

Heritage Citation



Fleming Farmhouse

Key details

Addresses	At 18 Railway Street, Nudgee, Queensland 4014
Type of place	House, Farm
Period	Federation 1890-1914
Style	Queenslander
Lot plan	L46_RP34651; L45_RP34651
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2003 Date of Citation — August 2010
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber
People/associations	Thomas and Margaret Fleming (Occupant)

This timber residence was constructed in 1913 for farmers Thomas and Margaret Fleming. Thomas was the descendant of Irish immigrant, Thomas Fleming, who purchased land and settled at Nudgee in the 1860s. The house was built through the Workers Dwelling Scheme, which existed to provide those with limited means the opportunity to build a suitable dwelling. This was one of 1501 such houses built between 1913-1914 across Queensland, all to a standard design. The Flemings' primary crop was pineapples, however by the 1930s they had branched out into watermelons. The Fleming family lived in the farmhouse until 1953.

History

The land on which this farmer's residence now sits, was part of twelve acres of crown land that was purchased by Ambrose Holland on 8 September 1866. Holland, a Brisbane resident, paid ?25.4s. for the property described as Portion 231 in the Parish of Toombul. On 16 April 1875, Holland sold the land to James Robinson, a prominent local farmer. Robinson had been one of the first of the free settlers to come to Queensland, after the Moreton Bay penal settlement closed in 1842. He was part of a group, organised by the Reverend J.D. Lang, which sailed for Queensland (then part of the colony of New South Wales) on 14 September 1848. The vessel *Fortitude* delivered Robinson to Moreton Bay on 21 January 1849. He established a farm at Eagle Farm. After marrying Mary Walton in 1852, Robinson moved to Nudgee to continue farming. Portion 231 was a late addition to Robinson's holdings in the district.

The district received a major boost when, on 11 May 1882, the Nudgee Railway Station and Goods Shed opened. The station ensured a regular transport service for the local residents, most of who were small farmers. Their crops of oats, corn, grapes and pineapples could now be more quickly transported to markets and the station also ensured a better mail service for the district. Already, James Robinson had subdivided and sold some of his farmland as 16 and 20 perch housing blocks. Robinson's land sale was aimed at "Mechanics, Working Men and persons of limited means" who were asked to place a deposit of ?2 and pay monthly instalments of ?1.¹ Robinson's housing estate created three unnamed roads that were the first streets of the new Nudgee Township. These would later be named Hayden, Oakmere and St Achs Streets.

Robinson disposed of Portion 231 on 22 October 1883. The new owners were David Joseph Childs and Thomas Smith Henzell. Childs had also migrated to Queensland on the *Fortitude*. The two partners followed Robinson's example by subdividing Portion 231 into residential allotments and putting them up for sale in 1884. On 15 November 1884, David Hay McLeod bought subdivisions 45, 46 and 47. This land totalling one rood and eight perches fronted an unnamed road that eventually became Railway Street. David McLeod sold his three subdivisions on 26 February 1910.

The new owners of the land were Thomas and Margaret Fleming. Thomas Fleming was a descendent of Irish migrant Thomas Fleming, who had arrived in Moreton Bay aboard the sailing ship *Golden Dream* on 28 May 1863. He moved to Nudgee where he obtained Portion 241, off St Vincents Road, on 19 December 1863. The Fleming family grew and spread throughout the district, operating a farm at Nudgee Beach. Thomas and Margaret Fleming's purchase in 1910 was part of this expansion.

Thomas and Margaret Fleming took out a mortgage on their Railway Street property on 17 June 1913. Their mortgage, for ?300, was financed through the Queensland Government's Workers' Dwellings Board. Fleming's Workers' Dwelling Scheme-designed residence was built during the year as Thomas Fleming appears is listed as a Nudgee resident for the first time in the 1914 edition of the *Queensland Post Office Directories*. The erection of Workers' Dwelling Scheme homes was the responsibility of the Workers Dwelling Scheme Board (later renamed the State Advances Corporation) which was created by the state government in 1910. The purpose was to "enable persons of limited income to erect, under the Corporation's supervision, suitable homes for themselves, with a comparatively small contribution by them towards the proposition, with easy terms of repayment, and a low rate of interest."² As farmers, the Flemings had most of their wealth tied up in farm assets and so were eligible to apply to this scheme. The Fleming's residence was of a standard 1910 design, of which 1,501 such houses were completed throughout Queensland during 1913-14.

The new Fleming residence was situated directly across from Nudgee Railway Station, which had been enlarged with the addition of a northern platform in 1901. The house usurped the old Fleming farmhouse situated along Cribb Island Road, as the centre of the family's fruit growing business. While pineapples were the Fleming family's main crop, by the 1930s Thomas Fleming had branched out into growing fields of watermelons to supply to the Brisbane markets. When Margaret Fleming died on 24 July 1944, the family home reverted to her husband's sole ownership. By 1946, a second residence had been built on subdivision 45, while farm sheds had been erected behind the two residences at 18 Railway Street. These structures were still in existence as late as 1966. Thomas Fleming died on 27 September 1950 and the property at 18 Railway Street passed to his son Thomas James Fleming and his business partner Norman Stegman.

The Fleming family finally disposed of their parent's residence on 7 July 1953 selling it to Alfred Charley Pflugrath. The property has since had several owners.

In the late 1970s, the Fleming farm along Cribb Island road together with the entire suburb of Cribb Island was resumed as part of the plan for the expansion and redevelopment of the Brisbane airport. By 1981, the original Fleming farmhouse had been demolished. The former farmhouse at 18 Railway Street is a surviving physical link to the Fleming family, who were early settlers to the Nudgee district. It is also one of the few Workers Dwelling Scheme residences built in the Nudgee/Banyo area.

Statement of significance

Relevant assessment criteria

This is a place of local heritage significance and meets one or more of the local heritage criteria under the Heritage planning scheme policy of the *Brisbane City Plan 2014*. It is significant because:

Historical

CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history

as evidence of the continuing development of Nudgee as a rural district in the early twentieth century.

Historical association

CRITERION H

The place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organization of importance in the city's or local area's history

as the former residence of the Fleming family who were early settlers in the Nudgee District.

References

1. John Oxley Library, Estate Maps – Nudgee
 2. Workers' Dwelling Scheme, *Information for Intending Applicants*, (Brisbane: Queensland Government Printer, 1938)
 3. Brisbane City Council, *Properties on the Web*, website, post-1946 building cards
 4. Brisbane City Council, 1946 aerial photographs.
 5. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
 6. John Oxley Library, Estate Maps – *Town of Nudgee Estate* (1880s)
 7. John Oxley Library, Suburban clippings file - Nudgee
 8. *Queensland Post Office Directories*, 1868-1949
 9. Tremayne, Jean and Pechey, Sue, *Pioneers, Picnics and Pineapples*, (Brisbane: A.E.B.I.S., 1994)
-

Copyright Brisbane City Council

Note: This citation has been prepared on the basis of evidence available at the time including an external

examination of the building. The statement of significance is a summary of the most culturally important aspects of the property based on the available evidence, and may be re-assessed if further information becomes available. The purpose of this citation is to provide an informed evaluation for heritage registration and information. This does not negate the necessity for a thorough conservation study by a qualified practitioner, before any action is taken which may affect its heritage significance.

Citation prepared by — Brisbane City Council (page revised June 2022)



Dedicated to a better Brisbane