

SETTLEMENT IN QUEENSLAND in The "Logan" Period

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INTRODUCTION

This paper and an earlier paper given in April, 1963, seek to place on record the work of those early Public Servants whose difficult task of administering the isolated penal settlement of Moreton Bay has hitherto been unrecognised. These officials formed the genesis of the Queensland State Public Service and it is altogether proper and fitting that they should be recognised as such.

It would be foolish to despise the day of small beginnings and disown this period as being devoid of any significance in the evolution of the Public Service.

The method of approach aims at highlighting the distinction between the two facets of Government, namely—

*Policy-making; and
Day-to-day Administration.*

Reference to convict policy as it affected Moreton Bay has been made in some detail as a necessary background to the events of the Settlement's history. This method has been adopted to help grasp the underlying philosophy of the British Government on convict policy and the function which Moreton Bay was to play in it.

Once this has been understood, a more realistic assessment can be made of the contribution of the various officials stationed at Moreton Bay. Most historians have levelled unjust criticism against these officers: this seems to have arisen partly because of poor source material, but primarily through the failure to observe this dichotomy in Government administration.

It must be remembered that these officials were called upon to administer a policy not of their own making and the error writers have fallen into in their criticism of this period has been to identify the Moreton Bay officials with the originators of the convict policy which operated during the course of the Settlement's history. Their criticism, to a large extent, should have been levelled at the policy and not at the individual officials who were responsible for its implementation.

PREVIOUS PAPER

In the previous paper, an attempt was made to sketch the history of the early Public Service in Queensland.

The immensity of this topic demanded a thumbnail sketch of the whole period from the commencement of the first

settlement at Redcliffe until the separation of the Moreton Bay District from New South Wales in 1859.

The early penal settlements at Redcliffe and Brisbane Town under the control of Lieutenant Henry Miller and Captain Peter Bishop were dealt with in some detail, and the thought was expressed in that paper that the following period of gradual development of the settlement and allied civil services presented a field for further research.

The period under discussion this evening embraces a portion of this development under the Commandantship of Patrick Logan from March, 1826, to the time of his death in October, 1830.

Patrick Logan arrived at Brisbane Town on the evening of Friday, 17 March 1826, to assume the responsibility of running the settlement from Bishop.

This period of the Moreton Bay Settlement was to be the most important in the convict history of Moreton Bay for it was during this period that the foundations were laid to receive the large number of convicts who were sent to the settlement. Convict population rose from a mere 77 to approximately 975 by the time of Logan's death. With the close of Port Macquarie, the penal settlement became the only one of considerable size on the Australian Continent.

TOWN SITES AND BUILDINGS

Captain Bishop was considering a sketch of the proposed sites of various buildings submitted by Major Lockyer from his recollection of the river before his departure in October, 1825, when Logan arrived at the settlement. The various situations were not on the site chosen by Governor Brisbane and John Oxley, the Surveyor-General, during their visit in November/December, 1824.

Lockyer's town plan would have placed nearly all the settlement buildings in flooded land close to thick scrub and at a great distance from fresh water. Naturally, Bishop was adamant that the original site was by far the most eligible situation and the incoming Commandant agreed with him.

Logan's only objection to the site of Brisbane Town was the difficulty of access for ordinary-sized vessels because of the bar at the river's mouth. He felt this difficulty could be overcome by the use of a small craft of 100 tons not drawing more than 7 feet of water, and enclosed in a letter to the Colonial Secretary a plan for its construction.

This vessel would be used as a type of barge to convey the stores to Brisbane Town and the time saved would be considerable as the existing procedure of unloading stores into

small boats meant that the number of days spent by vessels at Moreton Bay exceeded the time taken to travel between Port Jackson and the Settlement. Moreton Bay could then boast of having two of the best ship carpenters in the Colony, but approval was not granted for the construction of it locally as action was in train in Sydney.

First impressions of the geographical situation of the surrounding countryside describe the locality as consisting of "gently waving hills and vales"—the former generally of a poor light soil and the latter of good quality. Logan recommended the cultivation of tobacco, cotton and sugar-cane, but thought the area would never become a great agricultural settlement and therefore recommended against the cultivation of grain in excess of the establishment's requirements.

A considerable amount of construction work had yet to be undertaken and very few of the necessary buildings had been erected. Bishop had requested to be furnished with necessary plans, but these had not been forthcoming from the Engineer's Department in Sydney.

The Assistant Surgeon, Henry Cowper, who arrived at Brisbane Town in September, 1825, complained to his superiors of the want of proper accommodation for the sick at the settlement.

Certain buildings were given priority, viz. the Hospital, the Gaol, Prisoners' Barracks, a Lumber-yard and a Store.

Bishop had laboured under the lack of qualified builders and, although the promise was given to Logan that competent builders would be sent, the buildings were not to be of brick, as the Colonial Secretary stated good wooden structures erected on stone foundations would be satisfactory.

CONVICTS' ATTITUDES AND CONDUCT

During his initial period of settling in as Commandant, Captain Logan found that the prisoners were not at all disposed to work, and he resorted to some severity to convert Moreton Bay into the place of punishment intended by the British Government and Governor Darling. His return of punishments were submitted to the Attorney-General, and that officer furnished an adverse report upon Captain Logan's use of corporal punishment.

Captain Logan defended his use of this form of punishment on the grounds that he did not have available a treadmill or places of solitary confinement, and had these been available to him, he would have resorted to them, as he regretted exceedingly the frequent use of corporal punishment at Moreton Bay.

The prisoners at this time were being worked in irons in accordance with the approved Government policy. The statements made by Captain Logan indicate that his actions were not motivated by any sadistic streak in his personality, but rather a desire to fulfil the purpose for which the penal settlement had been established.

It should be borne in mind that the security of the settlement was Captain Logan's responsibility and that the settlement itself had not been intended for anything else except a place of punishment following Governor Brisbane's determining that policy in 1825.

Places of secondary punishment had been formed following Commissioner Bigge's inquiry and were meant as places of hard and monotonous labour for those refractory spirits already in the Colony who were brought before Magistrates for various crimes.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies certainly never desired that convicts sent to Moreton Bay should be encouraged to remain indolent. In fact, he was more than anxious that places such as Moreton Bay should convey to the minds of the English population such an image of terror as to deter them from the commission of crimes in England.

These places were established in the hope of restoring an image of dread which transportation had lost when reports of ex-convicts becoming prosperous reached England.

THE NATIVES AND THE CORN FIELD

Early in 1827, Captain Logan wrote to the Colonial Secretary in Sydney in glowing terms of the good relations that had been preserved with the native population who were beginning to make themselves useful in apprehending run-aways from the settlement.

With the ripening of the maize crop on the south side of the river opposite the settlement in May, 1827, the aborigines began to prove troublesome: they felt no compunction in helping themselves to the ripening crop but Logan found the presence of one armed guard was sufficient to deter them from helping themselves.

On 25 May, a group came down to the corn fields on the south side and attacked the guard, spearing him through the hand. He succeeded in making his escape and with no little difficulty carried his weapon with him. The attack came as a complete surprise to Logan who immediately sent three soldiers across to guard the area, but issued strict instructions not to injure the native population. If obliged to fire, it was to be above their heads.

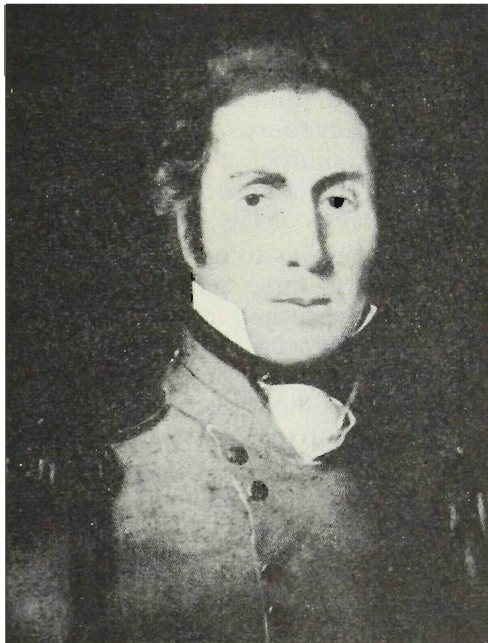
The party of natives returned and with them two Europeans, obviously runaways, upon whom Captain Logan

pinned the blame for the changed attitude of the aborigines towards the settlement population. The runaways explained to the natives the weakness of the guard and a still larger group gathered.

By 8 o'clock that evening, Logan felt it wise to dispatch two constables and three more soldiers to the field. When they arrived, they again saw the two white men whom they followed to the native encampment. They quietly approached the camp and saw the two men separate from the body of blacks. As they came closer, the growling of a native dog raised the alarm, and the natives and runaways fled. Several shots were fired and one native was killed by shot meant for the runaways.

DESIRE TO MISREPRESENT LOGAN

Those who discovered the native's body the following morning concealed the fact from the Commandant who only discovered it accidentally. The closing part of the report on this affray with the natives seems to indicate that at Moreton Bay there were those who were anxious to misrepresent Logan before the Governor or to discredit the Government in the eyes of the free settlers via medium of the Colonial newspapers. These newspapers, especially the "Monitor,"



CAPTAIN PATRICK LOGAN

were just warming up their muck-raking programme which was to involve Logan very much towards the close of his career.

It should be pointed out that the British Government impressed strongly upon the minds of the Governors that they were to ensure that good relations were preserved with the natives and punishment was to be meted out to any Europeans who committed wrongs against them. Instructions to Commandants bear ample witness to measures taken to prevent any rupture with them.

This incident seems to have triggered off that fragmentary war which continued intermittently throughout the penal settlement's history.

FIRST MURDER BY ABORIGINES

Early in January, 1828, the first murder perpetrated by aborigines against Europeans appears on official records. An Overseer, Samuel Myres, and a prisoner, Michael Malone, were directed to watch a field of ripening maize on the south side of the river. Captain Logan wrote—

“It appears they imprudently went some distance from the settlement and lost themselves, for they were for some time missing until Francis Reynolds, who had absconded about ten days previous, returned to the settlement and reported that he had narrowly escaped after being wounded by a spear in the shoulder—I accompanied him to the place about 15 miles from the settlement and found the two dead bodies. Reynolds recognised one of the natives who committed the murder a few days afterwards at the settlement. I have therefore detained him in custody until I receive the commands of His Excellency the Governor.”

This same maize crop was to occasion the death of another mortal as it attracted a large party of aborigines. On 24 January, a large number rushed into a field on the south side, threw spears at the guard who fired in return. Unfortunately, one of the natives was killed, but it did have the effect of ridding the settlement of their presence for some time.

The Governor ordered the cessation of maize cultivation altogether on the south side of the river, but Logan was able to persuade him to allow the growing of crops there because of the increased mouths the settlement was going to feed.

SOME RUNAWAYS KILLED BY ABORIGINES

During the month of June, 1830, some prisoners were killed by the aborigines. Logan attributes this to a dispute which had broken out between the blacks and runaways. A

prisoner, who returned from absconding, reported to Logan that a number of runaways had been murdered by the blacks.

Allan Cunningham, before the Select Committee on Secondary Punishment 1831/32 in London, attributed the hostility of the blacks "to liberties having been taken with the women by the convicts."

In the light of Cunningham's testimony, the fact that the officials attributed Logan's death in October, 1830, to the natives is certainly understandable.

GOVERNOR DARLING'S VISIT

Governor Darling was anxious to visit the various penal settlements in the Colony of New South Wales soon after assuming office in December, 1825, but more pressing matters had prevented his visit to Moreton Bay being realised until June, 1827. He himself had been anxious to ascertain the effectiveness of penal settlements in general, especially as he had entertained serious misgivings as to the way they were being managed by the various Commandants. Furthermore, he had been under some pressure from the Home Government which was being embarrassed by the incorrect image that the transportation issue was conveying to the English population.

When the Governor arrived at the settlement in June, 1827, he was totally unimpressed by the situation of the penal settlement. He felt that the local situation was highly objectionable, the entrance of the bay to the mouth of the Brisbane River being so shoaled as to hinder ready access and the bar at the mouth of the river compelling the use of small vessels of a fairly light draft for the conveying of stores.

It was decided to open up a small settlement at Dunwich on Stradbroke Island as a stores depot for the purpose of expediting the unloading of articles for the settlement. The Government had been experiencing considerable difficulty in obtaining suitable shipping to service its various penal settlements and therefore the delay experienced at Moreton Bay was of considerable concern to the Governor.

Dunwich was to contain a warehouse and the requisite buildings to accommodate the Pilot, a small guard of soldiers and a few convict labourers who were to be stationed there.

In the Governor's opinion, the most desirable action would have been the removal of the settlement altogether, but the establishment of the stores depot was anticipated to make this step less necessary.

ALTERATION OF BUILDING SITES

The Governor was displeased with the site of the settlement's hospital and as a result Logan converted this into military barracks and built the hospital on the hill behind those barracks. This extensive experimenting with building sites would have been a source of discontent to Captain Logan, who was more than anxious to see the official buildings necessary for the efficient running of the settlement completed that he might turn his endeavours to more profitable account.

Lastly, the Governor saw the need to supplement the monotonous flour and salted meat diet of the prisoners with some fish and also the occasional issue of fresh vegetables. For this purpose, he authorised fishing expeditions into the Bay and the establishment of gardens for the cultivation of the requisite vegetables.

In writing to the Colonial Office, the Governor commented favourably on the exertions of Captain Logan because of the successful cultivation of grain and his plans to improve the resources of the settlement. The over-all discipline and general running of the settlement earned for Captain Logan the Governor's approbation.

At the time of his visit of inspection to Moreton Bay, Governor Darling was not able to meet Logan, who was absent from the settlement on another exploratory journey.

Logan was requested in August to furnish a rough sketch of the area he had been able to explore as the Governor proposed publishing his journal in the *Sydney Gazette*.

Overall, the Governor was quite satisfied with the way in which Logan was running this settlement.

SETTLEMENT SELF-SUPPORTING

With a good harvest from the maize crop, it was found that the settlement could support itself for the next twelve months and no doubt Logan was pleased with this accomplishment.

It was expected in November, 1827, that 120 acres of wheat would be ripe for harvesting, and a considerable acreage had also been sown in maize. With increasing numbers at the settlement, it became necessary to provide a satisfactory stores depot as provisions were being exposed to the elements. However, it was not until the following year that a start was made on the stores building.

The "*Regent Bird*," the boat to convey the stores between Dunwich and Brisbane Town, was completed and ready for service in October, 1827, and, because of the undesirability

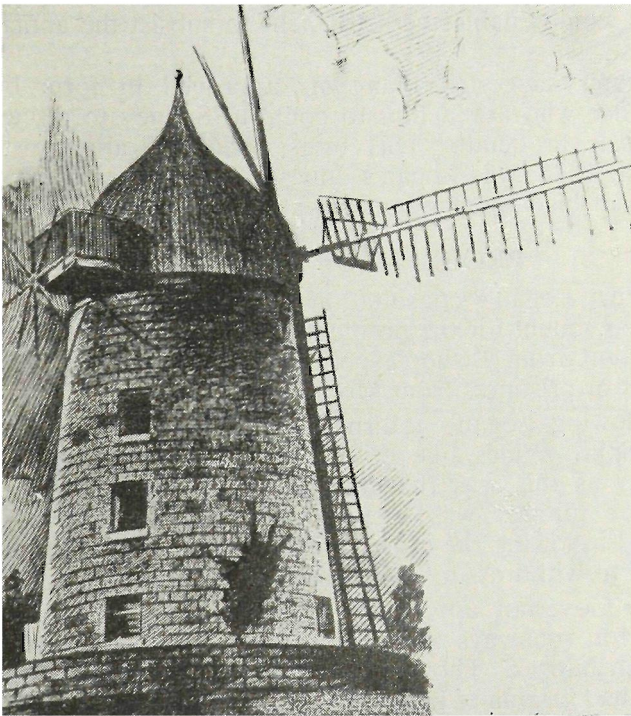
of engaging convicts to man this vessel, an additional group of civil servants were stationed at the settlement.

MORE PRISONERS

At the end of April, 1828, Logan was advised of the possibility of Moreton Bay Penal Settlement absorbing large numbers of prisoners, as Port Macquarie was gradually closing down.

It was therefore of the utmost importance that a plan be laid down for their future accommodation, employment and support, "especially for the production of grain within the settlement sufficient for its own consumption. For the information necessary to perfect this plan, the Government of course looks to you and you will accordingly be pleased to transmit a full report in detail on this subject."

Logan replied that, because of the inferior nature of the land in the immediate neighbourhood of Brisbane Town, it appeared that the most advisable place for raising immediately a sufficient quantity of grain for the consumption of the increased population would be the formation of an Agricultural Establishment higher up the river.



A sketch of the Old Windmill on Wickham Terrace.

The place suggested by him was an extensive plain containing about 5,000 acres of "very excellent land on Oxley Creek. . . There are some 100 acres that could be immediately ploughed up without any preparation and should this plan be sanctioned, there would be no difficulty in preparing 1,000 acres for a wheat crop for the year 1829, which at the moderate rate of 15 bushells per acre would produce 15,000 bushells, quantity more than sufficient for three years' supply. . . " One hundred and fifty of the "best-disposed" prisoners could be sent to this Agricultural Establishment.

Logan also proposed to employ some of the prisoners in quarrying lime-stone and coal at Bremer Creek for shipment to Sydney.

VISIT OF COLONIAL BOTANIST

With the visit of Charles Fraser, the Colonial Botanist, a garden site was pegged out for the reception of tropical plants, but this also appears to have been used extensively for the cultivation of vegetables.

J. S. Parker was appointed Superintendent of Agriculture in August, 1828, and as he had occupied a similar position at Norfolk Island, it was fully expected his knowledge and ability would enable the settlement to subsist the anticipated increase.

Logan's suggested plan was approved in form by the Governor who asked him to come to Sydney to discuss the proposals in detail. This brief period of absence during August, 1828, was Logan's only visit to Sydney in the whole course of his Commandantship at Moreton Bay.

PROBLEM OF RUNAWAYS

During Logan's consultations with the Governor, a solution was sought for the problem of runaways. Records of the settlement from Bishop's period onwards indicate a steady exodus of prisoners from Moreton Bay.

Following Logan's return, a guard was stationed on the New South Wales side of the Tweed River opposite Point Danger as this was the crossing point for runaways. The measure initially was successful as runaways were apprehended following the crossing of the river, but the guard was forced to withdraw following a clash with the natives.

The Governor apparently approved of a heavier punishment for runaways who returned to the settlement, often through hunger. Those who succeeded in making their way south had originally been sent to Norfolk Island, but Logan's suggestion that they should be returned and worked in double

irons for the remainder of their sentence was an attempt to deter others at the settlement from escaping.

Because the numbers absconding declined after Logan's death, historians have considered this additional evidence supporting the theory of the Commandant's tyranny. But this does not seem to be the case.

During Clunie's period as Commandant, the public hanging of a persistent runaway at Brisbane Town was carried out in the presence of the convicts in a desperate attempt by the Governor to stamp out absconding, and this appears to have dampened the desire of many to escape.

BOWMAN'S VISIT

In the month of September, 1828, the convict population increased by 168 to 693. The failure of the wheat crop resulted in rations being reduced for a short period. The fresh water supply was greatly overtaxed, and hospital returns indicate a very serious epidemic at the settlement.

This summer of 1828 was the most difficult period of Logan's administration, but he seems to have weathered the crisis. His difficulties were further accentuated by the arrival of 137 convicts in January, 1829. Bowman, the Inspector of Hospitals, was sent from Sydney to report back to the Governor on the situation.

Hospital accommodation was totally inadequate even with the increased population, but the epidemic taxed the Assistant Surgeon and the hospital to maximum capacity. Alterations to the existing structure were approved and an additional hospital for the military personnel was sanctioned by the Governor.

The Inspector commented on the scarcity of water and attributed this as one of the greatest causes of dysentery infection. He recommended against the despatch of additional prisoners to Brisbane Town and also criticised the diet of the prisoners, stating the general health standard of the settlement was such that patients were much longer convalescing at Moreton Bay than in any other medical establishment throughout the Colony of New South Wales.

The scanty allowance of vegetables and the long periods on salted provisions had had a very detrimental effect on the prisoners whose low resistance was seen during the recent epidemic. The settlement's garden was to remedy this situation following Mr. Parker's appointment.

PRAISE FOR LOGAN

In conclusion, Bowman passed a general comment on the state of the Moreton Bay Penal Settlement:

"I had an opportunity of observing the good effects of

the strict discipline established by Captain Logan and the regularity with which the various works were conducted under his orders . . . and it may be satisfactory to His Excellency to know that, having visited most of the Government establishments in the Colony, I have seen none where the general arrangements appear to have been so judiciously managed as they are at that settlement."

Following the reception of Bowman's report, prisoners originally intended for Moreton Bay were to be directed to Port Macquarie. However, Charles Fraser visited the settlement soon afterwards and found Logan had solved the fresh water supply problem by excavating a large area in a bed of clay in the "Brick Fields," and others were being dug. "Its hitherto bad quality arose, evidently from the great quantity of putrid vegetable substances which their ponds contained, and from their having very injudiciously deprived them of all shade, consequently destroying all the aquatic plants on their surface, and exposing the water to the effects of a Hot Sun." Prisoners were therefore redirected to Moreton Bay.

AGRICULTURE

This was not the only outcome of Fraser's visit in 1829 as it was during this period the site for the Agricultural Establishment was chosen and the Executive Council approved the site on 6 August 1829. Logan immediately sent 150 convicts to the area which was called Eagle Farm and further increased the numbers as more suitable accommodation became available.

The establishment was from the very beginning a success and was placed under Mr. Parker's jurisdiction, while Peter Spicer, the Superintendent of Convicts was responsible for the gardens and crop areas around Brisbane Town.

Only temporary accommodation was erected at Eagle Farm pending the visit of the Director of Works to Brisbane who advised the Commandant on the layout.

CIVIL OFFICERS

At the time of Logan's arrival, the settlement's administration consisted of the following persons:

L. V. Dulhunty, Superintendent of Convicts, also in charge of the Engineer's Department.

Appointed from 15 August 1825 and resigned 21 March 1826.

Mr. Walter Scott, who accompanied the original expedition in August, 1824, as Storekeeper. He resigned in October, 1826.

Mr. Henry Cowper, the Assistant Surgeon who was Aus-

tralia's first medical graduate, was appointed to Moreton Bay on 7 September 1825.

Mrs. Esther Roberts was made Mistress of the Public School from 1 January 1826.

With Logan came Lieutenant G. Owens who was Acting Engineer from 6 March 1826 and was succeeded by Ensign I. L. Innes who held the post for a short period from 20 March 1827. Lieutenant Thomas Bainbrigge was designated Superintendent of Works, commencing duty on 10 October 1827. He was replaced by a Civil Officer, George Edwards, on 28 October 1830.

Peter Spicer was appointed Superintendent of Convicts on 23 August 1826 and remained at the settlement until its closure in 1839. In September, 1829, he assumed control of the agricultural pursuits at Brisbane Town in addition to his duties as Superintendent of Convicts following Mr. Parker's being stationed at Eagle Farm.

A uniform practice was adopted in all penal establishments in the colony of appointing convicts as overseers in charge of gangs. These men were paid for their services and lived separately from the main body of convicts. They were responsible to the Superintendent of Convicts. Constables were also appointed from this strata of society.

This procedure reduced costs at the settlement as the employment of free inhabitants would have resulted in considerable expense. Unless the Colony was as a whole experiencing a serious economic recession, it is improbable the Government would have attracted free men to the settlement, to fill these positions.

When the river at Moreton Bay was being buoyed, Sir Thomas Brisbane directed that two free seamen—John Tosh of the "*Amity*" and William Innes of the "*Mary Elizabeth*" be left at the settlement for the purpose of superintending the buoys.

Captain Logan stated that, as John Tosh was the only person at the settlement capable of piloting vessels up to the settlement and his conduct was very good, an increase in salary should be paid to him. As a result, he was appointed Superintendent of Buoys and Pilot from 1 July 1827. He held this position until he was drowned on 1 May 1830 with two seamen whose boat was upset on the bar at Amity Point after piloting the "*Mary Elizabeth*" out to sea.

The Master of the "*Regent Bird*" acted in the position until James Nelson's appointment in May 1830.

The "*Regent Bird*" was constructed to convey stores to the settlement and was ready for service in August, 1827.

John Martin was appointed Master, but did not commence duty because of illness.

Robert Bremer was appointed in his place and the cutter proceeded to Moreton Bay Settlement with a crew of four free seamen. Some attempt was made to obtain New Zealanders for the crew, but this was not successful and Europeans were appointed. Edward King assumed full responsibilities for the position from 1 July 1828 and did not relinquish it until ten years later.

With increasing population, the need for the Assistant Surgeon to give evidence at trials in Sydney, and the division of the settlement into Brisbane Town and Eagle Farm, the Government decided to appoint James Fitzgerald Murray as the second Assistant Surgeon at Moreton Bay.

When J. S. Parker was appointed Superintendent of Agriculture on 9 August 1828, he was primarily engaged in supervising the garden at the settlement and the botanical collection of Mr. Fraser. With the opening of Eagle Farm, he assumed full control of this agricultural establishment.

MISTRESS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL

The Blue Books of the Colony indicate that Mrs. Esther Roberts was appointed Mistress of the Public School in January, 1826, and held the position until March, 1828. John Mill took charge of the boys from 28 June 1827 until the time Mrs. Roberts resigned her position. Both of these "teachers" were replaced by Robert Maginnis who taught the children of the Commandant, soldiers, civil officials and convicts until January, 1831.

In February, 1828, Captain Logan was advised of the appointment of a Mr. Layton as catechist, but he does not appear to have commenced duty. In September, 1828, the first chaplain, Rev. John Vincent, was appointed but he did not arrive at Brisbane Town until 27 March 1829. He left the settlement in December, 1829. Henry Cowper, who was the son of a clergyman, read the services at the settlement during the long periods when the Church of England was without an ordained representative at the settlement.

The small band of civil persons to whom reference has been made constituted a primitive Civil Service in Queensland, a Service which was to expand rapidly with the coming of free settlement, the advent of which was hastened by incidents during the period of Captain Logan's commandantship.

ADMINISTRATIVE DISCIPLINE

Captain Logan has been referred to as one of the worst scoundrels in Australian convict history. He is considered

the epitome of those harsh Commandants held responsible for the "horror" of convict life in Australia. However, in view of recently discovered sources, it becomes necessary to re-assess the conclusions drawn by previous historians on this perhaps most well-known Commandant of the Moreton Bay Penal Settlement.

Before reviewing the evidence now available on Captain Logan, it is well to consider the type of Commandant required for a settlement such as Moreton Bay.

Reference has been made to the substantial growth in population from 1828 to the end of Captain Logan's period, and it will not be denied that the appointee would need to be a strong disciplinarian to run such a settlement effectively, and maintain discipline especially having regard to the type of convicts who were being sent to Moreton Bay. Did Captain Logan measure up to these requirements?

It will be remembered that, when Mr. Bowman, Inspector of Hospitals, visited the settlement, he spoke in high praise of the general discipline and the efficient management of the settlement under the Commandantship of Captain Logan.

In Bowman's opinion, Moreton Bay was by far the best managed and the best disciplined settlement in the Colony.

CUNNINGHAM'S TESTIMONY

Allan Cunningham, before the Select Committee of Secondary Punishment in London in 1832, stated that Captain Logan was a very good disciplinarian, and it was necessary for him to rule with an iron hand in order to govern so large a body of "desperate men."

When asked, "Did there appear to you to be any unnecessary severity used?", Cunningham replied, "Not in the least."

LIBEL ACTION AGAINST SYDNEY EDITOR

Evidence has been brought to light regarding Captain Logan's conduct in the Executive Council minute books which record two series of interviews by certain officials who had been stationed at Moreton Bay prior to a libel action by Patrick Logan against a Mr. Hall, editor of a newspaper which had earned the wrath of Governor Darling who was determined at all costs to rid the Colony of this troublesome person. A statement appeared in Hall's newspaper bringing serious charges against the Commandant of Moreton Bay, namely, murder, terrible cruelty, and failure to report the murder of prisoners by their gang overseers.

Hall was at the time languishing in prison following conviction for libellous statements, but continued his fairly inten-

sive muck-raking campaign regarding Darling's administration. Liberty of the press had been granted to the Colony by Sir Thomas Brisbane, and each publication of the "*Sydney Monitor*" of this period contained the heading, "Alas it has flourished! Under the Government of Sir Thomas Brisbane, Knight, Liberty (of the press) was born. Under the Government of Ralph Darling, Esquire, it was strangled on the Ninth Day of January, 1830. 'I shall rise again'."

The Executive Council interviewed Reverend John Vincent, Dr. Cowper, and Lieutenant Bell, all of whom had been stationed at Moreton Bay. This was done to ascertain whether the assistance of the Crown would be given to Logan in the libel action.

CHARGES UNSUBSTANTIATED

Statements in these minutes do not substantiate the charges made by Hall against Captain Logan's treatment of the prisoners. There is every possibility that some overseers exceeded their authority, and the Reverend John Vincent alludes to an overseer "who was said to be of a cruel disposition and in the habit of beating and abusing the prisoners, but I never heard of the particular circumstances." Regulations forbade the striking of prisoners by overseers, and monthly the regulations were read to them who, it will be remembered, were recruited from the ranks of convicts.

If prisoners were abused by their overseers, could Captain Logan be held responsible? The working parties were scattered over a wide area and as an Administrator, he could not be continually supervising their activities.

Dr. Cowper related the incident of eight men being punished for attempting to break out of barracks and each received two hundred lashes. One prisoner, whom Cowper described as "a stout, robust man," died in hospital eight days after receiving punishment as a result of inflammation arising from the effects of the flogging. Here again, could Captain Logan be held responsible for the death of this man? It is conceded that he was responsible for the awarding of the punishment, but could a person in his position legally be held responsible for the man's death in our contemporary society?

Lieutenant Bell arrived at Moreton Bay in 1826 and remained there for approximately ten months. He was interviewed by the Executive Council in August, 1830, and was closely questioned concerning the death of the prisoner Swan—the man named in Hall's newspaper as having been murdered by Logan. This officer was unable to recollect the statements made by himself concerning Swan's death, but it

would appear that the latter was a very bad character who was a constant source of trouble. His punishment did not exceed fifty lashes.

“INDEFATIGABLE”

The following questions and replies were recorded during the course of the interview:

“Is it your opinion that in the infliction of punishment on the prisoners at Moreton Bay, any greater degree of severity was used than was necessary for maintaining subordination and security in the settlement?”

“I think not.”

“Will you have the goodness to state your general impressions as to Captain Logan’s conduct?”

“As Commandant, I consider he was indefatigable in his duties, and never exceeded them, but as private gentlemen we did not agree.”

“Did you consider Captain Logan capable of inflicting unwanton punishment.”

“I did not. From my having been longer in the service than him, he frequently consulted me on points of duty and acted upon my advice.”

The Council noted a discrepancy between the official returns from the settlement and the statement of Lieutenant Bell regarding the time which lapsed between the inflicting of punishment on Swan and his death.

CLOSE OF THE LOGAN ERA

Preparation for the libel case continued and Logan was advised that his regiment would be sailing for India. This meant that he would be relinquishing his position as Commandant of the settlement. However, the Governor wrote to Captain Logan desiring that he should remain at Moreton Bay for as long a period as possible as the Government was anxious to retain his services for the maximum period.

Captain Clunie was sent to the settlement for the purpose of ultimately assuming control when Captain Logan departed for Sydney. It was during this time that the Commandant undertook an expedition from which he never returned—his body being located some time after his disappearance. His death was attributed to the aborigines who were particularly ferocious during this period.

NO OFFICIAL INVESTIGATION

Thus, the libel case never eventuated and no official investigation was held into the allegations, other than the inter-

views conducted by the Executive Council to determine the assistance the Crown would grant to the late Commandant.

The hostility of the aborigines at this particular time and the very bad relations which existed between them and the runaway convicts seem to over-rule the possibility of Logan being killed by runaways from the settlement.

Towards the close of Captain Logan's commandantship, the official despatches indicate a tranquil atmosphere at the settlement. The years of hard labour had been rewarded as this period of prosperity arrived and the Commandant was able to enjoy the fruit of his labours. New penal regulations framed in 1829 had a considerable effect upon the prisoners. The whole establishment had been placed upon a sound footing. From a developmental point of view, the retiring Commandant had accomplished a great deal and the then state of well-being was to no small extent due to his exertions.

NEW VIEW ON LOGAN

Logan's period of service of five years as Commandant was equalled by that of only one other—his successor, Captain J. D. Clunie. It was a period which was to prove a significant prelude to the era of free settlement. It was during this period that Cunningham's explorations led to the discovery of the Darling Downs which was to attract Queensland's first squatters nine years after Logan's death.

Logan himself was associated with Cunningham in his first attempt to find an access from the east to this rich pastoral area. He had in his own explorations discovered Limestone Hill (Ipswich), the Logan River, and the Fassifern Valley. Through his interest in the hinterland and his exploratory efforts, he outstanding above all the Commandants, strove to fulfil the wider destiny of Moreton Bay to be other than a place for the reception of second offenders.

His Commandantship must be viewed in the light of the then prevailing policy of the Motherland. The legislators, finding that whipping or branding (being "burnt in the hand") had proved ineffectual in preventing crimes, confidently expected that the image of the word "*transportation*" would strike such terror within the hearts of the lower echelons of the English population as to actually deter them from crime.

When the Colony was in its infancy and reports spoke of hardships endured, of subsisting on reduced rations and the lack of adequate clothing, the image *transportation to Botany Bay* conveyed was all that the British Government could desire and it was felt that the "Great End of Punishment,"

i.e. the prevention of crime, was being realised. But, when stories of prosperity and the rapid acquisition of wealth by ticket-of-leave men and ex-convicts reached England, the dread rapidly disappeared and the Home Department found itself receiving applications from criminals who had committed transgressions not considered worthy of transportation craving the indulgence of being sent to Botany Bay.

The dread image of transportation had therefore to be restored and Governor Darling in 1826, with instructions from the Secretary of State upon this policy, sought to enforce its strict observance. The influence of this convict policy has therefore been reflected in the history of Logan's period as Commandant of Moreton Bay.

If, as an official, he had perforce to administer that policy, he did as a man display interests beyond the confines of the miserable settlement which he was called upon to superintend. Within the limits of his capacity, he endeavoured by exploration to extend knowledge of the new Colony beyond the horizons of Moreton Bay, and thus contributed his measure to the fulfilment of the prophecy of Sir Thomas Brisbane of creating

“A NEW ERA IN THE HISTORY OF THE CONTINENT
OF NEW HOLLAND.”