

KEW CITY HALL

City of Kem CENTENARY

1860 - 1960

MEMBERS OF MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, 1860

George Wharton (Chairman) John Carson Mark Cranwell William Derrick Henry Fox George Lewis Richard Oswin

George Bell was appointed Town Clerk and Rate Collector in January, 1861. He was in office for about six weeks. His successors were Osgood Pritchard and John Lowrey, the latter till the end of 1866.



MEMBERS OF KEW CITY COUNCIL, 1960

His Worship the Mayor: Councillor W. H. S. DICKINSON, M.B.E., J.P.

Prospect Ward:

Central Ward:

Councillor D. L. CHIPP, R.COM., A.A.S.A., J.P. Councillor W. E. R. HOPE, J.P. Councillor J. T. GAZZARD, J.P. Councillor R. D. KENNEDY, J.P. Councillor F. F. O'BRIEN, J.P. Councillor W. D. VALCHAN, J.P. Councillor W. D. VALCHAN, J.P.

Councillor F. E. O'BRIEN, I.I.B., J.P. Councillor W. D. VAUGHAN, A.A.S.A., J.P.

College Ward:

Studley Park Ward:

Councillor W. H. S. DICKINSON, M.B.E., J.P.
Councillor H. F. MOGG, J.P.
Councillor A. S. G. STEVENS, J.P.
Councillor H. NIXON, J.P.

North Ward:

Councillor F. W. DODS, J.F. Councillor H. G. FERGUSON, J.F. Councillor T. E. LLOYD, J.P.

CITY EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

W. D. BIRRELL, M.B.E., A.A.S.A.,

J. F. MAUGHAN, C.E., A.M.LE. (AUST.),
City Engineer.

It is noteworthy that since 1866 there have been only three Town Clerks—men of great ability, skilled in local government administration and to whom the citizens owe a lasting debt of gratitude. Holland Loxton held office from 1866 to 1901; his successor, Henry Hirst Harrison, from 1901 to 1938. The present Town Clerk, William Dickie Birrell, has held office from August, 1938.

I Hanington Rogers.



CITY OF KEW CENTENARY

Proclaimed a Municipality 18th December, 1860.

Part 1

JUST fifty years ago there was published in Kew an interesting and now a scarce book, the Jubilee History of Kew, by F. G. A. Barnard, a well-known identity of the city and for many years a member of our City Council. There is no intention in what follows to rival that book; it may be regarded as complementary. It will be designed to give citizens some brief account of Kew's early days, even of its pre-history, up to the time of its establishment as a municipality with its own government in 1860; some mention of citizens of prominence; an account of its churches and schools; of the community services the council provides; and, lastly, of its boundaries, and of the people commemorated in the naming of its streets and reserves.

This, naturally enough, leads to several divisions; but before proceeding to these, it is of wide interest to remember that during the last sixty years there have been three major wars calling for sacrifice from all sections of the British Empire, now the British Commonwealth of Nations. Residents of Kew served and died in the Boer War (1899-1902); numbers of the veterans are still with us. In the first World War (1914-18) Kew provided servicemen and nurses. Of these, one hundred and sixty-three died. To supply accurate figures for the second World War (1939-45) is difficult; but the Returned Servicemen's League finally recorded that about one hundred Kew residents met their death in that war.

On 30 August, 1925, the Earl of Stradbroke, Governor of Victoria, unveiled the Kew 1914-18 War Memorial before a great assemblage that completely blocked High Street and Cotham Road from the post office to the Kew Junction. The 1939-45 War Memorial is the City Hall, opened by the Premier, the Honorable Henry Bolte, M.L.A., on 23 April, 1960. A feature of the Hall is a memorial wall and symbolic sculpture unveiled by the Deputy Premier, the Honorable A. G. Rylah, E.D., M.L.A., the member for Kew, on Anzac Day of this year.

This new Hall superseded the well known Recreation Hall, now demolished, in Wellington Street. The Town Hall, with its Council Chamber, municipal offices and adjacent Library, of high repute among Kew citizens, is still in Walpole Street.

Early History

WHITE men first stood upon the soil of Kew in 1803. In that year Charles Grimes, the Surveyor-General of New South Wales, who had been sent by Governor King to survey the Port Phillip District, discovered the river Yarra. On 6 February he came by boat up the Freshwater river—as he called it, to distinguish it from the Saltwater, now the Maribyrnong—and on the next day was barred from further progress by Dight's Falls (as they are now known).

The explorers landed in Studley Park and made a brief survey of the country to the east. Then they returned to their ship, the *Gumberland*. One member of the party, James Flemming, in his diary, reveals that he was favourably impressed; but Grimes made an unfavourable report and the Port Phillip District was left undisturbed by the white man for more than thirty years.

In June, 1835, John Batman arrived at the site of Melbourne, six miles from the mouth of the Yarra, and made the historic entry in his diary, "... this will be the place for the future village". In January, 1836, a party led by John Gardiner, John Hepburn and Joseph Hawden, having overlanded cattle from New South Wales, crossed the Yarra near Dight's Falls, and established the first cattle station in the Port Phillip District, on the eastern bank of the river, embracing areas of land now in the municipalities of Kew and Hawthorn, and described by Barnard as the greatest cattle station in Australia Felix—the name given by explorer Thomas Mitchell to the new world of central, southern and western Victoria that he was the first to see; "a land exceedingly beautiful, so inviting and still without inhabitants".

This was, as need scarcely be mentioned, all "bush" country and the houses built in those early days were primitive indeed. Crossing the river was a problem solved first by means of a punt managed by John Hodgson somewhat upstream from the Johnston Street bridge. The story of the bridges would take us outside purely local history, but it may be mentioned that the first bridge at Johnston Street was called the Penny Bridge because of the toll of one penny on every pedestrian crossing it. There was a bridge by 1857 and an iron bridge superseded it in 1876.

The owner of the punt, Hodgson, became a wealthy man and he built a large house in Studley Park Road—a house that, modernized and enlarged—is still standing. It was Hodgson who named Studley Park, after his native village of Studley, near Bradford in Yorkshire.

The first land sales in the Kew area were conducted in 1845; and, as might have been expected, the land was sold in large lots, possibly as sheep and cattle runs and as farm lands. Prices ranged from 28s. to 69s. per acre. It would be idle to attempt to estimate the value of these properties today,

but it may be mentioned that residential blocks now sell at up to £100 per foot. The names of some of these early land-owners are perpetuated in various parts of Kew; their stories are told later.

Kew became a municipality in December, 1860, was created a borough in 1863, proclaimed a town in 1910 and a city in 1921.

Widely known Institutions

BEFORE proceeding to our next division, brief mention is warranted of two outstanding Kew institutions – the Mental Hospital and the Boroondara Cemetery. The former, with its modern adjuncts embracing an extensive administration block associated with the State Department of Mental Hygiene and with its recently erected groups of children's cottages and recreational facilities, began its history with a prolonged series of troubles and setbacks. Its original conception can be traced back to 1854 when the first official stirrings were heard of dissatisfaction with the existing institution at Yarra Bend on the "flat remote and secluded" farther side of the river. Following investigation by a committee which included His Honour Judge Barry, a new site comprising 480 acres was selected on the noble heights above the Yarra at Kew.

Three years later, came a project for the erection of two handsome and expensive lodges; but the expense involved and the sharp opposition of Kew citizens caused a halt, followed by a series of further investigations, decisions, protests and reversals of policy. It was not until 1872 that the imposing and superbly sited present structures were put in hand, to carry on their national service to the mentally sick. The devoted enthusiasm of numbers of Kew citizens has, through the years, assisted in the service.

In "a Place of Shade"

AN historic landmark, the Boroondara Cemetery, is a little older than the municipality of Kew. It is a triangular area of more than thirty-three acres, between High Street and Park Hill Road, with the Victoria Park Recreation Reserve at its base. At the entrance gates, marking the apex, stand the offices and manager's residence, surmounted by the widely visible brick tower with its chiming clock. Long ago—but not beyond the memory of our elder citizens—the entrance was the terminal point of the horse-tram line, connecting with the cable tram at Victoria Bridge.

The cemetery takes its native name from the more-than-century-old Boroondara Road Board. Boroondara means "a place of shade". There are still towering red gums in its neighbourhood; it has its trees, shrubs, lawns and gardens and it holds hallowed memories of our pioneer settlers, for it is their last resting place; their memorials are to be seen to this day, together with monuments and lesser stones of generations since the passing of their family founders. In 1901, when in Melbourne to open the first Federal Parliament, the Duke of Cornwall and York, later King George V, rode out one Sunday morning accompanied by the Governor-General, Lord Hopetoun, to view the widely famed monuments.

In recent years there has been established a new memorial development on this hallowed ground; first, a setting of row upon row of standard roses, with containers each bearing a plaque with the name of the deceased whose ashes are enclosed; and now a columbarium, designed of crossed walls with niches for the insertion of inscribed containers. The surroundings are of garden beds and lawns, with a still little pool.

More than a century ago this ground for a public cemetery had been reserved, but there was required determined and prolonged effort on the part of the earliest families of Hawthorn and Kew before the site was officially established. This story is set forth in the earliest minute books of the Board of Trustees (whose members are still — as originally — appointed as representative of the various religious denominations).

On one of the opening pages of the first ledger there is recorded the first burial, that of Ellen Quick, aged thirty-six years, formerly Ellen Derrick, mother of four children, the first white woman to have died in Kew. Her grave is marked No. I in the cemetery grounds, where, at this date, there have been almost 68,000 burials. She was buried by lantern light by her kinsmen, Whidycombe and James Bevan (father of Mr. William Whidycombe Bevan, of Rowland Street) after the cemetery land had been reserved but before its establishment, and was re-buried on its being licensed in March, 1859.

Prominent Citizens of Recent Years

In the opening sentences of his famous series of lectures in 1840, On Heroes, Hero Worship and the Heroic in History, Carlyle declared that "history... is at bottom the history of the Great Men who have worked here". He was concerned with universal history and his dictum hardly applies to individual places, known to fame because great men have been born and nurtured there. Kew can lay claim to many distinguished individuals; but there can be no attempt here, in a short space, at a biographical dictionary.

Perhaps it will be best, first of all, to pay some tribute to groups or classes of citizens who made their dwellings in Kew, away from their places of business in the City of Melbourne. From Sackville Street in the east to Studley Park Road in the west, businessmen and merchants built their homes, standing in large grounds necessary for those owning their own horses and cows and so requiring ample space.

Many of these relatively large estates have been broken up in recent years, since the almost total disappearance of horses from the streets and the advent of the motor car. But these men contributed much to the importance of Kew. From their ranks came parliamentarians and other of our rulers; from them came local councillors, who have given their time and energy to make for our progress.

Kew has always been mainly a residential suburb; but, of course, shops have been opened and there are many old ones in our city. It has been and still is a residential suburb for numbers of professional men. A check of the "pink pages" in the telephone directory shows that some hundred and fifty medical practitioners either practise or reside in Kew. To check other professional classes from the same source is impossible because so many give only a city address; but the legal profession is certainly well represented among our citizens, and in the senior ranks of that profession we have several members of the Bench, including a Justice of the High Court of Australia.

It may be invidious to mention individuals, mainly because any estimate of greatness must be largely a matter of opinion, considerably influenced by one's own interests or political opinions; but of the prominence of some of Kew's citizens there can be no question. The following names are of people in various walks of life whose importance has stretched far beyond the bounds of Kew.

Perhaps the most widely known is the Right Honorable William Morris Hughes, who lived for years at 167 Cotham Road. Here, Edward, Prince of Wales, afterwards King Edward VIII and now Duke of Windsor, visited him in 1920. Hughes was Prime Minister for seven years and four months.

Associated with Kew, and a resident for many years, is another Prime Minister, the Right Honorable Robert Gordon Menzies. He has been Prime Minister for a far longer period than Hughes — almost twice as long — and a record in the history of the Commonwealth. It is interesting to add that these two, between them, have held the office of Prime Minister for more than one-third of that history. Dame Pattie Menzies, G.B.E., the Prime Minister's wife, was also resident in Kew. It is surely worthy of note that both these Prime Ministers became Companions of Honour (C.H.), members of a select and limited number to be accorded that high distinction.

In the state political world Kew can claim a Premier, in Sir Stanley Argyle, who had his medical practice here for many years. He had left Kew twenty years before he became Premier of Victoria in 1932. He was Premier in the very difficult period of depression and it is to the great credit of his Government that it provided 'work instead of sustenance' for the unemployed and, by this action, did so much towards the beautification of many parts of Melbourne and suburbs. Argyle was Mayor of Kew in 1902.

There are other spheres beside the political and so some other names to mention. For thirty years Bland Holt provided much dramatic entertainment in Melbourne and Sydney. On his retirement from the theatre he resided in Kew and died here in 1942, in his ninetieth year.

A very distinguished resident was George Arnot Maxwell, barrister and parliamentarian for many years, leader of the Victorian criminal bar. He lived near the corner of Cotham and Burke Roads, where the pioneer Dannock family built their home, Darracombe. The Dannock family owned land in other parts of Kew. Mr. Henry C. Dannock, now of Leongatha, is today the oldest surviving person born in Kew, in Derby Street, in 1865. Maxwell lost his sight but for some fifteen years until his death in 1925 remained active in Parliament and experienced many legal triumphs at the bar. Maxwell Street, running south of Cotham Road, will serve as a civic memorial to him.

In the world of education there has been no greater Victorian than Frank Tate, a resident of Kew, first Director of Education. He held that position from 1902 until his retirement in 1928; he retained his interest and used his energies in the service of education till his death in 1939.

In another field may be mentioned some distinguished artists. Again, to select may be invidious, yet probably it will be agreed that Max Meldrum merits special note. He was certainly a controversial figure. He founded a school of painting, exercised much influence and aroused much criticism. His was a well-known figure in Kew till his death in 1955. Of an earlier generation was Tom Roberts, "Bulldog" — a famous name in the history of Australian art.

Another artist, this time in words, was Vance Palmer. Though born in Queensland, he lived in Kew for a great part of his life, until his death last year. As play-wright, novelist, short-story writer, poet and critic, Vance Palmer is an outstanding figure among Australian authors, and, with his wife, Mrs. Nettie Palmer, who still lives in Kew, has contributed greatly to Australian literature and to the encouragement of Australian writers.

In the field of science one name comes greatly to mind. Sir Macfarlane Burnet is a virologist with an international reputation and is still very active. He has received some of the highest awards available to a scientist, including the Nobel Prize.

Wilfrid Selwyn Kent Hughes, Knight Commander of the British Empire (an Imperially bestowed honour), M.H.R., M.V.O., M.C., E.D., B.A., is of Kew in almost every sense save that of his birth. A foundation student of Trinity Grammar, he completed his school days as Dux of Melbourne Grammar and Captain of the School. He was Victorian Rhodes Scholar for 1914. He was a member of the Australian Olympic team, Antwerp, 1920, and of the British Empire team versus U.S.A., and England v. France. At the Olympic Games in Melbourne four years ago he was chairman of the Organizing Committee which achieved brilliant success in their management.

Sir Wilfrid Kent Hughes has been resident in Kew for the past 31 years, which period encompasses a further extraordinary military and political career. He fought throughout World War I, was mentioned four times in despatches and gained the Military Cross. Whilst a member of the Victorian Parliament, and as a Colonel in the 8th Div. A.I.F., he was captured on the fall of Singapore and spent three and a half years as a prisoner of war in Manchuria. From 1927 until 1949 he represented Kew in the State Parliament, for a term as Deputy Premier. As Minister for Sustenance, he was responsible for putting the Boulevard (naming it the Tunnecliffe Boulevard) through the Yarra Bend National Park, also initiating the construction of the public golf course. For the past eleven years he has been a member of the House of Representatives, for some time as Minister for the Interior and Works. Sir Wilfrid two years ago extended his travels by a flight, with a small party of fellow Australians, over the South Pole.

In another sphere the name of David Syme will appeal to the memories of our citizens. His influence in Victorian and Australian history can scarcely be exaggerated. It will be remembered that he was referred to as the "uncrowned king of Victoria". For many years it was impossible for a Victorian Ministry to survive without the support of the Age. It was Syme who brought to the forefront of Australian politics one of the greatest statesmen, Alfred Deakin. Syme's home, "Blythswood", near the river in Kew's south-western corner, was long well known. He died there in 1908.

"The father of the Australian game of football", Henry Colden Antill Harrison, lived in Kew for many years and died here in 1929, shortly before his ninety-third birthday. He was a remarkably fine athlete and his name and influence, mainly because of Australian Rules football, are known and felt far beyond the borders of Kew. His home was at the intersection of Malmsbury with Walpole Street, once our leading residential thoroughfare.

This allusion to Malmsbury Street recalls another citizen of Australiawide renown but whose association with our city is perhaps long since lost to memory. Ernest Giles, explorer of Central and Western Australia, and author of historic journals on his pioneer travels, was wont to return to his abode at the corner of Malmsbury and Pakington Streets to rest and recuperate from his long, hazardous and lonely journeys. In the world of sport the name of Hugh Trumble will long be remembered as a cricketer of international fame. His tall figure was known in Kew for many years. He was manager of the National Bank for a number of years and later the Secretary of the Melbourne Cricket Club.

Churches

ALTHOUGH meetings of various denominations had been held earlier either in private dwellings or temporary structures, the first church building was that of the Congregational Church in Walpole Street, opened in 1854. Later in the same year the Baptist Church was built in Cotham Road, and the new Baptist Church in Highbury Grove is of very recent date. The foundation stone of the beautiful Holy Trinity Church of England was laid in 1862 and the church was opened in 1863. A full account of this building is given in Barnard's Jubilee History of Kew.

The Presbyterians erected a wooden church in Cotham Road in 1874, superseded in 1887 by the present brick building with its spire one hundred and twenty-five feet in height, visible in its architectural beauty for many miles beyond the bounds of the city.

A Roman Catholic Church was established in Walpole Street in 1875, and in 1900 the foundation stone of the Sacred Heart Church in Cotham Road was laid; that edifice was opened in 1901. The present church, with its superb dome, came much later. The earlier building was converted for use as a school.

It was not until 1883 that the Methodist Church in Highbury Grove was opened. St. Hilary's Church of England, in John Street, dates from 1889.

Of quite recent dates and due to rapid development in the east and north of the municipality, are various churches in that district—the Methodist Church in Strathalbyn Street, the Presbyterian Church in Normanby Road, St. Paul's Church of England in Hale Street, St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church in Beresford Street, St. Joachim's Catholic Church in Barnard Grove, and the Church of Christ on the corner of Valerie and Windella Avenue. The Salvation Army Citadel has long been situated in High Street.

Under church auspices or control are a number of notable homes for the aged and for children, and there are various colleges for students in training for varied aspects of work conducted by the churches. It is impossible even to mention all the other church organizations in the municipality.

Social Services: Hospitals

OF the social and community services controlled largely from South Esk by the Kew City Council, or under its patronage, much might be set down if space permitted. It might be said that any resident of the city could obtain help or recreation there should need arise. South Esk, a handsome old single storey structure, was formerly the home of David Carnegie. It was purchased by the Council in 1947; and, in its own extensive lawns and gardens sweeping along Charles Street and Cotham Road, it is embraced with the striking modern City Hall and the flanking Alexandra Gardens in the whole central civic scheme. South Esk contains club rooms for Kew's elderly citizens, meeting places for hospital auxiliaries, Red Cross, Kew's Emergency Housekeepers' Service and other organizations.

More than a few words might be given to St. George's Hospital, actually opened in 1912 and for many years conducted by the Church of England Sisters of the Community of the Holy Name. In recent years its administration has been under a committee of management and it is now a Public Hospital, serving mainly the eastern suburbs of Kew, Hawthorn and Camberwell.

In addition to this public institution, Kew has private hospitals in Sackville Street, Barker's Road, Glenferrie Road, Normanby Road, High Street and Studley Park Road.

It is fitting to note here that Kew has also three Infant Welfare and six Pre-school centres within its boundaries.

Schools

THE earliest scholastic establishments in Kew were two denominational schools opened in Peel Street, on its western side, in 1856 and 1859. In 1871 land was bought on the opposite side and the schools were amalgamated during that year and, under the Education Department, became the Kew State School. The second State School in the municipality is situated in East Kew; originally, it was near the intersection of Burke Road with High Street. Early in the century this school was transferred to its present site, where it has since been twice rebuilt and extended — each time moved slightly westward.

Private and public schools in Kew have won wide reputation. Perhaps the most prominent of these institutions, with its magnificent memorial chapel as an outstanding landmark, is Xavier College, founded by the Jesuit Fathers in 1872. Its junior school is at Burke Hall, in Studley Park Road.

There are Roman Catholic primary schools at the Sacred Heart Church in Cotham Road and at St. Anne's Church in East Kew, adjacent to the East Kew State School. In 1872 a distinguished teacher, J. Henning Thompson, left his senior position at the Church of England Grammar School to establish the Kew High School. That institution was carried on until 1908 when it was incorporated into Trinity Grammar School. Established in 1903, this is now one of Melbourne's biggest schools, covering a considerable area in Wellington and Charles Streets.

A third boys' school, the Carey Baptist Grammar, is situated on the Kew side of Barker's Road at its junction with Wrixon Street. Since its establishment in 1923, it has experienced remarkable growth and gained a high reputation.

Of the girls' schools Ruyton is the earliest. It had various locations from 1878 onwards and has been in Selbourne Road since 1920. The Methodist Ladies' College had its beginning in 1882 with the Rev. W. H. Fitchett as Principal—a position he held for forty-six years. This very extensive community of buildings, including its striking modern chapel, is a renowned landmark on the corner of Glenferrie and Barker's Roads. It is one of the largest girls' schools in the world and enjoys international repute.

The Genazzano Convent, dating from 1889, is in Cotham Road. It is very widely and well known and has drawn pupils from far beyond the bounds of Kew. Other scholastic centres must be given honoured mention for the nature of the activities carried on and the distinction they confer on our city. There is the Kindergarten Union Training College centred at Mooroolbeek, the old mansion of Sir Frank Madden, in Madden Grove. There is the Glendonald School for Deaf Children in Marshall Avenue. The recently founded St. Paul's School for the Blind has been inaugurated by the Roman Catholic Church in Studley Park Road, linking with a handsome former Carnegie residence in Fernhurst Grove. There is also the Special School associated with the "Children's Cottages" of the Mental Hygiene Authority.

This summary is necessarily brief and may not be fully comprehensive but it will serve to indicate that Kew's high reputation as an educational centre is well deserved.



Story of the City and its Street Names

Pioneer Origins

A FACT of history perhaps not realized by many of its citizens in this centenary era is that Kew became the chosen home of numbers of pioneer families before it was given a name. In the early 1850's its forested riverside plains were part of the sphere of the Boroondara Road Board which embraced also the country of Hawthorn and Camberwell. It was known vaguely as the stringy bark forest over the river.

Our earliest settlers had taken up grazing areas before the "village" of Melbourne itself was ten years old; and only a few years later came pioneers who had first tried their fortunes at the goldfields. These courageous residents paid dues to the Boroondara road authority even after Kew had established its own identity as recounted by Barnard.

With the founding of Kew as a separate and responsible municipality, those first settlers were gathered in the heart of a compact but isolated district where they had literally to hew their homes out of virgin bushland—almost impenetrable acacia and bracken, interspersed with groves of towering red-gums, some ancient specimens of which, happily, adorn our city still and flourish in beauty along the Yarra river.

Boundaries

The municipal boundaries, as originally laid out, are the same distinct, clean-cut and easily traced lines to this day. Starting from the point where Victoria Bridge crosses the river, our southern line (dividing us from Hawthorn) runs as Barker's Road due east to Burke Road (so named to honour the unfortunate explorer, Robert O'Hara Burke, the centenary of whose fateful exploits is being recognized coincidentally with our own hundred years' story).

Burke Road, that great north-south highway, separates Kew from Camberwell and carries our city's eastern bounds to meet the Yarra at Burke Road bridge. Thence our municipal limits follow the flow of the river, whose banks become both northern and western margins; these sweep in a score of curves towards the capital city, pursuing their course until the waters run under our starting point at Victoria Bridge.

In those sinuous miles the stream, with its flanking billabongs and island sanctuary, embraces the view first beheld by white men one hundred and fifty-seven years ago. It is a unique, beauteous and ever-popular vista; Yarra Bend National Park, with its scenic Boulevard, its emerald-green

playing fields, golf course, boat-houses, swimming pools, native and exotic trees and flowering shrubbery — truly a national adornment as its name proclaims.

This is Kew, about five and a half square miles in extent, housing 33,500 citizens and served by eighty miles of highways and residential streets; compact and clean-cut but capable at this day of housing comparatively few more individual home-owners so long as it remains so generously served with open spaces, in addition to the national park, such as the picturesque fields about the Mental Hospital, the riverside golf courses, Hyde Park, Willsmere Park, Stradbroke Park, Victoria Park, the Alexandra Gardens and other open public plots including the Dickinson, Eglinton, Norris, Reservoir, Kilby, Kellett, Fenton and Harrison Reserves.

Early Tributes

We are surely favoured in our native setting. Here is the earliest known tribute, paid by James Bonwick in describing a brief residence "in charming Kew, near Melbourne, enjoying more beautiful landscapes and a better climate" than even in his boyhood days in Kew, near London. It is not known just where Bonwick selected a site on bringing his family from Hobart Town on the outbreak of the great gold-rush. But somewhere in the embrace of Normanby Road with Parkhill Road he pitched tents and later built a timber cottage, opened a school, and founded a tiny community of Sabbath worshippers. Of those distant days he wrote, "... the happiest time of my life, at beautiful Kew on the Yarra Yarra".

Certainly, James Bonwick was of the stuff of our gallant forerunners. He made light of the situation in which he had settled his family in a thick forest of acacia, fern and giant trees, trudging six days a week to and from work in Melbourne, eight miles each way and, before setting out for Town across the river in the west, walking with a small son nearly a mile to the Yarra to obtain buckets of water for the household!

And little wonder that Lady Brassey-some forty years later than Bonwick-was moved to rapturous tribute. In a letter to a friend in Melbourne on her return to England, the Governor's Lady writes:

Of all the beautiful suburbs in your remarkable City, I have been more especially struck with Kew. If I were going to settle down . . . it is there I should select to build a residence, partly because the outlying portions of it to the north-eastward are so picturesque and salubrious, and partly because the views across the valley of the Yarra . . . combine the specific charm of the landscapes in the English County of Surrey with all that is most characteristic as regards brightness and variety in the scenery of your own country.

One of the most vivid pictures, which I have hung up for future enjoyment in the retentive chambers of my memory, is that which I shall carry away of a drive one summer evening along the Bulleen Road from Kew to some place the name of which I cannot recall to mind.

It is of peculiar interest that the name of Lady Brassey has been perpetuated in a corner of Kew quite near to that Bulleen Road along which she drove (behind horses) on a summer eve towards the close of last century. The Bulleen Road of that day is the High Street East of this era. History may well ask why.

Romance in our Street Naming

Let us proceed now from depictions of the native scenic charms of Kew territory, with a last touch of colour contributed by the historian, Isaac Selby. In his memorial history he writes of the dwelling places of "some of our great men" and records that they have been reared amidst a primordial setting in "the last haunt of the wattle" within five miles from the Melbourne Post Office, the golden bloom luxuriating in especial spring glory at Studley Park.

And so, from these references to Kew's pristine beauty to the century-old policy of naming its streets.

Shall we begin with the western grouping of pioneers and their dwellings: Among these is John Hodgson who named Studley Park and Road. There is the Syme family area, Rockingham and Blythswood, and Banool. There is Findon Crescent and Court. Findon carries on the tradition of its builder, Sir James Palmer, who reached Melbourne in 1839 as a physician, was Mayor of the capital city in 1846, a Legislative Councillor in 1848 when the Chamber met in Sydney because Victoria was part of New South Wales, who was made Speaker when the Colony obtained representative government, and, in 1856, became first President of our Legislative Council.

Findon was later purchased by Stephen George Henty, brother of Edward, the first Victorian settler; still later it became the home, in its famed and extensive grounds, of Henry ("Money") Miller, of whom a vivid account of wealth and high position might be presented, and after whom we have Miller Grove and Henry Street.

Palmer's parliamentary stature carries one's memory to another great and distinguished Council President and Kew resident, Sir Frank Madden; his mansion — Mooroolbeek — is now the training college of the Kindergarten Union, and Madden Grove in which it is situated is a memorial to its builder. The Henty name has been associated with several of Kew's old homes; notably by one that is part today of Trinity Grammar School, and by Field Place, off Studley Park Road; and now we have a Henty Court, running off Tara Avenue, immortalizing still another renowned dwelling and family. Lingering in the western landscape to which so many of our more distinguished pioneers were attracted, we must recall the towered hilltop of Raheen, home of Sir Henry Wrixon and subsequently and, for very many years since, the residence of His Grace the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, Dr. Mannix. Material changes are now in progress around Raheen, the memory of which will be retained by a new Raheen Court.

This picture must be sketchily carried on to present the names of Fenwick and Wharton, about whom a separate chapter might well be penned. In October, 1851, Fenwick, then Commissioner of Crown Lands, bought a block of one hundred and twenty-two acres extending east from the corner of High and Princess Streets. George Wharton surveyed it for him, nailing a notice to a peppermint tree at that junction corner and telling the world that "The Village of Kew extends 976 yards east from this point".

So originated the name of our suburban city. It is accepted, though long since lost to research, that these two were moved, in thinking upon the new area about to be opened up in small allotments, to remark that Richmond, near London, had Kew for its neighbour, so why should not Richmond, near Melbourne, also have Kew for its neighbour?

From this traditional source we proceed to the earliest grouping of street names with a distinctive association. Wharton—a good and loyal Briton, as he has been described—subdivided the new village and named the major streets running north from the frontage in honour of English statesmen Walpole, Pakington and Derby. Evidently following Hoddle's survey scheme for Melbourne, Wharton laid out wide and narrow streets alternately, and he named the lesser streets Little Walpole, Little Pakington and Little Derby. Thirty-three years later, the spirited citizens of this quickly developing heart of the town abolished the "Littles" and, carrying on the theme of the original survey, substituted the names of other British political leaders, Brougham, Peel and Cobden.

Over the years this idea has been expanded throughout Kew by designations such as Gladstone, Disraeli, Bright, Hartington, Eglinton, Malmsbury, Fitzwilliam, Asquith and Churchill. But our civic fathers have not drawn upon Australian political leaders, either pre- or post-Federation, even though Kew has been the domicile of two Commonwealth Prime Ministers, Hughes and Menzies. If there should be future scope for residential development in our compact territory this omission might be remedied.

At the same time another obligation could be performed, in restoring to the map the name of its first council chairman, George Wharton. There was a Wharton Street, part of a thoroughfare running northward from Cotham Road, west of Normanby Road. Long since it gave place, over its full length, to Cecil Street. But Wharton was really our founder. Following his mapping of the central soil of Kew, for Fenwick, he fought

gamely and grimly for the severance of Kew's toll-payers from the Boroondara Road Board; he became the spearhead of the movement for the creation of a separate municipality and was elected its inaugural chairman. He purchased a heavily wooded, bracken-covered wilderness along the northern line of Studley Park Road.

Through this virgin site ran a little stream of spring water beside which the aborigines from the Healesville country encamped when journeying to and from Melbourne Town. Here, Wharton built a towered mansion and named it Fernhurst, his lodge gates at the corner of Kew junction. Thus, he commemorated the fact, as Barnard, the jubilee historian relates it, that much of the land now covered by Kew was so dense a forest of wattle, gum and bracken-fern that it was almost impossible to force one's way through. So, to the extent of the naming of Fernhurst Grove, in which stands Fernhurst to this day, is carried on the link with our "first citizen".

Fernhurst Grove traverses Stawell Street, and thus we are introduced to another grouping of civic "christenings". Here, the judges of a century gone are remembered:—Stawell and Sir William Streets; Barry and Redmond Streets; a'Beckett Street; Holroyd Street, Molesworth Street, Fellows Street. The Stawell estate is no longer a spacious domain, but the residence, D'Estaville, in Barry Street, still stands, one hundred and three years old—a mansion of bluestone that should weather generations to come as a memorial to one of the greater citizens of Kew and Victoria—Attorney-General, Chief Justice, Acting Governor of the Colony.

Passing to other name-groupings we may recall those that hold in memory our Royal and vice-regal associations: Queen, Alexandra, Princess, Denmark (names loyally bestowed in the era of the marriage of the Prince of Wales with Princess Alexandra of Denmark); Balmoral, Lady Loch's Drive, Lady Brassey's Drive, Normanby Road, Stradbroke Park.

Kew's connection with Victorian premiership is not confined to Sir Stanley Argyle, who was held in wide esteem as a physician practising in Cotham Road and was a Councillor and Mayor of Kew and whose name and service are held fast with Argyle Road.

A fact now generally forgotten is that our constituency was once represented in Parliament by the Honourable Duncan Gillies. At a dramatic moment in political history he, as Premier of the Colony, presented himself for our Member when Kew was severed from Hawthorn as an Assembly District and was given the name, with neighbouring slices and corners, of Eastern Suburbs. But we have no Gillies Street.

This tale has not yet dealt with Cotham Road, nor with Glenferrie Road. Actually, Kew might have been called Cotham — and thereby hangs an adventurous history meriting a chapter of its own. Briefly, for this chronicle, a party of migrant families set out for Australia in 1852. They came from the village of Cotham, embarking at the neighbouring port of

Bristol. Their vessel, the John Bunyan, was in command of a captain and mate who proved incapable of trust because of drinking to excess and had to be locked in their cabins by the boatswain. This man, Uriah Whidycombe, brought the ship safely, and its passengers well and happily, to their destination in Port Phillip Bay.

At their long journey's end the grateful people presented Whidycombe with a testimonial expressing everlasting appreciation and appending their names, together with a listing of cash contributions (ranging from sixpence to five shillings). That document, written on both sides, and since framed, has been lent to the Kew Historical Society by two of its members, Mr. and Mrs. William Whidycombe Bevan, whose son is named Derrick.

On board the John Bunyan was a coterie of Cotham friends including the Derrick, Bevan and other families. Their menfolk were smitten of course with the goldrush fever on stepping ashore at Port Melbourne; and off they went to the diggings, taking their bosun friend with them (he having deserted the ship). In a short while they were back in the city with a very useful parcel of gold and thereupon decided to settle in the new land.

Those men of Cotham purchased parcels of land running through virgin scrub bounded on the south of their plan by what is now Cotham Road. Understandably, Derrick, Bevan, Whidycombe and Quick wanted—and tried long and hard—to name the new settlement Cotham. But Fenwick and Wharton had been on the scene shortly before them; so Kew gained the day and the Cotham contingent had to be content with naming the highway along their border and out into the far wooded hills, Cotham Road.

Now, on to Glenferrie Road, which comes to a four-mile conclusion at its head-on junction with Cotham Road. This highway originally bore the name of Barkly Road, after Victoria's early Governor, Sir Henry Barkly, who was the first vice-regal representative ever to visit Kew. And this conjures another story that could be recounted of His Excellency's personal friendship with the Rev. Richard Connebee, incumbent of the first church organized in Kew, the Congregational, in 1854. Barnard expressed understandable regret that the Kew section of Glenferrie Road had lost the designation of Barkly.

Glenferrie Road is understood to have been so named from a house built in the glen on the farther side of Kooyong-Koot Creek (Gardiner's Creek) by Peter Ferry, an early-day solicitor. He, however, spelt the name "Glen Ferry" – and appropriately so. How the variation was brought about may be buried in some historical record. Our suburban neighbour, Hawthorn, suffered a curious misadventure similarly, its primary designation, Hawthorne, having been accidentally pruned in the printing of a Government Gazette announcement. Squarely crossing Glenferrie Road near its upper terminus is Wellington Street, the association being with one of England's greatest military figures; and there are others, perpetuated in Kitchener, Birdwood, Gordon, Hamilton, Minto and Beresford streets, groves or avenues. Most of these great names of the Imperial past are to be found about the area off Belford Road. They were so styled by the Inglis brothers, of Kew, when they sub-divided their holding. One street among these had been left for the family designation, but they decided otherwise, preferring to preserve the name Hale, after their mother, born in Tasmania in 1834.

Mainly in the Wellington-Glenferrie angle there is still one other group, embracing the nineteenth century poets Coleridge, Byron, Scott, Lytton, Tennyson. And here is an appropriate point in the romantic story of our street designations to mention a grouping of Australian painters whose name and fame are preserved in recent residential expansion at the northeastern extremity—namely, Meldrum (of Kew citizenship), Longstaff, Leason, McCubbin, Newbury, Frater and Lister; all of the seven are joined, one with another.

The northern riverside area is our earliest historic ground. There, the Wills family made homes and estates for themselves following the first land sales. Their farming, grazing, dairying and citizenship activities warrant a chapter in the colony's pioneer story, and their memorials are to be found in Wills Street, Willsmere Road, Willsmere Park.

We pass now to the Wills' neighbour farmers, Wade and Oswin, forming a remarkable and truly historic chain right along the river flats to Burke Road bridge.

The rich soil of Kew was cultivated in the 1840's and '50's with such success by William Wade that his Belford farm gained a gold medal newspaper award acclaiming it the best and finest in the whole colony. On this property was used the first steam plough employed in Victoria. Alas, the great floods of 1863 ruined it, washing its soil down the river, over the falls, through Melbourne and out into the Bay where it stained the sea tides. That once renowned agricultural site is now the lovely parklike Kew golf links — and it, too, has had its periodic experiences with the unruly river and lagoons.

It was William Oswin who bequeathed the name of Kilby Road which in this centenary period is expanding into a superb tree-lined two-way highway proceeding from a point of contact with the Yarra at the Moorings and bounding Willsmere Park, Greenacres and Kew golf links and a residential area, to its ultimate contact with Burke and Doncaster Roads in Camberwell. This pioneer grazier and orchardist, a member of Kew's first Council, purchased selected portions at the land sales of 1845.

Oswin's name has been given to a street in the district and there is a living memorial to his labours to be seen to this day in three flourishing pear trees at the river's edge close upon the eastern side of Burke Road Bridge. May those trees long continue to produce their white blossoms and green leaves, protected as they are to be by their present-day caretakers, the Camberwell City Council.

Another east-west highway carrying Kew over to Camberwell is Harp Road. Here again are centred romantic legends of early days. Cobb & Co.'s coaches ran out from town — or struggled along rutted tracks — past the Harp of Erin Hotel to their next halt at the White Horse on the way to Lilydale. Inevitably, the track, first carved by the gold-diggers, took the name of Harp Road. The hostelry, built by Edward Glynn in 1854, was long the centre of race gatherings and meetings of the hounds.

Normanby Road, connecting the Cotham Road and northern Kew tram routes, was so entitled in vice-regal honour. But before the Marquis of Normanby the name was Connor Street, recalling an unknown who gave his name also to Connor's Creek—a meandering tributary which found the Yarra after providing the old golf links on the Hyde Park estate with a chain of eroded traps and hazards.

The famed Rimington nurseries and violet farm have largely given way to fine homes favoured with a sweeping vista across plains and pineclad rises to the mountains of Healesville. But the link with the pioneering gardening family is forged in Rimington Avenue.

Turning back from the eastern outskirts, we might expect to find a name given to a residential street somewhere along Cotham Road half way between Burke and Glenferrie Roads. That name is Dumaresq but—curiously—it is not to be found, there or elsewhere. In 1851, Captain Edward Dumaresq, a former army officer resident in Sydney, secured a large area which he had adjudged on an earlier visit to Melbourne to be the highest in all the forest wilderness east of the city. When dividing this estate he named his roadways after his sons and other male relatives, Edward, Thomas, John, Rowland and Alfred. But not after his daughters, nor after himself.

Dumaresq's southside neighbour was the Reverend Hussey Burgh Macartney, for forty years Dean of Melbourne. These two good citizens presented to the Kew Council a generous strip of their joint holdings, providing a thoroughfare which is Sackville Street. It was Macartney who made the choice of name, after stately Sackville Street in Dublin, his native city. Possessor of an even wider sweep than that of his friend "next door", spanning Glenferrie Road to Burke Road, with Barker's Road as its southern edge, the Dean's personality is recognized today in Macartney Avenue, running with and behind Sackville, and by Dean Street.

In this neighbourhood, by the way, someone has seen fit to hand on a reminder of Antarctic heroes in Ross, Evans, Mawson and Scott Streets.

Captain Dumaresq's grand-daughter, Margaret, a widely known school-teacher still resident in Kew, who was the first student of Genazzano to graduate at the University of Melbourne, can relate tales of historic background concerning her pioneer grandparent. Born one hundred and fifty-eight years ago, he served as an army officer in India, returned to England broken in health and at the age of twenty-two voyaged to Sydney where he stayed with his sister, Lady Darling, at Government House. He had been given only twelve months' remaining span of life but continued to draw his army pension till after his one hundred and fourth birthday! Periodic inquiries of the British pension authorities querying his continued existence right up to 1906 is a story connected to Kew only in the flattering inference as to our salubrious climate.

A turn out of Sackville Street at its western end takes traffic into Wrixon Street and so to Barker's Road. The name commemorates Judge Wrixon who lived there in a fine dwelling with his two sons, one of whom became an early-era Kew Councillor, while the other — Henry, of Raheen — entered Parliament, was knighted for services to his country, and became President of the Legislative Council.

From this neighbourhood is a short span still farther west where there can be found on the civic plan Stirling Street and Doona Avenue. These carry recollections of Robert Stirling Anderson and his dwelling-place. Anderson was a prominent Minister of the Crown about the time of the founding of the municipality. Across Cotham Road to the north there is Barrington Avenue, named from the home of Richard Ratten whose extensive property ran down to Park Hill Road.

Park Hill Road is so named from Park Hill, the home of a considerable land holder and pioneer character, Thomas Judd, who resided there from 1852 and was still there in Kew's jubilee period. Judd and his people must have been comparatively near neighbours of Bonwick, whose forested block lay somewhere along the subsequent line of Park Hill Road.

In the "village" area near to the post-office and shopping settlement, Gellibrand Street flanks Alexandra Gardens. It may be that its name holds in memory an explorer companion of John Batman — a young Tasmanian solicitor who, with one other adventurous searcher, set out from Geelong to learn of the unknown land beyond the You Yangs and stretching back east to the "place for a village" on the banks of the Yarra. They were lost and never heard of again.

Many Kew streets were in the past named after mayors and councillors of the city. The practice was discontinued thirty-five years ago. There are more than a score of streets named in this way — too many to list in a short chronicle.

Over the years there have been revealed inevitable oversights in the policy of bestowing memorial tributes by way of the city's street-planning. Several examples have been indicated in the course of this compressed chronicle. A most striking omission is the name of a citizen who has been designated the "father and founder of Kew". James Venn Morgan, born in Somerset in 1823, journeyed to Melbourne, and set up as a bootmaker on a corner of Bourke and Swanston Streets. He completed half a pair of riding boots for a customer, was caught up in the excitement of the earliest gold rush but returned to his last and completed the pair after winning ten ounces of gold; and then, with several companions set off again. Within a fortnight they were back, having "struck it rich".

Morgan persuaded his partners to invest with him in thirty-three acres at £15 an acre in a district becoming known as Kew. The area spread from a point at the present post office to the locality where the Boroondara Cemetery was established seven years later. Morgan's associates were the young men of the John Bunyan whose tale has been sketched in the fight for the naming of the new village and the compromise on the designation of Cotham Road.

Morgan and his friends divided the property by the drawing of straws; his portion was from near Charles Street to Glenferrie Road. Thereon he planted an orchard, ran a dairy, and built houses, living on in remarkable vigour to celebrate his hundredth birthday and to depart the scene in July, 1923. His daughter, Celia, was the first white woman born in Kew, in 1853.

It is regrettable that a completely satisfactory origin for the name Charles Street has not been traced. It is a plausible suggestion that it was named after Sir Charles Hotham, the first governor of Victoria, or after Charles Joseph LaTrobe, the Lieutenant-Governor, who preceded him.

One of the most entertaining accounts of Kew pioneering can be related of Patrick O'Shaughnessy, an Irish migrant of 1840. His first venture was a contract for the construction of portion of the (present) Bulleen Road, including a wooden bridge crossing the Yarra near the Heidelberg gasworks. This structure — not much less than one hundred and twenty years old — still stands although it has had to be patched and strutted to cope with latter-day traffic, and is at last being replaced with a more adequate structure.

Upon the completion of that task O'Shaughnessy leased land for a farm in portion of the Willsmere purchase. That rural soil is now the Greenacres golf course, its modern clubhouse sited on the rise above flood level where stood the humble O'Shaughnessy farmstead. It was in 1854 that Patrick purchased that familiar triangle of south-east Kew land comprising thirty acres bounded by Barker's Road as its base and by High Street South and Denmark Street for its sides, with a point at the now teeming Kew Junction as its apex.

On that strategic spot he built his home and hotel — a long-famed landmark which became the social, civic and political meeting centre of the developing suburb. The apex point still belongs to family descendants who can retail many graphic accounts of life in the big triangular paddock and in the family home, long since vanished. O'Shaughnessy Street and Foley Street and Place are their permanent testimonials.

Windella Avenue is a re-naming, for an interesting reason. Formerly Balfour, it parallels Belford; but the similarity of sound caused confusion. The city council therefore replaced Balfour with Windella, so maintaining the tribute of Kew to one of its most renowned and revered citizens. James Balfour came from Edinburgh in 1852; became associated with the Hentys, and married a daughter of James Henty, of Kew. He served his adopted country for a unique term in both Houses of the Legislature, from 1866 (with a brief break) to 1913, part of that span as a Minister of the Crown and always as Parliament's foremost debater; and, in the social and religious spheres, "the foremost layman in the church life of Australia". His stately old home and garden (now no more) was in Studley Park Road; and its name was Windella.

Adeney Avenue is another north-south link between the east-bound tramways, and it has an unusual source. William Sweyne Adeney voyaged to Tasmania in 1842, thence to Victoria's Western District as a jackeroo and, ultimately, a grazier (part of his original country is still with the family). In the 1870's William Adeney "came to town", residing in Wimba on Cotham Road (Wimba Avenue). About 1878 Adeney purchased a nearby dwelling, Clifton, the home and estate of the Austin family, then comprising 16 acres whose boundaries today are Adeney Avenue, Parkhill Road, Florence Avenue and Cotham Road.

The first owner was a Frenchman who planted the sixteen acres as a vineyard and orchard and built two four-roomed stone villas, one on Cotham Road (still standing) and the other at the far end, on Parkhill corner.

Well over the century old, the stout stone structure stands where the trams go by—until recent years adorned by olive, fig, apple and prune trees. With the sub-dividing of the vineyard, a central thoroughfare was run through and named Park Street. This eventually became Adeney Avenue, and the western edge of the sixteen acres was pegged out as Florence Avenue in compliment to a grand-daughter of the pioneer Adeney.

Two Courts eastward out of Carson Street-Younger and Mackieclaim ties with Coombs Avenue. The brothers William and Alexander Mackie Younger, who subdivided this residential backwater, come of early Hawthorn-Kew origin and are connected with Joseph Butterworth Coombs, born 1841. Coombs Avenue flanks the Raheen territory, running steeply down from Studley Park Road to look upon the Boulevard, the river, the park. An ancient stone and slated dwelling of the family has been razed from its cliff site, giving place to a modern group. Coombs owned many acres in all that country, having made his purchases from the original possessor, Dr. Black, who grazed his sheep down the hill and even beyond the Yarra.

"New Kew"

In this relation of our history beginning from pre-settlement days and proceeding through the story of the pioneers to this our development as a hundred-year-old city, it will be appropriate to add another brief sketch. There has arisen a "New Kew" — a spectacular and exceptionally valuable residential expansion that looks down upon the most beautiful vista in all Melbourne's metropolitan area. Prior to these post-war years there had remained largely in its primordial state a sweep of deep gullies and sharp rises deemed to be impossible from the aspect of home building.

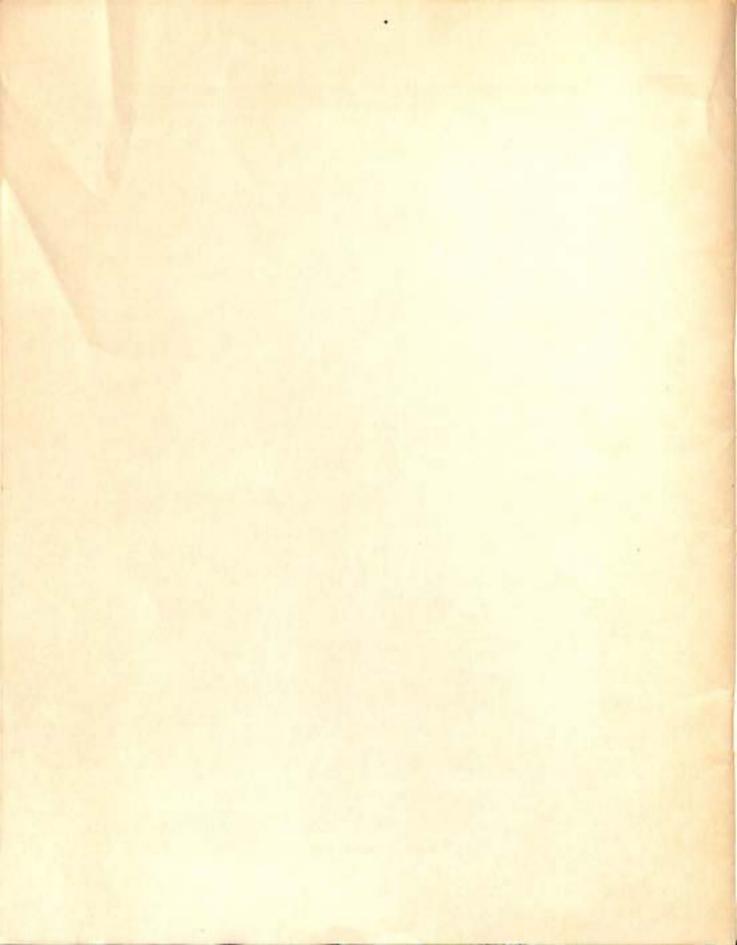
This north-western corner lies beyond Stawell Street which, in local parlance, had been known as the "country road", but is now a handsome two-way, two-level extension. The Boulevard, with its clifflike cuttings, the meandering river and the great park unfold at its feet. And here—thanks to prosperity and the art of modern architecture—has been built the newest Kew, comprising an almost complete cover of attractive dwellings costing up to £50,000 and more, with modern roadways, gardens, and tree-planting schemes.

No history of Kew could be written without its basis in the jubilee production of F. G. A. Barnard, long-serving member of the Municipal Council and its Mayor at the time of the jubilee; a business man of the "village", member of the Historical Society of Victoria and of the Field Naturalists' Club; editor of The Victorian Naturalist. His father before him — Francis Barnard — was a key man in the campaign for Kew's civic independance; a member of the Council two years after its inauguration, and thrice its Mayor.

Many other men and families there were, of the earliest period, who could be worthily enrolled here. They played their varied parts as builders of the city, their names in many cases written in earliest municipal annals. They have not all gained visible tribute in the laying out of their native territory but their families have carried on and created a recognition that will stand and stay.

"CRESCO": I grow! Thus has Kew grown from its unnamed beginning, from its term as a segment of a district road board in 1854, its emergence as a municipality in 1860, a borough in 1863, a town in 1910, a city in 1921, and, now, to its Centenary!





This booklet has been prepared by a Committee of the Kew Historical Society.



