

CARBROOK

The first to take up land in Gramzow was Christian Kruger. He leased the eastern most allotment in the Logan Agricultural Reserve here in 1867. His property was on the river to the east of Skinners Reserve. In 1868 he was joined by Herman Meissner, John Sommer, Auguste Fischer, Carl Habermann, Christian Lehmann and John Shears, who settled downstream. The German settlers were originally part of Paster Haussmann's Bethesda Mission on the Albert River, established in 1867. John Shears is believed to have been one of the earliest timber getters on Mount Cotton. The name Gramzow came from a village in Ukermarck, in northern Germany. Families travelled across the river to attend church in Alberton or Eagleby. By 1875, Pastor Haussmann purchased 10 acres of land halfway between Mt Cotton and Gramzow to build a new church to serve both these communities. St Paul's church was designed by August Von Senden and built by local farmers in the traditional north German style with hand made brick nogging in a timber frame which had been axe dressed and fixed with wooden pegs.

Charles Wilson of Waterford set about establishing a sugar mill on a site to the west of Skinners Reserve (Portion 202) in November 1872. Even before the sale of the property was registered, he advertised for someone to make 70,000 bricks at the site on California Creek at Gramzow. Earlier that year he had advertised a sugar mill for sale from his property in Waterford. By August 1873, the mill at Gramzow was still being completed. It was described as being a compact mill fuelled by the ample timber available in the area. Wilson grew no sugar of his own and relied on crushing the sugar of local farmers. JJ Walker managed the mill. The establishment was known as the Logan Sugar Factory. A wharf was built on the river with a tramway up to the mill.

During 1878, a new road was cut through the property linking the mill with the Mt Cotton Road, presumably to give access to Mt Cotton farmers. However, they were already in the process of building their own mill under the guidance of JJ Walker. By November 1879, Wilson's mill was in financial difficulty and passed into the hands of the Queensland National Bank. At that point it was managed by Mr Muir who continued to run the mill and make improvements to the machinery.

Meanwhile, Mount Cotton farmers continued to prosper and many mills were established. Henry Heinemann, Chairman of the Tingalpa Divisional Board, built one of the largest mills. In March 1882 he obtained a special land lease of 50 perches within the Gramzow wharf reserve, in order to erect a store, (presumably to store produce) adjacent to the wharf. He initially took out a five-year lease at £1 per annum. The remainder of the reserve was held for wharfage.

The Gramzow Provisional School was established in November 1877, although the children still attended the German School at Elkana (Alberton) on Thursdays to learn their native language and be instructed in religion. The schoolteacher, Horace Heywood, distributed the mail from 1878. Mail was deposited in a slot in the wall of the school building. At that time it was delivered twice weekly from Beenleigh via Alberton. In 1882, Fred Stern, who lived nearby (Portion 110), took over the role of Receiving Office Keeper for the mail.

During 1880, many farmers began erecting small mills on their own property, which would have undoubtedly affected the viability of the Logan Sugar Factory. In 1882, a section of the land was alienated for wharfage purposes (now Skinner's reserve). At that time Mr Norman Ruddle, who was formerly at Ageston, managed the mill. By July 1884 the property passed into a partnership of local German farmers comprising Freidrich Brauer, Freidrich Stern, Christian Lehmann, Christian Kruger, and Christian Mohr.

The 1887 floods destroyed many sugar plantations along the river and even though this mill remained in-tact, local farmers had no cane to mill that year. The mill partnership went into liquidation in late 1887 and the mill and farms of many of the partners were offered for sale. The mill site was on the river front and included a four-roomed house and blacksmith shop, as well as the mill, which was housed under an 80 foot by 70 foot galvanised iron roof. Properties offered for sale in this liquidation were located in both Gramzow and Eagleby.

Christian Kruger's house remains on the other side of Skinners Road. The family arrived from Germany in 1865 and initially settled at Bethania. Christian Kruger leased land at Gramzow in August 1868 and purchased it in December 1872. The house was apparently built in 1871, in the style typical of northern Germany. Presumably the bricks came from the same brick yard as those used in the neighbouring sugar mill.

Christian Kruger gave evidence at the 1889 Royal Commission into the sugar industry and stated that he had grown sugar for 12 years and had also successfully grown cotton in the past. At that time he had 10 acres under cultivation, and grew maize, oats and potatoes. From July 1888, Kruger was the overseer of the wharfage reserve adjacent to his property. In 1892, it was proposed to make the reserve a ferry reserve, and from 1901, Kruger cultivated an area of two acres adjacent to his fence under a leasing agreement with the Tingalpa Divisional Board.

For a brief time in 1889, the Alberton Ferry was relocated to the Gramzow reserve adjacent to Wilson's disused sugar mill. The old ferry had washed away in the floods of July 1889 and the Tingalpa Divisional Board was eager to relocate the ferry here. Beenleigh Divisional Board was not so keen, nor were the 50 Tingalpa Board ratepayers who petitioned the Board to return it to Alberton. The Tingalpa Board continued to argue that the Alberton site was useless to most Tingalpa ratepayers. However it would seem that there was a need for family and religious interaction cross-river at Alberton. Nevertheless, an application was made in 1892 to make this a ferry reserve.

In August 1910, John Burke and Sons, who operated steam boats on the river, sought permission from the Tingalpa Shire Council to move the Mt Cotton wharf and shed about one chain downstream to avoid the rocks in the river at that point. The council had no objection and the wharf was moved the following month. Councillors were invited to inspect the new facilities with the hope that they would fund road improvements leading to the wharf.

During WWI in May 1916, the postal name for Gramzow was changed to Carbrook under a government policy of the time aimed at removing German place names. At that time the Stern family ran the post office from their home, diagonally opposite the school, and the postal business was taken from them. The school name was changed in November that year. The Sterns, however, were running the post office again in 1924 and by that time also boasted the first public telephone in the area.

Carbrook remained an agricultural community. A new sugar mill was established by Musch and Appel, late in 1905. The mill was situated on land originally selected by John Shears and later owned by William Stern. A four acre lot was subdivided for the mill in January 1906, with Rudolph Musch and Adam Appel both listed as sugar millers when the transfer was registered. They took out a £1,000 (\$2,000) mortgage on the property in June 1906. An increase in traffic on the Alberton Ferry was noted in May 1906, due to the new mill. In 1911 the adjoining house site was transferred to Musch and Appel. The sugar mill operated until 1926 and was then converted to a sawmill. Adam Appel died in 1932, and the estate was transferred to Rudolph Musch's wife Helena. The sawmill remained operational through to WWII.

Neighbour Hermann Lehmann established an arrowroot mill on his riverfront property from 1918. It was managed by his son Dick, who manufactured 20 – 30 tons of flour per year. During the 1930s, sugar was still grown and milled at Eagleby. Other produce included bananas, potatoes and other vegetables. Most farmers also had a small herd of dairy cattle and sent cream to the Kingston Butter Factory. Pigs were also raised.

Timber from Mount Cotton continued to be loaded on to barges during the 1920s, but the river trade ceased once the Logan Road was bitumened in the late 20s, and the Loganholme bridge opened in 1931.

Electricity came to Carbrook in September 1936.

The old Carbrook wharf reserve was converted to a recreation reserve in 1950. The Albert Shire Council assumed responsibility for installing facilities and maintaining the site as a picnic reserve in March 1951. Water ski-ing became a popular pastime on the river in the early 1960s and the Carbrook Water ski park developed during the late 60s and early 70s under the ownership of Herb Gardner.

Sandmining began in Carbrook in 1974. Part of the land was then leased to the Carbrook Golf Club, which was established in 1977. The ongoing sand mining creates constant changes in the course. This is a significant deposit of fine to medium grade sand, up to a depth of 20 metres. It is used in concrete production or as bedding sand.

Carbrook still maintains its rural atmosphere and much of the area is rural residential land and large areas of wetlands in the area have been reserved as conservation parks. A new private school, Calvary Christian College operates not far from the Carbrook Primary School. Kimberley College relocated from Mt Cotton to establish its campus in Kruger Road in 2003. The original Carbrook School is now owned by the Logan City Council and has been heritage listed.