it erected the Terminus Hotel, now replaced by the George Hotel.

This sale of Wattle Paddock was no ordinary sale, but one that was conducted on a grand scale, opening with a champagne luncheon, and the proceedings enlivened with a band of music. The land buyers had to pay, of the purchase money, 25 per cent cash, and the terms were bills at 3, 6 and 9 months; the last two months' payments to bear 8 per cent interest. Thomas Clark was the solicitor, capable of telling a buyer everything the buyer was, within the ambit of the sale, entitled to know. It happens that we have a description of one of those "great" sales at St. Kilda, written by a resident of St. Kilda, William Kelly, who was a joint owner of a house with Brice F. Bunny, afterwards Judge Bunny. The type of house they owned was known, in 1853, as a "brick nogged house"; that is a wooden house, with brick fireplaces, and chimneys. The two of them agreed to call the house "Emerald Lodge," though Bunny was not an Irishman, having been born at Newbury, Berkshire, in 1820. According to Kelly, the buyers met, at the auctioneer's rooms, on the day of the sale, and they were driven out to St. Kilda, to the place where the land, purposed to be sold, was situated. An omnibus, and traps of various kinds were the carry ails. As they drove out to St. Kilda, the party was joined by others going to the sale, most of them on horseback, but some were in gigs and such like two wheeled vehicles. What we now know as the St. Kilda Road was not the only road to the village of St. Kilda. The village was on the hills' sea front, and not to any extent along High Street St. Kilda in the years of the forties and even to well into the fifties. The road from St. Kilda to Melbourne was a track that entered the Albert park about where the St. Kilda Railway Station now is. The track skirted the swamps (now Albert Park Lake) and came out, on the South bank of the river, where the first modern bridge crossed over the Yarra. The track was so bad, in the year 1847, that Howard's omnibus was often bogged along the road winding along the swamp's margin. On such occasions, the men had to alight from the omnibus, and push the wheels, in a joint endeavour, to assist the horses, to pull the vehicle out of the "glue pot." Such conditions, in a place newly settled, are not extraordinary. It is the comparisons of what the track to

St. Kilda was then, and what the road to St. Kilda is to-day, that is arresting, but marvellous changes have come in every direction along that St. Kilda Village swamp road, and along the Great Brighton, or St. Kilda Road. The St. Kilda Road was being made in June, 1859. Road making had not then attained the proficiency of construction, in the colony of Victoria, that is a common place with every municipal engineer in the state today. Many people in Melbourne were interested, in what the newspapers of the year 1859, called "a Novel Machine, patented by Mr. John Finlay, for the purpose of picking up the carriage way of the St. Kilda Road, to the regular depth of two and a half inches, an operation hitherto performed by hand." Finlay's machine was a plough, on a large scale, fixed to a four wheeled carriage. The plough share was shod with a heavy iron slipper. Two men, and five horses, were required to work the plough. With that plough the road to St. Kilda was first grouted, and so made ready to receive its stone foundations. Statistics from St. Kilda, a year before, 1858, showed that St. Kilda's valuation was £58,520, the number of dwellings 9961, and its population 4,901. In 1868 the valuations had increased to £103,058, the house totals to 1,639, and the population to 7,956. Ten years afterwards, 1878, the valuations were £124,184, the houses numbered 2,129, and the population 10,122.

To resume the story of the auction of 1853. When the auctioneer, with his party of prospective buyers of land, arrived at the place of sale, their ears were assailed by the noise, from a vigorous band of music, the drummer of which, on the big drum, made such a drumming that every resident in St. Kilda knew, that an auction was about to take place. The buyers were driven to a commodious tent. Close in upon the flaps of the tent, they saw waiting a motley group of men. These men were held up from entering the tent by a guard of strong bodied waiters. The guard was necessary to prevent the hungry rush of these free fattening fellows into the tent. A body of them regularly attended auction sales, where champagne, and luncheons, were given away. At times there was considerable difficulty in saving the wine, and preserving the luncheons, for the elect, on the omnibus, and for their brethren in gigs and on horseback. Once the nondescripts started their rush, it was as the rush of fami-

shed wolves on a carcass, as the struggle of thirsty camels at a desert spring.

According to Kelly, free seats were given to all parties on the omnibus, who wished to partake of a champagne luncheon at St. Kilda, "The invitation" he said, "was cut off from all contact with trade by the vile parody :-

"There is a transport in St. Kilda wood,
"There is a rapture in its sea grit shores,

which occupied the first series of allotments for the erection of villa residences on the magnificent and picturesque property of T. B d, Esq. without reserve." Auctioneers were free with their advice to the residents of Melbourne, telling them "to become owners of a cottage upon it, and to enjoy the advantage of sea bathing."

Kelly writing, in his book, entitled "Victoria in 1853, and 1858" states :—"St. Kilda is about 31- miles from the city, on elevated ground, washed by the bay waters on one side, and otherwise mostly surrounded by low lying wastes, which were flooded at the period of my visit. In 1853 there were a good many fine trees, of a venerable stamp, standing about, the last of their race, and several isolated residences, without reference to order, or future arrangement, as far as I could observe. There were a few older villas, and houses, neatly and substantially built, of brick and stone, but by far the greater number were hastily run up, of weather boards, without any intentions of stability, merely to meet the inordinate demand for residences there at most inordinate rents." He states that he saw in St. Kilda, in the year 1853, a two storied weatherboard building, that had fallen, with its face to the ground. He says the house had a balcony in its front, and that the tenants going out upon the balcony overbalanced the house. Kelly was an Irishman, and a barrister, and one who did not allow a story to become dull for want of a little picturesque basting. Bad foundation, and a "good blow", a "southerly buster," may have levelled the house. Another writer, of contemporary date, Thomas McCrombie says, "At this period, so great was the want of house accommodation, that those whose vocation would permit took refuge in the suburbs. St. Kilda was the favorite place for merchants, and members of the legal profession; it boasted the

twofold advantage of being near the city, and of possessing one of the finest marine views in the world."

When Kelly settled down in Emerald Cottage he found a difficulty in having parcels from Melbourne to St. Kilda delivered. The Royal Hotel licensee, Howard did not allow passengers, on his bus to bring parcels to St. Kilda. To Kelly, and to others, whom Kelly consulted, it was evident that a parcel delivery company, covering the districts of St. Kilda, Prahran, and Brighton would probably succeed. He formed the Parcels Delivery Company, and took an office in Bourke Street. Advertisements proclaimed the company's desire to deliver parcels. Kelly sat in his office, and waited for the parcels that were to fill the carts the company had specially built to carry them. Scarcely a parcel for delivery was lodged. The reason was that Howard removed his ban on parcels being carried by omnibus passengers, and also that three, or four residents in St. Kilda obtained spring carts, put canvas roofs over them, and turned to the work of carrying parcels for a very low figure. They drove through the streets of St. Kilda, in the year 1853, ringing bells, and calling upon the people to bring out their orders for Melbourne parcels. Kelly's company could not compete with the opposition, and sooner than lose any more money than its promoters had already lost, the company sold its carts, and ceased to exist.