



**Moreland**  
City Council

**ca. 1763**

Moreland, Jamaica

**1839**

Moreland, Melbourne

Report on the place name:

# Moreland

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**DEAKIN**  
UNIVERSITY

## Executive Summary

The name “Moreland”, used to designate the municipality, road, and train station, has associational and financial links to eighteenth- and nineteenth- century Caribbean slave plantations. The name was first adopted locally on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country by Scottish settler, doctor, speculator, and firebrand Farquhar McCrae (1806–1850). In October 1839, Farquhar acquired from the Crown, in the area’s first colonial land sales, property between present-day Moonee Ponds Creek and Sydney Road, either side of Moreland Road. Farquhar’s paternal grandfather Alexander McCrae (ca.1744/45–1796) had been the ‘Sugar Lord’ of the Moreland Estate, Vere, Jamaica. According to McCrae family records, at his death, Alexander’s estate may have been valued at £100,000, making him an extraordinarily wealthy man, a fortune generated from his slave plantation, the primary crop of which was sugar. His son William Gordon McCrae (1768–1829) spent his early childhood in Jamaica, and inherited advantage, privilege, and money generated from his family’s colonial assets. The McCrae family noted that the Moreland Estate passed on to the Mitchell family by the nineteenth century. Although not directly receiving inheritance from their grandfather’s estate, the children of William Gordon McCrae were aware of their family history and benefited from their family’s standing in Scottish and Australian society. Farquhar’s decision to call his Australian property “Moreland” accorded to his grandiose dreams for his colonial life in Melbourne, claiming prestige and distinction by invoking his

family’s Jamaican colonial heritage. In financial terms, Farquhar’s property investments were, in part, funded by inheritance received following the death of his uncle, John Morison (1766–1838), the father of his wife Agnes. In Edinburgh, John had raised, supported, and educated Farquhar. The Morison family wealth was linked to the Windsor Castle Estate, St David, Jamaica. In Melbourne, Farquhar was noted in colonial records for his support of bringing 'Indian coolie labour' to the Australian colonies and for his punishment of an Indigenous person for stealing from him. Following business, political, and personal disputes, Farquhar in 1844 departed Melbourne for Sydney. A section of his Moreland property was, for some time, leased to his sister Mary Harvey, who was an awardee of slave compensation in 1836 for the Bay Estate, St Michael, Barbados. Farquhar died in 1850 and the Moreland property was subsequently subdivided in 1858. At that time, Moreland Road was built, followed by Moreland Station in 1884. Since the start of the twentieth century, the public record including books and newspapers has made clear that the “Moreland” place name was chosen by Farquhar after his grandfather’s Jamaican plantation. In 1994, the newly-created City of Moreland adopted this name. New academic research suggests that Australia’s colonisation had strong social, financial, and cultural links to British slavery, and so the story of Farquhar and Moreland was echoed elsewhere. More unique is that an Australian municipal authority has a direct naming link to a slave plantation.

# Acknowledgements

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# Place Name: "Moreland"

## Introduction

The City of Moreland traces its naming origins back to a Jamaican sugar plantation of the same name. When the municipality was first established in 1994 – from the former Cities of Coburg and Brunswick – the name "Moreland" had been used locally for more than 150 years. Moreland Station dated to 1884 and Moreland Road dated further back to 1858, when an earlier land holding called "Moreland" was first subdivided. Between 1839 and 1841, settler Farquhar McCrae purchased parcels of land from the Crown, in the area's first land sales. He named this land holding "Moreland", after his grandfather Alexander Gordon McCrae's substantial, former Jamaican plantation, called "Moreland Estate", which was in the Vere parish of Jamaica, and primarily grew sugar, using slave labour. Farquhar was a doctor and speculator, a prominent and divisive figure in early colonial Melbourne. He was noted for his disputes with fellow settlers and for assaulting an Indigenous person. Farquhar's passage to Australia and his purchases of property were assisted by the inheritance he received in 1838 from his father-in-law John Morison to support himself, his

wife Agnes, and their children. John's brother Alexander, married to Mary Anne Cushnie, had an interest in another Jamaican sugar plantation exploiting slave labour. Farquhar's sister Mary Harvey received slave compensation money and subsequently leased Moreland from him.

This report examines the "Moreland" name. It considers the use of the name "Moreland" in the inner north of Melbourne between 1839 and today. The key moment in this history occurs between the noted land sale in 1839 and the later subdivision in 1858. From at least this time, Farquhar McCrae and his immediate relatives engaged with their family history including their Jamaican colonial plantation heritage. The accounts of the McCrae family evidence *associational links* between "Moreland" in Melbourne and "Moreland" in Jamaica, and provide some description of the operation of the Moreland Estate slave plantation. These *associational links* have been on the public record for the last century, including when the City of Moreland was named in 1994. *Financial links* also exists between Moreland in Melbourne

and British Caribbean slavery, because of the inheritance received by Farquhar McCrae from his uncle, and the rental received from his sister.

The report is divided into the following sections:

- » **Introduction**
- » **Methodology**
- » **Early Colonial Naarm / Melbourne**
- » **Biography of Farquhar McCrae**
- » **Moreland Estate, Jamaica**
- » **Links Between "Moreland" in Melbourne and British Caribbean Slavery**
- » **Public Knowledge and Conclusion**

## Methodology

Dr James Lesh of Deakin University was commissioned to prepare this history report by the City of Moreland in January 2022. The previous month, the City had made the decision to re-name the municipality. The City established an expert working group of residents, historians, librarians, archivists, activists, and First Nations representatives to monitor the preparation of and ultimately approve this report. Council officers held a public workshop to discuss the terms and content of this report with the Brunswick and Coburg historical societies and other community members, who had expressed an interest to Council in the history of the name “Moreland”.

The priorities raised by the City of Moreland, the working group, and the public workshop for the report were as follows:

- » Preparation of an authoritative historical account of the relationship between “Moreland Estate” in Jamaica and “Moreland” in Melbourne, from the eighteenth century until today.
- » Details about Farquhar McCrae and his role in establishing that relationship in the 1830s.
- » Transparency regarding the historical evidence available to demonstrate associational and financial links between “Moreland” in Melbourne and British Caribbean slave plantations.

The short two-month time frame available for the preparation of this report shaped the historical and archival research that was undertaken. The report was commissioned in early January 2022, with an interim report due in mid-February 2022, and a final report due in early March 2022. Archival documentary research was largely limited to the Melbourne metropolitan region and digitised historical sources.

Archival repositories of material consulted included:

- » State Library of Victoria – Manuscripts – McCrae Family Papers.
  - » Contains a family memoir by Andrew Murison McCrae, with details of his grandfather Alexander Gordon McCrae of Moreland, as well as copies of eighteenth-century wills, estates, and letters.
- » Public Record Office of Victoria – Land Documents.
- » Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria.
- » State Library of NSW – Petition concerning Indian Labour in New South Wales, 1842.
- » State Archives of NSW – Correspondence between Farquhar McCrae and William Thomas (1793-1867), Assistant Protector of Aborigines, Port Philip Colony.
- » National Library of Australia – Trove Digitised Newspapers and Periodicals.
- » National Records of Scotland – Scottish People.
- » British Library – Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century British Periodicals.
- » University College London – Legacies of British Slavery online database.
- » Out-of-Print Publications available via Google Books, Project Gutenberg, so forth.
- » Ancestry.com – Genealogy Details and Crowd-Sourced Family Trees.

The most detailed account of the Moreland Estate in Jamaica comes from the McCrae family history recorded between the 1850s and 1880s in Melbourne by both Andrew Murison McCrae (1799–1874), Alexander’s grandson and Farquhar’s brother, and his wife Georgiana Gordon McCrae (1804–1890), held at the State Library of Victoria (henceforth ‘McCrae Records’).<sup>1</sup> Much of this material appears to be in Georgiana’s handwriting, with occasional annotations from their son George Gordon McCrae.<sup>2</sup> The McCrae Records comprising family memoirs, oral accounts, and older transcribed records and correspondence are relied on below. The Records were recorded for private family purposes, rather than the public record, and appear to be less embellished than later material published by the family.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, the Records mention first-hand conversations with family members and the sighting of original documents, contributing to their reliability. Finally, much of the content in these nineteenth-century Melbourne documents can be reconciled against genealogical data and other historical records.

Conducting historical research further back in time impacts the historical sources available. The sources available are typically less comprehensive and less conclusive. For instance, the preparation of the family tree (Appendix 1) has required some interpretation, deduction, and triangulation efforts from the archival repositories. Furthermore, various first and last names identified are spelt inconsistently. For example, McCrae might be spelt Macrae, McRae, MacCrae, or otherwise. Harvie. Morison has been spelt Morrison and Murison. Researching histories and legacies of slavery have their own methodological challenges, including the minimal digital availability and indexing of historical sources across jurisdictional archives such as Jamaica. Furthermore, the University College London – Legacies of British Slavery provides important snapshots into the past but is not a comprehensive database.

Place names are difficult to conclusively identify the origins of. Decision makers rarely record the rationale for their choices. No definitive historical documents exist explaining why in 1839 Farquhar McCrae selected “Moreland” for his Melbourne property or in 1994 “Moreland” was put forward as the leading candidate for the name of the new municipality. Nevertheless, the role of the historian is to analyse and interpret the past, to make reasonable and replicable inferences, based on the records available to them.

There are sufficient historical sources to conclude a link between the adoption of the name “Moreland” in Melbourne in 1839 and the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Jamaican slave plantation called the “Moreland Estate”. Farquhar McCrae was almost certainly aware of his family’s Jamaican colonial heritage. His immediate family recorded this heritage on paper in the mid-nineteenth century and later promoted this heritage in the twentieth century. The family also has no recorded links to any such place – Moreland, Moor Land, the Moors, or so forth – in Britain.<sup>4</sup>

1. Andrew Murison McCrae, ‘Andrew Murison McCrae’s Family Memoirs noted down at Arthurs Seat’ (Arthur’s Seat, n.d.), MS 12831 Papers of the McCrae family, F Box 3608/4, accessed 3 December 2021, [http://search.slv.vic.gov.au/permalink/ff/1cl35st/SLV\\_VOYAGER1634980](http://search.slv.vic.gov.au/permalink/ff/1cl35st/SLV_VOYAGER1634980); Georgiana McCrae and Andrew Murison McCrae, ‘Family Memoirs, Oral Accounts, and Transcribed Records and Correspondence, in Letts Diary and Almanac 1866, Georgiana’s Handwriting’ (Melbourne, n.d.), MS 12831 Papers of the McCrae family, F Box 3592A/8, accessed 3 December 2021, [http://search.slv.vic.gov.au/permalink/ff/1cl35st/SLV\\_VOYAGER1634980](http://search.slv.vic.gov.au/permalink/ff/1cl35st/SLV_VOYAGER1634980). McCrae Family Papers.
2. Many thanks to Dr Marguerite Hancock for identifying the handwriting.
3. Georgiana McCrae and Hugh McCrae, *Georgiana’s journal* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1992).
4. I.e., Alexander Macrae, *History of the Clan Macrae with Genealogies* (Dingwall: A.M. Ross & Co, 1899).

A comprehensive secondary literature review was conducted. Unfortunately, in-depth academic historical research on the Moreland Estate in Jamaica has been minimal; with no known investigation of related archival sources at the Jamaica Archives and Records Office. In contrast, the nineteenth-century Australian McCrae family has received substantive historical research. Farquhar's sister-in-law Georgiana McCrae (wife of Andrew McCrae) has been subject to an authoritative biography by historian Brenda Niall, who reviewed the forementioned manuscript collections at the State Library of Victoria.<sup>5</sup> Farquhar McCrae has also been studied in a recent book by historian Douglas Wilkie.<sup>6</sup>

5. Brenda Niall, *Georgiana: a biography of Georgiana McCrae, painter, diarist, pioneer* (Miegunyah Press Series, Melbourne University Publishing, 1994). Page numbers refer to Google eBook, published in 2019.
6. Douglas Wilkie, *Farquhar McCrae and The Burning of Troy: The Search for a Lost Masterpiece & the appreciation of the fine arts in colonial Australia* (Melbourne: Historia Incognita, 2021). See also Penny Russell, "A Silly Quarrel About a Sore Knee"? Defending Honour in a Professional Dispute, Sydney 1846', *Health and History* 14, no. 2 (2012): 46–73. Wilkie provides a more sympathetic portrait of Farquhar McCrae compared to Brenda Niall and Penny Russell.

## Early Colonial Naarm/Melbourne

First Peoples have lived in the city now called Melbourne and the municipality now called the City of Moreland for millennia.<sup>7</sup> Naarm and the Yarra River region have long been inhabited by the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung of the East Kulin nations.<sup>8</sup> Melbourne was established in 1835 with the arrival of colonial settlers from Tasmania. Introduced diseases and frontier violence devastated the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung. An exploitative treaty was prepared by colonist John Batman, who had fought in the Tasmanian frontier wars. Batman's treaty was swiftly annulled. Colonial authorities asserted that the unceded lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung were owned by the British Crown.

In the 1830s and 1840s, waves of colonists arrived at the new Port Philip District from Tasmania, from existing New South Wales settlements, and from overseas: for the opportunity to speculate on property and make money from pastoralism and commerce in this new colonial outpost.<sup>9</sup> The population of the Port Philip District exponentially grew from 1,000 people in 1837 to over 75,000 by 1851 – when Victoria separated from New South Wales and the gold rush began. The colonisation of Victoria was quick, with tracts of Crown land sold to private investors in a few short years.

In 1837, the first Crown land sales occurred in central Melbourne, following the laying out of the city grid by Robert Hoddle. Between 1838 and 1841, some 850 square kilometres was alienated and sold across the Port Philip District by colonial authorities.<sup>10</sup> Within eight kilometres of central Melbourne alone, more than twelve square kilometres of land was sold at an average price of £10 per acre.<sup>11</sup> In 1838–40, the first land sales occurred in Coburg and Brunswick between Merri Creek and Moonee Ponds Creek.<sup>12</sup> Over 350 colonists lived in the area by 1841, while the Wurundjeri – such as possibly the Billibellary mob – were gradually relocated by authorities to Aboriginal reserves and missions.

The growing intensity of colonisation across Australia in the first half of the nineteenth century had a broader global context. Financial capital came from sources such as the profits of the Industrial Revolution, asset divestment after the British loss of the North American colonies, and, following the apparent abolition of slavery in the British Empire, compensation given by the British Government to former slaveowners.<sup>13</sup> For British settlers, migration to Australia offered opportunity and sources of wealth creation. From the 1830s, the Port Philip District and Melbourne was the new frontier.

7. City of Moreland, *Pre-Contact Aboriginal Heritage Study*, 2010, accessed 18 February 2022, <https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/globalassets/key-docs/policy-strategy-plan/moreland-pre-contact-aboriginal-heritage-study.pdf>.
8. Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians: a history since 1800* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2005).
9. Andrew May, *Melbourne street life: The itinerary of our days* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly, 2017).
10. Rod Duncan, 'The Great Dispossession', *No MOREland*, 2022, accessed 18 February 2022, <https://www.nomoreland.net/the-great-dispossession>.
11. A.G.L. Shaw, 'Foundation and Early History', *eMelbourne* (Melbourne: University of Melbourne, 2008), accessed 10 December 2019, <https://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM00602b.htm>.
12. City of Moreland, *City of Moreland: Thematic History (Revised)*, 2020; Richard Broome, *Coburg: between two creeks*, 2nd ed. (Melbourne: Coburg Historical Society, 2001).
13. Jane Lydon, *Anti-slavery and Australia: no slavery in a free land?, Empires and the making of the modern world, 1650-2000* (Oxon: Routledge, 2021).



## Biography of Farquhar McCrae

In October 1839, Farquhar McCrae (Appendix 2) purchased land from Moonee Ponds Creek to Sydney Road in the present-day City of Moreland (Appendix 3). The purchase was comprised of two adjoining land parcels in the new Parish of Jika Jika: portion number 126, comprising 315 acres and costing £834 and portion 133, comprising 323 acres and costing £1,227.<sup>14</sup> He called this property “Moreland”. He was one of 29 early landholders in the area. In 1841, he made further purchases from other property speculators of portions 134 and 141. Located north of his existing two plots, this final land holding comprised some 270 acres. Ultimately, “Moreland” was made up of four separate properties, a total of 908 acres. That final 1841 property was elevated, providing spectacular outlook towards Port Philip Bay and down the Moonee Ponds Valley.<sup>15</sup> He built his family home, called ‘La Rose’, to capture these views (present-day Wentworth House, Pascoe Vale South, Victorian Heritage Register H0138). ‘La Rose’ was initially a single storey basalt house in a simple Colonial Georgian style.<sup>16</sup> Its interiors were lavishly decorated and furnished. Farquhar recruited workers to farm his ‘Moreland Estate’, planting crops such as wheat, to generate income.<sup>17</sup> In total, Farquhar spent upwards of £3,000 on a property portfolio which also included a home on Bourke Street, a property in Richmond, and the Eumemmering run at Dandenong.<sup>18</sup>

Four months before his acquisition of Moreland, Farquhar arrived in Australia from Scotland on 15 June 1839. He was 31 years old, having been born on the outskirts of Edinburgh on 9 September 1807.<sup>19</sup> He was raised in Edinburgh, trained as a doctor in Edinburgh and Paris, and had a commission as a Regimental Medical Officer, 6th Dragoon Guards. He was a talented physician and surgeon.<sup>20</sup> On 18 November 1836, aged 29 years old, Farquhar married his first cousin Agnes Morison.<sup>21</sup> Like his forebears, Farquhar sought the opportunity afforded to him by Britain’s continued imperial expansion. A specific attraction of Australia was, he wrote to colonial authorities, ‘the warmer climate’; he suffered from poor health across his short life. Farquhar added that he was ‘bed-ridden for nearly five months’ before leaving the 6th Dragoon Guards.<sup>22</sup> Farquhar sailed on the first direct passenger transport from Great Britain to the Port Philip District on 15 February 1839. Joining him on the journey from Leith to Melbourne on a ship called the *Midlothian* was his wife Agnes, mother Margaret, sisters Thomas Ann and Margaret, daughter Jane, and 21 other passengers.<sup>23</sup>

14. Michael Cannon and Ian MacFarlane, *Historical records of Victoria: The Crown, the Land and the Squatter, 1835–1840*, vol. 6 (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1991), 407.
15. Richard Broome, *Coburg, between two creeks* (Melbourne: Lothian, 1987), 45.
16. Heritage Council of Victoria, ‘Wentworth House (formerly La Rose)’ (Heritage Council of Victoria, 1978), accessed 2 February 2022, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/919>.
17. ‘Provincial News.’, *Melbourne Times* (Victoria, 14 May 1842), accessed 21 February 2022, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article226924923>.
18. George Gordon McCrae, ‘Some Recollections of Melbourne in the “Forties.”’, *The Victorian Historical Magazine* 11, no. 3 (1912): 116.
19. Farquhar McCrae, 9 September 1806, in *Scottish People Archive, Old Parish Registers Births 682/20 270 Currie*.
20. R. L. Pearce, ‘Farquhar McCrae MD--portrait of a surgeon’, *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Surgery* 56, no. 1 (1986): 67–72.
21. Farquhar McCrae and Agnes Morrison, 18 November 1836, in *Scottish People Archive, Old Parish Registers Marriages 685/2 430 447 St Cuthbert’s*, and in *Scottish People Archive, Old Parish Registers Marriages 685/1 650 168 Edinburgh*.
22. Letter: Farquhar McCrae to George Gipps (Governor of NSW), 28 June 1839, in *Colonial Secretary Letters relating to land 1826–56*, Item No, 2/7919, Reel No, 1158, accessed 1 March 2022, <https://search.records.nsw.gov.au/permalink/ff/1ebnd1/INDEX966959>.
23. Wilkie, *Farquhar McCrae and The Burning of Troy*, 130ff.

Farquhar's property purchases were funded from various sources of financial capital. His passage to Australia with his family came about following the death of his uncle – Agnes' father – John Morison on 15 May 1837.<sup>24</sup> Farquhar received £6,000 from his uncle's estate<sup>25</sup> which supported his family's journey and their establishment in Australia.<sup>26</sup> John was close to his brother-in-law William Gordon McCrae, Farquhar's father, and to Georgiana Gordon, future wife of Andrew McCrae, Farquhar's elder brother. John raised William Gordon McCrae's children – Farquhar and Andrew among others – providing them with a home, education, and social standing. Meanwhile, William was posted to the remote Shetland Islands at Lerwick as a customs officer.<sup>27</sup>

The Morison family wealth had come from the Windsor Castle Estate in Jamaica.<sup>28</sup> Farquhar appeared to receive no financial inheritance from his father William (1768–1829), and thus his paternal grandfather Alexander;<sup>29</sup> both of whom had links to the Moreland Estate in Jamaica, as detailed below. In Melbourne, Farquhar borrowed money from his brother Alexander<sup>30</sup> and from financial institutions, such as the Port Philip Bank, for which he acted as a founding Director from 1839.<sup>31</sup>

As with other colonial Melbourne elites, Farquhar lived a busy life. He not only invested in property and involved himself in banking, but also practiced medicine from Bourke Street and founded the Melbourne Auction Company. Among his civic and corporate roles, Farquhar was an elected Magistrate, Vice-President of both the Melbourne Mechanics Institute (subsequently, the Atheneum Club), and the Pastoral and Agricultural Society of the Australian Felix. He was also a member of the staff of the Church of England, involved in the construction of St James Old Cathedral.<sup>32</sup> With his medical background, he moved the resolution to establish the Melbourne Hospital.<sup>33</sup> He was a founding member of the elite Melbourne Club, and reportedly had a verbal street-side spat with another member of the organisation.<sup>34</sup> Other disputes involving Farquhar included a street fight over reputation that was to involve a duel, but which was eventually aborted.<sup>35</sup> Following his move to Sydney in 1844, another duel, again over reputation, also never eventuated.<sup>36</sup> Farquhar was recognised for his medical expertise but not for his social nous or business acumen. As early as 1839, Farquhar complained to colonial authorities about the increasing cost of the Crown land he was seeking to profit from.<sup>37</sup> His decision to abandon Melbourne for Sydney suggests that his wide range of public roles were possibly more motivated by financial and reputational self-interest than genuine civic and public commitment.

24. John Morrison, 15 May 1837, in Scottish People Archive, Old Parish Registers Deaths 685/2 500 395 St Cuthbert's.
25. John Morison, 1838, in Scottish People Archive, Wills and testaments Reference SC70/1/57, Edinburgh Sheriff Court Inventories.
26. Wilkie, *Farquhar McCrae and The Burning of Troy*, 104.
27. Niall, *Georgiana*, 132.
28. University College London, Department of History, 'Details of Estate: Windsor Castle Estate', *Legacies of British Slavery*, 2022, accessed 21 February 2022, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estate/view/265>.
29. William Gordon MacCrae, 1829, in Scottish People Archive, Wills and testaments Reference SC15/41/4, Dumfries Sheriff Court.
30. Niall, *Georgiana*.
31. 'Port Philip', *Colonist* (Sydney, New South Wales, 18 December 1839), 1839, accessed 21 February 2022, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article31724236>.
32. Hilary Lewis, *A history of St James Old Cathedral, Melbourne, 2nd Edition*. (West Melbourne: Rowprint, 1993).
33. Paul De Serville, *Port Phillip gentlemen and good society in Melbourne before the gold rushes* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1980), 59; Niall, *Georgiana*.
34. Ronald McNicoll, 'The early years of the Melbourne Club' (Melbourne: Hawthorn Press, 1976), 27.
35. De Serville, *Port Phillip gentlemen and good society in Melbourne before the gold rushes*, 115; Edmund Finn, *The chronicles of early Melbourne, 1835 to 1852, vol. 1* (Melbourne: Fergusson and Mitchell, 1888), 364.
36. Russell, "A Silly Quarrel About a Sore Knee?"; Farquhar McCrae, *Correspondence between Dr. Farquhar M'Crae and Mr. Surgeon Bland*, Sydney. (Sydney: Kemp and Fairfax, 1846).
37. Letter: Farquhar McCrae to George Gipps (Governor of NSW), 28 June 1839, in Colonial Secretary Letters relating to land 1826–56, Item No, 2/7919, Reel No, 1158, accessed 1 March 2022, <https://search.records.nsw.gov.au/permalink/f/1ebnd1/INDEX966959>.

Farquhar's perspectives on race were typical of the era. British colonists had a post-Enlightenment perspective in which they assumed themselves, and their European civilisations, to be racially, morally, intellectually, and physically superior to non-Europeans and Indigenous peoples. At least two associated events involving Farquhar have been noted in the historical record. Firstly, to assist with improving his property estate, in response to widespread labour shortages, Farquhar signed a popular petition in 1842 to bring 'Indian coolie labour' to the Australian colonies, which was ultimately rejected by authorities.<sup>38</sup>

Secondly, Deputy Protector of Aborigines in the Port Phillip Colony, William Thomas, recorded an incident involving Farquhar. In late 1839, Thomas heard that an Indigenous person had attempted to steal items from Farquhar's horse-cart:

*From my slight acquaintance of you, and the pleasing conversation I had with you at Dandenong touching the Aborigines [sic], I feel assured of your humane consideration of those yet uncivilized people. I was informed yesterday that an Aborigine had robbed your dray and was detected, that you bailed him up to a tree and severely punished him.*<sup>39</sup>

Colonial Melbourne was a violent place during its early decades.<sup>40</sup> Indigenous peoples suffered in their attempts to survive the colonisation of their lands. Overall, Farquhar's clashes with an Indigenous person and fellow colonists appear to be not especially remarkable; other than his apparent propensity for attracting disputes and for his public reputation as a firebrand.

Farquhar and his family moved to Sydney in 1844 to seek a fresh start following financial and reputational difficulties in Melbourne. Over the previous two years, Farquhar had been affected by the economic crash, with much of his property and assets seized. He also refused to repay a loan of £125 to his brother Andrew. Consequently, Andrew instructed his wife Georgiana to call their younger son not by his first name, Farquhar, but rather by his middle name, Peregrine.<sup>41</sup> In Sydney, Farquhar opened a surgical practice and continued to sustain business interests in both cities. La Rose at Moreland was leased, for a time, to his sister Mary Harvey Cobham (née McCrae). She was an

38. 'Petition concerning Indian Labour in New South Wales, 1842' (Sydney, 1842), A 2029, accessed 21 February 2022, <https://archival.sl.nsw.gov.au/Details/archive/110365749>.
39. Extract of letter from Thomas to McCrae, dated 29 September 1839, located in New South Wales Archives, included in Michael Cannon, *Historical records of Victoria: Aborigines and Protectors, 1838–1839*, vol. 2B (Melbourne: Victorian Government Printing Office, 1983), 589. This correspondence may have continued but the New South Wales Archives were unable to locate the documents prior to the deadline for this report. The NSW Archives suggested the recruitment of a research assistant, to examine specific files. The research assistant examined the specific files, but these did not contain the correspondence. The correspondence may be located unindexed and deep in early files related to the Port Phillip District.
40. Penelope Edmonds, *Urbanizing frontiers: Indigenous peoples and settlers in 19th-Century pacific rim cities* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010).
41. Broome, Coburg, between two creeks, 44; Niall, Georgiana, 247; Georgiana Huntly Gordon McCrae, *A commonplace book: compiled at Gordon Castle, Scotland, and in Edinburgh and London during the years 1828–1837* (Melbourne: Spectrum Publications, 1996), 51.
42. University College London, Department of History, 'Summary of Individual: Mary Harvey Cobham (née McCrae)', *Legacies of British Slavery*, 2022, accessed 22 February 2022, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/6850>; University College London, Department of History, 'Details of Estate: Bay Estate', *Legacies of British Slavery*, 2022, accessed 21 February 2022, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estate/view/770>.

awardee of slave compensation, for two slaves, on behalf of her late husband Francis Cobham; related to the Bay Estate, St Michael, Barbados.<sup>42</sup>

Farquhar died in Sydney on April 20 1850.<sup>43</sup> In the 1880s, Edmund Finn, a chronicler of early Melbourne, sketched Farquhar's life and contribution to the colonial city as follows:

*Dr F[arquhar] McCrae was another squatting doctor, with a good professional prospect, but he dabbled a good deal in stations and politics, ultimately transferring himself to Sydney, where he died (20<sup>th</sup> April, 1850), at the comparatively early age of 43.<sup>44</sup>*

The Moreland Estate passed to Farquhar's wife Agnes, who died in London in 1855.<sup>45</sup> La Rose was sold to Coiler Robertson in 1852, after he had leased it for some years.<sup>46</sup> In 1858, when Farquhar and Agnes' youngest child came of age,<sup>47</sup> the remainder of the Moreland property was then sub-divided and sold off as the 'Moreland Estate', with Moreland Road running through the middle of the new subdivision (Appendix 4). In the mid-1920s, a red granite memorial was built to Farquhar at the Fawkner Cemetery (Appendix 5), probably by his daughter Mary Amelia.<sup>48</sup> It was located near to monuments dedicated to other early Melbourne colonial figures, such as to John Batman, that were either built or relocated from the Old Melbourne Cemetery when the Queen Victoria Market expanded at that time.

43. Registration Number 28213 / 1850, in Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria, accessed 21 February 2022, <https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>.
44. Finn, *The Chronicles of Early Melbourne, 1835 to 1852*, 1:880.
45. Agnes Morison MacCrae, 1855, in Scottish People Archive, Wills and testaments Reference SC70/4/38 Edinburgh Sheriff Court Wills.
46. Broome, *Coburg, between two creeks*, 44.
47. McCrae and McCrae, *Georgiana's journal*, 3.
48. The monument may have been erected in 1922 by Farquhar's daughter Mary Amelia (1844–1924). Mary Amelia was married George Robert Cadell, and the monument includes the following inscription: 'George Ward Cole Cadell / died 19 May 1972 aged 15 days'.

## Moreland Estate, Jamaica

Farquhar McCrae's grandfather Alexander Gordon McCrae was the key family member linked to the Moreland Estate in Jamaica. He was probably born in 1744 or 1745 in Kirkcudbright, Scotland, a town south of Glasgow on the Irish Sea.<sup>49</sup> Little is known of his early life, other than that he was sent to Jamaica in his late teens, possibly aged sixteen or eighteen. Eighteenth-century primary historical sources locate Alexander at the Moreland Estate in Vere, Jamaica. The most detailed account of Alexander and Moreland come from the McCrae Records at the State Library of Victoria.<sup>50</sup>

From the 1650s onwards, many Scottish people were active in Britain's North Atlantic colonies and involved in plantation estates utilising slave labour. Up to 1807 – when the slave trade was abolished in the British Empire – over 3.4 million Africans were forcefully brought to British colonies in the region. The slave trade (total people in servitude and total people transported) peaked between the 1760s and 1790s.<sup>51</sup> The practice of chattel slavery meant that the slaveowners had full legal rights over these men and women, who lived miserable lives of servitude, until their death. The extraordinary wealth produced on these slave plantation estates – from sugar, tobacco, cotton, indigo, and rum for European consumption – was ultimately transferred back to Britain and its colonies including Australia.

Across the British Empire, the general abolition of the slave trade in 1807 and then of slavery itself in 1833, followed by the payment by the British Government of compensation to former slaveowners, paralleled the intensification of colonisation of Australia.<sup>52</sup> Financial proceeds from the declining plantation industry were invested in mid-nineteenth-century Australia and its new colonial cities such as Melbourne and Adelaide.<sup>53</sup> In addition to convicts and labourers, Australia served as a destination for middling economic migrants seeking new lives and to establish, or re-establish, family legacies, prestige, and wealth. Farquhar McCrae's life reflected this broader British colonial historical context.

According to the McCrae Records, in the 1760s, the Jamaican Moreland Estate, or at least lands around the parish of Vere, belonged to Scotsman William Harvie (1728–83).<sup>54</sup> He was the son of Thomas Harvie, a Glaswegian educator and municipal administrator. William's brothers possibly included John (1721–61), Alexander (1723–67) and Thomas (1725–67); all of whom also had interests in Caribbean slave plantations.<sup>55</sup> In the early 1760s, Alexander arrived in Jamaica and worked with William Harvie in Vere. A map of Jamaica from 1763 includes the Moreland Estate (Appendix 6A, 6B).

49. Macrae, *History of the Clan Macrae with Genealogies*, 282. His Birth Certificate is not available online via Scottish People, and his Death records are inconclusive regarding his year of birth and his age.
50. McCrae, 'Family Memoirs'; McCrae and McCrae, 'Letts Diary and Almanac'. McCrae Family Papers.
51. Tom Devine, ed., *Recovering Scotland's slavery past* (Edinburgh University Press, 2015); Allan I Macinnes, Marjory-Ann D Harper, and Linda G Fryer, *Scotland and the Americas, c. 1650-c.1939: a documentary source book* (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 2002).
52. Lydon, *Anti-slavery and Australia*.
53. Georgina Arnott, Zoë Laidlaw, and Jane Lydon, 'Introduction: Writing Slavery into Biography: Australian Legacies of British Slavery', *Australian Journal of Biography and History* 6 (2022).
54. Possibly this William Harvie: University College London, Department of History, 'Summary of Individual: William Harvie', *Legacies of British Slavery*, 2022, accessed 22 February 2022, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/2146644127>.
55. University College London, Department of History, 'Summary of Individual: Alexander Harvie', *Legacies of British Slavery*, 2022, accessed 22 February 2022, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/214665287>.

Alexander then returned to Scotland, where he met William's sister Mary Harvie. According to the McCrae Records, she was 'well educated and accomplished a fine performer on the harpsichord, and excelled as a singer'.<sup>56</sup> They married in late 1767 in Glasgow. The next year, Mary gave birth to William Gordon McCrae, Farquhar's father. Within weeks, Alexander returned to Jamaica with Mary and their infant son. In 1770, Mary died during childbirth and was buried in Old Harbour, Jamaica, near Lionel Town.<sup>57</sup>

On hearing of Mary's death, Alexander received a letter from his sister-in-law Susanna Harvie Christie, dated 20 July 1770. Susanna expressed her 'upmost grief [on] the account of my worthy and much to be lamented sister's death [after] she had got safe to Jamaica'.<sup>58</sup> She also noted 'my little nephew [William] and niece [Mary]' and 'their duty to you [and] to their Uncle [William] Harvie'.<sup>59</sup> Alexander went on to marry Agnes Harvie, niece of 'Dr Troup of Aberdeen', and probably a relative of his deceased wife and the Harvie family.<sup>60</sup> The McCrae Records editorialised, 'The name of Harvie had an attraction' for Alexander Gordon McCrae.<sup>61</sup>

The McCrae Records provide further links between Alexander McCrae and the Harvie family. Scottish writer Tobias Smollett published *The Adventures of Roderick Random* in 1748. The McCrae Records suggest that the novel's character 'Mr Thompson', an entrepreneurial personality who establishes a plantation in Jamaica, 'represents' members of the Harvie family and their 'contemporaries'.<sup>62</sup> The McCrae Records also note that the shared Smollett and Harvie family crest – 'an oak tree fruited proper [with the] motto Delectat et Ornat'<sup>63</sup> – was then used by Alexander McCrae, reflecting his adoption by the Harvie family.

From his familial relationship with William Harvie, Alexander rose to the planter class between the 1760s and 1780s. This made him an elite and wealthy member of Jamaican colonial society; his status and his money produced from the Moreland Estate. Slave labour tended to the sugar, molasses, rum, herring, horses, and cattle. William Harvie died in 1783. According to contemporary records, Alexander was an executor of his will.<sup>64</sup> He probably inherited further interest in the Moreland Estate. In addition to his link to Moreland via the Harvie family, Alexander and James Cragg, a joint owner of the Moreland Estate,<sup>65</sup> were both identified as members of the Vere Regiment of the Militia of Jamaica in 1787.<sup>66</sup> In sum, there is sufficient historical evidence placing Alexander at Vere and linking him to Moreland.

56. McCrae, 'Family Memoirs', 6.

57. A handwritten copy of original documents written by William Gordon McCrae provides further detail, including that she was interned in Old Harbour, Jamaica, 'within the neighbourhood of Nightingale Grove where she died, which was the property of her brother, William Harvie', in McCrae and McCrae, 'Letts Diary and Alamanac', 56.

58. *Ibid.*, 15.

59. *Ibid.*, 17, 19.

60. McCrae, 'Family Memoirs', 3.

61. McCrae and McCrae, 'Letts Diary and Alamanac', 23.

62. *Ibid.*, 14.

63. McCrae, 'Family Memoirs', 15.

64. 'Acts of the Privy Council (Colonial)', §441, 2 July 1783, accessed 22 February 2022, [http://amesfoundation.law.harvard.edu/ColonialAppeals/images/APC/APC5\\_542.pdf](http://amesfoundation.law.harvard.edu/ColonialAppeals/images/APC/APC5_542.pdf).

65. University College London, Department of History, 'Summary of Individual: James Craggs of Vere', *Legacies of British Slavery*, 2022, accessed 22 February 2022, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/2146661267>.

66. '1787 Jamaica Almanac - Militia Foot Middlesex', 1787, accessed 22 February 2022, [http://www.jamaicanfamilysearch.com/Members/a1787\\_06.htm](http://www.jamaicanfamilysearch.com/Members/a1787_06.htm).

The McCrae Records provide a portrait of Alexander and the Moreland Estate. Andrew McCrae, writing in the first person, identified his informant as “Uncle” John Christie, who was ‘on the most cousinly terms’ with his father William Gordon McCrae.<sup>67</sup> Andrew then continues,

*A few words of my grand father [Alexander Gordon] McCrae. He was, according to Uncle John Christie, a tall man approaching six feet rather knock kneed – very particular in his dress and like most of the lords of the Sugar Islands a sort of Magnified [sic] but the good qualities of the man covered all his sins of pride and display. He was considered one of the shrewdest men of the Island – upright and honest in all his dealings – making money easily and spending it like a prince [highlight in typed manuscript]. From his estate of Moreland (now the property of the Mitchells) he had annually upwards of 300 Hogheads of Sugar – while the Rum and Molasses paid all the expenses. He had besides mountain “pens” where he bred and reared the finest horses and cattle stock in the Island and for which he always obtained very high prices. At length, while yet a young man having realised close upon £100,000 he returned to Britain, with the view of ending his days in Scotland, taking with him his second wife and the three children he had by her [until his] unexpected ... death.*

This vivid account of Moreland and Alexander, written by his grandson Andrew, reconciles with historical sources previously cited. Between the 1760s and 1790s, the Moreland Estate produced sugar and rum and had a cattle mill.<sup>68</sup> Details of the slaves employed by Alexander has not been identified from the Jamaican or other archives, but could be through further research.

A few months after his return from Jamaica,<sup>69</sup> Alexander died in Edinburgh on 17 March 1796.<sup>70</sup> In the McCrae Records, his grandson Andrew McCrae indicates that he had sighted originals of both his grandfather’s bank statements of £80,000 and his last will and testament of £100,000.<sup>71</sup> The existence of a bank statement with such a high account balance suggests that Alexander sold his share in the Moreland Estate – perhaps to the Mitchell family, but possibly to others such as James Cragg – when he left Jamaica a few months before his death. James Henry Mitchell received slave compensation from the Moreland Estate in 1835.<sup>72</sup> A dilapidated homestead in Vere, Jamaica called “Morelands” exists to the present day (Appendix 7).<sup>73</sup>

Alexander’s gravestone at Canongate Churchyard – possibly erected after the death of William Gordon McCrae (1768–1829) and his wife Margaret Morison (1770–1840) who also appear on it – records him as ‘Late of the Island of Jamaica’ (Appendix 8).<sup>74</sup> The ‘McCrae Clan History’ of 1899 also notes ‘Alexander...of Moreland estate, in the Island of Jamaica, where he lived for

67. McCrae, ‘Family Memoirs’, 8.
68. University College London, Department of History, ‘Details of Estate: Moreland’, *Legacies of British Slavery*, 2022, accessed 21 February 2022, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estate/view/2145>.
69. Macrae, *History of the Clan Macrae with Genealogies*, 282.
70. Alexr McCrae, 17 March 1796, in Scottish People Archive, Old Parish Registers Deaths 685/3 240 33 Canongate.
71. McCrae and McCrae, ‘Letts Diary and Almanac’, 26.
72. University College London, Department of History, ‘Details of Estate: Moreland’.
73. Raul A. Mosley, ‘Morelands Great House’, *A Tour of Jamaica’s Great Houses, Plantations, & Pens*, 7 July 2015, accessed 23 February 2022, <https://thelastgreatreathouseblog.wordpress.com/2015/07/07/morelands-great-house/>.
74. ‘Alexander McCrae (1745-1796)’, *Find a Grave*, 13 December 2013, accessed 28 February 2022, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/121686571/alexander-mccrae>.
75. Macrae, *History of the Clan Macrae with Genealogies*, 282.
76. C.f. distant members of the ‘McCrae’ clan such as William McCrae, Alexander McRae and Farquhar McRae received compensation from slavery.

many years'.<sup>75</sup> The direct descendants of Alexander received no compensation with the abolition of slavery from 1834, because they no longer held any interest in slave plantations.<sup>76</sup>

Alexander's son William Gordon McCrae, Farquhar's father, pursued a different path. According to the McCrae records, he remained in Jamaica until his seventh year, raised by William Harvie, who had no children.<sup>77</sup> He then returned to Britain. Niall writes that he was 'educated at Westminster School as a rich man's son, was trained for the law but never expected to work at it'.<sup>78</sup> Before his father's death in 1794, under the influence of Wilberforce's abolitionist writings, William may have published an anonymous attack on the slave system: 'a letter to newspapers signed "Small Shot" strongly attacking the planters and exposing the Black Cause'.<sup>79</sup> Andrew McCrae then continued:

*[My father] became known as a friend and advocate of the Negroes, defending them as opportunity offered, to the great terror of his slaveowning father! Often had my father told me of the arguments and superstitions of his father – who although he certainly disapproved of my father's sentiments, always had the manliness to give him credit for the best intentions, and courage in carrying out his views.<sup>80</sup>*

Alexander and his son William had a tense relationship due to their conflicting views on abolitionism and slavery. This disagreement may have shaped the inheritance received by William when his father died. A McCrae Records transcription of Alexander McCrae's Estate of 1796 identifies a total of £850 in annuities bequeathed to family members.<sup>81</sup> Even accounting for the cost of establishing annuities, that annuities total likely represented only a proportion of the total estate, suggesting difficult family relations, and also possibly that incomplete financial records survived into the nineteenth century. Despite the dispute with his father, William appeared to receive a £250 annuity. He would also benefit from some of the £500 annuity bequeathed to his stepmother Agnes, during her life, and following her death in 1825.<sup>82</sup> William was a poor financial manager. His children, including Farquhar and Andrew, basically received nothing in financial inheritance in 1829.<sup>83</sup>

The McCrae family members who migrated to Melbourne only indirectly benefited from the wealth generated by Alexander McCrae from the Moreland slave plantation. But they certainly profited from the prestige and status bequeathed by their family name and family connections. The privileged upbringing and quality education received by William Gordon McCrae (lawyer) and then his children – i.e., Farquhar (doctor) and Andrew (lawyer) – were a legacy of the family's previous links to slavery. Many British families of their social and economic class, including those who migrated to Australia, had a similar heritage.

77. McCrae and McCrae, 'Letts Diary and Alamanac', 17, 19.

78. Niall, *Georgiana*, 132.

79. McCrae, 'Family Memoirs', 10. Although this letter may exist, it could not be found in digitised British newspapers or periodicals, nor does it seem to appear in histories of abolitionism in Britain.

80. McCrae and McCrae, 'Letts Diary and Alamanac', 24–25.

81. *Ibid.*, 28.

82. Likely Death Certificate found at, Agnes McCrae, 14 July 1825, in Scottish People Archive, Old Parish Registers Deaths 633/1 520 503 Glasgow.

83. William Gordon McCrae, 1829, in Scottish People Archive, Wills and testaments Reference SC15/41/4, Dumfries Sheriff Court.



## Links Between “Moreland” in Melbourne and British Caribbean Slavery

The McCrae family members who migrated to Melbourne in the 1830s knew of their Jamaican colonial heritage. Alexander McCrae was labelled by his descendants as the ‘Sugar Lord’ of the Jamaican Moreland Estate. His son William spent his first seven years at this slave plantation. Farquhar would have known such basic facts about his grandfather and father, respectively; just as his brother Andrew and sister-in-law Georgiana recorded it for posterity in the McCrae Records. The McCrae family was invested in knowing its history and also had an interest in its contemporary implications. A copy of a letter from “Uncle” John Harvie Christie to Andrew McCrae, dated July 1833, discusses the ‘abolition of slavery’ and the ‘indemnity for the loss of their slaves’.<sup>84</sup>

84. McCrae and McCrae, ‘Letts Diary and Almanac’, 129.

85. Niall, *Georgiana*, 231.

No historical record identifies Farquhar’s motivations or intentions for naming his colonial Melbourne property “Moreland”. Some reasons can be inferred based on the extant historical record incorporating Farquhar’s upbringing and character. Certainly, Farquhar had a strong personality, attracted quarrels, and harboured resentments towards people around him. He may have held some frustration and bitterness towards his father, who was absent for extended periods during his childhood. The negative feelings held by Farquhar towards his father may have been intensified by thoughts that he missed out on the rewards of his grandfather’s inheritance because his father was both an abolitionist and a poor financial manager. Instead, Farquhar had to rely on inheritance from his uncle. Farquhar may or may not have been an abolitionist; but given the documentary record on his relationship to Indigenous peoples and Indian labourers, his politics on race were likely less progressive than, say, that of his more moderate father and brother and sister-in-law.<sup>85</sup>

Calling his property “Moreland” – more than a decade after slavery was abolished, by which time public opinion across the British Empire had firmly turned against slavery – did not necessarily symbolise an affirmation of slavery by Farquhar. It did, however, represent an endorsement of global British imperialism and, more specifically, the memorialisation of his apparently successful grandfather who was a slaveowner and the veneration of a colonial plantation outpost he had never visited. As the so-called “New World” expanded from the Americas to Oceania, Farquhar sought to re-establish his family legacy in the Australian colonies. He placed his family brand “Moreland” on his Melbourne property, another farming property, which was ultimately acquired with wealth from his uncle’s family and another Jamaican slave plantation.

The money that paid for Farquhar’s Moreland property acquisition and its early development had various financial links to Caribbean plantations and slavery. As noted, Farquhar received only minimal *financial* benefit during his upbringing from his own family inheritance – tied to Moreland in Jamaica – and

brought practically none of it to Australia with him. In contrast, Farquhar had the £6,000 from his uncle John Morison – his wife Agnes’ father – estate.<sup>86</sup> Agnes’ paternal grandparents, the parents of John, were the notable individuals Sir Andrew Morison, Writer to the Signet, and Mary Herdman.<sup>87</sup> A primary source of the Morison family wealth came from the Windsor Castle Estate in St David, Jamaica; following the marriage of Alexander Morison to Mary Anne Cushnie. Under that family’s ownership, the Windsor Castle Estate produced sugar and rum and had upwards of 200 slaves.<sup>88</sup> The family also generated wealth from professional work: John Morison was a successful Edinburgh solicitor and Alexander Morison was a successful London physician. The third link between Farquhar and slavery involved Mary Harvey Cobham (née McCrae), who received slave compensation for two slaves in 1836 for the Bay Estate, St Michael, Barbados, which would have contributed to her migration to Melbourne and lease of La Rose from Farquhar in the 1840s.

While the *financial* links between Melbourne’s “Moreland” and slavery are relatively new to the public record,<sup>89</sup> the *associational* links between “Moreland” in Melbourne and “Moreland” in Jamaica have been well known for the past century. Andrew and Georgiana McCrae did not publish their family history. That role would be taken up by their son, George Gordon McCrae (1833–1927), and his son, Hugh Raymond McCrae, both of whom were notable writers and poets, along with other family members. In 1912, George Gordon McCrae published in the *Argus* newspaper and *Victorian Historical Magazine* accounts of colonial Melbourne from his own memories and family records.<sup>90</sup> In 1915, George wrote a supplement to the *Australasian* newspaper: identifying that his great-uncle Farquhar McCrae ‘built a house called “La Rose” on a property of his which he named “Moreland” (and known as such to this day), after one of the estates of his grandfather in Jamaica’.<sup>91</sup> He was also the informant for the ‘Moreland Station’ entry in a 1918 book on the naming of Victorian railway stations: ‘Took its name from the estate of Dr. Farquhar McCrae [who] purchased the property about 1838, and named it after an estate which belonged to his grandfather – Alexander McCrae – in Jamaica’.<sup>92</sup>

Furthermore, in 1914, according to the *Brunswick and Coburg Leader*, City of Coburg Councillor Benjamin Cooke shared the same story with students from Moreland State School on their local discovery day.<sup>93</sup> Two decades later, lawyer and Labor politician Maurice McCrae Blackburn proudly shared the same family story, of his great uncle, during his successful 1937 and 1940 federal election campaigns for the former Lower House Seat of Bourke.<sup>94</sup> Hugh Raymond McCrae published an embellished version of his grandmother Georgiana Gordon McCrae’s *Journal* in 1934. In both its original and edited forms, *Georgiana’s Journal* mentions Farquhar, Agnes, and visits to ‘La Rose’, but neither Moreland nor Jamaica.

86. John Morison, 1838, in Scottish People Archive, Wills and testaments Reference SC70/1/57, Edinburgh Sheriff Court Inventories.
87. Chris Duff, ‘Morison Family of Gamrie’, *Electronic Scotland: Mini Biographies of Scots and Scots Descendants*, n.d., accessed 25 February 2022, <https://electricScotland.com/webclans/minibios/m/murison.htm>.
88. University College London, Department of History, ‘Details of Estate: Windsor Castle Estate’.
89. C.f., Wilkie, *Farquhar McCrae and The Burning of Troy*.
90. McCrae, ‘Some Recollections of Melbourne in the “Forties.”’; George Gordon McCrae, ‘Melbourne in the Forties’, *Argus*, 13 July 1912.
91. George Gordon McCrae, ‘The McCrae Houses’, *Australasian*, 23 October 1915, accessed 14 February 2022, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/142981457>.
92. Thomas O’Callaghan, *Victorian railways. Names of Victorian railway stations with their origins and meanings, together with similar information relative to the capital cities of Adelaide, Sydney, Brisbane, and a few of the border stations of New South Wales, and South Australia*. (Melbourne: H.J. Green, 1918), 71.
93. Benjamin Cooke, ‘Early History of Coburg’, *Brunswick and Coburg Leader*, 23 October 1914, accessed 14 February 2022, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/87757843>.
94. Maurice McCrae Blackburn, ‘Three Campaigners’, *The Herald*, 16 October 1937, accessed 14 February 2022, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/244605937>; Maurice McCrae Blackburn, ‘Link With The Past: Historical Society Chairman’, *Age*, 28 February 1940, accessed 14 February 2022, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/204006014>.

## Public Knowledge and Conclusion

From the start of the twentieth century, that Moreland in Melbourne was named by Farquhar McCrae after the Jamaican plantation of the same name was on the public record. For example, books and articles on place name origins published in 1944,<sup>95</sup> 1961,<sup>96</sup> 1963,<sup>97</sup> 1977,<sup>98</sup> and 1995<sup>99</sup> repeat the connection. Historian Richard Broome in his local histories of Moreland makes the same link.<sup>100</sup> As do heritage reports prepared for the City of Coburg in 1991<sup>101</sup> and the City of Moreland in 2010.<sup>102</sup> Contemporary interpretation signage on Moreland Road, below a street name sign, reads: 'Moreland farm occupied land between Albion St, Reynard St & Sydney Rd. Owned by Dr Farquhar McCrae (1807-50) and named after his grandfather's estate in Jamaica' (Appendix 9).<sup>103</sup>

The "Moreland" name has had continued public prominence since colonial Melbourne's early years. It was used by Farquhar McCrae for his property and then adopted for the roadway in 1858<sup>104</sup> and railway station in 1884.<sup>105</sup> So popular was the name among some sections of the community that in 1920, reflecting the anti-German sentiment of the period, Coburg residents were asked during Council elections: 'Are you in favour of the Alteration of the Name of the Town from "Coburg" to "Moreland"?'<sup>106</sup> Residents voted down the proposition. Across the twentieth century, residents, historians, and members of the McCrae family informed the community of the historical links to the Jamaican plantation.

In 1994, the Kennett Liberal Government amalgamated councils and shires across Victoria. The merger process was swiftly implemented by unelected commissioners without substantive public consultation. To provide for some public input, residents in Coburg and Brunswick were asked about the name to be adopted for their new municipality. As reported in 1994 in the *Coburg Courier* and the *Brunswick Sentinel*, names floated for the combined Coburg and Brunswick municipality were:<sup>107</sup>

95. A. E Martin, *Place names in Victoria and Tasmania* (Sydney, Australia: N.S.W. Bookstall Co., pty., 1944), 61.
96. 'News of the Day: La Rose', *The Age*, 24 May 1961, accessed 3 February 2022, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/244605937>.
97. 'Origin of Place Names in Victoria', *The Royal Auto Journal*, September 1963.
98. Leslie James Blake, *Place names of Victoria* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1977), 179.
99. Les Barnes, *Street names of Coburg*. (Coburg Historical Society, 1995).
100. Broome, *Coburg, between two creeks*, 40.
101. Timothy Hubbard, *City of Coburg: Heritage Conservation and Streetscape Study* (City of Coburg, 1991), 77.
102. City of Moreland and Historica, *City of Moreland: Thematic History*, 2010, 18.
103. The interpretation street signage was added in ca. 2012–13. With input from the local historical societies, the sign on Moreland Road was one of approximately 80 such interpretation aids hung parallel to street signs across the municipality. Another interpretation sign appears on Cocoa Jackson Lane. It recognises the most famous local Australian resident of Caribbean origins, Fred James, a legendary Brunswick featherweight boxing champion who lived on Edward Street from 1930 to 1979. See Suzanne Robson, 'Cocoa Jackson Lane a nod to legendary Brunswick boxer', *Leader (North)*, 28 January 2013, accessed 3 February 2022, <https://www.heraldsun.com.au/leader/north/cocoa-jackson-lane-a-nod-to-legendary-brunswick-boxer-/news-story/a1c7f1549f11ebfd600fe076a1f09c24>.
104. Farquhar McCrae and Robert Cooper Bagot, 'Plan showing subdivision of the Moreland Estate: the property of the late Dr Farquhar McCrae', cartographic material (Melbourne: Fergusson & Mitchell, 1858), accessed 21 February 2022, <https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/3425830>.
105. 'Moreland – Infrastructure', VICSIG, 2006, accessed 25 February 2022, <https://vicsig.net/infrastructure/location/Moreland>.
106. cherylg, 'Moreland Past: Should we change Coburg's name? - The burning question of 1920', *Moreland Past*, 21 August 2018, accessed 2 February 2022, <http://morelandpast.blogspot.com/2018/08/should-we-change-coburgs-name-burning.html>.
107. *Coburg Courier*, 25 July 1994; *Brunswick Sentinel*, 25 July 1994.

- » **Anstey:** Frank Anstey was first elected to the Victorian Parliament in 1902 as the member for East Bourke, later known as Brunswick, and in 1910 moved to Federal Parliament as the Member for Bourke, representing residents in Brunswick and Coburg.
- » **Merri Merri:** the Merri Merri Creek has always been the eastern boundary for Coburg and Brunswick, with the word Merri meaning strong or rock in the local Koori language. It is thought to have been the site of the signing of the Treaty of Iramoo [Batman's treaty] between the Koori people and John Batman and has always been considered significant in both Koori and European settlers' history.
- » **Merrivale:** reflecting the geographical formation of the Merri Creek by lava flows.
- » **Billibellary:** was the king of the Yarra tribes at the time of the signing of the Treaty of Iramoo [Batman's treaty] and signed for the tract of land owned by the white gum tree clan in what is now Brunswick.
- » **Moreland:** the name given by Farquhar McCrae to the property he bought in Brunswick when the first land sales were held in 1839.

108. Broome, Coburg, 354.

109. Before the vote, *Brunswick Sentinel*, 18 April 1994. After the vote, *Moreland City News*, Vol 1, No. 1, August 1994.

110. cherylg, 'Moreland Past'.

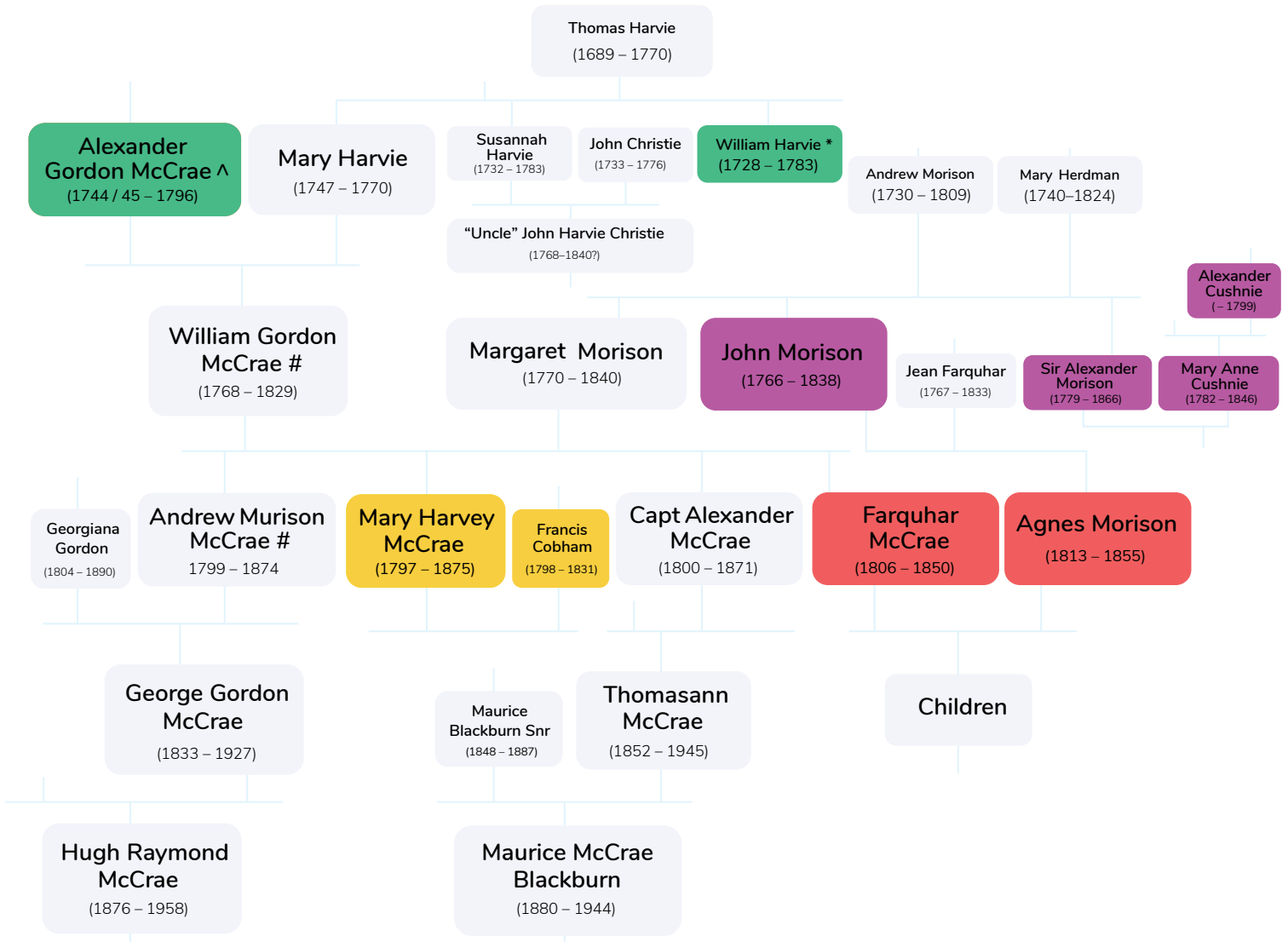
Some 39,000 survey forms were distributed to residents. Only 2,667 forms were returned, representing a response rate of less than ten percent. Of these responses, Moreland received 57 per cent, Merri Merri, Merrivale and Billibellary received 10 to 15 per cent each, and Anstey 5 per cent.<sup>108</sup> Moreland remained the name of the new municipality.

In public communications, the "Moreland" name was only sometimes contextualised to its Jamaican plantation genealogies,<sup>109</sup> and seldomly with the resultant associational or financial links to slavery. The same might be said for practically every historical account of the naming of Moreland in Melbourne since the nineteenth century. In effect, slavery has long been implied by the "Moreland" name, but rarely made explicit until recent years.<sup>110</sup>

# Appendix

## Appendix 1

### Farquhar McCrae and "Moreland" Family Tree



**Legend**



Moreland Estate,  
Jamaica #



Windsor Castle  
Estate, Jamaica



Bay Estate,  
Barbados



Moreland,  
Coburg

**^**

Alexander McCrae travels to Jamaica (1769) and becomes a 'Sugar Lord'. His second wife was Agnes Harvie, niece of Dr Jonathan Troup.

**\***

Possibly the William Harvie of Unity Valley Pen, Retreat Penn in St Ann and Great River in St James, Jamaica.

Brothers may include Caribbean plantation owner Thomas (1725-1767) and perhaps John (1721-61) and Alexander (1723-1765) Harvie (or Harvey).

**#**

According to Andrew McCrae's memoirs, Moreland, Jamaica passes into ownership of the Mitchells, and William was an Abolitionist.

## Appendix 2

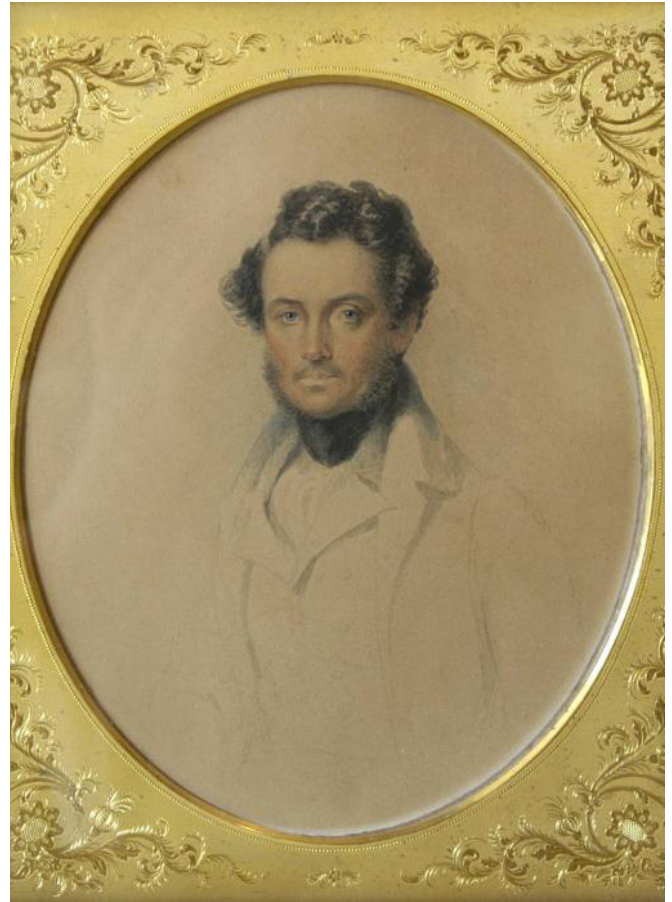
### Portraits of Farquhar McCrae

**Citation**

Georgiana McCrae. Farquhar McCrae, 1837.  
Royal Australasian College of Surgeons  
Museum and Archives.

Accessed 28 February 2022.

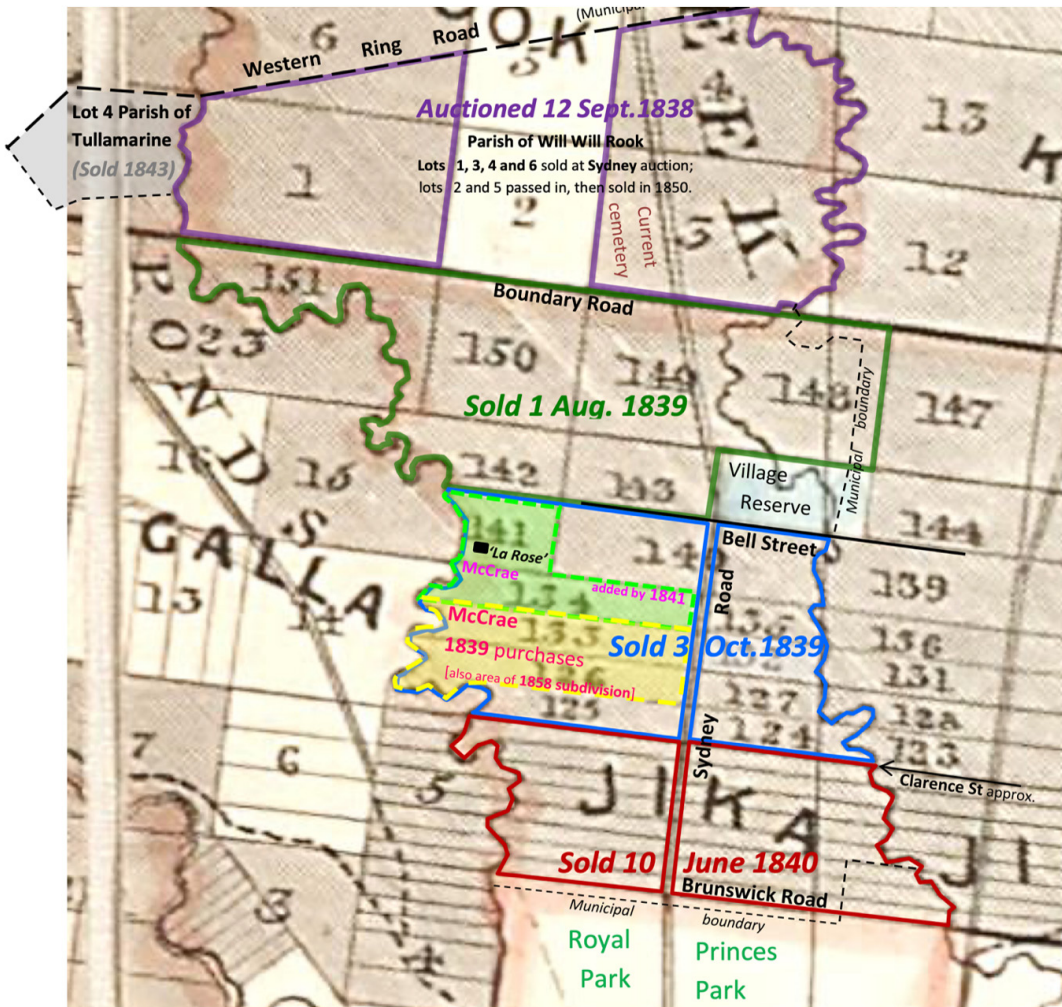
<https://victoriancollections.net.au/items/601ca1862dd6d61024c3cfac>.

**Citation**

Georgiana McCrae. Farquhar McCrae, ca.  
1830s. National Trust of Australia (Victoria).  
Supplied to Author.

## Appendix 3

## Early Land Sales in the City of Moreland



## Citation

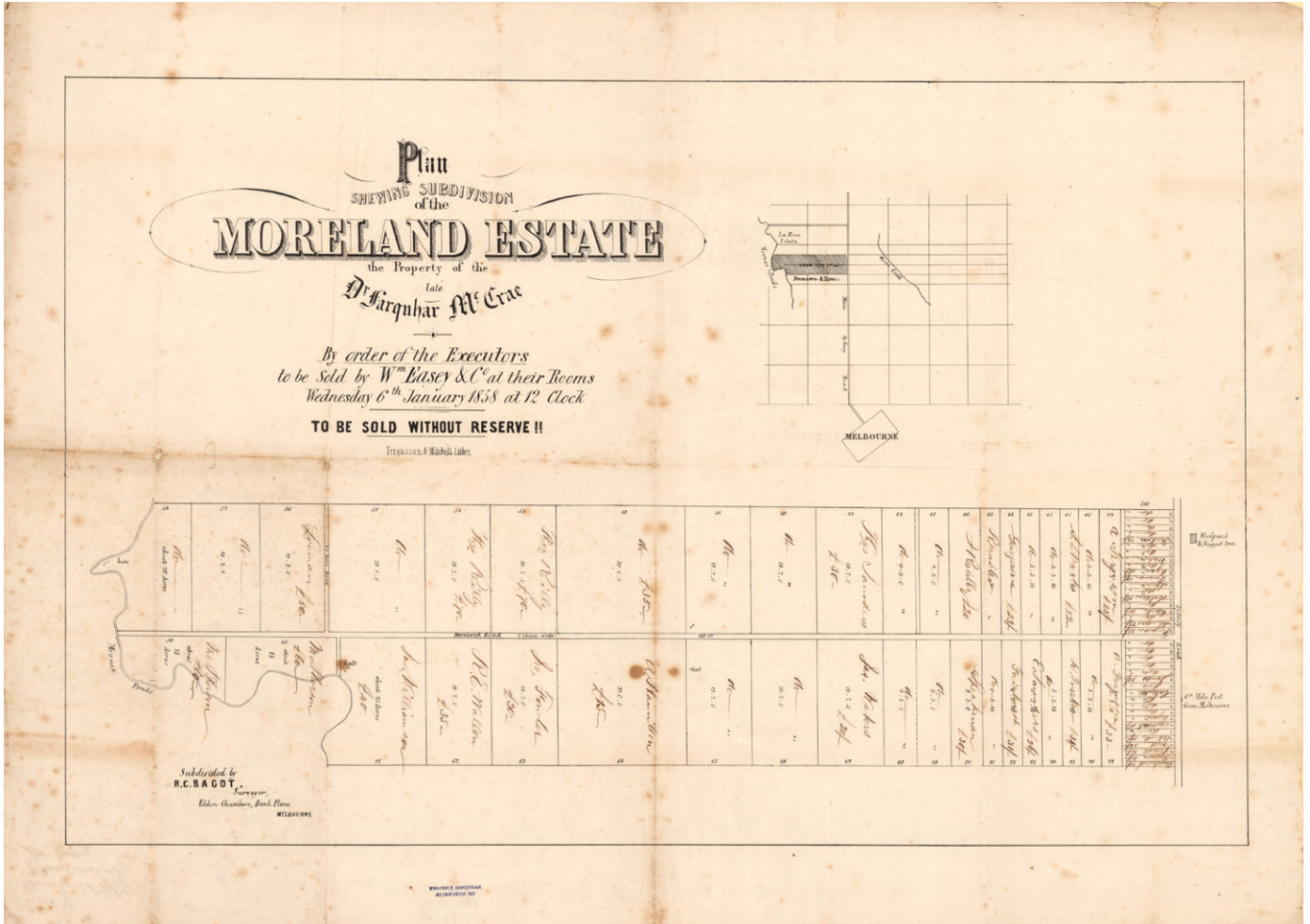
Prepared by Rod Duncan, March 2022.

Base Map – Thomas Ham, 'Map of the purchased & measured lands, counties, parishes, etc., etc. of the Melbourne & Geelong districts ... [cartographic material] / respectfully inscribed ... by his obedient servant Thomas Ham 1849.' Cartographic material. Melbourne: s.p., 1849. Accessed January 2022. [http://search.slv.vic.gov.au/permalink/f/1cl35st/SLV\\_VOYAGER797213](http://search.slv.vic.gov.au/permalink/f/1cl35st/SLV_VOYAGER797213)

Land Sale Data – Public Record Office of Victoria + City of Moreland and Historica. City of Moreland: Thematic History, 2010.

Appendix 4

**Subdivision of Moreland Estate, 1858**



**Citation**

Robert Cooper Bagot. 'Plan showing subdivision of the Moreland Estate: the property of the late Dr Farquhar McCrae'. Cartographic material. Melbourne: Fergusson & Mitchell, 1858. Accessed 21 February 2022.

<https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/3425830>



## Appendix 5

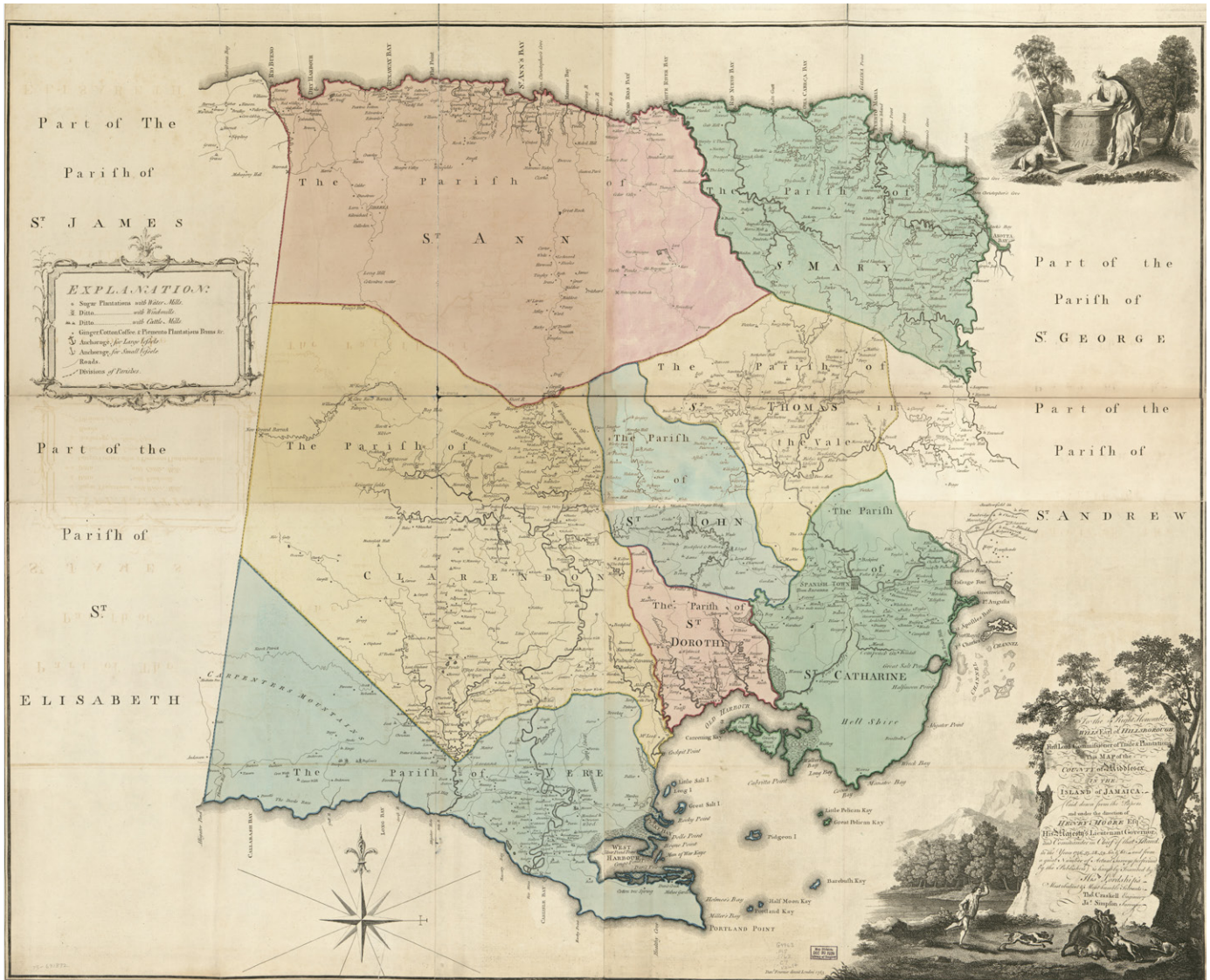
**Farquhar McCrae Monument, Fawkner Cemetery****Citation**

J.K. Moir. Collection of photographs of grave stones and sepulchral monuments relating to the historic figures of Victoria, 1933. Accessed 28 February 2022.

[http://search.slv.vic.gov.au/permalink/ff/1fe7t3h/SLV\\_VOYAGER3361288](http://search.slv.vic.gov.au/permalink/ff/1fe7t3h/SLV_VOYAGER3361288)

## Appendix 6a

## Map of Middlesex County, Jamaica, 1763



## Citation

Thomas Craskell's Historic map of Middlesex County, Jamaica. Cartographic material, 1763. Accessed 28 March 2022.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Craskell\\_\(1763\)\\_Middlesex\\_Jamaica.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Craskell_(1763)_Middlesex_Jamaica.jpg), <https://www.loc.gov/item/73691872/>

## Appendix 6b

## Map of Middlesex County, Jamaica, 1763 (Detail)



## Citation

Annotated Detail of, Thomas Craskell's  
Historic map of Middlesex County, Jamaica.  
Cartographic material, 1763. Accessed 28  
March 2022.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/  
File:Craskell\\_\(1763\)\\_Middlesex\\_Jamaica.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Craskell_(1763)_Middlesex_Jamaica.jpg)

<https://www.loc.gov/item/73691872/>

## Appendix 7

## Morelands house, Jamaica



## Citation

Raul A Mosley. 'Morelands Great House'. A Tour  
of Jamaica's Great Houses, Plantations, & Pens,  
7 July 2015. Accessed 23 February 2022.

[https://thelastgreatgreathouseblog.wordpress.  
com/2015/07/07/morelands-great-house/](https://thelastgreatgreathouseblog.wordpress.com/2015/07/07/morelands-great-house/)

Scan to see images

## Appendix 8

**Alexander McCrae Grave****Citation**

'Alexander McCrae (1745-1796)', Find a Grave, 13 December 2013, accessed 28 February 2022.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/121686571/alexander-mccrae>

## Appendix 9

### Moreland Road Interpretation Signage



#### Citation

Photograph taken at corner of Moreland and Melville Roads, Brunswick West, by the Author, 27 February 2022.

