

## CHAPTER XXVII.

*Petitions for Annexations, and Movements for Secessions—St. Kilda and Caulfield—Boundary Mistake in Local Government Act 1874—Extraordinary Position Arises—Caulfield Shire Gains Territory—St. Kilda Council Protests—New Wards Created—Annexed Land Restored—West Beach Ratepayers Dissatisfied—Movement for Severance—Hon. Francis Longmore Insults the St. Kilda Councillors—A Public Meeting—West Beach Ratepayers Told to Go—Tricky Move by, Emerald Hill Council—Shuffle in Boundary Lines—West Beach Seceders Aided by Sir Bryan O'Loughlen—West Beach Crown Land Sales—South Ward's Proposed Secession Fizzles Out—Influenza Epidemic, 1919—Municipal Hospitals—St. Kilda Baby Health Centre—Councillor Barnet's Civic Services.*

**I**N the days when Councils were very young corporations, many of the residents of municipalities were not quite clear, as to where the boundaries of a municipality began, and where they ended. The same remark applies today to hundreds of people living in suburban cities. They do not know the boundaries of their own municipality. The 55 householders, dwelling in a portion of the Caulfield Road District, were not, possibly, quite clear what were the boundaries of the newly-created municipality of St. Kilda, or may be they were taking no risks of being left within any portion of the Caulfield Road Board District, when on July 19, 1859, a petition from them was published in the Government Gazette, praying that the land in their locality, might be united to the St. Kilda municipality.

The petitioners' story was that they were resident householders, within the portion of the Caulfield Road District, known as East St. Kilda, which they said may be generally described as, bounded on the north, by the Great Dandenong Road, on the south, by the Glen Huntly Road, on the west, by a road, or street, called Hotham Street, and on the east, by a road called Barkly Road, Caulfield. They were desirous of being included within the municipal district of St. Kilda. They explained that the said locality adjoined the municipality of St. Kilda, that it contained an average of at least, thirty six residents to each square mile, of whom the petitioners stated they them-

selves constituted the majority, and, further, they urged that the Municipal Council of St. Kilda had expressed its willingness to accede to their proposal for annexation.

The names of the petitioners were John S. G. Webb, William Tucker, Henry G. Orme, Fredk. Geyhr, William Holmes, William Mitchell, J. R. Tuckett, F. McDonnell, Jesse East, Charles James, Dawson, W. S. Woolcott, T. L. Perie, Jas. M. Gibbs, Wm. Peterson, Josiah Chapman, H. Taylor, William Hirst, John Ferguson, B. C. Ashenden, Thomas Brown, B. Ashenden, Wilton Gardiner, George Wall, Alfred C. Cummins, Arthur Beachamp, D. Sutherland, Horatio Beachamp, Robert Campbell, C. E. Bertheau, F. T. Sargood, Henry Warland, Robert Whitelock, Daniel Andrews, Richard Borpey, Thos. Pay, Joseph Wilkie, Henry Alfred Bunn, W. T. Frost, J. W. Wilson, T. Mahnke, Robert Langford, Joseph Lane, Charles Carry, John Pinions, W. G. Lempriere, William Clarke Jnr., Charles John Arnold, Alfred Denney, John Dickson, James Fahey, Joseph Drew, Henry Lane, G. Bradley, John Eason, Frederick Tucker.

These petitioners, of the year 1859, knew better than we do what they wanted, and why they asked for it, but so far as we follow the second, and revised proclamation, of the boundaries of the newly created municipality, which appeared in the Government Gazette, in February 1857, the petitioners were obviously asking for what was already proclaimed. Had the petitions been necessary, then those fifty-five rate-payers, formerly belonging to the Caulfield Road Board District, would have been the men, whose actions enriched St. Kilda with more than half of its Eastern area. Mistakes made by residents, in boundary lines, do not cause us any wonder since Governments have been guilty of such mistakes, and still worse have proclaimed their mistakes in legal enactments causing no end of confusion, and discord.

Such a mistake was made in the Local Government Act, 1874 whereby the Shire of Caulfield had improperly incorporated, in the description of its boundaries, a portion of land, belonging to, and within the established boundaries of the Borough of St. Kilda. Rates were levied upon the residents therein, by the St. Kilda Council, and the Caulfield Council. The ratepayers had, at the best, no great welcome for a municipal tax gatherer, but when the first collector was followed by another tax gatherer the ratepayers speedily voiced their indig-

nation. Having paid their municipal taxes to St. Kilda, or to Caulfield, just as it happened, they stoutly refused to pay their rates twice over. The St. Kilda Council, on its part, commenced to enforce its claims for overdue rates. This action brought the strange position of the ratepayers with two municipal claimants for their rates, under the notice of the Government. Application was made, by the St. Kilda Council, to the Government to rectify the error of description, and to restore the section of the municipality that the erroneous description had eliminated from the Borough. The Assistant Commissioner of Roads, and Bridges, said (February 7, 1876) that the error in describing the boundaries of Caulfield might be rectified, by a short amending Act of Parliament, but that it was not considered necessary to apply to Parliament for further legislation, as the powers contained in the Local Government Act 1874, were sufficient for the purpose. The Commissioner invited the bewildered ratepayers to state, in a petition, under which Council they desired to be ratepayers. This was done, and the result was submitted to the St. Kilda Council in a report that showed, "the number of assessments, as obtained from the copy of valuation, by the St. Kilda Borough Council, to be 202; owners stated as, "unknown" 53, owners known, but names given twice, or more, in copy of valuation, 20, leaving 129, as the number of assessments. Petitioners signing admitted as correct by the St. Kilda Council 72; against being included in Caulfield Shire, 57, in favor of being included 72. Majority in favor of being included in Caulfield Shire 15.

The St. Kilda Council protested that the Government officials had no right to deduct the 53 assessments in the way they had done, because the names were not known. The Council decided to take counsel's opinion. Clearly was it unfair to make the St. Kilda Council pay for a Parliamentary blunder, but the Council's well founded protests were unavailing. The prayer of the petitioners was granted, at a meeting of the Governor in Council, held on February 7, 1876. After the boundary of the Borough of St. Kilda was redefined in the Government Gazette containing a notice of the meeting of the Executive Council, the annexed land was described as,

"East St. Kilda Riding of the Shire of Caulfield. Bounded on the north, by the main Dandenong Road, on the east, by the Orrong Road, on the south, by the Glen Huntly Road,

and on the West, by Hotham Street. The centre of the said roads and streets, to be taken as the boundary line. And the honorable Joseph Jones, Her Majesty's Commissioner of Railways, and Roads, for Victoria shall give the necessary directions herein accordingly.

ROB. WADSWORTH,

Clerk of the Executive Council."

The St. Kilda Council held a special meeting to hear the opinion of Counsel, George Higinbotham, afterwards Chief Justice of Victoria, upon the whole of the circumstances, that had arisen and deprived St. Kilda of territory. One of the results of this annexation of territory, was that it disfranchised one of the St. Kilda Councillors, Councillor P. D. Phillips. He was deprived of his Councillors' qualifications, within the Borough of St. Kilda. Counsel's opinion was that his seat was vacant. The balance of the wards was disturbed, and it became necessary to notify the new adjustment of boundaries to the old wards. This was done in the Government Gazette of March 24, 1876.

"The North Ward: Beginning at the intersection of Barkly, and Wellington Streets, thence eastward along Wellington Street, and the main Dandenong Road to Hotham Street, south along this street to, and west along Inkerman Street to Barkly Street, and north by this street to the starting point."

"The South Ward: Beginning at the junction of Inkerman Street, with Barkly Street, thence eastward along Inkerman Street to and south along Hotham Street to the Glen Huntly Road, west along this road to, and south along St. Kilda Street to Park Street, west along Park Street, and to the shore of Port Phillip Bay, northward by the shore to its junction with Barkly Street, and up this street to the starting point."

Delegates from the Caulfield Council, and the St. Kilda Council, met to adjust business arising out of the transfer. The St. Kilda delegates claimed the rate from October 1st, 1875, to February 17, 1876, the date of the proclamation, severing the locality from St. Kilda. This claim was allowed, and the Caulfield delegates undertook to see that the rate was collected, and paid to the St. Kilda Council, the St. Kilda Council to pay the Caulfield Municipal rate collector's commission. A further claim, by St. Kilda delegates, for the cost of lamp pillars, and lanterns,

erected in the severed district, was not favored. The Caulfield delegates claimed a portion of the Brighton Road toll fund, but the St. Kilda delegates declined to consider the claim. When the report of the Conference was placed before the Council (April 3) Councillor Tullett said that, in the course of three or four years, those who had been in favor of the severance would wish to rejoin St. Kilda Municipality. Several sources of revenue, which the discontented ratepayers had shared in, while they remained in the Borough of St. Kilda, notably the fees for publicans' licenses would no longer be available to them. Caulfield did not have so large a revenue as St. Kilda, and the Caulfield Council's new domain carried with it the responsibility of the maintenance of main roads.

The Caulfield Council discovered, when too late, that it was not to receive so much subsidy as its councillors thought it would have done on their increased assessments.

Councillor Phillips, sent in his formal resignation to the St. Kilda Council. About 100 ratepayers presented a petition to Richard Balderson, of Grosvenor Street, East St, Kilda, asking him to stand for election, as a Councillor of the South Ward, in the St. Kilda Council. He was elected, without opposition, and he took his seat at the Council table on April 1st, 1876.

Regarding the dissatisfied ratepayers, who had ranged themselves under the banner of the Caulfield Council, Councillor Tullett was a truthful prophet though he was not correct in his time estimate that was to elapse before some of the ratepayers sought to return to the St. Kilda fold; repentant prodigals who had found out that they had made a mistake. About the middle of October, 1886, they presented a petition to the Minister of Public Works, praying that this portion of Caulfield be annexed to the municipality of St. Kilda. Their arguments were, that they were neglected by the Caulfield Shire Council, and also that a fair share of the amount of the rates collected was not expended on their streets. Councillor Pilley, a forgiving city father of St. Kilda, was well content to open his civic arms, and to embrace and to welcome the prodigals. The North Ward, the portion of St. Kilda benefited, was prepared to kill the fatted calf, but not so the South Ward ratepayers, with Councillor Jennings as their mouthpiece. The majority of the Council differed from him, and the prodigals were rejoiced to learn that their names would once more be placed on the rate books of St.

Kilda. The notice of the reannexations appeared in the Government Gazette of October 22, 1886. The municipal area that was reannexed, in the year 1886, is contained within the following boundary lines :— On the north, Dandenong Road ; on the south, Inkerman Street; on the east, Orrong Road ; and on the west, Hotham Street. The area of the land is 160 acres, and included in its boundaries is the St. Kilda Cemetery.

The first lands to be sold, at the West Beach, are shown on a plan, issued by the Crown Lands Office, and dated August 4, 1859. This plan indicates land allotments 200 x 250, 200 x 500, and some odd area blocks, advertised for sale, on August 31. Beaconsfield Parade is described on the plan "Marine Parade". The Parade extends from the "Boundary Post, Fraser Street to Fitzroy Street." Cowderoy Street, and Patterson Street, are the only two streets indicated on the map. The plan is divided into three sections, with frontages shown to Marine Parade, Patterson Street, and a road called Park Road, bordering on "Unfenced portion of South Park, Swampy Lagoon". The depth of two sectional blocks measure 500 feet each, or together, in depth, 1000 feet, before they reach the swamp. According to scale the swamp, in breadth, varies from 1,000 feet east of Patterson Street to the railway line, and 20,000 feet along Fitzroy Street to the Railway station. Beyond the Railway Station, when the Bowling Club premises, and the Park State School now stands, a site about 700 x 700 feet is marked "Site set apart for Archery Ground." Five years later Fitzroy Street, from the station to Beaconsfield Parade, was enclosed by a post and rail fence, and to the west of the Melbourne and St. Kilda Railway line, was a long narrow lagoon, extending northward, and labelled, in a Government map, dated June 3, 1864, made by J. B. Philp, "salt lagoon."

The St. Kilda Council wrote to the Deputy Surveyor General, J. Hodgkinson, asking him to withdraw the West Beach lands from sale, and he replied, under date August 17, 1859, "this request cannot be complied with, for if the land in any one municipality be withheld from sale, with a view to future endowment, the lands in other municipal districts would have similarly to be withheld, to the very serious detriment of the public revenue, for the current year."

The land offered for sale, Wednesday August 31, 1859, was situated between the St. Kilda Railway, and the line of the

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West Beach. "Considering," said The Argus in its report of the sale, "the unfavorable locality, having as yet no road approach, the prices realised were generally considered as satisfactory. Several lots, in the most swampy parts, were passed without an offer being made, and many allotments realised only a trifle above the upset price."

The parcels of land disposed of comprised 13 acres, 9 9/10ths perches, and realised £4,997, being at the rate of £382.7.3 per acre. The following are the particulars of the several lots sold, and the prices obtained for them. The upset price was £300 per acre. The names of the purchasers were, Michael Burry, James Watson, Cornelius Job Ham, John Carter, Clement Hodgkinson, Jonas Nash Hassan, William Monton, Albert Edelman, James Pipe Hyam, Joseph Glynn, Alfred Harris, George Wing, Thomas Anstey, F. A. Chave, Charles Charlton Pain, John Greaves, William Kesterton, Solomon Benjamin, James Furrier, and Thomas. Hamilton. Some of these buyers, half of whom, at least, resided in St. Kilda, bought two lots of land.

Thirty eight parcels of land were offered at this West Beach sale of Crown Lands. Lots 33 to 38 had an area each of an acre, mostly swampy land. For these lots no offer was received, nor was there any for two lots, containing two roods of land. Two acres, Lot 31, Farmer, and Lot 32, Hamilton, brought £340, and £300 respectively. The remainder of the land offered contained areas of two roods of land. John Carter paid the highest price obtained that day, for West Beach lands, viz. £395. The lowest amount paid for a two rood block was £150. Land with frontages to the Marine Parade, now Beaconsfield Parade, brought the highest price.

Remembering the adjacent swamps it was remarkable that any land was sold, except in the belief of purchasers, that the swamp lands would be eventually drained! Even the dry land was not immune from flooding, in unusually wet winters, when the Albert park lagoon's excess of storm waters sought an outlet towards the sea. Still there are men, who will buy swamp lands, if there is any prospect of being able to worry a municipal council into draining their lands. Swamp dwellers seem to be, by habit agitators for land reclamations, and none know better than they that agitation is their intention, when they drive their home-stakes into the more or less water-logged ground that they have come to, and chosen to dwell on. Very often it

happens that Councils are not able to satisfy the men of the swamps, and then the air is filled with talk of secessions, of the ratepayers' intention to join some beneficent neighboring municipality that is ready to promise to drain the self-pitying ratepayers' sodden land, at the expense of the common municipal purse. That is the story of the very early West Beach residents, told in broad lines. The details are more interesting, since the secession caused a considerable amount of hostile feeling. The West Beach ratepayers' grievances were :-

1. Insufficient drainage of their lands at West Beach.
2. Overrating for the benefits they derived from inadequate municipal services.

The first drain constructed on the West Beach, was made in the year 1869, from the plans of the then surveyor of St. Kilda, Sydney Smith. The drain work cost £2,318, half of which was borne by the St. Kilda Council, the other half by the Government. In 1875, a new drain was proposed, and the plans for it were drawn out by the then St. Kilda Borough's surveyor, R. H. Shakespear. The plans were approved by the Central Board of Health. The Board promised the St. Kilda Council, that it would influence the Government to provide a subsidy, for the construction of the new drain. The St. Kilda Council wrote to the Councils of Prahran, and Emerald Hill, asking them to *share in* a portion of the expense. Both Councils declined to do so. Then the St. Kilda Council learnt that the Government refused to allot any sum, on its annual estimates, towards the cost of the drain. The St. Kilda Council was therefore unable to build the drain, but its members did not cease to press their requests upon the Government. By means of private ministerial interviews, and by deputations to Ministers, the Council succeeded in having the sum of £3,000 included in the Government estimates, for the year 1877. This sum was earmarked for the cost of the work of draining Albert Park, and also for reclaiming the swampy ground, on the West Beach of St. Kilda. The Government proceeded with the work of draining Albert Park, but not one penny of the £3,000 was spent on the work required, at the West Beach.

The St. Kilda councillors were surprised, and disappointed, at this evasive act of the juggling Government, but they were not defeated. On the contrary, the councillors again began to interview the Ministers of the Crown. In the end their persis-

tency was rewarded. In the year 1878, the councillors succeeded in having £2,000, placed on the Parliamentary Estimates, for the work. The passing of this sum was made contingent upon the St. Kilda Council undertaking to contribute a like sum towards the West Beach drainage scheme. These actions do not disclose any evidence, that the St. Kilda councillors neglected the civic wants of the West Beach ratepayers. The ratepayers had, of their own volition, chosen a doubtful place, for their residential sites, and the St. Kilda Council, in the circumstances, had done the best it could do for them.

When the Hon. Francis Longmore who was for a period a well known politician in Victoria, went to live at the West Beach, in the year 1874, he bought land, for which he paid, at the rate of £300 per acre. The place name Longmore Street records his one time association with the West Beach lands. A drain that ran alongside Longmore's property was not of sufficient capacity to adequately drain the swampy lands.

Longmore attained to various ministerial positions, among them that of Minister of Lands, under Graham Berry. Longmore was born in Monaghan, Ireland in 1826, and he was educated at a Presbyterian Academy in the same place. He was full of the fire of a quarrelsome Irishman. He placed no brank upon his tongue, nor did he scruple to use his powers as a Minister of the Crown, in an attempt to force the St. Kilda Council to make improvements at the West Beach, calculated by him, to enhance the value of his property. Finding he could not coerce the councillors to do, as he desired, he took a violent antipathy to the St. Kilda Council. When occasion caused the councillors to wait, as a deputation, on him, in his ministerial capacity, he was boorish in his manner, nugatory in his attitude, and gross in his speech, so much so, that some of the St. Kilda councillors declined to go again before him as a deputation. On one visit he said to the deputation, "If I had the power, I would send the whole of the St. Kilda Council on to the roads." The outrageous licence he took in making such an insulting remark, becomes evident when it is known that some years before that time, it was not unusual for convicts to be employed in the work of making roads. We remember seeing, about the year 1876, a gang of prisoners, with armed warders as overseers, at work in constructing, or deepening, the ornamental lake, in the Melbourne Botanical Gardens. An old protest of

clamorous intensity was revived by the working sections of the Melbourne public, against the utilisation of "prison labor" for such and kindred works. The loss of employment caused to free men by the Government ordering convicts to do road and other work was too clear to admit of any plausible excuse to employ prison labor. Longmore's use of the phrase "on to the roads," when uttered by him, was still remembered by old colonists, and it had not lost the sting of its penal significance.

At the time, about which we write, the St. Kilda Borough Council—it became a borough in April 1863—had spent on the West Beach, and its drain, £2,000, and the Council had received, in rates, from the West Beach residents £840. For the municipal year, ending in 1879, the Council had struck a 1/6d. rate, instead of its usual municipal rate of 1/s. or 1/3d. The increase in the rate was made, to enable the Council to raise sufficient money, to take advantage of the Government's subsidy of £2,000 towards the reclamation of the swampy lands, at the West Beach, under the pound for pound offer. Thus, it is clear that all the ratepayers of the Borough were to be penalised, so that the West Beach could be adequately drained. When the Western ratepayers learned that the Council had struck a rate of 1/6 they were loud in their protests. To rate them, they cried, at eighteenpence, when they lived in a swamp, and "swallowed miasmatic air, where typhoid fever was quite a *daily* household complaint," was to make them seek to cut adrift from such an inconsiderate Council. They had suffered too much, already, to allow the St. Kilda Council to place any more burdens upon them. They would ask His Excellency, the Governor, by a memorial, wherein they would set forth their troubles, wherein too they would pray to him to allow them to be annexed to the municipality of Emerald Hill.

Some of the West Beach ratepayers were very serious, but there were others who seemed to bear the ills they had more stoically than those who wished so ardently to fly to the ills they knew not of. Indeed there were ratepayers who did not join in the public clamor. They met secretly in the house of Isaac Lazarus, Marine Parade, but what those reticent ratepayers said, or what they did were also secrets from the bulk of the curious West Beach ratepayers, waving their annexation banners in the West Beach breezes. This militant section was chagrined that the meeting of Lazarus, and his friends, had

not been a public one. In a way they repudiated the meeting, though Lazarus still acted as one of the sponsors of the movement.

The militant West Beach ratepayers cried "Away with secret meetings! Let us proclaim our grievances from the Town Hall platform so that the world, and St. Kilda, can hear them!" Public light was what they wanted, and so they petitioned the Mayor of St. Kilda to call a public meeting, "to discuss the desirability of separation, or non-separation of West Beach, from the Borough of St. Kilda." The ratepayers, who signed the petition for a public meeting, were Frederick Harcourt, D. Duffy, C. Trewhella, Edward E. Eicke, T. Taylor, Edward O'Donnell, Wm. Macdonald, Wm. Kesterson Alex Henderson, Matthew Egan, V. M. Wyley, John J. Beck, Mary Rouse, Eliza J. Hodgson, J. Hodgson, Chas. Anderson, Archd. Mackenzie, Robert King, James Roberts, John Spottiswood, Maria Brunt.

The Mayor of St. Kilda, Councillor Henry Tullett, granted the petition, and he appointed the meeting to be held, in the Town Hall, on Tuesday night, January 21, 1879. Municipal opinion in St. Kilda proper was that this movement of the West Beach ratepayers was merely a demonstration in force, a piece of West Beach bluff, to cause the council to capitulate, and to offer to them, as a bribe to remain, all that they demanded, quite irrespective of any expense. The men of the West Beach lands misjudged the temper of the Borough Council the members of which, were tired of hearing the complaints of the West Beach ratepayers. They considered them to be unreasonable in their demands, and that they showed a want of consideration for the financial responsibilities the Council had in other parts of the Borough. The Council remembered too the liberal way in which the West Beach ratepayers had been already dealt with. The Council, was prepared at the public meeting to show, what had already been done, for the West Beach and then to tell the ratepayers then, and there, to quit as quickly as they could and enroll themselves under the jurisdiction of the Emerald Hill Council. At the Town Hall meeting, the West Beach ratepayers failed to put up any case whatsoever. Francis Longmore employed abuse in place of argument. The forces of the West Beach ratepayers had not been schooled for the occasion. It came as

a great shock to the ratepayers, when an opponent to the movement, one Mr. Gillespie, moved:—

"That the movement set on foot, by the ratepayers of the West Beach, to be separated from St. Kilda, and annexed to Emerald Hill receive the support of this meeting, and that the Borough Council be instructed to carry out this resolution."

The motion was seconded by a Mr. Calder. An amendment was moved by one Mr. Harcourt, and seconded by D. Duffy, to the effect

"That the ratepayers of West Beach are not anxious to separate from St. Kilda."

On the amendment being put to the meeting, four votes were recorded in its favor, for the motion the whole of those present apparently voted in its favor. The motion was declared carried. In due course a deputation of ratepayers from West Beach waited on the Minister of Lands, the Hon. Francis Longmore, who said he was in favor of the separation, and he wanted to know, from those present, whether the St. Kilda Council desired that the boundaries of the portion annexed should be Fitzroy Street, and St. Kilda Road. Now the first petition of the dissatisfied ratepayers asked, that the land, known as West Beach between the sea, and the railway line, and bounded on the south by Fitzroy Street, should be severed from St. Kilda. To that petition the St. Kilda Council had no objection, but it was an entirely different proposal, when that petition was abandoned, and in the light shed by Longmore's countenance, a second petition was prepared, which not only included the area already indicated, but extended the Fitzroy Street boundary to St. Kilda Road, thus, giving the Emerald Hill Council the control of Albert Park. By the St. Kilda Council this change of intention was regarded as a very sharp, and unneighbourly move, on the part of the Emerald Hill Council. The St. Kilda councillors regarded the second petition as one that had in it grave elements of danger to the rights of St. Kilda. With Longmore in power, and his known, and declared dislike of the St. Kilda Council, it seemed almost certain that the Council must be robbed of its municipal interests in Albert Park. It was not the first time the St. Kilda Council determined to put up, what looked like a forlorn fight, to retain its jurisdiction over what it already possessed. Everyone concerned in

the proposed annexation, including representatives from the Emerald Hill Council, waited on the Acting Chief Secretary, Sir Bryan O'Loughlen where the whole question was to be argued out.

Longmore, a big man and blustering, essayed to play a dual roll, inasmuch as being a municipal petitioner he was also a Crown Minister. He made the two positions interchangeable, as suited his mood. Some of the St. Kilda councillors sharply criticised his attitude, but to no purpose since Longmore was within the ministerial fence. O'Loughlen supported him, and opposed the councillors, saying that "any attack made on his ministerial colleague he regarded as an attack on himself, and he would not allow such liberties." Two Irishmen, each with a Ministerial shillelagh, were too much of a handicap altogether. The St. Kilda councillors had no effective weapons with which to oppose two such Irishmen, entrenched in office, and full of their own ministerial whims. They could only give voice to so much of their opinions as O'Loughlen pleased to allow them to do and that was not a great deal. The meeting was non-conclusive. The St. Kilda councillors were disgusted. No one doubted what Sir Bryan O'Loughlen's opinion was on the subject. He affected to tarry a while, to allow him to consider what had been said on both sides ! He did not wait long after the echoes of the St. Kilda councillors' footsteps had died away, in the outer passages to his ministerial office, to come to a decision to publish his assent to the secession.

The official advertisement, signed by Sir Bryan O'Loughlen, Acting Chief Secretary, Melbourne 27th January 1879, set out, among other things, "In pursuance of the provisions of the Local Government Act 1874 (No. 506 Sec. 46) the substance, and prayer of a petition, in accordance with the 39th, and 44th sections of the said Act, which has been presented to the Governor-in-Council are published viz.:—

"The petitioners state that they are a majority of the ratepayers, in the portion of the Borough of St. Kilda, hereinafter described, that from the recent removal of the rifle butts, and the filling up of the low lying land between them, and the town, of Emerald Hill, they have become naturally united, and their interests, and wants, assimilated to those of the town, that they always formed part of the Electoral District of Emerald Hill, and that whilst their interests

are identical, with those of Emerald Hill, they greatly clash with those of the Borough of St. Kilda, and that for obvious reasons the granting of their petition cannot but lead to the future advantage of the town of Emerald Hill, and this part of the West Ward of St. Kilda."

The reference to the rifle butts in the petition refers to rifle butts that lay to the north of West Beach. A railway station, on the St. Kilda railway line, close to the butts, was called "Butt's Station." Passengers, who used the "Butts Station"—riflemen—had to notify the railway guard, when they desired the train to stop at the station. Riflemen were opposed to the reclamation works in progress since the work meant that they were to be deprived of their shooting ground. This paragraph taken from the Austral Review, of August, 1877, represent the riflemen's point of view. The paragraph runs, "There is a strong desire to extend building operations, so as to fill up the space between Emerald Hill, and St. Kilda, now occupied by the Rifle Butts. It would be a public misfortune, if the individuals concerned, in this had their way. The butts are necessary in their present site. The volunteers ought to keep their eyes peeled, and take care they are not tricked in this matter."

Examining the old municipal official files it is obvious that a great part of the trouble that ensued from the inadequate drainage of the West Beach swampy land was caused by Francis Longmore, the Minister of Lands. The Borough Council of St. Kilda, prepared a plan, with the approval of the Board of Health, for a tidal drain, three feet six inches lower, than the one then existing. This plan was prepared, but it was rejected by the Minister of Lands in favor of another plan of his own selection, wherein the level of the new drain was the same as the old drain. Longmore's drain, apart from the mistake of following the old levels, was too small, and its designer had not provided, in its construction, for its future arching over, so as to transform it from an open, to a barrel drain. The difference between the two drains, as they were designed, was as 15 feet to 10 feet. The 15 feet was shown on the Borough of St. Kilda's design. Longmore had his way, and his drain was not one whit better than the previous drain. The lands of West St. Kilda were still swamped. The money spent in the drain's construction might as well have been cast into the old drain.

## MAYOR OF ST. KILDA UPHOLDS CIVIC DIGNITY 173

While this West Beach annexation business of the Emerald Hill Council, was in progress, the Mayor of Emerald Hill gave a civic dinner to which he invited the Mayor of St. Kilda, Councillor Tullett. The sequel was told in the Age newspaper, March 27, 1879. "Some amusement was caused at the Emerald Hill Council last night by the handing round of the following unique reply to a polite invitation to dinner:—

"The Mayor of St. Kilda has the honor to acknowledge the invitation of the Mayor of Emerald Hill for Thursday next 27th inst., but under the existing municipal position of the bodies represented, he feels it his duty not to accept the same."

The ratepayers of St. Kilda and the Borough. Council were agreed in supporting the Mayor of St. Kilda in his refusal to accept the invitation, and it was acclaimed that Councillor Tullett had upheld the dignity of his office, and the honor of the borough. The St. Kilda Advertiser newspaper said, "No doubt the Emerald Hill councillors think they are doing a clever thing in getting the whole of the park under their control, but they must conceive the losers to be something more than human to anticipate they would be placated by a cheap feed."

This incident shows that between the St. Kilda Council and the Emerald Hill Council there lay a strong feeling of resentment. The annexation of the lands of the dissatisfied ratepayers of the West Beach did not trouble the St. Kilda Council, but what the councillors did resent was the attempt by the Emerald Hill Council to deprive the Borough of St. Kilda of its interest in the control of the Park lands abutting on Fitzroy Street, the Junction and St. Kilda Road. The St. Kilda Council made the way quite easy for the Emerald Hill Council to take over the West Beach lands and the ratepayers belonging to that area. The St. Kilda Council was, in the adjustment of accounts, even generous in its financial concessions, apparently being glad to be quit of the grumbling West Beach community, even to suffering a loss in the final phases. The behaviour of the Emerald Hill Council to the St. Kilda Council was different when the time came for the West Beach ratepayers to petition to return to municipal fold of St. Kilda, because the acts of the Emerald Hill Council had not realised the ratepayers' expectations. The corporate body of the Emerald Hill Council, stalked forth, like a municipal Shylock, with a knife in one hand, in the shape of a threat of a Supreme Court Writ, and with a bag in the other hand, wherein the Council purposed to place its pound of flesh.

The West Beach seceders gained their objective, of becoming ratepayers of the Emerald Hill Council, on April 29, 1879. By the end of February 28, 1882, the clamoring spirit of seceders, had departed from them, to be succeeded by the chastened penitents. The Emerald Hill Council saw that it could not restrain the restive dissatisfied ones, who were so anxious to return to the municipal mother whom, they had, in the year 1879, so rashly disowned. The Emerald Council was annoyed. The St. Kilda Council would have to pay the Council for its administration of the West Beach from April, 1879, to February, 1882, and the statement of accounts, when drawn was to be well in favor of the Emerald Hill Council. The Emerald Hill Council claimed under the statements of accounts arising out of the West Beach the sum of £1,011.8.7. This was the amount the Emerald Hill Council, instructed its solicitor, Marcus Sievwright, a police court debt collecting lawyer of the day, to demand from the St. Kilda Council, and the lawyer wrote such a letter of demand on June 9, 1883. The St. Kilda Council expressed its surprise to the Emerald Hill Council that the Council had chosen to bring into the negotiations a threat from a lawyer. It pointed out to the Emerald Hill Council that such an act was a hasty one, and an ill-considered action, and that threats of such a nature were quite out of order, in the case of a municipality engaged in negotiations with another municipality over debatable accounts. These sharp raps over the knuckles, and the accompanying homily, on decent municipal behaviour, if they did not do the Emerald Hill Council much good, they had some effect, for no more was heard of Sievwright, as a debt collector, in the dispute. The amount demanded by Sievwright was amended, and the council claimed, on the basis of a new estimate, the sum of £1,361.15.7 from the St. Kilda Council towards the payment of which the St. Kilda Council offered a passive resistance. The St. Kilda Council was not, in this secession business, agreeable to allow the Emerald Hill Council to make a financial gain in the act of surrendering the West Beach territory, which the Emerald Hill Council had annexed from its rightful owner in the first instance, presupposing at that time, that the municipal control of the Albert Park by a barefaced shuffle would follow as the chief jewel of the West Beach dowry. The return of the prodigals bade fair to set up a dead-lock between the two councils. Eventually the two mayors were, by the councils, entrusted

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with the settlement of the dispute. The Mayors' solution was embodied in the following memorandum:

"Aug. 23, 1883.

"The St. Kilda Council agrees to pay to the Emerald Hill Council a cheque for £950 in settlement of accounts. The rates collected since February 27, 1882, as to which Council is to have the rates, is to be referred to the Minister of Public Works.

Joseph Stead, Mayor of Emerald Hill.

W. Simpson, Mayor of St. Kilda."

About the year 1879 the Berry Government, anxious to find work for the unemployed, set gangs to work to remove sand from the St. Kilda Beach, for the purpose of filling in the low-lying land, between Kerferd Road, South Melbourne and Fraser Street, the St. Kilda municipality's northern shore boundary. A tramway was laid down upon which to run the trucks carting the sand. When the work was done the tramway remained and in time was covered over with sand drifts. It was uncovered in 1928 through wind blowing and sand drifting. We have a note that reads, "The work was carried out in a very perfunctory manner. Instead of removing a spit from the old surface to place on top of the filling, the sand was just trucked, tipped and levelled. Consequently, whenever a strong north wind blew, thousands of yards were drifted into St. Kilda. The Hon. Francis Longmore, who was Minister of Lands at the time, lived in a house in Patterson Street close to or adjoining the house now owned by Councillor O'Donnell. After a storm I have seen the sand running over the top of his fence into the garden. About 4,000 yds. of this drift sand from Patterson Street was used in filling up the low side of Fitzroy Street, between Park Street and the Canterbury Road. During the progress of the work the men employed filling trucks on the beach on several occasions found 'treasure trove,' viz. sovereigns in some quantity."

The sweep of a road along the beach had always appealed to the aesthetic, and utilitarian senses of the St. Kilda Council. Beach land, long stretches of sand, always suggest the advantages of a picturesque highway to run parallel with the shore. It was thought that a road from Port Melbourne to the Red Bluff, St. Kilda, would not only be a bay promenade, but, also, it would serve as a military road, to allow artillery to be moved from

battery, to battery, engaged in fighting the invading enemy ships, arrived in Hobson's Bay. Such were the crude ideas of warfare in those days! In May, 1887 the St. Kilda Council persuaded the Councils of South, and Port Melbourne, to wait with it, on the Minister of Public Works, the Hon. John Nimmo, to ask him to persuade the openhanded Gillies Ministry to spend pound for pound, with the municipality to construct this military road. The St. Kilda Council's idea was to have a reserve in the centre of the road with a width of 36 feet, to be planted with trees. The roadways, on either side of the reserve, were to be width, 24 feet, and a pathway of 20 feet. The estimate of the cost to each municipality was St. Kilda, 136 chains £11,939; South Melbourne, 117 chains £12,000; and Port Melbourne, 11 chains £570, making a total of 264 chains to cost £24,509. The deputation pointed out to the Minister, that the road ran past a quantity of Crown Land, and the sale of such land would recoup the Government. The Minister was asked to place the sum of £12,000, or £13,000 on the estimates. The Mayor of St. Kilda Councillor F. Wimpole, urged that the work was a national one, a military work, and also a commercial undertaking. The road would form a suitable Jubilee memorial of Queen Victoria. The Minister, in reply, expressed his approval of the grant, and he promised to make the most favourable representations to the Cabinet, concerning the desirability of making the road.

The St. Kilda Council did not then quite succeed in having its whole scheme of beautification carried out, but it was pioneering the way for the beauty of picturesque beaches. The utility of a road, military or otherwise was conceded, and when later it was deemed desirable to find employment for laborers, at a time when work was scarce, some gangs of the unemployed were set to work to make the road commencing at Port Melbourne. The road as it is today is the evolution of successive periods of work. In April, 1890, the Councils of St. Kilda and South Melbourne were subsidised by the Government and they then constructed the beautiful Beaconsfield Parade, and the road was proclaimed as such on June 6, 1890.

The St. Kilda Council's proposal to make the military road was made in May, 1887, and in October, of the same year, Joseph Harris, M.L.A., member for St. Kilda, wrote to the St. Kilda Council stating that the Minister of Lands was anxious

that the sale of Crown Lands at the West Beach should take place at as early a date as possible, but that part of the land was under water, and that immediately the Government surveyor could get on the land, it would be surveyed and sold. The Council asked the Government to improve the projected streets, as well as the land, before selling and to insert, in the conditions of sale, that both swampy streets, and lands, must be reclaimed by purchasers.

Some dissatisfied ratepayers, in the South Ward of St. Kilda, launched a movement in February, 1888, for the formation of a new borough to be called Elsternwick. On February 14, St. Valentine's Day, the ratepayers received a sensible valentine from the St. Kilda Council, in the form of a booklet which contained facts, and figures, that answered much talk of irresponsible, and ill-informed would-be seceders. The St. Kilda Council's case against the severance showed that, although the receipts from all sources amounted to £2,904, the actual expenditure, in the South Ward, was £5,413. The Council reminded the ratepayers, that in the new municipal loan of St. Kilda, of the sum of £100,000, provision was made for the expenditure of £10,561, in the portion to be severed, that is the dissatisfied ratepayers were to receive about one seventh of the £100,000.

The municipal valentine stated that "The new Borough would commence with a debt of £6,750 (its proportion of the moneys borrowed by the municipalities of St. Kilda, Brighton and Caulfield). A proportion of the annual contributions to the Prince's bridge would also have to be paid. Two matters complained of—the Elwood Swamp and the Abattoirs—would, in consequence of the pressure brought to bear on the Government by the St. Kilda Council, be abolished. The erection of several new lamps in the locality proposed to be severed had been arranged for. The high cost of the construction of private roads was mentioned ; also the fact that main roads running through the district would have to be maintained. The Mayor, in conclusion, advised the ratepayers concerned to remain part of the old-established Borough of St. Kilda."

Exercising what common sense they had, the ratepayers followed the advice given to them.

There was another fruitless attempt, in May, 1907, by a dissatisfied section of ratepayers in South East St. Kilda to

become annexed to Caulfield. The Local Government Act 1903, provided that petitions for the severance, annexation, or subdivision of municipalities, shall not be presented to the Minister during the months of May, June, July, or August. This mandatory clause of the Act was overlooked by the would-be seceders. Their petition, when presented, was rejected, on the grounds that it did not comply with the provisions of the Local Government Act.

Probably the last has been heard of from restless would-be seceding St. Kilda ratepayers. Greater settlement, in these one time outlying parts, then lacking in cheap and regular transit, by the means of trains, and tramcars, has led to the consolidation of cities, and the permanency of city boundaries, and of municipal wards, allowing for adequate representation, at the council table, of the ratepayers resident within those wards. The only movement that may develop hereafter, may be the one, with the general objective of the amalgamation of outer cities, in groupings that suggest a correlation of interests for the general betterment of municipal powers, and of civic administration. The marvellous developments of the southern portion of the City of St. Kilda, that followed the subdivisional sales, by the Government, of the reclaimed lands at Elwood, was such that it disturbed the balance of municipal representation in the Council, and obviously suggested the advisability of resubdividing the city into four Wards, with the consequent increase in the number of councillors from nine to twelve. Prior to that the business of the City was carried on by nine councillors, representatives from three Wards, and that had been so from November 27, 1868, when it was proclaimed in the Government Gazette that St. Kilda was divided into three Wards, respectively, the North Ward, the South Ward and the West Ward.

The St. Kilda Council faced the position created by the development of Elwood. It received a petition from certain ratepayers desirous that a new Ward of the City should be created. A plan of the proposed subdivision, prepared in October, 1913 by Carlo Catani, at the desire of the Hon., the Minister of Public Works was approved at a conference held between the St. Kilda Council, and the petitioners. Copies of the petition were issued for signature, by ratepayers in favor of the resubdivision of the City of St. Kilda into four Wards. The official position at the

time was shown by the Town Clerk, Mr. F. W. Chamberlin in a table he prepared for the occasion:—

Ward	Valuation	Area	Popula tion	Number of Ratepayers	Probable Future Valuation
North	£74,159	498 acres	7,204	1,580	£84,845
South	49,898	649 acres	4,466	1,444	88,974
West	102,087	523 acres	9,076	1,611	102,087
Central	65,826	425 acres	6,740	1,752	83,493

The resubdivision of the City into four Wards was gazetted on April 8, 1914.

Pursuant to the Order-in-Council made the 30th of March, 1914, re subdividing the city into four wards, viz., the North Ward, the South Ward, the Central Ward. and the West Ward, the whole nine sitting councillors went out of office, and an election of three councillors for each of the four wards was held on August 27, 1914.

The following candidates were elected.—Central Ward : T. G. Allen, J. H. Pittard, J. J. Love; North Ward : H. F. Barnet, H.B. Gibbs, F. G. Hughes ; West Ward : E. O'Donnell, R. A. Molesworth, G. B. Renfrey ; South Ward : Burnett Gray, J. H. Hewison, H. McL. Duigan.

When in February, 1919, there occurred in Melbourne, an extremely violent form of influenza, the St. Kilda Council, in common with other metropolitan councils, had as the local civic guardian of health, to put forth its strength, and resources, to stamp out the disease. Well warned by medical men, the executive bodies of the community were alive to the danger of the influenza passing from the stage of an epidemic, to that of a plague, claiming its thousands of victims. On the outbreak, the St. Kilda Board of Management of the Presbyterian Church offered its school room to be used, as an emergency hospital. The Council thanked the Church authorities, while expressing the hope that the epidemic would not so far increase, as to be beyond the receptive power of the municipal hospital, which was established in the Brighton Road State School. The Education Department gave every assistance possible, and its schools were handed over to be used as emergency hospitals. In the midst of the fight against the common enemy, the St. Kilda State Election Council of the Victorian Labor Party deemed it a fitting time to protest against the inaction of the Education Department, in not providing accommodation for the

whole of the scholars attending the Brighton Road State School. Medical advice was against congregating in groups, and the fact that the school children were not "in school", doubtless saved a number of their lives. Some of the elder pupils were taught in a room in the Town Hall, placed at the use of the Education Department by the Council.

The Brighton Road State School Hospital opened on February 12, 1919, and it was closed for the first time on March 19. During those 36 days the number of patients admitted was 59, and out of them four died. A temporary cessation of the numbers of influenza cases reported, rather suggested that the worst of the attack had passed, and in consequence of that belief the temporary hospitals established in the State schools, including of course the one in the Brighton Road State School, were closed. The hope that the epidemic was ended was not realised. In April, the temporary hospitals had to be re-opened. The St. Kilda municipal hospital in the Brighton Road State School, was re-opened on April 8, and it was to remain open until August 18, when it closed, other arrangements having been made. During the tenure of the hospital's existence, 133 days, 541 patients suffering from influenza, were treated, 45 of whom died. In the aggregate, there were 600 patients treated at the Brighton Road State School Emergency Municipal Hospital, of whom 49 died. The daily average of patients, in the hospital was sixty four. The average length of treatment was from one to ten days. The expenses, including ambulances, amounted to £5,184,10,11, and the cost per patient for treatment per day was 12/1, which compared advantageously with the cost of treatment in the Government Emergency Hospital, at the Exhibition Buildings, viz. fourteen shillings per patient per day. At the St. Kilda Town Hall, citizens to the number of 9,011 submitted themselves for preventive inoculation from the disease of influenza. The Municipal Health Inspector, by direction of the Council, fumigated many houses from where patients had come to the hospital, at a cost for the fumigation of £228,1,11.

Later an Epidemic Hospital was started in the Drill Room at Albert Park, the hospital expenses were to be shared jointly between the Council of South Melbourne, Port Melbourne, and St. Kilda, the hospital having been established to serve influenza patients from those suburban cities. Each Council had three

representatives on the Board of Management. The Government undertook to pay half the cost of the equipment of the hospital, estimated at £1,500. The St. Kilda Council had, on the closing of its local emergency influenza hospital, transferred its equipment to the Albert Park Emergency Hospital. The equipment so transferred cost £571,11,5. The Town Clerk, Mr. Fred W. Chamberlin, made a very clear financial report of the cost of the fight against the epidemic, waged by the St. Kilda Council, and we are indebted to his report for the interesting figures we have quoted. Still quoting, the Brighton Road State School Emergency Hospital's total cost was £5,835,2,4. That gross amount was lessened by the Government paying £2,695.1.5, leaving £3,140.0.11. This sum was further reduced by the sale of hospital material, bringing the sum of £145.12.1, leaving the net cost of the Brighton Road Hospital at £2,994.8.10. The amount contributed to the Albert Park Hospital, by the St Kilda Council, under the arrangement for the equipment, and maintenance of the hospital, was £666.13.4. The Council's actual proportion of cost was Building account £313.16.6; Maintenance account £106.2.4. Total Disbursement £419.18.10. The motor ambulance was the one article the Council retained, when the transfer of equipment was made.

And when the grim fight against this insidious form of death, was finished the members of the St. Kilda Council found many brave citizens, and citizenesses, to whom their heartfelt thanks were given. Recorded on the Council's minutes, is the Council's high appreciation of the valuable assistance rendered by those ladies, who organised, and worked in the hospital kitchen, at the Town Hall, and it is ordered also, that the expression of the Council's gratitude be conveyed to the ladies concerned. Doctors Blaubaum, Eadie, Laurie, and McAdam were given an honorarium of £60 each in recognition of their services, as the medical staff of the St. Kilda Emergency Municipal Hospital, and also for acting as special health officers. Bonuses were given to the following officers in recognition of their valuable work, in connection with the fight against the Influenza Epidemic, the Town Clerk £50 ; the Chief Clerk 215 ; the City Inspector £25. A letter, September 8, 1919, was sent to the Head Teacher of the State School, Mr. J. A. McAllester thanking him for his services, and also complimenting him on the excellent discipline, and the good behaviour of the school

children, while having their lessons at the St. Kilda Town Hall. Thus ended the most strenuous time, in connection with the outbreak of an epidemic, that the St. Kilda Council had been called upon to face.

On May 3, 1921, Councillor Barnet reported to the St. Kilda Council, that he had attended the conference, called to consider the report, prepared by the Town Clerks of Brighton, Prahran, and St. Kilda, Messrs. J. H. Taylor, John Romanis and Fred W. Chamberlin, with regard to the charges made by the Government for the treatment of patients, in the hospitals for influenza cases. The Conference passed the following resolutions:—

"That in view of the unreasonable and excessive expenditure, incurred by the Government, in the equipment of special hospitals, and treatment of influenza patients, during the recent epidemic as compared with the cost of municipal Emergency Hospitals, and the unsatisfactory explanations offered by the Department, this Conference recommends that the Government be offered the sum of fifteen shillings (15/-) per head in full settlement of the accounts rendered to the municipalities."

"That the Minister of Health be asked to receive a deputation, from the Conference, in order that the report of the Committee, and this resolution may be placed before him."

When, in November, the question of the acquirement of the Caulfield Military Hospital, as an epidemic emergency, or infectious diseases hospital, by the municipalities was propounded, the St. Kilda Council was quite opposed to such an action, and it recorded an "emphatic protest" against such a course being followed. The Government was not satisfied, nor was the Public Board of Health, which Board wrote to the Council some time after the Council had declared against the proposal, only to be told by the Council that it was not in favor of the proposal. The Government's undeclared policy, shown by its acts, was to saddle the municipalities with as many financial burdens, as it was possible to persuade the Councils to take, whether such burdens were such ones as the Councils should bear, while the Government, on its part, studiously avoided subsidising anything that may be termed local, which it could avoid. Two cases in point, so far as St. Kilda was affected, were the Foreshore Improvements, and the Albert Park Committee's works, though in the latter case for a time the Government did not carry out its original intention to withdraw its subsidy. Another practice of the Government was, where it was possible to do so, to intimate that it would withdraw a subsidy if the Council did not increase its original payments.

In the case of the Epidemic Emergency Hospital, the particularly desired creation of the Government, in 1924, the municipal councils, called a conference to consider, and to deal with the Government proposals, so far as they affected the financial responsibilities of the Councils. Councillor Renfrey reported the result of that conference, held on July 24, 1924, to the St. Kilda Council. The Conference resolved by thirteen votes to seven, "that the Government be informed, that the Conference was not willing for the Councils to contribute towards the cost of providing for the proposed epidemic emergency hospital. A further resolution, which the St. Kilda Council endorsed, was "that in the opinion of this conference, it is desirable that the proposed Emergency Epidemic Hospital should be erected by the State Government, and the conference wait as a deputation on the Minister of Public Health as soon as possible, and place before him the views of the municipalities, and urge him to have the present Health Act amended."

When it became known, that the St. Kilda Council, had decided to appoint a Health Inspectress of the City of St. Kilda, a letter was received from the Trained Nurses' Association suggesting the permanent establishment of the office of a nurse. The Council had well defined opinions of what services it sought to have rendered. After an appointment was made of Miss Una Behan, attention was given to the nature, and the scope of her domiciliary visits, and also what steps should be taken to apply her qualifications, in connection with nursing, and the organisation of a scheme for baby welfare. A letter was received by the St. Kilda Council on August 25, 1919 from the Committee of the Victorian Baby Health Centre congratulating the Council upon its action in appointing a Health Inspectress. The hope was expressed that before long the St. Kilda Council would establish a Baby Health Centre in St. Kilda.

In May, 1921, Councillor Hewison deprecated the delay that was taking place, in establishing a Baby Health Centre, in St. Kilda. In explanation, Councillor Barnet said the Committee dealing with the proposal, had been hard at work on the report, and that it would be presented to the Council during the month. Councillor Barnet, as the Chairman of the Health Committee, presented its report to the Council, on May 30, 1921 wherein the Committee recommended the early establishment of a Baby Health Centre in the Town Hall. It was further recommended

that (a) the Centre be managed directly by the Council as a municipal function, and that its workings be supervised by the medical officer of Health; (b) a Baby Health Centre Nurse be appointed as a full time member of the staff, at a salary of £156 per year and (c) that as the main structure affords no suitable accommodation, an addition be made to the Hall, for the purpose of a centre, at an estimated cost of £500. After considerable discussion it was decided to refer the report to the Public Works Committee for further consideration. As a result of that consideration, it was decided (June 13, 1921) that the room at the south angle of the Town Hall building would be a suitable one, if a suitable approach, in the form of a ramp, was made to it, the cost of forming which the Surveyor estimated at £150. The other clauses of the Committee's report were adopted, and it was resolved that applications be called forthwith for the position of the Baby Health Centre Nurse. Later, on further consideration, the Health Committee considered the approach to the angle room, and the room's surroundings both rendered the position an unsuitable one for a baby health centre. The Committee therefore, on June 27, recommended a revision to its original proposal, and to give effect to that recommendation the Chairman, Councillor Barnet moved, and Councillor Renfrey seconded, the following motion "That the resolution of the Council, in regard to the accommodation of the Baby Health Centre, passed at the last meeting of the Council, be, and is hereby rescinded, and that a wooden building be erected in the southern angle of the supper room, and the recent annexe, at an estimated cost of £500. Two amendments were launched against the motion, in effect only to vary the motion to one alternatively for tenders to be called for the building in wood, and in brick, and that the question of a site, for the Baby Health Centre building, be referred to the Health Committee. Both these amendments were defeated, and the Health Committee's motion carried. On August 8, the Public Committee recommended the appointment of Miss Charlotte Greene as a Baby Welfare Nurse.

In July, 1921, the Council agreed, subject to the approval of the establishment of the Baby Health Centre by the Minister of Health, to accept the tender of Henry Ryall for addition to the Town Hall to accommodate the Baby Health Centre at a cost of £608. At the time when the Council of St. Kilda had

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decided to establish a Baby Health Centre the Council received a request from the St. Kilda Sub Branch of the Returned Soldiers, seeking the Council's assurance, that due preference in the appointment of a nurse to the Centre, would be given to returned Sisters. The Branch was assured by the Council of the continuance of its policy, to give preference to those who served in the Great War. Sister Greene resigned her position on July 24, 1922. Sister Vera Dobson was then appointed nurse to the St. Kilda Baby Health Centre, and she still holds that position (November, 1930). So greatly did the work of the Baby Health Centre increase that it became necessary to appoint an assistant, and Sister A. Best was selected for the position on May 12, 1926.

An important meeting was called by the Premier of the State in May, 1923, for the purpose of discussing the question of the control of Infant Welfare work. The Government's scheme, when stated, was seen by the councillors present, to be so drastic that it amounted to taking control of the movement, regardless of the vested interests that the Councils had, in the establishment of their own local Baby Health Centres. The Government foreshadowed an Advisory Board, the members of which were to have full financial powers, and a general authority in questions of vital importance. The Government's proposal did not show any studied consideration towards the Councils, and voluntary workers, who had done good work in the important activities of Baby Welfare Centres. As a bribe to the Councils, to allow the Government nominees to be placed in power, they were promised that the Government would pay 50 per cent. of the nurses' salaries of the Baby Health Centres. Councillor Renfrey was the St. Kilda Council's delegate at the meeting. When he reported the result, he was very firm in stating to the Council, that in his considered opinion, if the allocation of the 50 per cent. subsidy was to be the price of the Government's interference, with the local administration of the Baby Health Centre, the St. Kilda Council should forego the subsidy, and continue to manage its own St. Kilda Baby Health Centre as it had done hitherto. He suggested that a municipal conference, of the Councils concerned, should be called. The Conference suggested took place, and it was opposed to Government control. The Council resolved, on the motion of Councillor Renfrey, that the Council approve

of, and adopt the resolution passed at the Conference of Councils, concerning the establishment, by the Government of an Infant Welfare Advisory Board. The Council held the opinion strongly, that there was not, at that time, any need for the proposed new Central Government Control Committee as suggested by the Government. In the St. Kilda Council's opinion the present method of municipal control was proving quite satisfactory. The councillors carried Councillor Renfrey's motion unanimously.

In December 1923, Councillor Renfrey reported on the Government's proposal to appoint an Infant Welfare Board, as the outcome of a conference, held on November 30. At that conference the Council's delegates, interested in Baby Health Centres, passed a resolution, to the effect that there was no present need for the Government's proposal to appoint a new Central Government Control Committee. Thirty-four municipalities had representatives present at the Conference, and 26 of them voted against the resolution, three delegates were in favor of the creation of the proposed Board, and five delegates refrained from expressing their Council's opinions.

When, in October, Councillor Renfrey attended, as a representative of the Council, at a meeting of the Central Executive of the Infant Welfare Association, he reported that everything as regards St. Kilda was deemed satisfactory. He spoke in appreciation of the work done by Sister Dobson, and of the growth of the Baby Welfare Centre, and also of the help rendered by Miss Behan, the Health Inspector of St. Kilda.

St. Kilda suffered a great municipal loss when Councillor Barnet, a representative of the North Ward, handed in his resignation to the Council on February 6, 1922. His colleagues, knowing of his contemplated intention to do so, endeavored to dissuade him from his purpose, but without avail. The resignation was dated February 3; and was accompanied by Councillor Barnet's sincere expressions of goodwill towards his colleagues, and assurances of his continued interest in the welfare, and progress of the municipality. It was resolved, on the motion of Councillor Alford, a representative of the North Ward, and Councillor O'Donnell, who best knew how well the retiring councillor had served St. Kilda, that "the Council place on record its keen appreciation of Councillor Barnet's services to the municipality, for nearly twenty years as a representative of the North Ward, and his enthusiasm, and

energy, during that long period, in all matters, making for the progress of the municipality and the welfare of the community, and that an expression of such appreciation be suitably engrossed, and presented to him."

Such civic appreciations of honorable labors are invariably compressed into tabloid form, and so, necessarily, they lack details. The time during which Councillor Barnet represented the North Ward, is the period of his municipal services to St. Kilda, but that is not everything in the way of public service that is worthy to be recorded of him. His full-hearted co-operation in every citizens' movement to advance St. Kilda was given, without hesitation, when, and where it was wanted, noticeably so in the war period. The beautification of St. Kilda Road, by floral plantations, lawns, and ornamental shrubs, is due to the efforts of Councillor Barnet. He did not cease agitating, at almost every meeting of the St. Kilda Council, for such beauty to be added to the Road. At last the councillors consented to create the road parterres in the picturesque boulevard.