

**Submission ID:** O-0628  
**Date Received:** 8/4/26, 1:10 pm  
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**Submission Topic:** Electorate Names  
**Electoral District:** Cleveland (formerly Oodgeroo)

**Submission:**

The Queensland Redistribution Commission proposes returning to the practice of renaming electorates after geographical places. Its proposal quotes from the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission (EARC) of 1991 to observe that many such places had earlier been named after “distinguished persons from the State’s past.” Such a practice inherently introduces a bias against women and minority groups, given that until relatively recently, the opportunities for publicly recognised distinction were culturally available overwhelmingly to men.

Cleveland is a particularly unfortunate example of a geographic place named after a supposedly distinguished person, although in his case, with little to do with Queensland’s past.

It is generally agreed that Cleveland was named for William Vane, Duke of Cleveland, who, according to his Wikipedia entry, was a slave holder who owned 233 slaves in Barbados. Most governments these days are rethinking memorialising slaveowners: for example, Moreland Council in Melbourne officially changed its name to Merri-Bek City Council in 2022 to remove a connection with Jamaican slaveholding.

It is most unfortunate then that the Redistribution Commission is considering replacing the name of Oodgeroo, named for a celebrated local Indigenous female poet, with that of an aristocratic slaveholder with no known connections to the region.

There must be a more suitable geographic place name.