

**THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND THE REGIONAL
STUDY, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
BLAIR ATHOL**

Presidential Address

[Delivered by ALLAN A. MORRISON, M.A., at the Annual Meeting of the Historical Society of Queensland, Inc., on 22nd September, 1949]

When one undertakes an important task it is well to have clearly in mind the aims of that undertaking and the methods by which they can be achieved. But when the task is of great magnitude and involves much detailed work, it is sometimes easy to forget the main aims and allow oneself to be led into interesting by-paths or to be smothered under a mass of data which cannot be comprehensible without reference to the original aims. Moreover, sometimes the original plan as set out may have to be modified—perhaps the initial stage of development as planned has been attained, in whole or in part, perhaps altered circumstances make it necessary to widen or reduce the scope of the original plan. Hence it is frequently valuable to leave temporarily the immediate tasks on which one is engaged to glance back, however briefly, at the original concept.

In this society we are fortunate in having a clear statement both of the aims and methods as set out in the beginning. Thirty-six years ago, on 18th August, 1913, the late Professor (then Mr.) Melbourne in the inaugural address of the Society set out for us a plan which we could follow, and which we have attempted to follow ever since. For the purposes of my talk it is necessary to give a brief summary of the objects of the Society, as set out in that address. First and foremost came the arousing of an historical sense in the community. Every community builds on the work of its predecessors, and unless that work be thoroughly understood, then no modern structure can have any real meaning. It is not enough for those in authority to have that understanding; every citizen must know and understand something of the story of the development of his community, or no real development is possible. But the story of the past cannot be understood without proper records, and so the Society should

encourage the preservation of State archives of all descriptions, and take a very active part in such collection and preservation. Again, this would be only part of the task, for no collection of material can have its highest value without guide posts to help the researcher find his way through it, and so the Society must do its best to provide such guides, in the form of catalogues and indexes to the available records. Finally, the Society can provide help of another kind, by collecting and collating the ascertainable facts relative to a region, an industry, or some feature of Queensland life, and thus provide a basis from which the trained historian may build up a more complete picture of that development, and from which he may draw material which will form part of the yet unwritten history of Queensland as a whole.

Since that address was delivered the Society has undergone many changes and vicissitudes, not the least being the loss of its home during the war, its membership is almost completely different from the original list, and external circumstances have altered, so it seems to me necessary to take some look at what has been done in furtherance of those aims, to see what remains to be done, and perhaps to set an immediate target. Hence let us consider the original aims one by one.

The fact that we are permanently housed in this historic building, which is set apart as an historical museum, is sufficient proof that we have succeeded in some measure in our first aim, that of awakening historic consciousness. Both State and municipal governments realized that it was part of their duty to assist in the development and preservation of national monuments, and the collection of the mass of data which forms the raw material of history, and Newstead House stands as a memorial not only to the original pioneers of our community, but to those who had the wisdom to see and understand the importance of such a building. The establishment of the Newstead Trust was an important event in the history of Queensland, for it provided conclusive evidence of progress towards a real appreciation of the past. It is true that we have not been as successful as at times we have hoped, but we can congratulate ourselves on at least that step forward. But we can take pride in another matter too; had it not been for the work of the Society it is at least

doubtful whether Queensland would be in possession of the Oxley Memorial Library, and whether the Legislature of the State would have passed Part IV. of the Libraries' Act in which provision is made for the establishment of State archives. But evidence of the intention is not enough, for that section of the Act is not yet proclaimed, and the Society should make efforts to urge the Government to take the necessary steps to proclaim that section before more manton destruction of public records is committed. We know that the times are difficult, and that the provision of accommodation for the records and of staff to do the necessary work seems at present impossible; but we must continue to urge the importance of the provision of these necessities as soon as is humanly possible. Earlier we had hoped that Newstead might be used for that purpose, but it matters not to us where or by whom the records are preserved—the important matter to us is that they shall be preserved.

But the Society has done much more than ask others to take steps to provide records and documents of all kinds. Here in this house we have a most valuable store of records of all kinds, public records, letters, diaries, to mention only a few. But we have by no means all that we want or need, and we must never cease urging all who have access to documents of that nature not only to do all they can personally to preserve such valuable possessions, but to ensure that they will become available to those who wish to carry out genuine research. Records of the actions of those who did their share in building up the State are to me the property of the State and not of the individual. Unfortunately at present we cannot say that all the records we have are fully available, for we have not recovered completely from our temporary ejection from our home, when our whole system of storage was completely upset. But we can say that the problem is being continuously and energetically attacked and the filing and cataloguing of our records is steadily coming nearer to completion. What I have said about the gathering of records holds good also for our museum collection—new items are being added continually, and the cataloguing of these exhibits is also progressing. It is hoped that in the not so far distant future we shall be able to arrange for the publication of a handbook to Newstead, for sale to visitors.

But the mere collection and cataloguing of material is, as I have said, only one aspect of our work in providing signposts for the researcher. It is a truism that no history book can remain fully accepted for all time. As soon as a survey of the progress of a nation is made, attention is concentrated by research workers on portions of the story whose development had not been adequately described in the old synthesis. Perhaps some corner of the State has been omitted altogether, some industry has been scantily treated, or some new material entirely contrary to the established view has been unearthed from some musty file, or perchance from conversation with actors in the original drama. So the work of the researcher and the monograph writer go hand in hand, and here in this Society for thirty-six years we have now been adding data, examining and correcting statements of alleged fact, and repairing omissions. We have revised views of the scope and value of early explorations, we have tried to solve enigmas that have puzzled historians, and we have added much to the knowledge not only of what people did but of how they lived, which is of equal importance. The history of area after area has been revived and recounted, and the past has been made ever more real to us. But these studies, interesting and valuable as they are, must never be regarded as a mere end in themselves. They must be part of a greater whole, guide posts to point the way through the mass of data, stones which, when combined will make the complete building. We must never forget that each area, while important in itself, is only part of the greater area of the whole State, and that is again part of the whole nation.

But the time has now come to give especial prominence to the third of the aims of the Society as listed earlier. Never was the lack of connected history of the whole State of Queensland made more obvious than when American servicemen were departing for their home. Looking for some real souvenir of their stay here, they sought a book which would tell them the story of this land so new to them, and we could only admit that such a work had not yet appeared. It is true that a few early attempts were made, but these are no longer adequate, for, as already stated, no book of history can remain fully accepted for all time. Here, too, we have no systematic study of the last forty years of the existence of the State, years which have seen so

much and so important a development. It is now necessary, then, that a new synthesis should be constructed, and in fact the History Department of the University of Queensland is making preliminary plans for such an undertaking.

Here the Society can play a very valuable part. By continuing its work in arousing a historical consciousness it will help to make the work more complete and comprehensive, and the more records we can preserve ourselves or encourage others to preserve, the easier will be the task of the compilers, especially if those records are maintained in an accessible form. But in the presentation and preparation of our own papers here, we can give additional valuable aid, for we can provide further guide posts showing, for example, the inter-relation of areas and industries. We can consider just how far development in one area or industry is typical of that of the whole of the State, and we can suggest in what way it varied. Perhaps one area was responsible for altering the whole course of events, or for retarding development. We can consider the impact on particular industries of policies inaugurated by State or Federal Governments, we can see how the problems of trade unionism are demonstrated in the area covered by our own particular topic. As far as possible we can keep before us the picture of our own topics as part of a larger whole. Perhaps not all of us can carry this out fully, but we can still remember that every new connection or inter-relation that we make will be of value, and that every fresh regional history that we collect is providing some pre-digested material which will help the compilers of the history that we need so much.

Until now I have been speaking of the problem in general terms, and the time has now come to leave the general for the particular. Hence I propose to take for the remainder of my topic the story of one particular area of Queensland, to see how it reveals for us the interrelation of local and State development, and to see what light it can throw on problems external to the area itself. To do so it will be necessary to refer to some features of local development, but no exhaustive account of local history will be attempted; the emphasis will be placed almost entirely on general trends and movements.

As we all know, Australia owes much to her parties of explorers who revealed the existence of new lands

which could be taken up by the sheep or cattle men ever hungry for fresh lands, and Queensland has been no exception, and it is not necessary for me to give you any list of those major exploring parties. But one of those parties was to cause the extension of settlement to the region of which I wish to make mention. In 1845 Ludwig Leichhardt traversed the Peak Downs area, and brought back news of more lands available for pastoral occupation. Once the existence of such lands was revealed, it was never long before a more thorough examination was made of the area by those who were in search not of glory but of grass and the Peak Downs area was no exception. Explorers such as P. F. MacDonalld searched the area more thoroughly and more and more areas were taken up, including one of which you have heard but recently, Cullin-la-ringa. Macdonalld himself took up several runs and others followed his example. But as well as genuine graziers were the speculators—as early as 1860 advertisements offering the sale of fine grazing lands in the Peak Downs area appeared in the Brisbane “Courier”. Some of the runs that were occupied bore aboriginal names or names that described some feature of the country, but as usual it was common to find a name that showed an exile looking back to the land of his birth, that attempted to recreate the memory of home. Among those names that we find as we move to the northern portion of the area is one that is well known to-day. Perhaps the giver of the name showed an unconscious prescience of things to come, of the need to look back to the Motherland—not merely in nostalgia but in need for positive aid—for the name given was Blair Athol.

So it appeared as though Blair Athol would be just part of another grazing run. Just average brigalow country, it gave no hint of any promise of ever yielding anything beyond pasture for cattle. True, some twelve miles away the calm of the area was disturbed in 1861 by the discovering of the Peak Downs copper mines in the area so aptly but unimaginatively named Copperfield; but Blair Athol itself gave no surface indication of the tremendous hidden wealth that we now know exists there. But the development of Copperfield does bring to our notice one important aspect of the history of Queensland, viz., migration, for among the miners who came were a few representatives of a group usually to be found where copper was developed. I speak, of course, of the Cornishmen. In South Australia they

left their mark, not only in the mines themselves but in their characteristic dwellings and in their intermingling with the community. At Charters Towers they appear to have been strong in numbers and to have had a considerable influence on music and community life. Here at the Peak Downs mines they appear to have been only a small group and here they apparently did not erect their characteristic houses. Probably this was a result of the climate, though I have been told that on at least one Queensland field we still have the remains of some of those cottages, designed for a climate so different from our own. Here then is a field for investigations, and one which should soon be approached, or it will be too late.

Blair Athol went on for a short period as a pastoral area, without dreams of any prosperous future in mining until accident intervened. We know of other instances where accident altered the shape of events, e.g., we know how a low tide wrecked Cleveland's hopes of becoming Queensland's port. But here the accident was bound up with necessity, for the pastoralist needs water as well as grass, and in whatever part of the world we observe the pastoralist we see his preoccupation with those two needs. In South Africa it was written indelibly on the map by the Trekboers in the names they gave to their areas, e.g., Bloemfontein, Magersfontein, Stinkfontein, Klipdrift (stony ford), and here in Queensland the need for water was just as great. If surface water were not available then wells must be dug, and so in 1864 we find a station hand acting as the instrument of destiny. He sank a well in search of water and found not what he sought but coal—a seam some seven feet wide. So far only the top seam had been discovered—the second or major seam up to 105 feet in width still slumbered unsuspected. Here was wealth, but at once appeared the problem which has not yet been solved—what was to be done with it? Peak Downs copper mines were interested and sank bores, they tested the coal and found it suitable for use. But Peak Downs was to have a comparatively short existence, for in the early 70's the mines began to peter out and so Blair Athol coal lost its prospective market. But the copper mine had already raised another question which has not yet been answered—in the event of rich mineral deposits being discovered inland, how was the ore to be brought to the coast? In 1865 a track had been developed to Broad-

sound and shipments went to Sydney from there. But this was by-passing the already established town, and Rockhampton wanted to be the outlet for any produce from the hinterland. Again the pastoralists found the answer, for it was one of them who discovered a fresh route by which the ore could come to Rockhampton and save some 50 miles of the earlier route. But with the collapse of Peak Downs copper the need for such a route disappeared, and the district went back to its pastoral pursuits. Blair Athol had its coal but no use could be made of it.

Another feature of the history of pastoral development in Queensland then appeared. Not all the early graziers were successful, and in Pugh's Almanac for 1874 we find among a list of station properties in unsettled areas an entry which stands as a forewarning of things to come:—Name of Property: Blair Athol. Owner: Bank of New South Wales. The great droughts had to come before the movement of pastoral properties into the hands of institutions was to become widespread, but here was an early warning.

In the meantime the railway was steadily advancing westward—advancing with remarkable rapidity when we consider that Queensland had become a separate colony only in 1859 and its first railway was opened only in 1865. In 1884 the line from Emerald to Clermont was opened, and transport facilities had now reached to within twelve miles of the coal deposit. Notice also that the pattern of the Queensland railway system was being set, not a fan system radiating from one centre, but a series of parallel lines snaking inland with remarkable speed considering the youth and undeveloped state of the colony. This railway extension gave some hope to Blair Athol—small parties of miners working on a co-operative basis took up contracts at irregular intervals to supply coal for the railway, the coal being drawn to the railhead by horse teams. In 1890 appeared in the story of Blair Athol a name which makes us think of Queensland shipping, Howard Smith. But this Mr. Howard Smith was a grocer of Clermont. He took out a prospecting license and in 1892 some 3000 tons of coal were produced from his mine, the whole output being taken by the railway. But no other industry requiring coal was within any convenient distance of the field and the demand from the railway was too small to encourage large development. What

working was doné was by ordinary mining methods, operating only on the top seam.

It was now known that the deposit was fairly extensive in area, but little could be done with it. While in Europe and in the U.S.A. coal and steel were dominating the world, Queensland was still almost entirely pastoral; its mineral resources were largely unknown, and apart from gold, those that were known were almost entirely unusable. A large area immediately north from the Blair Athol mine operated by Howard Smith was known to have coal, but listen to its story. It was first owned by a Mr. Carrol: on his death it passed to a party of miners as a prospecting area. Disappointed, they allowed it to revert to the Crown, but it then went to two partners, Simpson and Window. No great fortunes were apparently to be made from this area. But in 1908 fresh interest came to the field, for the existence of the second or major seam was proved. Now it was at last known that Blair Athol had what was claimed to be the widest seam of coal in the world. At once a further attempt was made to develop the area. The New Hope Colliery was opened with a production reaching 40 tons per day. In 1908 the Blair Athol Coal and Timber Company took a lease of 360 acres and a successful agitation was made for the construction of a railway. Authorisation had been given in 1900 for the extension of the railway from Clermont, but it had met some strong opposition in the Legislature because of the unproven nature of the field and the problem of what to do with the coal. The Blair Athol Coal and Timber Co. was registered and by 28th June had a control of a total area of 1200 acres under lease and license. One of the directors of the company which was financed largely from Rockhampton was Mr. Ken Grant, who was to be Minister for Education in the Denham Government. So once again came a pointer to the present, this time in the association of government and coal mine.

Already attempts had been made to find answers to two of the main problems, markets and finance. On 23rd April, 1910, the first train load of coal left Blair Athol and samples of the coal were consigned to possible users—King & McLeod, steamship owners, the Mt. Morgan Mine, the Rockhampton Harbour Board, the Lake's Creek Meat Works and the railway. Reports were favourable—the coal was good steaming coal. In February, 1911, a new company, Blair Athol North,

was registered with a capital of 1000 shares at £1 each; and in March an attack was made on the problem of finding sufficient capital to develop the field. An option was given to a large southern firm to form a large company capable of handling a big export trade, but nothing came of it. The search for markets still continued, and in June a trial order of 200 tons was sent to Brisbane for the use of H.M.S. Pyramus. In July an effort was made to obtain greater efficiency by the installation of new machinery, including an electric coal cutter. In October, 1913, the problem of the market was attacked again and samples were sent to the Agent-General in London for distribution among English and German manufacturers of coke ovens with a view to determining the best class of coke oven for treating the coal. But Blair Athol coal, while a good steaming coal, and a hard coal standing up to transport, is not a good gas coal.

The market was so restricted by transport that the mines could not produce extensively. More experiment was carried on, this time in methods of working the coal. In 1913 miners on the southern edge of the basin began working in co-operative parties under tribute to the Bluff Co. Ltd. But again accident was to intervene—following heavy rains the surface subsided. Production continued, but costs of mining were still high and transport costs far too great for profit. Consideration was now given to new methods of producing the coal and in 1919 a writer in the Queensland Mining Journal suggested a solution to the dual problem. Costs could be cheapened by the use of the new principle of the open cut, and transport could be improved by developing the old Peak Downs route to Broadsound. To emphasize the wealth of the deposit a third seam had been discovered in 1918.

But nothing was done and the two companies were in difficult straits. For some years they combined and worked under a joint management. In 1922 the two companies separated again and B.A.C. & T. arranged with M. R. Hornibrook to work by open cut methods. The plan was to start above the old workings, but, though the coal was reached, no production was ever attained by those methods. All that was to happen was the provision of a most expensive swimming baths. Old-timers say that as the cut was on top of old workings no one could be found who was willing to work in the cut, but the company directors in 1946 (who were

not then in control of the company) declared the failure was due to lack of demand for the coal combined with lack of finance caused by unprofitable ventures in places far removed from Blair Athol. The handicaps to Blair Athol coal were increased by a most serious accident which was to jeopardise the whole future of the area. An experimental shipment of coal was sent to New Zealand, and on the way it caught fire, thus condemning coal from this region. But at the back of it all lay neglect as well as accident. Some coal had been included in the shipment against orders from the manager; the whole had been wet at Gladstone, and then this combined load was put on top of the remains of a consignment of a much more volatile coal, with the fatal result. Since that time coal shipments have been sent much farther afield, e.g., to China, without any repetition of the incident or any danger of it. But the bad reputation clung to Blair Athol coal.

But Blair Athol's troubles were not yet over. The main source of income for the field came from the State Railways which provided a steady though small demand. State enterprise now took a hand, for the Government opened two State coal mines in the Central district, viz., Báralaba and Styx River, which took away much of the demand which had kept the field going. The miners expressed considerable dissatisfaction, claiming that the new coal was most inferior, was damaging the locomotives and was causing trains to be late everywhere. The cost of Blair Athol coal to the railhead was less than for either of the other two mines, and protest meetings were held. J. S. Collings, a State organiser for the A.L.P., visited the field to address a meeting of the miners, who remained far from satisfied, for now they could supply the available demand by two or at most three days' work a week.

This was not the only experience of State enterprise in the area. Not far away from Blair Athol is Birimgan where the railway department had a sleeper mill, a light line being run to the area. But the mill was not successful, for it was found that cartage by horse teams to the Blair Athol line was 2/- per 100 cheaper than by the special line. The sleeper mill was then changed over to a complete sawmill as a full State enterprise, and was somewhat more successful. The area in which the mill was situated has now become a forestry reserve.

Fortunately for the town it was not entirely dependent on coal. In the country surrounding it the pastoral industry was still of considerable importance, and Blair Athol in 1922 was one of the most important sheep and cattle railing centres in Queensland. Here again we have a small area demonstrating the important reliance that is placed on the pastoral industry and Australia's dependence on it. Perhaps a trickle of business, too, came into the town from Miclere, an alluvial field fourteen miles to the north.

But such a treasure of coal as lay at Blair Athol could not permanently be neglected. The industrialization of Australia was becoming more necessary and the experience of the war of 1914-18 and the depression of 1931 emphasized the need for the increase of Australian secondary industry. The first attempt to help Blair Athol was a search for overseas investment. Sufficient interested capital was not available in Australia and eyes turned overseas. In June, 1932, the "Brisbane Courier" records that a Captain Campbell Mackenzie was in possession of a power of attorney over the whole of Blair Athol. Some Queensland financiers were interested, but Mackenzie was to take his power of attorney to Britain to endeavour to interest British capital in the project. So the choice of name seemed justified, and Captain Campbell Mackenzie seemed well qualified by name for such a task. Once again nothing came of it.

But the Blair Athol Co. management had not abandoned hope. A Tasmanian expert in open cut methods, Mr. Lindsay Clark, was brought to Queensland to inspect the area and to give advice on methods of development. Some southern capital became interested; and in 1936 the decision was taken to develop Blair Athol as an open cut; in 1937 production began. At first much opposition had to be overcome—the town had one swimming bath already, it was said—but the project went on. The equipment available was limited, but production became greater than ever before, in 1946 reaching 161,777 tons as compared with a total of 65,346 tons mined from 1890 to 1900. During the 1939-45 War the need for coal increased considerably and more machinery was applied, but still far from the equal of equipment used on overseas mines. Australia could not import the machinery she needed because of the war and since the war the dollar problem has prevented the machinery from being obtained.

Blair Athol had not been recognised as a matter of interest for the State at large, but in 1945 the State Government appointed a Committee of Enquiry into the possibilities of the development of Blair Athol as a large-scale project. This committee, under the leadership of Mr. J. R. Kemp, the State Co-ordinator General, made a thorough investigation into the problem. In 1946 matters reached a still higher level when the State Government began discussion with the Commonwealth Government. Approach was also made to the North Australia Development Committee and a special Technical Committee of Commonwealth and State experts was established. And so Blair Athol reveals a new phase of Australian development—coal was now a national affair.

While the committee was pursuing its enquiries, other areas sought to profit. Callide interests drew attention to the stores of coal available there and the committee investigated those deposits as well. Rivalry developed among the coastal towns which realized that they could benefit from a development of the coal resources. Gladstone successfully put forward its claim to be the port for Callide, and negotiations were begun for improvement of the railway connection with Gladstone, but so far no town has established a final claim to be regarded as the port for Blair Athol. Mackay put forward a claim that more use should be made of the harbour constructed there and the Mackay-Blair Athol railway league was formed, led by Mackay business interests. The whole question of railway transport to the coast has been re-opened in respect of both Blair Athol and Callide, and it would seem that some definite moves will have to be made in the near future.

The Special Committee presented its report in 1947, the substance being that outside capital was essential. Overseas interest had gradually been increasing; before the war a German syndicate had been negotiating to obtain the right to large-scale development of Blair Athol, and the Japanese had boasted that if they owned the area they would replace each tree there by a factory chimney. In the face of the committee's report the Queensland Government sought overseas capital, and late in 1947 the Queensland Parliament passed the Electric Supply Corporation (Overseas) Act enabling the Government to make an agreement for the development of the area by an English firm.

What has happened since then is a story itself and one that is far from complete, so we must leave its full telling until another time. To complete the record we can give the bare outlines. In 1947 an agreement was concluded with the English Electric Supply (Overseas) Corporation under which £18,000,000 would be spent, a railway and a harbour built, and 3,000,000 tons of coal per year dug out. But the franchise was transferred to another firm, Power and Traction Finance Co., which would take over the original option. Now this firm had refused to take up the option saying that it would take £25,000,000 and that no private concern could find the capital. Two alternative schemes were suggested:

- (a) Federal-State Co-operation.
- (b) Power plant to generate and distribute electricity.

A third proposal has now been submitted by two English firms. In addition the coal is being examined as a possible source of petrol, thus bringing up the whole question of international trade.

During the negotiations for the development of the coal resources of the region, some other important matters have forced their way to the front. The first of these is trade unionism, for the development of such large coal reserves as are available here could vitally affect the position of one of Australia's major unions. At present the Miners' Federation controls the supply of coal to Australian industry. But it would be possible for open cut mines to be worked by other unions, e.g., the less militant Australian Workers' Union, and a strong move has been made in some quarters to hand the open cut mines to this union. So here we can see one aspect of the clash between the left-wing militant unions and the right-wing, more conservative type.

Another matter of considerable interest is the way in which negotiations for the development of the field have been carried on. In the early years development was in the hands of private enterprise. Now the field is regarded as a potential State asset, with the result that the Government is carrying through the whole of the negotiations. At times the firms who hold the leases appear to be kept completely in the dark until a fait accompli is presented to them. What the ultimate mode of development will be still remains uncertain,

though at present private enterprise is still in a favourable position, but other suggestions have been for State control, or joint Commonwealth and State control, which last suggestion, of course, brings to mind Queensland's insistence on maintaining its own Coal Board, and not coming under the control of the Commonwealth Joint Coal Board.



Inscription accompanying a portrait in oils painted by Harold Chester of the Very Rev. John Flynn, O.B.E., D.D.

This portrait is presented to The Historical Society of Queensland by The Flying Doctor Service of Australia, Queensland Section, to commemorate the establishment of a service which has provided a Mantle of Safety and Security to Australian Inlanders as envisioned by Padre Dr. John Flynn of the Australian Inland Mission (Flynn of the Inland) during his many trips through the country as a servant of the Australian Inland Mission. The first medical flight was made from Cloncurry in 1928 by Dr. George Simpson, and the first message over the Traeger Pedal Set was despatched from Augustus Downs Station on the Leichhardt River to Inlander Sydney on 21st June 1929. To-day our two doctors fly about 50,000 miles each from our Cloncurry and Charleville Bases, and some 36,000 radiograms are dealt with each year.